

**St. Paul's Preparatory Academy
Athletic Handbook
2024-2025**



St. Paul's Preparatory Academy Athletic Handbook 2023-2024

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the St. Paul's Preparatory Academy Athletic Handbook is to provide an understanding and appreciation of the athletic program and to enhance communication among the coaches, athletes, and parents. The handbook contains most practices, policies, and regulations governing St. Paul's Preparatory Academy athletics. The policies in this handbook are reviewed and revised annually by the School Board, Principals, and Athletic Director.

For a student to participate in any sport at St. Paul's, the student and the parents or guardians must sign the Athletic Statement of Commitment. Signing this form indicates an agreement that all policies, procedures, and regulations in this Athletic Handbook are understood and will be followed. Participation in sports can be an integral part of a student's educational experience, and St. Paul's Preparatory Academy attempts to provide extracurricular sports opportunities for all students who wish to participate. Students in grades 4 - 12 are eligible to participate in only one sport during each of the three seasons unless allowed by special circumstance approved by the Athletic Director.

SPORTS OFFERED

Fall

Cheerleading/Mascot
Football
Volleyball
Cross Country

Winter

Basketball Boys
Basketball Girls
Cheerleading/Mascot

Spring

Baseball
Cheerleading
Softball
Track and Field

St. Paul's offers up to four levels of teams in most sports: Upper Elementary, Junior High, Junior Varsity, and Varsity. Upper Elementary teams consist of students in grades 4 - 6.

Junior High teams consist mainly of students in grades 7 - 8. Students in grade 6 may try-out for the Junior High team when Upper Elementary teams are not offered for a sport or there is a numbers challenge. Approval for a student in grade 6 to play on a Junior High team will be made by the Athletic Director.

Junior Varsity teams consist of students in grades 9 - 11. Students in grade 8 may try out for the Junior Varsity team when Junior High teams are not offered for a sport or there is a numbers challenge. Approval for a student in grade 8 to play on a Junior Varsity team will be made by the Athletic Director.

Varsity teams consist of students in grades 9 - 12. Eighth grade students may play on a Varsity team with permission from both the Athletic Director and Principal, if a Junior

Varsity team is not offered. Approval for a student in grade 8 to play on a Varsity team will be made by the Athletic Director.

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

St. Paul's is committed to the values of a well-rounded program which develops Kingdom leaders and is, therefore, devoted to the exploration and development of human potential. An individual should be involved in physical growth and development along with intellectual and spiritual development. It is for this reason that St. Paul's offers a program of interscholastic sports designed to:

- Glorify God with the physical talents and abilities with which He blessed us.
- Provide a unifying activity open to the entire school and community through participation as team members or spectators. Assist in the development of relationships with other schools and communities.
- Provide a vehicle for personal growth and development among students.
- Contribute to the development of school spirit.

At St. Paul's, athletic excellence shall include the following personal benefits:

- Provide personal enjoyment and a sense of accomplishment.
- Develop the concept of teamwork and an understanding of subordinating personal desires in the interest of a productive cooperative effort.
- Test capabilities and help determine limits of physical ability and endurance.
- Develop self-esteem and the ability to deal with adversity.
- Develop control of emotions in tense situations.
- Develop the ability to handle success and cope with failure.
- Provide an understanding of the importance of thorough knowledge of fundamentals in any endeavor and the value of thorough preparation for effective performance.
- Develop an understanding of the lessons that can be learned from mistakes while striving for excellence.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Athletics Department of St. Paul's recognizes student-athletes often hold a unique place in society, and they are under considerable pressure to not only perform in athletics but also in the classroom. Student-athletes are often looked upon as role models. They must develop and maintain outstanding levels of achievement in athletic endeavors and adhere to the highest standards of ethical behavior and sportsmanship. The way a student-athlete conducts himself/herself is a direct reflection of themselves, St. Paul's Preparatory Academy, and Jesus Christ.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The athlete should:

- Be courteous to visiting teams and officials.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials and accept their decisions without displays of objection, including verbal and physical reactions.
- Respect the facilities of the host school and the trust extended in being a host.
- Play hard and to the limit of potential and ability regardless of discouragement. Each should realize that the true athlete does not give up, nor do they quarrel, cheat, or grandstand (showboat).
- Encourage their teammates and speak highly of them when talking to others.
- Be modest when successful and gracious in defeat. A true sportsman does not offer excuses for failures.

