



ST. LUKE

ATHLETICS

St. Luke School Mission Statement

The mission of St. Luke School is to provide each student with an excellent academic education that is faith-based, by challenging and nurturing the mind, body and spirit, and by developing responsible servant leadership.

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The SLS Athletic Handbook is designed to provide athletic department guidelines and policies for all parties involved. However, all written policies and areas of concern covered in the Athletic Handbook are subject to clarification and/or change by the school administration.

I. St. Luke School Athletics

At St. Luke School, we believe that the lessons learned in athletics are a vital part of educating the whole student and making a positive difference emotionally, physically, and spiritually. The contents of this handbook are designed to help establish expectations of behavior and provide direction for the student-athletes, coaches, and parents during their athletic experience at St. Luke School. The success of our athletic program depends not only on the hard work of the student-athletes and coaching staff, but also on the support of SLS families and friends.

II. Purpose

The purpose of Athletics at St. Luke School is to provide a Christ-centered competitive athletic program that will encourage the development of student athletes while building character and developing community. The student-athletes' learning and development will be the focus, not only in athletics, but throughout all aspects of the SLS experience. Our student-athletes have an opportunity to challenge themselves through sport, cultivating teamwork, self-discipline, and athletic skills, and achieving growth as leaders and citizens in their community.

III. Our Commitment

a. Overall Management:

As our school continues to grow, the SLS Athletic Department is committed to providing the best and broadest athletic experience for each student-athlete. Through a comprehensive program of middle school interscholastic sports teams and clubs, our student-athletes compete in baseball, basketball, cheer, cross country, dance, equestrian, golf, softball, tennis, soccer, swimming, volleyball, and wrestling.

Students in grades 1-6 are afforded the opportunity to participate in developmental and intramural leagues/clubs:

Tennis (fall, boys and girls, ages 8-10), basketball (winter, boys and girls, grades 2-6), wrestling (winter, boys, grades 1-6), and running club (spring, boys and girls, grades 1-4).

b. Programs Offered

Middle School (Grades 6, 7, 8)

**Fifth graders may participate as noted*

- Girls Competitive Cheer
- Girls Competitive Dance*
- Girls/Boys Cross Country*
- Girls Softball
- Girls Equestrian*
- Girls Volleyball*
- Girls/ Boys Golf*
- Girls/Boys Tennis*
- Girls/Boys Swimming*
- Girls/Boys Basketball*
- Boys Wrestling
- Girls/Boys Soccer
- Boys Baseball

c. League Affiliations

Student-athletes are governed by the rules established by our school’s affiliation with the GICAA (Georgia Independent Christian Athletic Association), GISA (Georgia Independent School Association), Chattahoochee Valley Area Leagues, CORTA (Columbus Area Regional Tennis Association), CVMSG, (Chattahoochee Valley Middle School Golf), and the US Equestrian Federation. Officials at St. Luke School home games/events will hold current certification and membership in a league approved officials association.

d. Sport Season/Calendar

The competitive sport season chart may be found below. Tryout dates, preseason conditioning, parent interest meetings, and specific season schedules are not indicated as they will be determined and announced by each head coach and/or athletic director. Conference participation may be subject to change.

Sport	Grade	Season	Conference
MS Competitive Cheer	Girls 6-8	Fall, Winter, Spring	GISA
MS Dance Team	Girls 5-8	Fall, Winter, Spring	Independent
MS Softball	Girls 6-8	Fall	GISA
MS Volleyball	Girls 5-8	Fall	GICAA
MS Cross Country	Boys/Girls 5-8	Fall	Independent/GISA
MS Golf	Boys/Girls 5-8	Fall & Spring	CVMS Golf /GISA
MS Tennis	Boys/Girls 5-8	Fall & Spring	CORTA/ GICAA
MS Basketball	Boys/Girls 5-8	Winter	GICAA
Swim	Boys/Girls 5-8	Winter	GISA
Wrestling	Boys 6-8	Winter	GISA
Baseball	Boys 6-8	Spring	GISA
Soccer	Boys/Girls 6-8	Spring	GISA
Equestrian Team	Girls 5-8	Fall, Winter, Spring	US Equestrian

