

# Athletic Handbook

## 2016-2017





 **SJA**  
**Bloodhounds**

# To the Parents & Student Athletes

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Fall 2016

Welcome to the 2016-2017 athletic season at Saint Joseph Academy. You are now part of the Bloodhound Athletic Program which began in the 1920's with a track team. Since then, our program has expanded to 56 teams across 12 sports and activities.

Athletics, recognized as an integral part of education, complements our greater mission at Saint Joseph Academy. Lessons of commitment, teamwork, tenacity, and overcoming adversity are advanced on our courts, fields, and track. It is in the midst of "running to win the prize" that our student-athletes experience great life lessons. These lessons go beyond the x's and o's and into the heart. It is our hope that our Bloodhounds develop a love for Christ, through service to their teammates and their school.

Along the way, our programs also provide wonderful opportunities to strengthen the larger community of SJA. Relationships built on the sideline provide cohesiveness among our parents as they support their children. Your enthusiastic participation is important as we continue to seek to honor God through our athletic program.

This handbook contains the philosophies, policies, and guidelines which govern the Saint Joseph Academy program, as well as some of the more important rules and regulations required by the school and governing leagues. Although it is intended to be comprehensive in nature, there will inevitably be situations that occur which are not outlined in this handbook. Having a common understanding of the rules and regulations that govern athletics will assist in significantly reducing concerns and unforeseen problems.

We ask that you read this handbook thoroughly with your student-athlete(s). The athletic office must have a current, signed Parent/Athlete Handbook Contract (located at the end of the handbook) on file before a student-athlete can participate.

We look forward to another great year in athletics.

*Go Bloodhounds!!!*

*Michael Motyl, President*

*Melissa Valadez, Principal*

*Tino Villarreal, Athletic Director*

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# Athletic Program Profile

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**Teams:** Bloodhounds & Lady Bloodhounds

**Colors:** Red & White

**Leagues:** Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) for grades 9 – 12

Rio Grande Valley Public School 32-3A Division for grades 7 & 8

**Classification:** TAPPS 6A or TAPPS Division I

**Sports:**

Grades 9 – 12: football, cheerleading, cross country, basketball, soccer, swimming, golf, baseball, tennis, volleyball and track and field

Grades 7 & 8: football, volleyball, basketball, cross country, track and field, swimming

## State Championships

### Football

TCIL – 1962, 1977, 1980

### Basketball

TCIL – 1937, 1956, 1957 – Boys

TCIL – 1991, 1996 – Girls

### Track & Field

TCIL – 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1996, 1997, 1998 – Girls

TAPPS – 2007 – Girls

TCIL – 1963, 1971, 1972, 1992, 1997 – Boys

### Cross Country

TCIL – 1987, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1997- Girls

TAPPS – 1998 – Girls

### Tennis

TCIL – 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996 – Boys

TAPPS – 2012 – Boys

### Swimming & Diving

TCIL – 1975, 1976 – Boys

TAPPS – 2000 – Boys

TCIL – 1997 – Girls

### Golf

TCIL – 1978, 1979, 1987 - Boys

### Contact Information

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# Athletic Program

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## **Purpose:**

The SJA Athletic Department exists to help fulfill the mission of the school:

*Conducted by the Marist Brothers of the Schools and serving the children of the lower Rio Grande Valley, Saint Joseph Academy provides religious and moral formation and a college preparatory education in the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church. It endeavors to form young men and women who will succeed in university studies, who know and love Jesus, and who actively participate in the worship and mission of the Church, including the Church's preferential option for the poor.*

## **Philosophy**

SJA athletics helps to fulfill the mission of the school by teaching the values of integrity through athletics and the Christian way of life through athletic competition. This is expressed through our three core values in athletics.

