



Handbook
2025-2026 School Year

DIOCESAN PHILOSOPHY OF SCHOOL-SPONSORED ATHLETICS

The greatest strength of the elementary and middle Catholic schools of the Diocese of Baton Rouge is the opportunity and responsibility of the administration of each school to consider and use the uniqueness of its circumstances to provide the best Catholic education for its students. Within this basic tenet, the first priority of such schools is the overall development and growth of each of its students – spiritually, socially, mentally, emotionally, and physically. School-sponsored intramural and other athletic programs shall provide a medium by which students can:

1. Develop an awareness of their abilities.
2. Learn and improve athletic skills.
3. Acquire the true meaning of and practice sportsmanship.
4. Enhance their self-esteem and feelings of belonging.
5. Form foundations for a healthy adult life style.

Such programs should emphasize the positive accomplishments of the individual through recognition, praise, and positive constructive criticism. Athletics should be a vital part of and interact with the spiritual, social, and discipline elements of the overall school program. Administration, faculty, coaches, parents, and fans are necessary components in nurturing a positive Catholic athletic experience.

The St. Jude the Apostle School Athletic Association provides programs for all students which promote healthy physical, emotional, and social growth as well as enhance the pursuit of faith, academics, and excellence.

I. STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND CONDUCT

A. STUDENT ATHLETE STANDARDS

Students who elect to participate in extracurricular activities must remember that in doing so they are accepting the responsibility of maintaining acceptable behavior at all times. Through their participation, they represent the total enrollment of our school.

Students who participate in school-based sports must cooperate with coaches and may be removed from the team by the Athletic Director/Administration should a serious incident occur during a sports related activity.

Disrespect of any kind will not be tolerated. Players should be on time, attentive, and cooperative during all practices and games. Players should be respectful of his or her teammates, never criticizing another player's mistakes or ability. Any violation of this rule during practices or games could result in suspension from play.

Should disciplinary problems arise concerning a student involved in extracurricular activities, a conference will be scheduled with the parent in order to determine if continued participation is in the best interest of the student. Although we set guidelines for eligibility requirements, the final decision in this matter is left to the discretion of the principal.

B. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

If a student is absent or checks out of school, he/she may not participate in a practice or game that afternoon or evening. If a student is absent or checks out of school on a Friday, he/she may not participate in a practice or game until the following Monday. If a student checks in by 11:30, he/she may practice or play in the game that day. If a student checks out for an appointment, he/she may only practice or play in a game that afternoon or evening if he/she presents a doctor's excuse.

When a child is checked out for a doctor's appointment, the child should be returned to school as quickly as possible. We discourage excessive scheduling of doctor's appointments during the school day. The School Administration reserves the right to remove any student from school-sponsored sports eligibility should a serious incident occur during the school day or at a sports or school related activity, whether on or off St. Jude's campus.

C. STUDENT ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Because participation in extracurricular activities requires additional time after school and away from academic preparation, it is necessary for parents to consider this aspect when allowing their child to take part in after school activities.

Student eligibility to participate in **fall** sports is determined using the previous school year's final academic and conduct grade.

In accordance with CSAA policy, the minimum academic requirement is an overall grade point average of 2.25. The GPA is comprised of all academic courses and the average of the enrichment grades (no F's in academic subjects will be allowed). Prior to the first progress report in September, the fourth nine weeks' grades for the preceding school year will determine player eligibility. A student transferring in from another school may be put on probation based on the principal's review of prior academic performance at the preceding school. If the student fails to maintain these requirements, he/she will be put on probation for one grading period (a grading period is determined by progress reports and report cards). After the probationary period, if a student again fails to meet the academic requirements, he/she will be suspended from the team. A student on academic probation may continue to practice and

play with the team. If the grade requirements are not met and the student is removed from the team, they may no longer participate in any practice, game, or team function.

D. STUDENT CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS (SCHOOL)

1. Weekly Conduct Grade

All players are expected to maintain a grade of 85 or above on a **weekly** basis in conduct. The conduct card weekly grade will be checked every Thursday at 3:30 to determine eligibility. If on Thursday, the conduct grade has fallen below an 85, the student will be placed on probation for 1 week. If on the following Thursday, the conduct grade remains below 85, the student is subject to suspension, upon review by the principal, from any games, practices or team functions until the grade has improved to 85 or above and the student has been removed from disciplinary suspension.