e. Coaches

St. Luke coaches work to provide a safe, positive and Christ-like environment for all student-athletes. Coaches possess current knowledge of their sport in addition to the skills necessary to instruct players, develop and enhance their sport skills, and assess their progress. The coaches will abide by the rules of the sport and will demonstrate respect for the officials. Our coaches will communicate team goals, schedules, and detailed expectations to all student-athletes and parents. The SLS coaches will work to treat all student-athletes fairly, respecting the personality of each individual student-athlete, while encouraging the student-athletes to work and bond as teammates. The coaches will serve as positive role models, demonstrating leadership, integrity, and good sportsmanship for all players and spectators.

f. Physical Fitness Exams

Student-athletes planning to participate in middle school athletics are to undergo a physical exam by a physician prior to participating in a sport. The completed sports physical, including the medical history form and clearance form, must be submitted to the team's head coach, the middle school office or the Athletic Director before participation. All forms are available at the Middle School Office, the Athletic Director's office, and on the school website. The sports physical is valid for one calendar year.

g. Athletic Waiver and Emergency Release Form

An Athletic Waiver for Athletic Participation is required for each student participating in St. Luke Intramural and Interscholastic athletics. This form is included in the enrollment packet completed by the parent each school year. The Athletic Waiver and Emergency Release Form is valid for all sports played during a school year.

h. Concussion Policy, Awareness Form, and IMPACT

St Luke School follows the GISA Concussion Policy:
<http://www.gisaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GISA-Concussion-Policy.pdf>

Student-athletes and their parents/guardians must sign and submit a copy of the Concussion Awareness Form prior to participating in a sport. The concussion form is valid for one calendar year. Additionally, St. Luke School provides IMPACT Baseline Test for all Student-athletes in grades 5-8 participating in a sport requiring a medical physical form. The IMPACT computerized test is one important piece of the overall concussion evaluation and management process. Parents/guardians are asked to review the IMPACT Information sheet, sign and submit a copy to the team coach, Athletic Director, or Middle School office. An athlete's baseline is acquired on a 2-year cycle, with testing of incoming 5th graders and 7th graders each year. Anyone new to an athletic program, or having sustained a concussion the previous year, is tested each year. All forms are available at the Middle School Office, the Athletic Director's office, and on the school website.

i. Heat Policy

St. Luke School follows the GISA Policy for Mitigating Heat Related Injuries during athletic practice. Please click here to view the GISA Heat Policy.

<http://www.gisaschools.org/athletics/gisa-heat-policy/>

j. Game Schedule, Practice, Postponement

The Athletic Director is responsible for preparation of all athletic event schedules (coaches create individual sport practice schedules). Upon completion, event schedules are posted on the school website, and may also be found on the RenWeb calendar. When scheduled events are postponed or cancelled, parents will be notified as soon as the information is available. Inclement weather can cause last-minute changes in scheduling. If a scheduled practice or event is cancelled or postponed on the day of the event, students will be notified via teacher announcements and/or school's public announcement system. Parents will be notified by email and/or the Parent Alert communication.

k. Equipment, Facilities Management

The St. Luke School Athletic Program provides most equipment required for participation. Exceptions may include athletic shoes and personal equipment such as tennis rackets, personal shin guards, and similar items. All facilities/equipment should be handled with proper respect, and returned to the proper storage area after each use. Any damage to facilities and/or equipment should be reported to the Athletic Director as soon as possible.

l. Uniforms

Student-athletes are responsible for the care and cleaning and care of all game uniforms. When laundering uniforms, wash in cold water and hang to dry. Do not put uniforms in the dryer as damage to uniform may occur. Uniforms that are lost, stolen, damaged, or have unusual wear need to be replaced by the student-athlete. Student-athletes will wear game uniforms assigned by their coach and turn them in to the coach at the end of each season.