### **Character:**

Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4perseverance, character; and character, hope.” *Romans 5:3*

### **Commitment:**

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” *Col 3:23*

### **Community:**

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought

to lay down our lives for our brothers... let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” *1 John 3:16, 18*

The St. Joseph Academy Athletic Department acknowledges the following order of priorities in our school. 1. God, 2. family, 3. academics, 4. athletics. This focus gives student-athletes the opportunity to be balanced spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally.

## **Goals**

### **Athletic Department and Team Goals**

**Excellence** – programs focused on service, altruism, and integrity will ultimately honor God, through good management practices.

**Success** – reaching maximum potential both individually and as a team.

**Individual Goals** - The ultimate individual goal that SJA athletics will emphasize is Academic All-State. Being a great student and a great athlete goes hand in hand at SJA and it is a worthy accomplishment.

### **School Motto: Ad Astra Per Aspera**

For generations, the Saint Joseph Academy motto, Ad Astra Per Aspera (“To the stars through difficulties”) has encapsulated and expressed the highest ideals of our faculty and students.

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The motto is an exhortation to perseverance and a reminder that success, achievement, and accomplishment are the fruits of patient and strenuous work. The best results are seldom instantaneous. Although each person's talents are varied, it is equally true for all; only through diligent effort do we attain our full potential.

### **Team Level Philosophy**

We recognize the normal stages of a child's development and provide appropriate opportunities in athletics:

#### **Middle Division Athletic Programs**

**(7th & 8th Grades)** strive to further a love for the game, continue to develop fundamental skills, and help athletes begin to understand and execute more advanced level strategies and schemes. Try-Outs are for the purpose of team placement based on skill and ability with the focus on giving the individual athlete the best opportunity to succeed. Cuts are discouraged but permissible if based on facility or resource issues. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach, and is not guaranteed for every game, however all athletes should see valued playing time through the course of the season.

#### **Upper Division Athletic Programs**

**(9th – 12th grades)** strive to be the best they can be with a focus on excellence in execution. Players are put in positions to get the most out of their athletic talent, cultivate leadership skills, and understand "team" first responsibility. Each head coach will put the collective efforts of the team ahead of individual achievement and will take knowledge, ability to execute, attitude, conduct and safety into consideration when it comes to playing time. Athletes should not assume

that they are guaranteed a spot on a varsity team simply because they participated on the same team in previous years. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach, and not guaranteed.

Creation and size of teams is determined by many factors including but not limited to the number of participants interested in a sport, facility availability, safety and coaching resources. Whatever we do, we want to do it well. Decisions will be made on a season-by-season basis if we cannot provide a healthy experience for all parties involved.

#### **Multiple Sports and Activities**

We desire athletes to be well rounded, and encourage participation in various activities athletically and otherwise, especially early in student athletic careers. Different sports challenge athletes in different ways, and the skills developed through the training methods used in one sport will often help the athlete in another. Additionally, the disciplines and work ethic required in fine arts are similar to those in athletics.

Regarding multiple sport participation, student-athletes may not participate in multiple team sports during the same season. Student-Athletes may not conclude a sport and join a different sport that belongs to the same season.

Fall Season Team Sports include: Cheerleading, Volleyball, & Football

Winter Season Team Sports include: Cheerleading, Soccer, & Basketball

Spring Season Team Sports include: Baseball

Student athletes may, however, participate in an individual sport and a team sport at the same

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time, if agreed upon by the coaches of both sports. In this case, team Sport participation will take priority with the following exceptions only:

- An individual sport competition over a team sport practice
- Individual Sport TAPPS Conference competition over non-district team sport competition

Fall Season Individual Sports include: Cross Country

Winter Season Individual Sports include: Swimming

Spring Season Individual Sports include: Golf, Tennis, & Track & Field

Consistent, open communication between the student-athlete, his/her parents, and the two coaches involved are paramount. In cases of scheduling conflicts, a priority will be determined by the coaches involved and/or the Athletic Director.