The coach should:

- Exemplify behavior that is representative of the school's educational staff, and be a credit to the Christian teaching profession.
- Demonstrate the highest ideals, desirable attitudes in personal behavior, good habits of courtesy, and demand the same standards of the players.
- Recognize that the process is as important as the end product and, in fact, has a major bearing on the outcome of the product God wants to produce.
- Remember that the most important values are derived from playing the game fairly and teaching players that it is better to lose fairly than to win unfairly.
- Maintain self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without losing emotional control. Demonstrate to players how to work with officials to improve performance without humiliating or disrespecting them.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

The spectator should:

- Realize that they represent the school just as distinctly as the players on a team. Therefore, he/she has an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through personal example the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
- Understand that good sportsmanship involves applauding good team play, individual skill, and outstanding sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- Treat visiting teams and officials as our guests, seeing this as an opportunity to be a witness for Christ to unbelievers and so extending every courtesy to them.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- Respect the judgment of officials, realizing that their decisions are based on fast-moving game conditions as they observe them from their vantage point.

ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION

St. Paul's is a member of the Texas Christian Athletic Fellowship (TCAF) and the Christian Schools Athletic Fellowship (CSAF). Through these organizations, students participate in sports with other schools. The school must adhere to all eligibility requirements set forth by these organizations.

ST. PAUL'S PREPARATORY ACADEMY, TCAF, AND CSAF ELIGIBILITY

Student-athletes at St. Paul's are subject to the eligibility requirements of TCAF and CSAF. The requirements are listed in each league's policies and procedures manuals, and copies of both are on file in the Athletic Office. The requirements are listed as follows:

- 1. Individual participants must regularly attend and meet all academic requirements of a Member School.**
- 2. Academic Programs: A student shall be permitted to participate in a CSAF/TCAF contest if the student is in good and regular standing and is passing all courses with a minimum grade of 70.**
- 3. 8th Grade Participation in High School/Varsity (Grades 9-12) Level Sports: an 8th grade student may participate on a Varsity Team without affecting his/her eligibility for the remainder of their High School career.**
- 4. High School Participation Eligibility: Once a student has entered the ninth grade he/she has eight semesters to compete in varsity athletics.**
- 5. Eligibility Periods: Each eligibility period will be six weeks. If a student is failing (69 and below) any subject his/her name may not appear on the current eligibility report and he/she will be ineligible for any competition until the date of the next report, which will be 3 weeks or at the 9 weeks period. Any student or coach violating this rule will be subject to sanctions, forfeitures, or expulsion.**
- 6. Graduation: No one shall take part in any contest in this organization that has graduated from High School or the equivalent, including Home Schools or Foreign Schools outside the U.S. borders.**
- 7. Age: A student is not eligible for competition if he/she has reached the age of nineteen (19) years old prior to the first day of the current school year.**
- 8. Student Transfer: If a student has transferred to a member school, having participated in either sub—varsity or varsity in the 9th—12th grades, a transfer form must be sent to the**

state office. The state office must give prior approval of all transfer students participating in Varsity Athletics.

9. **Waiting Period:** If a student transfers to a TCAF/CSAF school after the school year has begun, he/she shall be ineligible for competition for fifteen (15) school days. The school will also fill out all applicable paperwork and send copies to the state office.
10. **Suspension:** Students suspended from their school may not play in TCAF/CSAF competition during the period of suspension.
11. **League Suspension:** Suspension from league activities by the member schools shall require the student to remain clear of the team bench for the duration of the suspension.

SAFETY

The Athletic Department strives to provide students with a safe and enjoyable environment in which to participate. Consequently, all coaches and administrative personnel have a responsibility to reduce and/or eliminate all potential safety hazards. It is vital to understand that participation in athletics involves inherent risks. Coaches and administrative personnel are obligated to act prudently in order to prevent accidents and injuries. They should respond to unexpected circumstances according to the guidelines set forth in this handbook.

INSURANCE AND ATHLETIC PHYSICALS

Adequate insurance coverage for an athlete is the responsibility of the parent or guardian. The Athletic Physical Form has an insurance disclaimer the parent or guardian must sign before a student participates in athletic tryouts, practices, or games. No student may begin any phase of the athletic program (tryouts, practices, or other activities) without obtaining permission from a physician and completing the Emergency Information Form. The physical must be completed once per calendar year. The Athletic Physical Form will be filed in the Athletic Department office, and the parent or student, at their request, may obtain copies of the physical form. Copies of the Insurance Disclaimer and Emergency Medical Form will be issued to the coaches to carry to all away games.