m. Transportation

St. Luke School will provide transportation via St. Luke vans to away contests when possible. The Athletic Director will designate games/contests when parents are asked to drive student-athletes. Parent Drivers are asked to complete and submit a Driver Liability Form which is available on the school website. Student-athletes should know that the use of school and personal vehicles includes the responsibility of keeping the vehicles clean. Food and drink in the vehicles are at the discretion of the driver. Parents are required to pick up their student from an event when participating at a home venue.

n. Gate and Entrance Fees

Game entrance fees or "Gate Fees" are admission fees charged to enter athletic events. St. Luke School students, parents, and teachers/staff are exempt from charge to enter regular season athletic events hosted by St. Luke at a home venue. All other spectators will be asked to pay the gate fee, which will be determined by the host conference.

o. Awards and Letters

Throughout the year, each athletic team will celebrate at the conclusion of their respective sport season, and student-athletes may be eligible for sport-specific awards to be presented at the team celebrations. At the end of the school year, each student-athlete will receive a sports participation certificate indicating athletic participation for the current academic year, and student-athletes in 8th grade will receive participation plaques at the end of their 8th grade year. The Scholar-Athlete Awards (one boy and one girl in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades) and the Lion Awards will be presented at the Honors Day Ceremony.

Athletic Pins:

Athletes in grades six through eight will be eligible to receive an athletic participation pin for each sport played. Pins will be given with academic letters and bars in May of each year. Awarding of pins is subject to the following criteria which are required for all sports:

- Have earned an academic letter and/or bar during the participating school year.
- Have no academic grade lower than “C” on a Quarterly Report Card
- Unexcused absences from practice or team events must be pre-approved by the coach, Athletic Director, and/or Administrator.
- Exhibit sportsmanship at all practices, games, races and/or events
- Additional criteria for lettering announced by the head coach prior to the start of the sport season.

II. Student Eligibility/Responsibilities

a. Required Forms

All student athletes must have on file with the Athletic Director the following completed forms before participating in any SLS athletic team tryouts, clinics, or competitions. The forms may be found on the school website, the middle school office and the athletic director’s office.

- Current Sports Physical Examination, History, and Clearance forms
- Athletic Waiver/Emergency Medical Form
- Concussion Awareness Form
- Sport Intent Form(if applicable may be completed online)

b. Tryouts

Tryouts may be used as a method to determine individual sport skills, physical condition, and attitude in the process of selecting players for an athletic school team. Students who wish to participate in team tryouts must be present unless prior arrangements have been made coach and/or Athletic Director. The coaches who may have the assistance of outside experienced evaluators will make the final decisions regarding the rosters of their respective teams.

c. Academic Requirements/Standing

St. Luke School believes that while participation in co-curricular activities, including athletics, is an important part of the overall educational experience, focus on academic studies must remain a priority for all students and student-athletes. To participate in extracurricular activities and SLS athletics, students must meet or exceed academic standards. Students receiving a grade less than a "C" on a Quarterly Report Card may be placed on probation. Students on probation may attend try-outs, conditioning practices, rehearsals, and planning meetings. Students already on a roster for an extracurricular activity and/or sport are required to attend regular practices, games, meetings, and rehearsals. Students on probation will be monitored by their sponsor, coach, athletic director, and/or administrator in order to assess academic progress, and determine their eligibility to participate. Teachers, sponsors, and coaches will work with students and student-athletes to improve their academic standing to the required level to be reinstated in full to their activity.

A student receiving a grade less than a "C" on two Quarterly Report Cards within an academic year may not be eligible for participation in extracurricular nor athletic activities for the remainder of the academic year. If the second offense occurs at the end of an academic year, the student may remain ineligible for the first quarter of the following academic year.