Although the overall conduct grade minimum is 85 at each grading period, the 85 allows for students who “have a bad week” to have a chance to bring their grade up and remain eligible. Decisions concerning play eligibility will be determined on Thursday afternoon and inactive time will begin at 3:30 PM on Friday until 3:30 PM of the following Friday (or in the case of the Christmas Holidays, the first Friday once school resumes after the Holidays).

2. Report Card/Progress Report Conduct Grade

The conduct grade average, reflected at each grading period (i.e. progress report or report card) must be a minimum of an 85 “B”. (No “F” in conduct will be allowed.) Any student who does not meet this requirement will be placed on disciplinary probation and has until the next grading period (i.e. progress report or report card) to improve this grade. The grading period requirement is in addition to weekly conduct grade reports.

This discipline code will be in effect for games, tournaments, etc., or whenever the team is representing St. Jude School.

3. Tryouts

In the selection process for any sport that requires tryouts for a limited number of positions on a team, consideration will be given to the students’ academic and conduct records. Students who tryout while on probation will receive a rating based on meeting/not meeting that requirement.

II. PARENT PARTICIPATION AND CONDUCT

A. GATE AND CONCESSION DUTIES

Parent participation is a necessary part of a successful sports program. Parents of students participating in the CSAA and cheerleading programs are scheduled to work the gate and concession home games and tournaments. After teams are formed and the game schedules are known, a gate/concession work schedule will be distributed. It is the responsibility of the parents to find a replacement should they be unable to work their shift. High school students are allowed to work to earn service hours.

B. UNIFORM RESPONSIBILITIES

Each student athlete and parent(s) is responsible for the uniform issued. Uniforms will be issued once a student has paid his or her player fee. Uniforms are not to be worn to practice. Uniforms are not to be washed in hot water or placed in the dryer as this causes shrinkage and loosening of numbers. Failure to return a clean uniform at the end of the season will result in withholding of a student's report card.

Students who win a tournament are allowed to wear their championship shirts to school on the following Monday, with the exception of Mass days. In the case of Mass, the students may wear the championship shirt on Tuesday. Girls may wear the t-shirt with their skirt or shorts, and boys with their uniform pants or shorts.

Jerseys can be worn on Spirit Days.

C. SPECTATOR CONDUCT

Any player, parent, or coach that is attending a practice or game (home or away) is expected to act in a respectful and orderly manner.

Fan conduct in the stands is expected to be appropriate. Fans should cheer a good play, be supportive, and avoid negative comments. We ask that parents not shout instructions from the stands and let the coach perform his/her duty.

Game officials should not be criticized. These individuals dedicate considerable time to our children. They will make mistakes, but they are doing their best to create a learning and enjoyable environment for the participants. Good spectator conduct teaches our students to be respectful of coaches, teammates, opponents, and referees.

Attending your child's practices and/or games is a PRIVILEGE, not a right. This privilege can be revoked at any time by a coach, coordinator, or Athletic Director. If revocation is ignored, your child will be dismissed.

In order to develop and maintain the Christian attitude encouraged by St. Jude School and Parish and parents as the primary role models for their children, the Athletic Association reminds the parents of the following procedures:

1. If parents display unsportsmanlike conduct, the coordinator or Athletic Director will warn them.
2. If the questionable conduct continues, they will be asked to leave and escorted out.
3. The Principal and AD will make the final determination for future attendance at athletic events.
4. If necessary, the student will be asked to withdraw from the team.

D. GYM TIME AND SCHEDULING PRACTICE PROCEDURE

Practices are booked by emailing Josh Broggi (jbroggi@stjudebr.org) or Lindsey McCombie (lmccombie@stjudebr.org). Practices are scheduled week to week due to high demand. Varsity teams have first priority, beginning with 8th grade on down to 3rd grade. Practices are held for 1 ½ hour slots. If you cancel your practice, please notify Josh Broggi or Lindsey McCombie so that the time slot may be given to another team. Key codes are issued to Varsity and Developmental head coaches by Josh Broggi or Lindsey McCombie.