Regarding multiple activity participation, student-athletes will not be discouraged from participation in non-athletic department (i.e. fine arts, debates, academic competitions, etc.) programs. However, student-athletes must take into account the seriousness of the commitment to an athletic team and the time necessary to reach a high level of excellence. As with any team, athletes will depend upon each other for

success. Student-athletes are expected to consider their responsibility to their teammates as an obligation to be taken very seriously.

### **TAPPS**

St. Joseph Academy participates in the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools for grades 9th through 12th in the following sports: football, cross country, basketball, boys soccer, swimming, tennis, golf, baseball, and track. TAPPS which has been existence for over 30 years, is the largest state association of private schools in the nation with over 250 member schools that compete in five classifications.

Parents must provide the school a signed consent form each year to allow their son/daughter to participate in any TAPPS event. This consent is provided on the “Acknowledgement of Rules” form given to each student-athlete at the beginning of the year.



# General Policies

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## **Sportsmanship**

During home contests, we serve as hosts to the visiting team, its students and spectators. They are the guests of Saint Joseph Academy, and should be treated accordingly. At away contests, SJA is expected to act as invited guests. The home school's personnel and facilities must be treated with care and respect.

## **Expectations of Spectators**

1. Spectators at Saint Joseph Academy athletic events are expected to remember that they are attending the contest to support and cheer for their team. Only language and cheers that are positive and uplifting should be used.
2. Spectators should respect the integrity and judgment of game officials, and appreciate their willingness to undertake their work in full view of the public. Officials will be treated with respect. Decisions of the officials are to be accepted without quarrel or controversy.
3. Spectators should remember that they are attending the athletic event to support their children and/or enjoy the athletic skill of the competition. Members of the SJA community should at no time engage in inappropriate behavior such as
  - the use of profanity
  - fighting and arguing
  - attempts to intimidate, ridicule and/or verbally abuse
    - Saint Joseph Academy students and/or coaching staff
    - the opposing team and/or their fans
    - the contest officials

4. Failure to comply with the school's behavior expectations for spectators may result in removal from the contest facility and/or prohibition from attending future athletic events.

**It should be understood that, according to league regulations, Saint Joseph Academy is deemed responsible for the behavior of its spectators. The school or the school district is liable to possible disciplinary action as a result of behavior on the part of its patrons that is in violation of TAPPS or UIL standards and rules.**

## **Scheduling**

The athletic department does its best to schedule games and practices well in advance of the season. However, we cannot control league changes or changes made by an opponent when we travel to their home court/field. Changes to schedules will inevitably occur. As many SJA coaches are part time, there may be a few changes throughout the season due to their work schedules. Middle Division Schedules are often not created until the season is about to start.

## **Transportation and Travel**

1. When athletic events are being held at Saint Joseph Academy or within the Brownsville city limits, athletes will be responsible for their own transportation.
2. When travel outside of Brownsville occurs, Saint Joseph Academy will provide transportation that all athletes will be required to use. Exceptions will occur on a case by case basis.

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3. For post event transportation, athletes may be allowed to ride home with their parents, when the proper waivers have been filled out in a timely manner. At the coaches discretion, some teams may be asked to travel back as a team.
  4. Athletes wishing to ride home (when allowed by the coach) with other relatives or adults after an event will be considered on a case by case basis. A signed parental waiver and verbal confirmation is required.

### **Substance Abuse**

Saint Joseph Academy vigorously opposes any student's use, possession, purchase, or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, or controlled substances (including performance enhancement drugs) of any form, either on or off campus. Violation of this policy subjects a student-athlete to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the school administration and may lead to the involvement of local law enforcement. Penalties could include multiple day suspension, permanent removal from the team, or expulsion from school.

### **Gambling**

Gambling will not be tolerated. Violation of this policy subjects a student-athlete to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the school administration. Penalties could include multiple day suspension, permanent removal from the team, or expulsion from school.

