



**ATHLETIC
HANDBOOK
2009-2010**

A LETTER FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Dear Parents,

Welcome to 2009-2010 athletics at St. Mark Lutheran School. The athletic department is looking forward to your support for the upcoming year. Coaches, teachers, students and parents will all play a vital role in making this year a success.

Through athletics we hope to develop student athletes in the following ways. **Physically:** athletics will help improve skills, and promote a healthy lifestyle. **Mentally:** we will encourage social skills, positive self-esteem, and also teach accountability to others. The most important area we will deal with is the student's **spiritual growth**. In every practice and in every game we will be giving glory to GOD.

We wish to accomplish three goals this year - W. I. N. !!!

1. W - ORSHIP the Lord in everything that you do and say.
2. I – NSPIRE others to do the same by example.
3. N – EVER quit. Always strive to do your best in all situations.

We are looking forward to a new and exciting year of Cougar athletics! There are many challenges before our teams and many goals, which we must strive to reach. We ask for your support and patience in this upcoming year. Enclosed you find the guidelines which we feel may help you and your student – athlete.

Thank You for your help and cooperation! See you at the games and let's fill the stands with for all the Cougar teams this year!

Remember HE IS THE REASON FOR ALL THE SEASONS!

Dale Quickel
Athletic Director

HOUSTON LUTHERAN CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION

FAITH
IMMANUEL
LSA
MEMORIAL
OUR SAVIOR

PILGRIM
SALEM
ST. MARK
TRINITY-DOWNTOWN
TRINITY-KLEIN

PHILOSOPHY OF ST. MARK ATHLETIC PROGRAM

It is the aim of St. Mark's athletic program to facilitate the mission of St. Mark Ministries through sporting activities. The student's participation in interscholastic sports will help to develop the student spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically and socially. Students will be encouraged to be the best they can be by doing the best they can do to the glory of God.

The interscholastic athletic program at St. Mark refers to the competitive sports between schools as an after school co-curricular event. One of the major goals of this program is to help students learn to apply Christian principles to their lives. Our interscholastic program is for students who demonstrate an emotional and mental readiness for competition and who possess a satisfactory level of physical and academic competence.

St. Mark's athletic program stresses the following points: technically correct physical skills, physical conditioning, commitment in team participation and team building, self-discipline, priority setting, the encouragement of others, perseverance, and respect for those in authority.

To maintain these values, we recruit teachers from our staff along with adults who have a commitment to the student, family, sport and mostly, to the ministry of our Lord. They are to keep the sport in perspective as part of the total educational process of the student. It is vital they understand each student as an individual as they relate to team oriented activities.

TEAM PARTICIPATION AND EXPECTATIONS

FALL: CROSS –COUNTRY (*coed*)

SOCCER (*coed*)

VOLLEYBALL (*girls*)

WINTER:

BASKETBALL (*boys and girls*)

CHEERLEADING (*coed*)

SPRING:

SOFTBALL (*girls*)

BASEBALL (*boys*)

TRACK & FIELD (*boys & girls*)

CHEERLEADING POLICY

The primary purpose of cheerleading at St. Mark is to promote school spirit and unity. Cheerleaders will encourage positive support of St. Mark athletic teams during games and pep rallies by leading spectators with organized cheers and choreographed routines. Cheerleaders should encourage crowd involvement and promote good sportsmanship.

St. Mark cheerleading will compete interscholastically in Houston Lutheran Athletic Conference events. Other outside competition participation will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All St. Mark student athletes, coaches, and parents must abide by a Code of Conduct emphasizing good sportsmanship in a Christian atmosphere. Attitude, behavior, and language should be God-pleasing at all times.

DRESS CODE

All participants and support staff should dress in a manner, which will reflect a proper light on St. Mark Ministries and the Athletic Department. Coaches should require high standards for the students when not in uniform and representing St. Mark.

ELIGIBILITY POLICY

St. Mark student-athletes must be in good academic and disciplinary standing to compete in school-sponsored events. Student-athletes will be evaluated every interim and report card grading periods. A student-athlete becomes academically ineligible if he/she is failing **TWO or more** subjects (69 or below) for the bi-weekly evaluation. The ineligibility/eligibility begins the day the interim/report card is issued. The student will remain ineligible until the next bi-weekly evaluation determines the eligibility status.

Ineligible student-athletes are **REQUIRED** to practice with their respective team unless determined otherwise by the athletic director or school principal, but will not be permitted to participate in games. Additionally, the athletic director or school principal may declare a student-athlete ineligible at any time for a specified period of time for disciplinary reasons. A student serving a school suspension is not in good disciplinary standing.

Age Requirements:

1. No student may compete in athletics that is 15 years of age on or before the first day of September of the current school year.
2. No student may compete in a Junior Varsity team who is 13 years of age on or before the first day of September of the current school year or in seventh grade.

GAMES

We expect all players and support staff to be at the games. Each player should be at the facility at the time directed by the coaching staff. Late attendance or no attendance will result in loss of playing time.

PHYSICAL FORMS

All students participating in a sport must have a physical examination for that school year. The form must be on file in the school office prior to the student's participation in practices or games.

PRACTICES

Every participant is expected to be at every practice. Practices are designed to prepare the athlete for the next competition. This is vital for the student and his/her teammates. Students are required to wear their **P.E. uniform** to all practices. Excused absences include sickness, family emergency and appointments (PLEASE do not schedule appointments on practice / game days). In case of an emergency, a note will be required for the coaching staff.

