



St. John Paul II Catholic High School Falcons

Student & Parent
Athletic Handbook
2020-2021

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Mission Statement

St. John Paul II Catholic High School (JP II) develops young people in spirit, mind and body to foster a lifelong discipleship of Christ in the Sacramental life of the Church. We encourage, challenge, and support each student to **learn enthusiastically, lead honorably, and live responsibly.**

JP II Athletic Program Mission Statement

The mission of St. John Paul II Catholic High School (JP II) Athletic Program is committed to providing opportunities for each individual student-athlete to reach his/her highest potential while developing the qualities and spirit of a Catholic Christian. By competing at the highest level possible, our program commits to the development of the whole person in mind, body, and spirit.

JP II Athletic Program Philosophy

One of the goals of our athletic program is to help our student-athletes develop into productive citizens through learned acts of sportsmanship and teamwork. The St. John Paul II Catholic High School Athletic program successfully integrates the Gospel message that produces individuals who are faith-filled, have respect for others, value human life, and are willing to sacrifice for those in need.

Our Athletic Department strives to offer our students the opportunity to participate and succeed in a wide range of individual and team activities. Interscholastic sports should offer the skilled performer an opportunity to compete at the highest level, locally and state wide. JP II believes in a comprehensive physical activity and sports program, and strives to provide quality coaching and facilities. Budget and facilities will set practical limits on these but we strive to continually update our facilities and our coaches are constantly challenged to grow and improve.

There should be no inherent conflict between athletics and academics. One of our fundamental responsibilities is to encourage each player to achieve academic success. This is not just to earn acceptable grades, but to secure a sound and solid education and to graduate with the best record possible. We encourage them to participate in other school activities, to be student leaders and instill an attitude to never accept and be satisfied with mediocrity.

Athletic Goals and Objectives

Our Goal – The student-athlete shall become a more effective citizen in our society.

Our Specific Objectives – The student-athlete shall learn:

- ✦ To promote religious formation – Our society should begin and end in the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. His life, His work, and His teachings provide in-depth instruction on the relationship of human beings with the God who created them as well as the relationships with each other.

- ✦ To work with others – In our society a person must develop self discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. The team and its objectives must be placed higher than personal desires.
- ✦ To be successful – At the middle school and junior varsity levels, the emphasis is on skill development and participation, as well as team success. At the high school level, team success and performance become more primary objectives and therefore we do not guarantee playing time. Playing time is determined by the head coach of each team. All student-athletes will benefit from the development of physical fitness, leadership, teamwork, social skills, self-discipline and integrity.
- ✦ To develop sportsmanship – To accept any defeat like a true sportsman, knowing we have done our best. We must learn to treat others as we would have others treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
- ✦ To improve – Continual improvement is an essential component of good citizenship. As an athlete, you must establish a goal and you must constantly try to achieve that goal. Try to improve in the skills and knowledge required and those personal traits that enhance the success of a team.
- ✦ To enjoy athletics – It is necessary for athletes to enjoy participation, to acknowledge all of the personal rewards to be derived from athletics, and to give sufficiently of themselves in order to improve the program.
- ✦ To develop desirable personal health habits – To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits, and to develop the desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.
- ✦ To Prioritize – Develop the ability to organize and balance the demands of spiritual life, academics, extracurricular activities, and social life.

Governance

The Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA)

All schools are voluntary members of the Alabama High School Athletic Association and compete only with member schools. As a member school district, St. John Paul II Catholic High School agrees to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations promulgated by this association.

The primary role of the state association is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for the student-athletes and a balance with other educational programs. The association solicits input and is responsive to requests for rule modification from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches' associations. The state association attempts to enforce such rules that assure the greatest good for the greatest number and to ensure that competition is conducted in an appropriate manner.

The National Federal High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS consists of the fifty-one individual state high school athletic and/or activities associations. The purposes of the NFHS are to serve, protect and enhance the interstate activity interests of the high schools belonging to state associations; to assist in those activities of the state associations which can best be operated on a nationwide scale; to sponsor meetings, publications and activities which will permit each state association to profit by the experience of all other member associations; and to coordinate the work to minimize duplication.