Decisions regarding suspension due to academics or conduct will be made by the sponsor or athletic department and administration.

d. Sport by Season/Grade*

Fall: August-October

- Cross Country: Boys and Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts in May
- Golf: Boys and Girls (5th-8th) If necessary, tryouts in early August
- Softball: Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts conducted in April
- Tennis: Boys and Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts in early September
- Volleyball: Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts conducted in April

Winter: November-January

- Basketball: Boys and Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts in early to mid-October
- Swim: Boys and Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts in early October
- Wrestling: Boys (6th-8th) Tryouts, if necessary, early September

Spring: February- May

- Soccer: Boys & Girls (6th-8th) Tryouts in late January
- Baseball: Boys (6th-8th) Tryouts in late January
- Golf: Boys and Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts in late January

Year-Round

- Cheer: Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts in April of previous academic year
- Dance: Girls (5th-8th) Tryouts in April of previous academic year
- Equestrian (5th-8th)

** Students who enroll during the summer or after the start of the school year may be considered for participation in Athletics. Each situation will be handled on a case by case basis and tryouts/evaluations will take place as necessary.*

Many students participate in multiple school sports throughout the year. Students who wish to participate in more than one sport per season or sports whose seasons overlap, must receive approval from the coaches and the athletic director. Student athletes are required to attend practices and competitive events, games, or matches for both sports. If practices for the sports conflict, the coaches may work with the student-athlete to allow make-up practice sessions. Competitive events, games, or matches will take precedence over practices unless otherwise noted by the athletic director.

e. Multi-Sport Participation

Students who wish to participate in more than one sport during an athletic season may do so with consent from both coaches involved and the athletic director. Both coaches will discuss missed practices and events/games prior to both seasons starting, and the Athletic Director will resolve any and all conflicts regarding the multi-sport participation of a student-athlete. Student-athletes desiring to participate in sports with overlapping seasons must understand the current sport takes priority over the upcoming sport. Coaches involved in overlapping seasons are encouraged to communicate with the student to provide the best opportunity for the student to participate in both sports. Many of our student-athletes participate in multiple sports during the school year. When one season overlaps a second season, student-athletes are expected to remain committed to the current team/sport for the entire season and before advancing into the next season. In case of multi-sport athletes or coinciding co-curricular activities, coaches will grant flexibility where possible. Questions or concerns regarding participation should be addressed to the team coach and/or Athletic Director.

f. Commitment

St. Luke student-athletes assume great responsibility to their team, coach, their school and community. Our student-athletes are committed to succeed in the classroom and in their chosen sports. They will strive to represent their team and St. Luke in a positive, Christ-like manner at all times. They will also commit to abide by the policies and guidelines in the SLS Athletic Handbook, and the policies in the SLS Student/Parent Handbook. Every student-athlete is expected to demonstrate responsibility and respect at all times.

g. Sportsmanship

St. Luke student-athletes will be respectful in all situations to teammates, coaches, and opponents. They should demonstrate self-control and personal discipline in all situations. Our student-athletes will respect the judgment of the officials and will demonstrate humility and graciousness on and off the field of play.

h. Conduct and Behavior

Specific information concerning team rules expectations and consequences will be shared by each team coach at the sport team's informational meeting and/or prior to the beginning of the sport season. On the field and off, win or lose, the students should strive to always be the example of honor, integrity and respect. St. Luke student-athletes are expected to adhere to and promote the SLS conduct and behavior policies, which may be found in the [SLS Student/Parent Handbook](#).

i. Service

The student-athletes of each athletic team will participate in a community service related activity during the year of participation. Each team member is asked to participate in the service project to benefit Columbus area organizations.

j. Team Captains

Team captains are leaders of their team and should be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to not only be aware of team rules and student responsibilities but also to help their teammates abide by them. The coach determines how team captains are selected, if at all. Captains may be appointed by the coach and they may also be elected or appointed on a game-by-game basis. There is no requirement that teams must have captains nor that captains must be eighth graders.

k. Daily Attendance Requirements

Team members are expected to be present at all practices, meetings and games. Students must be in attendance for a minimum of one half of the school day in order to participate in team practice or in a contest. The athletic director and/or administration may permit participation in special excused circumstances. Appointments or other similar outside activities should be arranged to avoid conflicts with practices or games. The Athletic Department follows the guidelines stated in the [St. Luke Parent/Student Handbook](#) in regard to school attendance.