ATHLETIC PRACTICE DATES

Practices and tryouts for the Fall Athletic Season will start the first week of August. Parents and students will be notified of these dates for the summer schedule and so they can be available for practices and/or tryouts in August. The Winter Season begins in the middle of October and is interrupted by Thanksgiving and Christmas. The Spring Season will begin in the middle of January and is interrupted by Spring Break.

Cancellation of games due to inclement weather will normally be made after 1:00 p.m. Athletes should always come to school prepared to play. Do not assume there will be a cancellation based on the weather in the morning. Coaches will communicate to parents through the Band app.

TRANSPORTATION

Practices and Home Games:

It is the parents' responsibility to arrange for transportation after practices or games from our home fields. Athletes will need to be picked up immediately after a practice session or game. This may require parents to wait 10-15 minutes from time to time. Coaches are required to supervise athletes until they have left the school or athletic field premises. We ask that you understand that coaches should not be asked to wait for an extended period of time on a regular basis. Any student not picked up immediately from practices or games may be subjected to a late fee of \$1.00 per minute.

Away Games:

The school will arrange for transportation to and from games that are played away from St. Paul's. Parents wishing to take their child home after a game must inform the coach prior to the student being released to the parents or guardians of that student.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Senior Pastors

St. Paul's School Board

St. Paul's Head of School

St Paul's Secondary Principal

St. Paul's Athletic Director

Head Coach (for particular sport)

Assistant Coaches

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Athletic Department oversees the entire athletic program. The Athletic Director works with the Administrative Staff to provide a quality program. Each coach reports to the Athletic Director.

General questions or concerns about a specific team should be first addressed to the appropriate coach. If your questions are not sufficiently addressed, feel free to make an appointment with the Athletic Director.

For game-time concerns, parents are strongly encouraged to support the decisions of the coach. Please do not approach coaches during or after a game with concerns. While you may not agree with every decision of a coach, how and when you express your feelings may have a negative effect on your child and on the team. The time immediately following a contest or game is an emotional time, so please refrain from approaching a coach with issues at that time. Please allow a 24-hour “cool-down period” for players, coaches, and parents. A good standard to follow is “right time, right place, right spirit.”

PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

Both parenting and coaching are difficult tasks. Parents and coaches must have an understanding of the expectations and philosophies of one another. Clear communication is important.

Communication you should expect from the coach:

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations the coach has for the team members.
- Locations and times of all games and practices. Coaches use the Band app for this purpose.
- Approximate return times for all away games.
- Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off—season conditioning.
- Procedure to follow for injuries.
- Discipline that would affect playing time.

Communication coaches expect from parents:

- Notification of any schedule conflicts, preferably two weeks in advance or ASAP.
- Specific concern regarding a coach’s philosophy and/or expectations.

Appropriate issues to discuss with a coach:

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child’s behavior.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with a coach:

- Playing time.
- Team Strategy.
- Play calling.
- Other student-athletes.

GENERAL POLICIES

1. Team Selection

Each team's makeup is at the head coach's discretion.

2. Players Cut From A Team

a. Upper Elementary - there is a "no cut" policy in place for upper elementary.

b. Junior High - we encourage a "no cut" policy. However, when numbers exceed the allotted amount for a particular team, cuts will be made. For sports that have a large number of students participating, coaches will hold an evaluation period.

c. Junior Varsity/Varsity — Coaches determine which players will make up a particular team. There will be a maximum number of players for each team at each level of play. "Cuts" will occur when more players than the maximum number allowed try out for a team. It is the responsibility of each coach to meet individually with players who are cut. The coach will explain the reason why they were cut, answer any questions the athlete might have, and offer suggestions to help the athlete improve in the sport.

3. Coach/Parent Informational Meeting

After a team has been determined, the coach will call a parent meeting to go over logistical matters and expectations and requirements of the athletes and parents in regard to the season at hand. Parents will be given an opportunity to ask questions of the coach and may be asked to sign a form of agreement covering such things as sportsmanship and commitment to the program.