General Policies

- ☞ Coaches will follow and abide by all rules and policies of the AHSAA and St. John Paul II Catholic High School. The Varsity Coach of each program is responsible for the overall program of that sport and is responsible for the supervision of all assistant, junior varsity and middle school coaches involved. All coaches are under the supervision of the Athletic Director, Headmaster or President.
- ☞ Coaches are expected to hand out all available information on their teams to the Athletic Director, parents, and athletes at the beginning of the season (i.e. coaching philosophy, scheduled practices and games, team rules, team policies, etc.).
- ☞ Coaches should monitor their athletes at all times-before, during, and after practice, games, and/or team events
- ☞ Athletes are required to be fully enrolled at JPII in order to participate in athletics.
- ☞ Athletes and coaches must dress appropriately for athletic and school functions. Athletes must remember even when they are off-campus they may be wearing the JPII Logo and must project a positive image at all times. Travel attire to and from games is up to the head coach, but should be limited to school uniforms or warm-up gear. The team should look uniform and professional when entering any athletic facility.
- ☞ **DUAL SPORT PARTICIPATION:** A student may participate in two sports during the same season under the following conditions:
 - Student must declare primary sport that takes precedence.
 - The two Coaches must meet and discuss implications of meets/practice time, etc. and have Athletic Director approve coaches' plans for managing practice time, etc., with Academics being the top priority. A student that is falling behind in work or not putting forth maximum effort should not be allowed to play two simultaneous sports. The Dean of Academics will be in charge of student athlete eligibility.
 - Option not available for students to play on two team sports simultaneously. For example, a student could play soccer and run in track events, but they could not play soccer and baseball.
 - Students will be charged an additional team fee of \$100 for participation in two sports during the same season.

- ✦ No team practice is permitted on Sundays and other Holy Days of Obligation, including Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil Saturday without the permission of the Headmaster.
- ✦ ATHLETIC COMMITMENT: **Athletes unable to honor their commitments to their chosen sport (including dance and cheerleading) for any reason (grades, disenchantment, peer pressure, etc) will be ineligible to participate in any other sport during that season.** Athletes who are uncertain about making a commitment to a sports program are encouraged to discuss the program with the Athletic Director before they make a commitment.
- ✦ Participation in activities, groups and teams is a privilege, not a right, at JP II Catholic High School. The use of social media by a student considered to be “unbecoming of a Falcon” may result in discipline including suspension or removal from the activity, group, leadership position or team. Please be familiar with the social media policy outlined in the Family Handbook.
- ✦ Student athletes may drive themselves to events inside Madison County only and they may only transport siblings. For events outside of the county, coaches may arrange bus transportation or use parent drivers over the age of 21 possessing a valid, non-probationary driver’s license. An up-to-date Diocesan Driver Information Form (located under Links and Forms on our website) must also be on file.
- ✦ Athletes must comply with all items in the JP II Family and Athletic Handbooks including the Drug Abuse Policy set forth by the Diocese of Birmingham. This policy is located on our website under Links and Forms.
- ✦ All fund-raising efforts must be approved by the Athletic Director and the President.
- ✦ All correspondence with the media must be approved by the Athletic Director, Headmaster, or President. Exception: Calling in Scores and Stats or giving a quote after winning effort.
- ✦ Every athletic program at JP II will offer a tryout/evaluation period of 5 days. Coaches are also allowed to have open tryouts the first week of in-season practice. Team members are selected by the head coach. Questions and concerns should be directed to the head coach.

Requirements for Participation

All AHSAA required forms are available on the Dragonfly Max app. The information needed to sign up for Dragonfly Max is available on the JP II website. Go to the JP II Athletic page under the “Links and Forms” tab.

- ✔ Physical Examination (AHSAA form) signed by an MD or DO (**certified physician**) only, good for one calendar year from the month of examination
- ✔ NFHS Sportsmanship Program Completed online (once in school career)
- ✔ Concussion Parent/Student Liability Waiver Form (completed yearly)
- ✔ AHSAA Student Release Form (completed yearly)
- ✔ Copy of Birth Certificate (must be issued by the Bureau of Vital Statistics from the state where born.)
- ✔ JP II Parent Liability Waiver form (completed yearly)
- ✔ Non-School sponsored driver release and Field Trip Form CH-1 (completed yearly)
- ✔ An Athletic Fee of \$400 per sport must be paid by the deadline date. The JP II Athletic Fee Schedule, which includes all deadline dates, is available on the JP II website Athletic page under the “Links and Forms” tab. Middle schoolers participating at the high school level (Varsity or JV) will pay the \$400 fee per sport. Middle schoolers participating at the middle school level will pay \$275 fee per sport.