III. FEES AND FORMS

The Athletic Department operates on a self-sustaining budget. The general approach to each sport is to balance revenue from the sport with the expense required to play, except for extraordinary expenses. Fees cover the cost of entry fees for each sport, referees, supplies needed, gym maintenance, field maintenance, uniforms, coaching stipends, and other expenses that arise. Athletics' fiscal year starts July 1st of each year and ends June 30th of the following year. Checks should be made payable to St. Jude Athletic Association or made through Venmo (@stjudeathletics). Please refer to the Athletic section of the school's website for sport fees.

A. REQUIRED FORMS - ATHLETES

Prior to participation in any sport, the following forms must be submitted:

- ✓ Player Registration form (done with Google Doc Sign Up Sheet)
- ✓ Medical Release/Waiver
- ✓ Athletic Handbook Parent Signature Page

These forms can be downloaded from the Athletics link.

B. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Health Examination – Prior to participation in any school-sponsored athletic activity, the school *suggests* that a complete physical examination be performed.
- Insurance – The school **requires** that students involved in CSAA Varsity and CSAA JV Athletics provide proof of adequate insurance coverage.
- Additional Insurance – A program of student accident insurance covers all Catholic School students for accidents on school property.

***NO STUDENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO PLAY IN A GAME UNTIL
FORMS ARE COMPLETED AND FEES ARE PAID***

IV. COACHES

All coaches must adhere to the Child Protection process of the Catholic Diocese. The requirements are below:

A. REQUIRED FORMS - COACHES

- ✓ Child Protection Volunteer Application
- ✓ Code of Ethics
- ✓ Safe Environment On-Line Training – **“Serving Vulnerable Populations”**
- ✓ Background Check – To complete the background check, you must bring the two background check forms to the LA State Police Bureau of Criminal Identification & Information located at 7919 Independence Blvd. You will undergo a fingerprint and background check. LA Police will send the background check directly to Lori Layman, the Child Protection Coordinator at St. Jude School.
- ✓ Turn in all completed documents to Lori Layman at St. Jude School; questions: llayman@stjudebr.org
- ✓ Transfer of Documents Form (to transfer any of the above forms that may have been previously completed at another school or church parish to St. Jude School)

B. SELECTION OF COACHES

The Athletic Director with the approval of the Principal selects coaches. The primary factors considered in the selection of coaches are:

- Evidenced Christian Values
- Depth of character and personality
- Ability to communicate with athletes
- Technical knowledge of the sport

C. GUIDELINES FOR COACHES

1. Exhibit knowledge of the game and possess the skills to coach the sport.

2. Keep the parents informed of expectations and follow time schedule.
Ex: Arrival time, ending time, etc.
3. The players are the responsibilities of the coaches until the parents arrive.
4. Formal scrimmages should be approved by the AD.
5. Coaches must abide by published CSAA timelines
6. All Head Coaches must have an Assistant Coach.
7. CSAA Varsity teams (6th-8th) MAY NOT be head-coached by a parent/sibling of a child on the team. However, if all efforts to find a non-parent coach have been exhausted within one (1) month of the sport's entry deadline, a parent will be allowed to coach with Administration's approval.
8. CSAA JV and CSAA Developmental teams MAY be coached by a parent/sibling of a child on that team.
9. All coaching appointments will be for one year only, subject to annual renewal with approval of the Athletic Director and Principal
10. All CSAA Varsity, JV, and Developmental coaches are to be fingerprinted according to State Law.

D. COACH'S CONDUCT

1. Appropriate language is to be used at all times.
2. Positive acceptance of guidelines and rules of CSAA should be exhibited.
3. Coaches are discouraged from having any confrontation with a player's parents. Parents will be directed to speak with the Athletic Director for resolution of any problem.
4. Coaches will not contact the CSAA office or an umpire/referee without obtaining approval from the Athletic Director in advance (NO EXCEPTIONS)
5. The following must be reported to the Athletic Director:
 - a. Any confrontation with a parent, coach, or official
 - b. Any unsportsmanlike penalty or technical foul called on a player or coach

E. COMPLAINTS OF COACH OR STAFF

The Athletic Director is available to discuss concerns regarding a program, sport, coach, or player problem/concern. If a parent has a concern regarding a coach or anyone on his staff, that parent should first contact the Athletic Director and discuss the situation with him/her. The Athletic Director will attempt to resolve the issue at hand. If necessary, the Principal will be contacted and a meeting scheduled to discuss the issue and necessary plan of action.

V. OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL SPONSORED PROGRAMS

St. Jude offers a broad array of athletic programs for students encompassing Pre-K through 8th Grade. The basic philosophy is to promote involvement and individual skill development early, moving to character development and concepts through the middle years, leading to an

understanding of teamwork, team goals, and self-sacrifice by the time the students exit the program heading into high school. Our coaches are chosen with the understanding that they follow this basic philosophy.

To accomplish the offerings described above, the St. Jude Athletic Department employs an INTRAMURAL PROGRAM as well as participation in the CSAA leagues offered in our community. These have been screened for the types of values and goals that we strive to attain. The Athletic Director recommends participation in specific leagues and the Principal must give final approval. What follows below is an overview of the programs offered.

A. INTRAMURALS

St. Jude intramural programs strive to help children:

1. Develop an awareness of their abilities.
2. Learn and improve athletic skills.
3. Acquire the true meaning of and practice sportsmanship.
4. Be a part of a team effort.
5. Enhance their self-esteem and feelings of belonging.
6. Form foundations for a healthy adult life style.

This program is open to those students in Pre-K through 2nd grade at St. Jude Catholic School. The programs will only be available if there is substantial parental interest and involvement. The St. Jude Intramural Program exposes these children to organized team sports. The overriding objective is for the children to have fun and learn basic skills. This program nurtures relationships for the children and their families in the St. Jude Community.

1. SOCCER

Boys and girls play together to form teams and play a series of games on Saturday mornings in the fall. Pre-K and K may play together and 1st and 2nd may play together depending on interest and parent volunteers. The emphasis is on participation and fun and parents are encouraged to get involved. Parent volunteers are needed to coach.

2. BASKETBALL

Boys and girls play together as stated above for Soccer. This program begins after the Christmas holidays. Drills and games take place on Saturdays in the gym.

The program will provide grade-level based instruction on the game of basketball. This instruction will include introduction to the rules, conditioning, individual skills, and team aspects of basketball.

Each weekly session will include instruction and a competition involving the skills learned and practiced. Participants will benefit from the instructive and competitive blend of this program.

3. UNIFORMS

Each team has a designated color (red, blue, yellow, purple, etc. teams). The player's registration form will request a t-shirt size. The student's t-shirt will coincide with his or her team's color. These are ideally handed out the first Saturday of the program. The students wear any shorts they like. Cleats are helpful for soccer to avoid slipping, but tennis shoes are acceptable. Shin guards are REQUIRED for soccer.

B. SCHOOL SPONSORED LEAGUE PARTICIPATION

The school sponsored leagues participation programs are overseen by the Athletic Director subject to the approval of the Principal. Currently, the school participates in the CSAA league which consists of both Varsity, JR Varsity, and Developmental teams.

1. CSAA

The Catholic Schools Athletic Association provides an organized structure of interscholastic athletic programs for the students of the Diocese to participate. The CSAA emphasizes fair competition, developing character, good sportsmanship, and building teams as moral communities.

2. FOOTBALL

The philosophy of the football program is to introduce boys to the skills, conditioning, and overall understanding of the unique aspects of the sport to allow them to continue playing in high school if they choose. In 3rd and 4th grade, emphasis is on skill development (stance, blocking, tackling, ball handling, etc.) and self-confidence as well as an introduction to conditioning. 5th and 6th graders are introduced to the more intricate areas of the game as well as higher skill level and conditioning requirements. Students in 7th and 8th, in addition to refined skill enhancement, are expected to understand the concept of teamwork and their specific contributions/sacrifices to the team's overall success.

❖ Season

The season for football runs from August until mid-November for tackle football.

❖ 3rd/4th grade tackle football

The CSAA of Baton Rouge offers a 3rd and 4th grade tackle football league with rules designed for the ages of the players in mind. The league will have weight restrictions to maintain the integrity of the game.

The school will send out a sign-up sheet when school starts in August. Prior to the start of school, emails may be sent out to all boys in these grades gauging interest.

❖ CSAA 5th/6th & 7th/8th tackle football

St. Jude Catholic School participates in the CSAA tackle football leagues for grades 5th – 8th. The leagues are divided according to school enrollment size and St. Jude has maintained competitive teams throughout its participation.

Interest for tackle football is gauged towards the end of the school year for the following school year through a Google Doc sign-up sheet. Practice usually starts by the 2nd week of school. 7th and 8th graders play together on one team. 5th and 6th graders also play together on one team although if there are enough 5th graders to fill a roster, a stand-alone 5th grade team may be fielded. This will be decided by the Athletic Director after the 1st week of practice.