4. Playing Time

Determining how much playing time each player has is at the discretion of the head coach. Playing time is a privilege and should be earned. The coach should be notified in advance when a student will miss practice. Below are some general goals for which we strive.

a. Upper Elementary - Instruction and active participation is our primary concern, and our goal is that every athlete participates in every contest as

long as they regularly attend practice and abide by team rules. Coaches are expected to play eligible players in each game. However, this does not mean that every player will receive an identical amount of playing time.

b. Junior High - Concepts of competition and role-playing within a team setting may result in some athletes not playing in some contests. Coaches are encouraged to play all eligible players in each game during the regular season.

c. Junior Varsity/Varsity - Coaches should play as many players as feasible. Playing time on this level is based on coaching decisions made during practices and games.

5. Tryouts

All coaches will hold tryouts for teams. Tryouts will be held during the first official week of practice in each sport. Any student who meets the TCAF, CSAF, and SPPA eligibility requirements may try out.

6. Practices

All athletes are expected to be present and on time at all practices called by the coach during the season of a particular sport. They are expected to attend practices and stay for the duration until dismissed by the coach, unless other arrangements with the coach or Athletic Director have been made in advance. Unexcused absences will be dealt with on an individual basis, and some form of discipline will be taken. It is the discretion of the head coach to determine whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

School or church activities that conflict with practice will be handled in an appropriate manner. It is the athlete's responsibility to communicate to coaches and the Athletic Director any conflicts that may arise due to an overlapping school or church commitment (school or café employment, student council duty, or church volunteer activity). If possible, this notification should be done before tryouts have taken place for any sport activity so the coach to be prepared to modify practice accordingly. This does not warrant an athlete leaving practice on a regular basis to attend random outside activities.

St. Paul's athletics are to be viewed as a priority during the season. The opportunity to participate in St. Paul's athletics is a privilege and not a right and should be treated this way.

Parents wishing to speak with a coach after a practice need to wait until he/she has been released of responsibility for the students. A coach's primary responsibility is to care for all students in his/her care. At the close of the day, every coach has many duties to perform before being able to go home. Impromptu conferences will cause him/her to be delayed. Please schedule all conferences in advance through the coach.

ATHLETIC UNIFORMS

Uniforms and equipment must be returned in satisfactory condition no later than one week after the final athletic contest for the season. Parents of athletes will be responsible for uniforms and equipment not returned one week following the closing of the athletic season. Any charges for uniforms lost or not returned will be added to the student's account. Report cards will be held until all uniforms are paid for or returned. If you have questions regarding proper cleaning procedures for uniforms, please ask the Athletic Director.

ATHLETIC DRESS CODE

Students represent St. Paul's when traveling to and from athletic contests and returning to school for home contests. They are required to dress in accordance with the following athletic dress code for away games and home games.

Football: Students are to dress in their jersey, game pants with pads, and shoes (no cleats) and have their shoulder pads, helmet, and additional equipment stored in their travel bag when traveling. Students are to wear all equipment that is issued and must not modify any of the protective equipment. When permission is given by the Athletic Director to wear game jerseys to school, each student is to wear their game jersey tucked in at all times, any school approved pants, belt, appropriate shoes, and socks (no game socks).

Boys Basketball: Students are to dress in their jersey, shorts, and shoes and have any additional equipment stored in their travel bag when traveling. When permission is given by the Athletic Director to wear game jerseys to school, each student is to wear their game jersey with an undershirt (white t-shirt) tucked in at all times, any school approved pants, belt, appropriate shoes, and socks (no game socks).

Girls Basketball: Students are to dress in their jersey, shorts, and shoes and have any additional equipment stored in their travel bag when traveling. When permission is given by the Athletic Director to wear game jerseys to school, each student is to wear their game jersey with an undershirt (white t-shirt), any school approved skirt, appropriate shoes, and knee or ankle socks (no game socks).

Volleyball: Students are to dress in their jersey, shorts, and shoes and have any additional equipment stored in their travel bag when traveling. When permission is given by the Athletic Director to wear game jerseys to school, each student is to wear their game jersey with an undershirt (white t-shirt), any school approved skirt, appropriate shoes, and knee or ankle socks (no game socks).

Cheerleading: Students are to dress in their shell, skirt, body liner or warm-ups, briefs, socks, and shoes and have any additional equipment stored in their travel bag when traveling. Students are to wear only the approved uniform and accessories. When permission is given

by the Athletic Director to wear uniforms to school, each student is to wear their shell, skirt, warm-ups, briefs, socks and shoes at all times. Students can wear a body liner instead of a warm-up top, but must always wear the warm-up bottoms and at the proper length.