### **Harassment/Bullying**

Saint Joseph Academy Athletics is committed to maintaining an atmosphere that is free from violence, personal abuse, bullying, intimidation or any other form of harassment. The athletic department will uphold the Saint Joseph Academy harassment policy as cited in the Student & Parent Handbook pgs. 47-48. Any form of unwelcomed conduct towards another student whether verbal, written (typed or text included), physical, or visual that occurs in school, out of

school, or at school sponsored events is not condoned by Saint Joseph Academy. Student-athletes in violation may be subject to disciplinary action, by their coaches and by athletic and school administration.

### **Hazing/Bullying**

Hazing and other acts of initiation of students during athletic or extra-curricular events are not condoned by the Academy, and are strictly forbidden. Before school activities and events, students will be advised of the school's policies in an attempt to ensure the safety of all participants as well as maintain the personal dignity of each student and the reputation of the school. Students found to be guilty of such activities are subject to serious disciplinary consequences.

### **Requisites for Participation**

Each SJA student-athlete desiring to participate in Bloodhound athletics must have the completed and signed documents on file in the athletic office before the first day of participation in any given sport:

1. Signed Contract of Athletic Handbook
2. Physical Examination and Medical History
3. Student-Athlete Emergency Information Sheet
4. TAPPS Acknowledgment of Rules (for 9th through 12th grade student-athletes)

Please Note: SJA student-athletes may join the team, once all forms have been turned in, which should be before the first scheduled day of participation. All of the aforementioned documents can be found on the Saint Joseph Academy website or in hardcopy form in the athletic office.

In addition to the above required documentation,

5. A student-athlete must not have any outstanding uniform/equipment items; otherwise the athlete will not be able to attend his/her next sport of choice.



# Student Athletes

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## Code of Conduct

Athletic Participation is a student's choice and thereby a privilege. Student-athletes shall conduct themselves in a way that brings positive recognition to God, St. Joseph Academy, their sport and themselves. At SJA, a student-athlete reflects the mission and identity of the school, no matter where he/she is. Student-athletes must abide by the school and athletic department rules as well as to the TAPPS and/or UIL organizations that we belong to. Any fees incurred from TAPPS or other outside organizations on the part of the Student-Athlete for rule violations will be the responsibility of that student and his or her parents or legal guardians.

## Academic Requirements

1. A student who misses school due to athletic competition is responsible and will be held accountable for any missed assignments while out.
2. Any work that is due during a period that the student will miss should be turned in before the class period or specific arrangements made with the teacher prior to missing.
3. The student –athlete is responsible for making arrangements with the teacher ahead of time for taking early or making up any tests or quizzes that may be scheduled.
4. Under no circumstances should a student fail to talk with a teacher whose class he or she will miss at least a day ahead of time.

## Academic Eligibility

1. To be eligible for participation, a student must currently carry 7.0 credits.
2. Two failing grades in a single quarter renders a student ineligible.
3. Eligibility is determined on the day report cards are issued or at the beginning of the tenth day after report cards are issued with the approval of the Administration.
4. An ineligible student remains ineligible until the next progress report or on the tenth day following the date the next progress report is issued; if progress report indicates that the student is failing no more than one of the courses which had rendered him/her ineligible, eligibility is restored.
5. If eligibility is not restored at the progress report, it will be reviewed at the next report card (see 2 and 3 above).
6. Passing summer school courses may remove a student's ineligible status incurred during the previous school year. Eligibility would begin ten days following the date report cards are issued.
7. Varsity athletes, upon their coach's discretion, may be allowed to practice if they are ineligible, however they may not compete. Ineligible sub varsity or middle division athletes, however, will not be allowed to practice or compete.

## Participation

Participation in athletics is a privilege and is contingent on the following:

1. *Clearance from Previous Sport* – Student-athletes must fulfill any and all obligations necessary to complete their previous sport

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season in good standing. Obligations such as turning in uniforms, equipment, etc. must be fulfilled before an athlete can begin their next sport of choice.