l. Early Release for Athletic Events

An athlete who is aware of an athletic competition that will cause him/her to be absent part of the academic day is responsible for completing and submitting any missed work. Any work that is due during a period that the athlete will miss should be turned in, if possible, before leaving for the athletic event. Any tests that the athlete will miss should be taken ahead of time, if possible. Otherwise, the athlete must work out an arrangement with the teacher ahead of time for making up the missed work and/or the test. Under no circumstances should an athlete fail to talk with a teacher whose class he/she will miss at least a day ahead of time. Athletes are responsible to obtain the day's assignments before dismissal and submitting these assignments the next time the class meets.

m. Uniforms/Travel Attire

Uniforms that are lost, stolen, damaged, or have unusual wear need to be replaced by the student-athlete. Student-athletes will wear game uniforms assigned by their coach and turn them in to the coach at the end of each season. The team coach will specify appropriate travel attire as the intent is for our student-athletes to appear neat and well-mannered while traveling and representing our school.

n. Report of Injury

Any injuries occurring during practice/contests should be reported immediately to the coach. Injuries requiring medical attention need medical clearance for further participation. Injured athletes are expected to attend practices/contests unless the absence is approved by the coach and/or the Athletic Director.

III. Parent Responsibilities

a. Commitment

Parental commitment is essential to the success of the St. Luke School Athletic Program. Parents are asked to guide their children as they work to manage their time, develop athletic skills and assume responsibility as a team member. We ask that parents encourage their children to communicate with their team coach. We also ask that parents provide positive support for the coach and team in and out of the stands.

b. Parent/Coach Relationship

Communication between the coaching staff, player and parents/guardians is vital to the overall success of the athletic program. When your child is a participant in St. Luke School Athletics, additional responsibilities will be placed upon your child, and communication appropriate communication is important to your child's success.

Communication from your child's coach will provide the following information:

- Coaching philosophy and team expectations
- Detailed practice and contest schedules with location and times
- Personal team discipline that may affect an athlete's participation

Communication a coach may expect from a parent:

- Concerns regarding a coach's philosophy
- Notification of any schedule conflicts made in advance

Parents also may request from the coach any information about ways his child athlete might improve his or her performance. Coaches will make decisions based on what they believe is best for the team and all student-athletes. Parents should discuss any concerns they may have about the participation of their child with the coach at an appropriate time. If the coach cannot be reached, please feel free to call the athletic director to arrange a meeting for you.

c. Volunteerism

At St. Luke School, the success of our athletic program depends heavily on parent volunteers. There are many areas where volunteers are needed: field set-up and take-down, concessions, and admissions. In many cases, parent volunteers find themselves serving as assistants to the coaches in positions such as score-board operators, and book keepers.

d. Transportation

Transportation to and from practices is the responsibility of the athlete or parent. Players will travel to and from away games in parent/guardian vehicles or vehicles designated by the school. Drivers transporting athletes to and from games are asked to stay with the athletes until their parent or designated driver arrives. Athletes are never to be left alone in the school parking lot to wait for their ride home. Players may be transported by their parents, or an adult designated by their parent, but only after prior arrangements have been made with the coach. Vehicles are to be kept clean at all times.

e. Athletic Fees

Athletic participation fees are essential for the operation of intramural and interscholastic athletics at St. Luke School. Every effort is made to keep the fees minimal, but each sport requires a fee specific to help meet the needs of that sport and to defray rising cost of facility usage fees, game officials, and equipment. The fee amount is determined yearly by the Athletic Director and the Head of School. Some sports may require additional charges as deemed necessary by the Athletic Director. Parents will be supplied with information regarding additional charges prior to the season beginning. Once the student-athlete has been placed on a roster, the Athletic Director will submit the student's information to Student Accounts for collection. Student Accounts will submit the amount of the fee to the student's account.

f. St. Luke School Sports Council

The purpose of the SLS Sports Council is to create a community of sport volunteers who will serve to support and enhance the overall athletic program. Contact Christy Lynch, 2017-18 Sports Council Chair or Sherry Bunn, Athletic Director, to learn about opportunities to serve as a SLS Sports Council volunteer.