Games are held on Sunday afternoons and the season consists of a jamboree and 6 regular season games. There is a weight limit to play a backfield position in both leagues, 5th/6th and 7th/8th respectively. There is no mandatory play rule in the 7th and 8th grade league. Basic high school rules are used.

3. BASKETBALL (Girls' and Boys')

The philosophy of the basketball program is to introduce girls and boys (separately) to the individual skills needed and team aspects of the game, while providing consistency and continuity of instruction and coaching. In learning and practicing core individual skills (dribbling, passing, shooting, guarding, conditioning, discipline) and team roles (positions, plays, guarding techniques, bench support), athletes will be prepared for competitive basketball at St. Jude, for participation in other camps and clinics offered, and for participation in off-season leagues. Members of the St. Jude Basketball program are encouraged to participate in additional camps, clinics and leagues.

❖ Seasons

- The **girls'** season begins in August and concludes in mid-November.
- The **boys'** season begins in November and concludes in late February or early March.

❖ 3rd and 4th grade teams play in the CSAA Developmental league (if a league is available)

- These teams are formed based on number of girls/boys interested and parents' willingness to coach. The AD will assist in the formation of these teams.
- Each year, the leagues are determined based on interest of each Catholic School (smaller schools sometime combine 3rd and 4th grade students)
- These teams are typically coached by a parent or other volunteer who meets criteria on page 7 and completes necessary paperwork.
- If a league is not available, options are discussed with the AD.

Teams may be formed if the following team formation rules are met:

- There must be a minimum of 7 players to a team and all members of the team must be St. Jude students and members of the same grade.
- Teams must be organized with the approval of the St. Jude Athletic Association, thus assuring that everyone is given an opportunity to participate.

- Team rosters will be determined based on the skill level and the number of girls and boys participating. The St. Jude coaches and the St. Jude Athletic Association will make the final determination.
- ❖ **5th grade teams play in the CSAA Developmental League.**
- There must be a minimum of 7 players on a team to enter the league.
 - More than one team may be formed. Teams are determined based on the number of participants. Teams must be organized with the approval of the St. Jude Athletic Association, thus assuring that everyone is given an opportunity to participate.
 - Team rosters will be determined based on the skill level and number of girls/boys participating. The Coaches and the Athletic Director will make this determination to ensure that, if there is more than one team, each team is equally competitive.
 - These teams may be coached by a parent or other volunteer who meets criteria on page 7 and completes necessary paperwork.
 - Practices are held based on coach and gym availability (See gym practicing scheduling)
 - Each player is required to play a minimum of one full quarter per game.
 - This league is open to 5th graders who do not become 13 prior to January 1st.
 - Games are played at the gyms of the participating schools on week nights and Saturday mornings.
 - The CSAA provides the officials.
 - Each player is issued a uniform upon payment of the player fee. Uniforms are not to be worn to practices.
- ❖ **6th-8th grade teams play in the CSAA Competitive league.**
- These teams consist of 10 players and are formed based on try-outs. (If there are 10 or fewer students who wish to play in each grade, try-outs are not held).
 - Because there is no mandatory playing time in 8th grade, this team may have more than 10 players.
 - Practices are held based on coach and gym availability.
 - League games are played on weekday evenings at 5:45pm, 6:30pm, and 7:30pm for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade teams respectively. They are also played on Saturday mornings. Games are held at participating Catholic school gyms.
 - Tournaments are held on Thursdays, Fridays, and weekends.
 - Officials are provided by CSAA.
 - For 6th and 7th grade, there is mandatory play time of one full quarter. There is not mandatory play time for 8th grade games.
 - Each player is issued a uniform upon payment of the player fee (see **uniform responsibilities**).
 - In addition to the CSAA Varsity teams, a CSAA Junior Varsity team may be formed for each grade with a minimum of 7 players.

- 6th graders must be at least 10 on January 1st and may not turn 13 prior to January 1st.
- 7th graders may not turn 14 prior to January 1st.
- 8th graders may not turn 15 prior to January 1st.
- If a student repeats a grade, he or she may play that grade again if the age requirements are met. No student can play in the 8th grade league twice.

❖ **CSAA Tryout Process**

Sign-up is done through a Google Doc spreadsheet. School Administration will check student eligibility).