St Mark athletic activities should be placed first priority. Other outside activities such as club practice/games, rehearsals, vacations etc... which do NOT involve St Mark will counted as UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. Each player is allowed ONE unexcused absence per season. Second miss will result in loss of ONE GAME. Three unexcused absences may result in the student being removed from the team. Any exceptions to the missed practice/game guidelines will be made as a joint decisions between the coach, athletic director and principal.

NOTE: IF A TEAM MEMBER DOES NOT PARTICIPATE IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION, ALTHOUGH HE/SHE IS IN ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL, HE/SHE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DAY'S PRACTICE OR GAME. ALSO, THE STUDENT MUST HAVE BEEN PRESENT AT LEAST ONE-HALF OF THE SCHOOL DAY TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY SCHOOL EVENT.

PRACTICES OR GAME CANCELLATIONS

In the event that a practice or game is cancelled, students will be given permission to use the phone as soon as possible after the cancellation is announced. Athletes who remain will be supervised by their coach until they are picked up or sent to extended care.

TEAM ATHLETICS

Students in 5th through 8th grade may participate in a variety of team athletic programs at St. Mark. Students in K through 4th grade may participate in a variety of programs with the West Houston Christian League who use our facilities for games and practices. Emphasis is placed on sportsmanship, the development of fundamental skills, mental discipline, and teamwork. Student athletes are expected to come fully prepared to participate each day with the appropriate clothing and necessary equipment.

Note: All students participating in a team sport (including cheerleading) must have a physical exam each school year. The physician's form must be turned in to the school office prior to any practices or games. Forms and registration information are available online (www.stmarkhouston.org) at Back to School Night or through the athletic office.

TRANSPORTATION

The coaches will need parental assistance in this area. We have many athletes to transport to various events with inadequate transportation available with the number of students participating.

UNIFORMS

St. Mark Athletic Department will supply uniforms for each participant. Supplementary items may be required which the student will purchase. Be sure that the uniforms are properly cleaned and student appears as a proper representative of St. Mark. Damaged or lost uniforms will be replaced at the student's expense.

Uniforms will be returned clean and in good condition at the end of the season. Report cards will be held until uniforms are turned in. Other sport uniforms will be held until past sport uniforms are returned.

INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE RULES AND TEAM SELECTION

Interscholastic League rules specify that no student who will be 15 years old or older on or before September 1 of the current school year may compete in middle school team athletics.

Team selection may be limited based on coaching personnel and available facilities. While St. Mark strives for maximum student participation, equal playing time is not guaranteed. The team selection process and decisions concerning playing time will be at the sole discretion of the coaches and the athletic director. If the number of student – athletes reaches at point where there are enough for multiple teams, they will be divided into an A and an B team.

ATHLETIC BANQUET

A recognition sport banquet will be held for all students that participated in athletics. This sports banquet is usually held in May at the end of all the sports seasons.

PARENTAL VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

In an effort to help offset the enormous expense of running a comprehensive athletic program, parents are required to assist in game management functions such as sale of concessions, gate, scorekeeping, etc. We do not require an athletic fee to participate in athletics at St Mark. In order to run an successful athletic program we do need you're your help. Specific details and actual assignments will be communicated prior to the start of the respective sport season by the sport coordinator.

CODE OF ETHIC: STUDENTS, PARENTS AND COACHES

I hereby pledge to provide support, care and encouragement to my child participating in St. Mark Sports Ministry by following this code of ethics.

- I will remember that the game is for the children and not for adults.
- I will place the spiritual, emotional, and physical well being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every practice and game.
- I will do my part to ensure that my child plays in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will support the coaches and officials in an effort to provide a positive experience for all.
- I will uphold a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free sports environment for my child and agree to refrain from their use at all games and practices.
- I will treat players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect, regardless of religion, race, sex, creed, or ability.
- I will encourage my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect, regardless of religion, race, sex, creed or ability.

The Parental Role in the Development Of the Student Athlete

The parents of a student are usually the determining factor in their child's becoming an athletic participant. The parents have an important, if not vital role in the student's co-curricular life. A portion of the responsibilities and roles are listed below:

1. Teach by example a Christian attitude towards all. All members of St. Mark Ministries will encourage and help, but it is the parent who must be the main director.
2. Assist the student to establish proper priorities with respect to church, family peers, studies and play.
3. Encourage and participate in the development of the student's athletic abilities.
4. Teach the student and be a role model for the student in dealing with coaches and peers.
5. Support the student's commitment to teams. Make a commitment to attending games, driving for the team, helping in supporting roles such as the concession stand and

- fundraisers, assisting in set up and clean up, being active in the booster club and being a positive public relations avenue.
6. Develop within the athlete, foresight that enables him/her to accept responsibility for both individual and group actions.
 7. Instill in the athlete, good health habits regarding, food, sleep, exercise and spiritual life.
 8. Enthusiastically support teams at athletic events with support for all players, coaches, and officials.

In general, the student is an extension of his/her role models, the parents.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND GRIEVANCES

Students, parents, teachers, and administrators at St. Mark are encouraged to work in partnership toward the common goal of excellence in Christian education. When questions or conflicts arise, they should be addressed courteously and directly with the coach involved. If issues are not satisfactorily resolved, please discuss the matter with the athletic director.

The Biblical directive for conflict resolution at St. Mark Lutheran School is found in Matthew 18:15-17.

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a [pagan or tax collector].