

# Immanuel Athletics Handbook

## April 2022

### Athletics Philosophy

The Athletics Program at Immanuel Lutheran School is based on the philosophy of the school to follow Christ's command to make disciples who are responsible, believing, committed followers of Jesus Christ. This philosophy necessitates a godly character that we believe Immanuel's athletics program helps develop in each athlete. The opportunity for demonstrating Christian attitude, values, and behavior readily presents itself in the arena of sports competition where the athlete is expected to be a responsible, self-disciplined, cooperative team member and a good decision-maker. Therefore, the Athletics Program at Immanuel Lutheran School is considered to be a valuable part of a student's overall development.

Scripture commands our commitment to excellence as Christians. We are to be wise stewards of the talents God has given us and should use these talents as witnesses for Christ. Our athletes and coaches should strive to do their best both in practice and in competition while serving as positive Christian role models. Parents should also serve as positive role models. Athletes should realize that becoming the best among other competitors may not always be an achievable goal but doing one's best is the goal.

### Goals:

1. To glorify Jesus in all that is done on and off the playing arena
2. To provide guidance as each student athlete searches to realize and use his or her God-given talents
3. To foster working together as a team, each member showing unity, support, and encouragement for the team as a whole
4. To prepare the student athlete for the next level of competition
5. To provide an additional avenue for school spirit
6. To develop an understanding of the rules and concepts of the sport that will encourage lifelong enjoyment of it (both competitive and recreational)
7. To be a Christian first, a student second, and a Christian Student Athlete third by maintaining eligibility for participation

### Sports Offered:

Sports offered may vary depending on availability of coaches. There may be some overlap in seasons if a team progresses to a state tournament.

<b>Fall:</b> Season begins with the start of school	Volleyball Cross Country
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<b>Winter:</b> Season begins after the conclusion of the fall season (usually around November 1)	Basketball Cheerleading
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<b>Spring:</b> Season begins after the conclusion of the winter season (usually mid-March)	Track and Field
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## **Job Descriptions**

### **Athletics Director:**

The athletics director is appointed by the principal. He/she coordinates, implements, and administers a sports program for Immanuel Lutheran School that demonstrates a Christ-like and enthusiastic attitude. Therefore, he/she shall:

1. Serve as a Christ-like example of fair play and good sportsmanship.
2. Execute policies as established in the Athletics Handbook.
3. Schedule or approve the use of the gym for all events.
4. Be responsible for ordering or overseeing new equipment approved by the principal, as well as caring for existing equipment.
5. Ensure that all paperwork for tournaments, competitions, and state/national events is submitted in a timely fashion.
6. Secure and/or approve officials, transportation, and coaches, as needed.
7. Obtain park or facility permits.
8. Ensure that the coaches understand policies, procedures, schedules, fees, and student eligibility.
9. Keep coaches informed of students' eligibility.
10. Conduct a mandatory athletic meeting in conjunction with the coaches prior to the start of each sport season (Fall, Winter, Spring) for the parents and students. This meeting is to inform everyone about coaching philosophy, student eligibility guidelines, as well as coach, student, and parent responsibilities. Additionally, all necessary forms will be distributed for parents to complete, including a medical release form and a participant contract. Fees will also be discussed. Athletics handbooks will also be made available to parents.
11. Be responsible for securing and maintaining all signed athletics participant contracts, athletics release forms, and physical forms, and for collecting activity fees.

**Coaches:** Only persons approved by the principal and athletics director may serve as coaches, conduct practices, or coach a game. A head coach must be knowledgeable of the sport and be a minimum of twenty-one (21) years of age. The coach will demonstrate a Christ-like attitude and will be responsible to organize and implement the sports program in coordination with the principal and athletics director. Therefore, he/she will:

1. Serve as a Christ-like example of fair play and good sportsmanship and emphasize the glory of God over the glory of self and school.
2. Attend games and practices, arriving at each event promptly and dismissing promptly.
3. Be responsible for their own conduct and that of their team at all times.
4. Organize and execute practice sessions in conjunction with practice times coordinated with the athletics director.
5. Give adequate notice to players and parents regarding game and practice times and locations.
6. Communicate with the school office regularly to provide any updates to game and practice times and locations.
7. Provide supervision for athletes before, during, and after practices or games.
8. Provide parents/drivers and the school office with directions to all away events.
9. Secure facility after each event.
10. Make all equipment needs known to the athletics director, as well as care for existing equipment.
11. Submit the roster of the team to the athletics director within one (1) week of the first practice. This is essential for checking an athlete's academic eligibility.