For 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, tryouts are held to form a roster of no more than 10 players. Tryouts are held for 2-3 days. Players will be selected based on the following categories: dribbling, shooting, passing, discipline, and game knowledge. Players must attend at least one tryout to be eligible to make the team. Parents are not allowed in the gym for tryouts.

❖ **CSAA Varsity and Divisions**

The CSAA is divided into divisions for championship play in the 8th grade league. At the end of the 8th grade Girls and Boys Basketball Leagues, the top 6 basketball teams per division will be invited to play in championship tournaments. The standings are not kept, nor championships awarded or recognized for 7th and 6th grade leagues.

4. GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

The philosophy of the girls' volleyball program is to introduce girls to volleyball by focusing on individual skills and the team facet of the game, while providing consistent and stable instructions and coaching. In learning and practicing core individual skills, (bumping, setting, spiking, serving, blocking, conditioning, and discipline) and team concepts, (positions, defensive strategies, and bench support), girls will be prepared for competitive volleyball at St. Jude, for participation in other camps and clinics offered, and for preparation in off-seasons leagues. Members of the St. Jude Girls Volleyball program are encouraged to participate in and are provided information on additional camps, clinics, and leagues.

❖ **Season**

The season for 5th through 8th grade girls begins in February and concludes in late April. The 5th grade will participate in the school based CSAA Developmental league. The 6th through 8th graders will participate in the CSAA Competitive school based sports program of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. If the number of participants warrants, additional 6th through 8th grade JV teams may be formed.

❖ **5th grade teams play in the CSAA Developmental program.**

- More than one team may be formed. Rosters are determined based on the skill level and number of girls participating. The Coaches and the Athletic Director

will make this determination to ensure that (if there is more than one team) both teams possess competitive quality.

- These teams may be coached by a parent or other volunteer who meets criteria and completes necessary paperwork.
- Practices are held based on coach and gym availability (**See gym practice scheduling**)
- Each player is required to play a minimum of one full game.
- This league is open to 5th graders who do not become 13 prior to January 1st.
- Games are played at the gyms of the participating schools on weekday evenings and Saturday mornings. Teams may also play in tournaments.
- Officials are provided by the CSAA.
- Each player is issued a uniform upon payment of the player fee. Uniforms are not to be worn to practices. (See uniform section on page 5 for care and responsibility of uniforms).

❖ **6TH-8TH grade teams play in the CSAA Competitive league.**

- These teams consist of 10 players and are formed based on try-outs. (If there are 10 or fewer students who wish to play in each grade, try-outs are not held).
- Because there is no mandatory playing time in 8th grade, this team may have more than 10 players.
- Practices are held based on coach and gym availability.
- League games are played on weekday evenings at 5:45pm, 6:30pm, and 7:30pm for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade teams, respectively. They are also played on Saturday mornings. Games are held at participating Catholic school gyms.
- Tournaments are held on Thursdays, Fridays, and weekends.
- Officials are provided by CSAA.
- For 6th and 7th grade, there is mandatory playing time where each player must play one full game. There is no mandatory playing time for 8th grade games.
- Each player is issued a uniform upon payment of the player fee.
- In addition to the CSAA Varsity teams, a CSAA JV team may be formed for each grade.
- 6th graders must be at least 10 on January 1st and may not turn 13 prior to January 1st.
- 7th graders may not turn 14 prior to January 1st.
- 8th graders may not turn 15 prior to January 1st.
- If a student repeats a grade, she may play that grade again if the age requirements are met. No student can play in the 8th grade league twice.

5. CHEERLEADING

❖ **3rd-5th Grades - Cougarettes**

- Eligible for all 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade girls (no tryouts).
- Practice once a week.
- Cheer at football and girls'/boys' basketball games.

❖ **6th-8th Grade Cheerleading**

Tryouts are held in the spring for all eligible 5th, 6th, and 7th grade girls for the following year. In addition to grade eligibility, each girl must be able to attend mandatory summer practices and camp in addition to the weekly Tuesday practice after school until 5:00 PM. Unexcused absences, including detention, are not tolerated and are grounds for dismissal. During tryouts, judges not affiliated with St. Jude evaluate the auditions. The number of squad members from each grade is decided on by the scores submitted by the judges, the Administration and Cheer Sponsor. The final decision as to who is chosen will be made based on multiple criteria including but not limited to:

- Tryout scores
- Experience and dedication
- Grades/Conduct
- Number of girls who tryout

PLEASE NOTE: No single criteria guarantees selection to the squad.