Baseball: Students are to dress in their jersey, pants, and shoes (no cleats) and have any additional equipment stored in their travel bag when traveling. When permission is given by the Athletic Director to wear game jerseys to school, each student is to wear their game jersey with an undershirt (white t-shirt) tucked in at all times, any school approved pants, belt, appropriate shoes, and socks (no game socks).

Softball: Students are to dress in their jersey, pants, and shoes and have any additional equipment stored in their travel bag when traveling. When permission is given by the Athletic Director to wear game jerseys to school, each student is to wear their game jersey with an undershirt (white t-shirt), any school approved skirt, appropriate shoes, and knee or ankle socks (no game socks).

CLASS ATTENDANCE

In order to participate in an athletic contest, students must be present at school 4 periods unless they have gained permission through the Principal's office. Circumstances arise where students have doctor's appointments, family emergencies, college visits, etc. Yet, we stress that students cannot be expected to physically participate when they are not well enough to physically attend classes throughout the day. This policy also applies to practices.

QUITTING ATHLETIC TEAMS

Our athletes take a sense of responsibility when they agree to participate on our athletic teams. Therefore, we hold our athletes accountable for their commitment to their teammates, coaches, and our school. If a student-athlete quits a team, that student may not be allowed to try-out for any other sports during that school year. (They may request a release from the Athletic Director. They may not begin another sport until a release has been granted.)

MEDIA RELEASE FORM

During the school year, many opportunities occur to capture students at their best in athletics and to better show the excellence of students at SPPA through pictures, video recordings, etc. SPPA understands that it is the right of every parent to decide if his or her child's image is published or not. It is SPPA's policy that no students' image will be published unless the student's parent has returned a signed Media Release Form.

AWAY GAME MEALS

All athletes are encouraged to bring money for post-game meals following an away game. Students should bring only the amount they need for their meal and not bring excess money. SPPA will not be responsible for any lost or stolen money.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Service Application and notify the Athletic Director within 30 days of any change in the status of the information contained in the application. Volunteers may be asked to complete an additional form for the department in which they want to volunteer. For all employees and volunteers, the minimum record includes:

1. National—level search, including the current county of residence and prior county.
2. Prior employers, residential address history, and Social Security Number verification.
3. Motor Vehicle Record Check
4. Sexual Offender Registry Check

LEAGUE RULES

All players, coaches, and spectators are expected to abide by the rules set forth by TCAF, CSAF and St. Paul's Preparatory Academy. The list is not all-inclusive and may be added to or changed if deemed necessary.

1. The use of tobacco or any controlled substance (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before, during or after games at contest sites is prohibited.
2. Live animal mascots, cannons, firearms, fireworks, etc. are prohibited.
3. No dogs or other animals are allowed.
4. Except in their normal course of business, emergency vehicles shall not flash lights or sound sirens during the course of a game.
5. Noisemakers are prohibited at events held in gymnasiums.
6. In events held in field houses/gyms, megaphones may be used only by cheerleaders in uniform. Megaphones must not be used to strike walls or playing surfaces.
7. Bands, when permitted, shall play only during time-outs and intermissions. Individual instruments may not be used as noisemakers.
8. Air horns and bullhorns, handheld or otherwise, are not permitted.
9. No chastising of players, coaches, or officials is permitted. Good sportsmanship should be displayed at all times.

Official Table: Players and fans are not permitted to approach the Official Table, except

in cases of an emergency.

Field/Gym Floor: No one is allowed on any field or gym floor during games. In the event of an injury, a parent may be escorted onto the field or gym floor if the injury deems necessary.

The Athletic Director or designated person in charge has the authority to remove anyone attending a sporting event if they refuse to follow the rules of TCAF, CSAF or St. Paul's Preparatory Academy. Our goal is to demonstrate Christian conduct at all times and provide an environment that allows everyone to have a positive experience.

ST. PAUL'S PREPARATORY ACADEMY ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

I, _____, athlete representing
St. Paul's Preparatory Academy, and my parent/guardian,
_____, have read the athletic
hand book and agree to follow the rules of TCAF, CSAF, and St. Paul's Prep. By signing below,
we understand negative behavior or actions can result in an athlete being removed from a
game or a team and a spectator being removed from a game or games.

Athlete: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____