2. *In good academic and moral standing* – Student-athletes may not participate in practices or games if they have failed to meet the minimum academic requirements or are suspended from school.
3. *School attendance*
  - a. Student-athletes must attend school in order to participate in a practice or a game that day, if he or she is late to school on a regular school day they must be present by the beginning of third period. A student-athlete may miss school for up to 3 hours, at any one point during the day if it is to attend a medical appointment, however, proper documentation and school procedures must be followed.
  - b. If the game or practice is scheduled on a Saturday then the student-athlete must be present at school on Friday. If the game or practice is scheduled on a school holiday and school was in session the day before, then the “Saturday rule” will still apply.
  - c. If a student-athlete is traveling at the beginning of the school day for an athletic competition and is to miss the entire day, then he or she must be present at school the day before under the same conditions.
4. *Practice and Game attendance* – Parents and student-athletes need to recognize that absences from practice will hinder skill development, physical and mental conditioning, as well as team unity. Time missed from a sport team practice will influence an athlete’s performance and possibly his or her position on the team. Playing time will be affected, regardless of the reason for missing and any missed

playing time shall not be considered punishment. Missing practices leads to a student-athlete possessing a lack of information, such as game plans, latest play calls, etc. that are vital to a team’s execution.

- a. When a personal or social event conflicts with a practice or a game, we expect students to honor their commitment to the athletic program and their teammates.
- b. When a family event causes the student-athlete to be absent from a practice, the situation should be communicated to a coach at the earliest possible moment, preferably at the beginning of the season. Communication on the day of a competition regarding conflicts is not acceptable. This does not include family emergencies which are unpredictable and managed differently.

### **Tryouts**

Tryouts allow coaches to place like-skilled players together which aids in each player’s development. Whether a team should have tryouts and/or cuts, and how they are handled and executed will be left to the discretion of the team’s coach in consultation with the Varsity Head Coach and Athletic Director. If a student misses tryouts, he/she will be placed on the lower level team. Coaches reserve the right to pull players up from lower level teams at any time. Seventh grade students may use the first two days of tryouts or practices to see if they want to play the sport. If a seventh grader shows up for the third day of tryouts/practice it is assumed that he/she is committing to play for the season. A roster spot on any team the year before does not guarantee the same spot on the team for the current year.

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## Time Commitments

*Middle Division Athletics* – 4 to 5 days a week commitment with no more than 2 competitions or 1 competition and 1 tournament throughout. Practice lengths for all sports are not to exceed 90 minutes. Football (only) will be allowed 1 hour and 45 minutes due to equipment apparel and distance to practice fields. Practices and games may be held on Saturday due to league scheduling. No teams will have mandatory practices during holidays with the following exception. If a game is scheduled during the first day of school from the return of a holiday, practices may be mandatory on the one or two days before. Playing a game after several days off could be a safety/health issue. Also, student-athletes in Middle Division Basketball often have a game on the Monday or Tuesday before Thanksgiving and attendance for that game is expected as well.

*Upper Division Athletics* - 5 to 6 days a week commitment, practice lengths for all sports shall not exceed 2 hours a day. This does not include a possible additional required 45 minute strength and speed period. Practices and/or games will be held during some school holidays depending on the sport and season. However there will be no games or practices of any kind:

- On Sundays
- During the last week of July (TAPPS Mandatory Dead Week)
- Dec. 24, 25, & 26
- One day prior to Mid-Term and Final Exams through their completion

Student-athletes in the upper division whose seasons run through Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter Holidays (Spring Break) may have games and practices throughout. Attendance is expected and mandatory.

## Departure from Team

There are three types of departure from a team.

1. *Leaving a team* – An injury, poor health status, or family emergencies may all lead to

permissible departure from the team only after being discussed between parents, the head coach, and/or Director of Athletics. A student-athlete may still be eligible for a varsity letter in this circumstance, and he/she will still be eligible for his/her next season sport.