Academic Eligibility Requirements

St. John Paul II Catholic High School encourages participation in extracurricular activities. However, students are reminded that such participation is a privilege and not a right. A student’s academic welfare takes precedent over their participation in any activity. This policy is meant to encourage students who are active in any activity to maintain their academic standings. The Athletic Department has eligibility requirements in accordance with St. John Paul II Catholic High School as follows:

The Dean of Academics will begin checking grades at the two week period. Any student having difficulty in a class will be strongly urged to begin tutoring in that class. Several teachers and students are willing to help, and the JP II’s NHS, with guidance from the Dean of Academics, offer tutoring assistance.

JP II Academic Eligibility Policy

An athlete’s eligibility in August is based upon Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) eligibility rules. AHSAA states students must have passed during the previous two semesters six new Carnegie Units with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six units. Four of those units must be in the core subjects: English, mathematics, science and social studies. At JP II, fall eligibility will be based on AHSAA eligibility rules.

A student that is declared ineligible at the beginning of the school year may regain their eligibility at the end of the first semester by meeting the academic requirements of the last two semesters. The regained eligibility of any student may be determined any time after the end of the first semester but all course requirements use to determine eligibility must be completed no later than the fifth day of the second semester.

The JP II Academic Eligibility Policy will be administered as follows:

- ✦ Grades will be spot checked (checked for low and/or missing grades) every 3 weeks by the Dean of Academics. If a student is found to have “two Ds and/or one or more Fs” they will be required to meet personally with the Athletic Director and work with counselors to schedule at least one tutoring session that week if there is a academic reason for the low grade. They must show proof from the tutor or teacher to the Dean of Academics.
- ✦ Grades will be officially checked for contest eligibility at the interim (4½ weeks into the quarter and end of each quarter). At that time, any athlete who has “two Ds and/or one or more Fs” is ineligible to dress for competitions. The athlete may participate in limited practice and will be required to attend academic tutoring afterschool where applicable. The grades will be checked weekly to determine if they can be reinstated.
- ✦ If an athlete is ineligible based on their quarter or semester report card, they remain ineligible until grades are checked again at the 3 week mark. This includes the end of the 2nd semester affecting an athlete’s eligibility at the beginning of the next school year. In this case, a student would miss any competitions before the 3 week check.

Risk of Participation

All athletes and parents must realize the risk of serious injury which may be a result of athletic participation. Parents are responsible for providing health insurance for their children who are participating in athletics. St. John Paul II Catholic High School will use the following safeguards to make every effort to eliminate injury.

- ✦ Conduct a mandatory parent/athlete meeting prior to the start of the season to fully explain the athletic policies and to advise, caution and warn parents/athletes of the potential for injury.
- ✦ Coaches will continuously instruct all athletes about the proper techniques in their particular sport.
- ✦ Huntsville Hospital provides a full-time athletic trainer on site at JP II to assess, monitor and rehabilitate injuries. This includes access to an orthopedic doctor and clinic availability that may be superior to that of your family doctor. In many cases, the team doctor can both see your athlete in a timely manner and instruct our trainer on how to quickly rehabilitate an injury as to reduce missed practice and playing time. It is imperative that all injuries are reported to the Head Coach first so that they may be aware of the trainer’s involvement in the recovery process.

- ✦ The AHSAA provides catastrophic coverage for all middle school, junior varsity and varsity sports. This coverage has a \$10,000 deductible and a \$2 million ceiling. It is for accidental injury medical expenses and can be used only for injuries that occur during AHSAA events (practices, games, meets, etc.).

Financial Obligations and Equipment

Each sport season, when teams are selected, athletes will be assessed an athletic fee of \$400 per high school sport and \$275 per middle school sport to help maintain the high quality of the athletic program. Students who quit a sport after the fee deadline date will not receive a refund for that sport. Additional monies raised by the booster club may be used to purchase uniforms/equipment on a needed basis.

Additional fundraising per team may be warranted to help purchase needs outside of the school's budget, but must be approved by the President, Headmaster or Athletic Director. Coaches may ask athletes to purchase team/practice gear that would be kept by the athlete at the end of the season.

Equipment/Uniform – All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment/uniforms issued to them. School furnished equipment/uniform is to be worn only for contests and practice (if applicable). **All equipment not returned in good condition, other than normal wear, will be subject to a financial penalty.**

Parent/Family/Staff Expectations

Positive involvement in sports requires commitment from students, parents, family members, coaches, and advisors. To be successful, all involved stakeholders must work to ensure effective communication. The following expectations and policies are intended to aid in providing the best opportunities to our students while respecting coaches and staff.