## **Code of Ethics and Conduct**

### **Coaches will:**

1. Demonstrate a Christ-like example at all times both on and off the playing arena.
2. Treat each player, coach, official, parent, and administrator with respect, Christ-like love, and dignity.
3. Become familiar with the objectives of the Athletics Program at Immanuel Lutheran School and strive to achieve these objectives and communicate them to the players and the players' parents.
4. Learn the fundamental skills, teaching and evaluation techniques, and strategies of the sport.
5. Become thoroughly familiar with the rules of the sport.
6. Learn the strengths and weaknesses of the players so that they can be placed in situations where they have a maximum opportunity to achieve success; develop their God-given talent and skills; promote teamwork and athletic participation to the glory of God.
7. Communicate to the players and the players' parents the rights and responsibilities of individuals on the team.
8. Cooperate with the athletics director and principal in the enforcement of rules and regulations, sign and follow the Code of Conduct for Immanuel Lutheran School coach's contract, and report any irregularities that violate sound, competitive practices.
9. Protect the health and safety of the players by insisting that all the activities under the control of coaches be conducted with the players' welfare in mind.
10. Ensure that all athletes are supervised from the scheduled arrival time for an event (practice or game) until the athlete is picked up by their designated ride.
11. Communicate with the athletics director, players, parents, assistant coaches, administration, and the school office of any schedule changes for practices or games in a timely manner.
12. Support and participate in the school-wide behavior expectations.
13. Support Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and follow FCA requirements to maintain our school eligibility in the FCA program, including weekly devotions.
14. Meet pre-season with coaches, athletics director, and principal.
15. Complete annual training on concussion protocols.

### **Players will:**

1. Demonstrate a Christ-like example at all times both on and off the playing arena.
2. Make academic success a priority.
3. Be diligent in preparation, relentless in effort, unified in teamwork, pure in speech, and humble in spirit.
4. Be respectful of coaches, players, officials, and spectators at all times.
5. Know the team schedule and take responsibility to arrive at practices and games on time.
6. Take pride and care in facilities they play in and equipment they use.

### **Parents/Spectators will:**

1. Model and foster a Christ-like example.
2. Assist their child in establishing proper priorities with respect to church, family, peers, study, practice, and play.
3. Show promptness in picking up and bringing their child to/from games and practices.

4. Conduct themselves in a manner which respects the rights and privileges of others, including coaches, competitors, referees, and spectators.
5. Show good team spirit, self-control, support, and proper Christ-like conduct in all situations.
6. Remain in designated areas at all times.
7. Refrain from behavior, which is unsportsmanlike, disruptive, or disorderly before, during, after or in any way connected with the event.
8. Not talk disrespectfully about coaches, athletes, officials, or decisions being made. If unhappy with an aspect of the program, parents and spectators will have the courtesy of addressing the matter with the coaching staff, knowing that public comments could lead to confusion and stress for parents and athletes who might overhear these comments.
9. Not approach an athlete or the coaches before, during, or after a game or tournament to discuss playing time or a coach's choices. If parents or spectators have concerns or questions, they should contact the coaches who will talk with them at a time outside of competition days.
10. Refrain from using any illegal substances (i.e., tobacco, drugs, or alcohol) during a school athletic activity.
11. Help with set up and take down and work the concession room.
12. Work the books and clocks (with training).