Tryouts are closed to all spectators.

Each cheerleader will be responsible for all costs associated with being a member of the cheerleading squad. This includes camp fee, camp wear, cheer gear, and uniform rental.

Each cheerleader must be able to cheer for all pep rallies, football, girls and boys basketball games and tournaments decided on by the sponsor. Only a girls' basketball player is excused from cheering for girls' basketball games.

To support our athletic program, all cheerleader parents/guardians will be expected to work concessions at games and our tournaments. If a circumstance arises where you are unable to work, you will need to find your own replacements for your scheduled day.

*Eligibility: Please refer to the Student Standards section of the handbook.

6. CROSS COUNTRY

The philosophy of the cross-country program is that each athlete performs at his/her "personal best" while working as a team throughout the season. Each runner is encouraged to track his/her running times and strive to improve or reach personal goals.

The cross-country program is offered to students in **grades 4th-8th**. All 5th-8th graders will be accepted onto the team. 4th graders will have to meet certain criteria in order to be on the cross-country team and run in a meet. Interest is gauged towards the end of the school year for the following school year through a Google Doc sign-up sheet. Also, information on Cross Country will be given out in May. The boys' and girls' cross-country season begins in September and concludes in November.

7. TRACK

The track program is offered to students in **grades 5th-8th**. Track information will be given out in February, and the track and field season begins in early March and concludes in late April. There are generally 4 meets hosted by area schools with a championship meet concluding the season. Meet divisions include junior girls, junior boys (5th and 6th graders) and senior girls, senior boys (7th and 8th graders). Parents interested in involving their children should contact the coach or the Athletic Director.

8. SWIMMING

The philosophy of the Cougar Swim Team is that each athlete performs to his/her “personal best,” while working as a team throughout the season. Each swimmer is encouraged to track his/her progress in practices and meets and strive to meet their timed goals. Through this sport, it is our hope that life skills are enhanced in our students such as hard work, goal setting, commitment, and time management. A final-added benefit is that this sport is one for life, which one may turn to for physical fitness in years to come.

Students in 5th-8th grade interested in joining the Cougar Swim Team will register through the St. Jude Athletic Association, as well as through Crawfish Aquatics. Crawfish Aquatics offers on-deck coaches, who have been certified by USS Swimming and focus on swim stroke technique and skill development.

❖ Season

Swim season typically runs from September through October, with practices being offered 4-5 times/week, providing flexibility when scheduling around other extracurricular activities.

The Cougar Swim Team participates in the Capital City Swim League of Baton Rouge. This league holds four swim meets, three of which are non-scored, and the final meet being the Championship, scored meet. Meets are held at Crawfish Aquatics on Bluebonnet Blvd. primarily on Friday evenings, two held in September and two held in October.

❖ Costs

Costs to join the cougar swim team include the following:

- Registration through the St. Jude Athletic Association for meet participation and end-of-season recognition.
- Registration through one of the two local year-round swimming programs to cover the costs of coaching throughout the season.

9. SOCCER

The philosophy of the St. Jude soccer program provides student athletes the opportunity to develop individual, and as part of a team, in a competitive soccer environment.

- The soccer program offers girls and boys teams each for 5th/6th grades and 7th/8th grades.
- The teams are registered through BRSC.

- Season runs from November through January.

10. ATHLETIC BANQUET

St. Jude understands the importance of recognizing the accomplishments of the young student athletes and hosts an athletic banquet in the spring. The banquet is funded by the Athletic Association. All student athletes in grades 6th – 8th along with 2 guests (parents or other) are invited to attend. Athletes are recognized and dinner is served.

- ❖ **Awards** – The Athletic Department presents a participation certificate to each 6th and 7th grade student and a school letter to each 8th grade student who participates in a school-sponsored athletic activity.

Parent/Student Athletics Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I _____ have read and understand the rules and guidelines of the St. Jude Athletic Association Student handbook. I will follow the rules of the handbook and I will do my best at all times to represent my school with integrity and pursue victory with honor.

Student Signature: _____

I agree additionally as a parent/guardian to support my student's compliance with the rules, policies, and procedures contained in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____