- ✦ **Volunteers** – Our success is dependent upon volunteers and supporters. Parents and/or family members of athletes are required to help with transportation, gates, concessions and facilities clean-up. Parents of each sport are required to work home events for that sport.
- ✦ **Positive Support and Commitment** – Representing our school in athletics is an honor and an accomplishment. Positive support from parents and family members regardless of playing time is expected. Support for our coaching staff regardless of lineups, playing time etc. is also expected. Our athletes and their families need to remain committed to their teammates, fellow parents and coaches throughout the entirety of the season.
- ✦ **Sportsmanship** – Every athletic event is an opportunity to represent the entire school and community of St. John Paul II Catholic High School. Berating fellow or opposing fans, coaches, players or officials will not be tolerated and could result in removal from JP II athletic events. Players, coaches and officials will make mistakes throughout the course of the game. Aggressively reminding them of mistakes often has a negative effect on our teams and is a poor representation of our school.

- ✔ **Discipline and Structure** – Discipline and structured environments are vital to athletic success therefore it is expected that our coaches will have disciplined and structured programs. Support of our coaching staff when disciplinary matters arise is vital.
- ✔ **24 hour rule** – Parents and family members that have concerns or grievances will NOT contact a coach, an assistant coach or the athletic director within 24 hours of a game. This time period allows coaches and families to separate from the emotions of intense competition. Following the initial 24 hour period, please contact the head coach and schedule an in person meeting. Coaches will not communicate about concerns or grievances through text messages, phone calls, emails or social media. Parents must contact and meet with the coach prior to contacting the athletic director. If after the meeting you still feel the need to discuss further, please contact the athletic director.

Athlete Expectations

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics (described in JP II Family Handbook) which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality or violations of law, tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the athletic program and will not be tolerated.

- ✔ **Attendance** – A student is expected to attend all classes on their schedule on the day of a contest and the next school day following the contest. Habitual absences before and after contests may result in suspension or removal from the team. (To be eligible to participate in the contest of the day, the athlete must be present for half of the school day.) Team members are expected to be present at all practices, team meetings, contests, and special occasions unless excused by the head coach. If you are going to miss for any reason, it is the player's responsibility to contact the coach (email, phone, etc.) 24 hours in advance.
- ✔ **Club and Travel Teams** – The AHSAA prohibits a student from participating in a school sport and a club/travel team of the same sport at the same time. For example, a student cannot play JP II soccer and play club soccer at the same time. The AHSAA also does not allow students to participate in practice for an outside team while in season at school.
- ✔ **Ejections** – Coaches and players that are ejected from contests in all sports will receive the following penalties: First Ejection: Minimum \$300 fine. (The fine can be reduced one time to \$100 if the person fined completes the STAR Behavioral Mode within 10 days of the date of the ejection.). Second Ejection: Minimum one-game suspension and \$500 fine. Third Ejection: Minimum suspension for the remainder of the season and \$750 fine. ***NOTE: JP II will not pay these fines on behalf of a coach or athlete.***

“Sportsmanship is that quality of honor that desires always to be courteous, fair and respectful and if is interpreted in the conduct of players, spectators, coaches, and school authorities,” *Fielding H. Yost*

“Catholic school sportsmanship means positive, upbeat outlook toward the game, treating teammates and opponents with real respect, handling all facets of the contest as a game, and playing hard and intensely by fairly. Catholic school sportsmanship is characterized by honesty, integrity, good judgment, love of competition, cheerfulness, and self-control in defeat and unending graciousness in victory.” *Rev. Richard McGrath*

Programs Offered

****All teams are contingent on having enough students to meet the requirements to field a team.***

Sport	Level	Season	Competition Summer Months
Cross Country	Varsity	Fall	
Cheer	Varsity, Middle School	Fall, Winter	
Dance	Varsity	Fall, Winter	
Football	Varsity, Middle School	Fall	July
Swimming	Varsity	Fall, Winter	
Volleyball	Varsity, JV, Middle School	Fall	July
Basketball	Varsity, JV, Middle School	Winter	June
E-Sports	Varsity	Winter	
Wrestling	Varsity, JV, Middle School	Winter	
Baseball	Varsity, JV, Middle School	Spring	June
Golf	Varsity	Spring	
Soccer	Varsity, JV, Middle School	Spring	
Softball	Varsity	Spring	June
Tennis	Varsity	Spring	
Track	Varsity, Middle School	Spring	