## **Participation**

### **Activity Fees:**

There will be an activity fee assessed for each child participating in a sports activity, including children of volunteer coaches; hardships should be communicated to the athletics director. Uniforms will be distributed upon payment of fees. Fees will vary depending on the sport and will be used to help offset the cost of officials, tournament fees, replacement of uniforms and equipment, the renting of offsite facilities, and facility upkeep. All activity fees will be discussed at the parent meeting at the start of the season.

The athletics director will collect the activity fee before team selections have been made and before team practice has begun. Costs for travel and lodging while attending an out-of-town tournament or game will be the responsibility of the athlete's family.

### **Participation Requirements:**

1. Athletes and parents **must** promote Christ-like fellowship and sportsmanship at all times.
2. Before an athlete may participate on an athletic team, the following forms **must** be submitted to the athletics director: Athletics Participant Contract (signed by athletes and their parents), Medical Release Form (signed by athlete's parents), and Physical Form (signed by athlete's doctor).
3. Before an athlete is issued a uniform or may participate on an athletic team, activity fees **must** be paid and submitted to the athletics director.
4. Athletes and parents **must** attend the **mandatory** athletics meeting prior to the start of each sports season (Fall, Winter, Spring).
5. A student who is assigned a detention will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities on that day or during that evening.
6. A student who is assigned homework study hall due to incomplete work may attend extracurricular activities only if the schoolwork is completed prior to the event. Additionally, if the student is repeatedly assigned homework study hall, the student may require principal approval to participate.

7. In order to participate in any school-sponsored athletics event during the day or evening, an athlete **must**:
  - Be in attendance at school on that day and participate in all classes and school-related activities. This includes school days where a half-day of school is scheduled. Exceptions may be made only at the discretion of the principal.
  - Participate in and dress for Physical Education (PE) class that day in school. Exceptions may be made only at the discretion of the principal.
  - Maintain academic and behavior eligibility as outlined in the Immanuel Lutheran School Policy Handbook and this Athletics Handbook.
8. An athlete may only participate on one (1) Immanuel varsity athletic team or squad during the winter sports season.
9. In order to participate and remain on an athletic team, all financial payments, and fees due to the school by the athlete's family **must** be paid in full.
10. In order to participate on an interscholastic team or squad, an athlete **must** attend Immanuel Lutheran School.
11. Only students in Grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are eligible to participate in the interscholastic competition sponsored by Immanuel. However, students in Grade 3 may be eligible to participate in track, cross-country, and cheerleading and will follow all guidelines listed below for Grades 4, 5, and 6 teams.
12. Attendance at sports camps for any sport is not required to participate on an athletic team.
13. Children of coaches may attend practices with their parent when their parent is coaching but may not participate on a team that they are not eligible for.

#### **Uniforms:**

1. Athletes will be provided with a uniform for game use if available.
2. Athletes must be dressed in their uniform to participate in games.
3. Athletes must turn in their uniform within two (2) weeks after the season ends. The uniform must be clean, and, in the condition, it was given to the athlete. If any part of the uniform is lost or abused, the athlete will be responsible for paying for its replacement.
4. Uniforms may only be distributed if all tuition / fees accounts are current.
5. Practice attire should be appropriate and non-offensive as determined by the coaches, the athletics director, or the principal.

#### **Team Selection**

Immanuel will not "cut" players from any team in order to maintain lower number of participants. Participation by the students in Immanuel Lutheran School's athletics programs is encouraged.

#### **Scheduling:**

The coaches and athletics director will work together in scheduling practices and game times. A calendar of practices and games will be provided to parents via an electronic calendar. Changes in the schedule are inevitable. Every effort will be made to update the electronic calendar and inform parents and athletes of changes as early as possible. Coaches and the athletics director will communicate with the school office regularly to provide any updates to game and practice times and locations.

## Practice and Game Limitations:

Each function (practice, team meeting, team supper, game, film session, shoot-around, and club meeting) an athlete is required to attend shall be considered an “experience.” During a tournament where a team plays two (2) games in the same day, it is considered one (1) experience. A week shall be considered as beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday.

The player composition of each team will be determined by the coaches in cooperation with the athletics director, in consultation with the principal, and the impacted parents. In the event that player(s) are offered to play on a team that is above their grade level, all students in that level would be given the opportunity to participate in that particular sport as well. Each player will only play at one (1) level during the season. The goal will be to put each student athlete in a competitively appropriate situation to allow each player to succeed in increasing their athletic skills. Additional games will often be scheduled (JV, Grade 7, etc.) to allow for significant participation by the maximum number of players based on the composition of the team and the competition.

During the season:

- A maximum of five (5) experiences a week may be scheduled; the average being no more than four and half (4.5) experiences per week for the varsity teams.
- A maximum of three (3) experiences may be scheduled per week for Grades 4/5, and four (4) experiences per week for JV teams.
- If a “tripleheader” of games is scheduled for a given day (not a tournament), players will only be scheduled to attend two (2) of the three (3) contests.
- During the time period two (2) weeks before the state tournament, the number of permitted experiences will not exceed six (6), and only if that team qualifies for the state tournament.
- Any experience, on a school day, may not exceed two (2) hours in length and must end by 8:00 p.m. On a non-school day, an experience may not exceed three (3) hours in length unless a team is in a tournament/meet/cheerleading competition. Any game, on an evening when school is in session the following day, shall be scheduled to be completed by 8:00 p.m.
- **Experiences may not take place on Wednesdays.**

The Grade 4/5 and JV **basketball** teams may not schedule more than twenty-two (22) games in any one (1) season. Each game played in a tournament counts towards this total. Overnight tournaments may not be scheduled for the Grade 4/5 and JV teams.

The purpose of Immanuel Lutheran School’s young athlete is instructional, all Grade 4/5 players, who are in regular practice attendance, and who follow the Code of Ethics and Conduct as outlined in this handbook, should be played a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of each game, including tournament play.

JV basketball players, who are in regular practice attendance, and who follow the Code of Ethics and Conduct as outlined in this handbook, should be played a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of each game. Tournament play may be treated differently as the goal for the team is to advance in the tournament competition; therefore, in tournaments the twenty-five percent (25%) rule is waived.

The Grades 7 and 8 **basketball** teams may not schedule more than twenty-eight (28) games in any one (1) season. This total excludes the State and National Competition. Only two (2) overnight tournaments may be scheduled per season, excluding the National Competition. Any Grade 4, 5, and

6 athletes that participate as part of the Grade 7 and 8 teams will follow the Grade 7 and 8 team guidelines. The athletics director must approve all schedules. If a team qualifies for the National Competition, one (1) additional game may be scheduled between the State and the National Competitions. Only varsity level teams may compete in a state or national tournament competition (Lutheran or other).

All Grade 4, 5 and 6 volleyball players who are playing on a Grade 5/6 level team and are in regular practice attendance, and who follow the Code of Ethics and Conduct as outlined in this Athletics Handbook, should be played at least once in each match. Tournament play may be treated differently as the goal for the team is to advance in the tournament competition; therefore, in tournaments the rule is waived.

Practices scheduled during school vacations will **not be mandatory**. Family time is the first priority.

Scrimmages, shoot-outs, practices, games, or competitions of any kind will be NOT be scheduled for five (5) consecutive days during Christmas break.

**Experiences may not take place on Wednesdays.**

**Coaches shall be limited to two (2) on a bench for games and tournaments plus a statistics person. Any number of coaches may assist in practices.**

### **Eligibility for Participation**

The principal or his/her designated agent will monitor an athlete's eligibility for participation. Eligibility requirements are put into place to support academic success.

### **Academic Probation:**

A student will be placed on academic probation when his/her trimester grade average in any subject falls below "C-". If a student is placed on academic probation the student and parent will be contacted by the principal or his/her designated agent and made aware of the situation.

During a student's first offense of probation, he/she has two (2) weeks to improve his/her grades to "C-" or above. The student must attend an after-school study hall until the grade improves to at least a C- grade level. The after-school study hall will be monitored by the teacher of the affected class. The student is eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities as long as he or she attends the after-school study hall and is actively working on improving their grade.

During a student's second offense of probation, the student must again attend an after-school study hall until the grade improves to at least a C- grade level. The student is not eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities for a minimum period of five (5) school days or until the grade is raised to a C- grade level or higher.

During a student's third offense of probation, the student must attend an after-school study hall until the grade improves to at least a C- grade level. The student is not eligible to participate on extra-curricular activities for a period of ten (10) school days. Any further probations may see the student removed from extracurricular activities including athletic participation.

**Behavioral Probation:**

A student may be placed on probation due to behavioral issues, even if his/her grades meet the C- grade level criteria. Students who receive a detention or suspension are ineligible to attend any extra-curricular activities, including games or practices on the days of the discipline.

**Infractions:**

The Christian Student Athlete student is a Christian first, a student second, and athlete third, and because being a member of a sports team is a privilege and not a right, the Christian Student Athlete is expected to be a good example for others to follow. In the event that the student athlete fails to exemplify a Christ-like attitude and good behavior or violates a school rule or policy, it may be necessary to suspend or permanently remove the athlete from a team. The principal will make the final decision concerning the issue. Use or possession of any weapons, illegal drugs, including alcohol or tobacco products, will result in an automatic removal from the team.

**Transportation**

It is the responsibility of the athlete's parents to make arrangements for and/or provide transportation for their child to all athletics events. Coaches may not transport their team or squad members. They may only transport their own child(ren). All drivers shall comply with state laws and guidelines regarding licensing, insurance, and operation of motor vehicles.

**Concussions & Head Injuries - Athletics**

Immanuel Lutheran School follows the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) concussion protocols, which can be accessed on the IHSA website:  
[www.ihsa.org/documents/sportsMedicine](http://www.ihsa.org/documents/sportsMedicine).

Students who have experienced a force of impact believed to have caused a concussion may not participate in athletic practices, competition, physical education class, recess, and/or other physical activities during the school day or in school-sponsored after-school activities until successful completion of the concussion protocol, including a medical release from the licensed physician who has treated the student. Students exhibiting signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion will be immediately removed from these activities. Immanuel's concussion protocol guides school staff on accommodations needed, including cognitive rest, for students recovering from a concussion.

Christian student athletes and their parents/guardians must sign the Athletic Participation Agreement before the student is allowed to participate in a practice or interscholastic competition.

**Concussion Return-to-Learn Protocol**

A student experiencing symptoms of a concussion should be evaluated by a medical professional before returning to school and school activities.

A student with a concussion should be evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional who has experience managing concussions for guidance about when it is safe to return to school as well as recommended appropriate levels of cognitive and physical activity throughout the recovery



process. If at any time during the school day the student needs to leave the classroom or school due to symptoms, provisions will be made to meet the recovery need, whether the student takes a break in quiet area or the parents are called to pick up the child.

Immanuel Lutheran School supports a Return-to-Learn post-concussion framework. This framework provides guidance for supporting the student through the concussion recovery period. As brain injuries can vary in how the student is impacted, this protocol should be used to as a guide for the return-to-learn team through the different phases of recovery.

The Return-to-Learn team shall consist of the resource teacher, school administrator, classroom teacher, and parents. The return-to-learn team will follow the guidelines of the student's medical professional.

The Return-to-Learn plan will be documented. For students with prolonged symptoms, a formal 504 plan may be created to ensure the child's educational needs are being met.

#### Phases of Recovery:

##### Phase 1: No School/Complete cognitive rest

No tests, quizzes, etc. Notes provided to student while student remains at home. No visual activity (i.e., reading texts, etc.)

##### Phase 2: Part-Time School attendance with accommodations

Student returns to school on a limited basis. Classroom activities are modified with an emphasis of limited/eliminated screen time, eliminating non-essential homework assignments, prioritizing homework, and missing work, no tests or quizzes, extended time for assignments, and copies of classroom notes provided. Student checks in with a member of the return-to-learn team on a daily basis. Accommodations are determined by student symptoms. No physical activity is permitted without doctor's release.

##### Phase 3: Full-Time attendance with accommodations

Student returns to school full time. Accommodations are determined by student symptoms and will be reduced/eliminated as the student recovers. No physical activity is permitted without doctor's release.

##### Phase 4: Full-Time attendance without accommodations

A plan is created to help the student complete missed work. Physical activities permitted according to the doctor's recommendation.

##### Phase 5: Full School and Extracurricular Involvement:

No symptoms are present. Student may return to full involvement under the direction of their doctor's recommendation.

Return to Learn plan constructed according to "Return to Learn after a Concussion: A Guide for Teachers and School Professionals", Lurie Children's Hospital, Retrieved from <https://www.ihsa.org/documents/sportsMedicine/Lurie%20Return%20to%20Learn%20Guide.pdf>

#### **Return-to-Play Protocol:**

Immanuel follows the IHSA Protocol for Implementation of National Federation High School (NFHS) Sports Playing Rule for Concussions: "**Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or**

**behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.”**

Definition of a Concussion: A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (be “knocked out”) to have suffered a concussion.

Behavior or signs observed indicative of a possible concussion:

- Loss of consciousness
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Appears confused
- Forgets plays
- Unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to or after the injury

Symptoms reported by a player indicative of a possible concussion:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion

**Concussion Awareness and Training:**

All coaches, assistant coaches, athletic directors, administrators, and school secretaries will receive concussion training. Parents and athletes will be made aware of the symptoms and dangers of concussions every year. Students will not be permitted to participate in any practices or games without first completing the Athletic Participant Agreement.

**Resolution of Parental Concerns**

Occasionally parents and/or athletes will have concerns about athletics programs that need to be researched, analyzed, and resolved. It is the intention of the school to resolve these concerns in a fair manner, giving appropriate and prompt attention to concerns when made known. Concerns should be voiced without fear of retaliation. Concerns will be kept confidential; information will be disclosed only to those who need to know in order to review, investigate and respond to the concern.

Most athletics-related concerns can be resolved through open and honest discussion with the coach of the sport. For this reason, in most cases, concerns should be brought directly to the coach for an explanation and resolution. If the concern remains unresolved, or if the parent/athlete feels uncomfortable discussing the concern with the coach, the athletics director should be consulted. If the parent/athlete is uncomfortable taking the concern to the athletics director, the principal or the athletics

committee may be advised of the concern. In these unusual instances, the principal and/or the athletics committee would become responsible for investigation and resolution.

In situations where a concern exists, the individual who has the concern must:

1. State the cause and the specific nature of the concern.
2. Provide a timeframe indicating when the concern arose.
3. Provide any other information or documentation, which helps describe or explain the concern.

The parent/athlete may also be asked to describe how he/she feels the concern should be resolved and why.

After this procedure has been followed, a prompt investigation of the concern will be performed and the parent/athlete will be notified within ten (10) school days of the findings and what action, if any, will be taken to resolve the concern. Based on severity of the concern/grievance, due process may include further investigation as outlined in the Board of the Christian School policy and the Personnel Policy Manual handbooks.

It should be understood that not all concerns will be “resolved” to the satisfaction of the person who has the concern. In certain circumstances, decisions may be made by those involved that the concern does not necessarily require any action or change. However, those who use the process should be satisfied that their concern was acted upon promptly and that attention was given to the concern consistent with the principles stated in Immanuel’s School Athletics Policies.

### **Off-Season Guidelines**

Off-season opportunities in various sports may be offered to Immanuel students. No pressure in the way of phone calls or personal contact may be made to existing Immanuel students by coaches, other students, or parents once the opportunity is offered. If an opportunity is presented it must be offered to all students in the grade.

There should be no implied sponsorship by Immanuel Lutheran School for off-season teams; therefore, the Immanuel name will not be given to a team. For example, the name Bobcats may be used, but the name Immanuel Bobcats may not be given to an off-season team.