2. *Quitting a team* – Regardless of the reason, any player quitting a sport after he/she has started the sport will not be eligible to participate the rest of the school year.
3. *Being dismissed from a team*- Any player who is dismissed from a team for conduct, rule infractions, or disciplinary reasons will not be eligible to play the following season's sport.

## Injuries

The school's therapist & first responder is responsible for the oversight of treatment and rehabilitation of injured athletes, as prescribed by a physician and/or First Responder. The following policies are in effect in cases of injuries:

1. All athletes should notify their coach when injured. Coach and player should then notify the school First Responder of injuries requiring treatment.
2. Injured athletes must be seen by our school therapist and first responder. They will be asked to seek an opinion from an First Responder and/or doctor for evaluation before being released for participation.
3. No treatment and/or rehabilitation program will be discontinued until authorized by the prescribed First Responder and/or doctor.
4. Injured athletes, regardless of grade, are still required to attend practices unless treating and/or rehabilitating an injury, or as approved by the Head Coach.
5. Athletes missing a practice or a game for training must first get permission from their coach. It is the player's responsibility to communicate with their coach.

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### **Stewardship**

All student-athletes are expected to be good stewards of all equipment, facilities and uniforms entrusted to them.

1. Locker rooms, weight room and training room are expected to be clean and orderly at all times.
2. Student-athletes are required to use assigned lockers to store their equipment, uniforms, and personal items and those lockers should be locked at all times.

### **Athletic Uniform and Dress Code**

Student-athletes are issued team uniforms and are expected to take great care of the uniforms. If a uniform is lost and cannot be found, another uniform (if available) will be issued, once the lost uniform has been paid for in full. Uniform pieces which are damaged outside of practices and games will need to be replaced at the expense of the student-athlete. The replacement cost for a uniform top or bottom is \$75.00. The replacement cost for both is \$150.00.

Each coach will determine team dress code when traveling to an away game. If there is athletic team travel during a school day that occurs either at or before the end of 2nd period, then the student-athletes belonging to the traveling team may come to school dressed down in their appropriate athletic uniforms or travel gear as approved by the team coach and/or Director of Student Services. If travel is going to occur during 3rd period or after, then team members traveling should come to school following the rules of the normal student dress code. During game days that involve a home game or travel after school, Student-Athletes may wear their jerseys over their school uniform top. If an Athletic Team wishes to wear an alternate top, other than their normal school uniform, then permission from the Director of

Student Services must be received first. All practice gear at all times should be Saint Joseph Academy athletic apparel or as appointed by the Head Coach.

### **Lettering Policy**

Varsity Letters are earned for significant contributions to a varsity team either in playing time. Being on a varsity roster or earning a PE credit for varsity athletics does not guarantee a Varsity Letter will be earned. Completion of a varsity sport's season is a prerequisite but does not necessarily entitle an athlete to a Varsity Letter.

Student-athletes in grades 9-12 may earn a Varsity Letter in a sport under this qualification:

1. Playing/Participation Time – Athletes must play in half of the games for at least half of the season, for individual sports they must compile at least 1 point in half the meets for at least half of the season. These requirements will be communicated to the athletes and their parents at the beginning of each sport season.
2. If an injury impacts the minimum playing/participation time qualification, then it is up to the discretion of the Varsity Head Coach and Athletic Director to determine whether or not the playing/participation time qualification would have been met based on the to-date contribution at the time of injury.

Letter jackets may not be purchased prior to a student-athlete earning his/her first Varsity Letter. The athletic department monitors the list of athletes who have qualified for a Varsity Letter and will notify student-athletes and their parents with enough time to handle discrepancies before information is released about where and when to purchase letterman's jackets at the end of the school year.

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### **Weight Room Policies**

1. Athletes are not permitted in the weight room without proper supervision.
2. SJA athletic or PE clothes and athletic shoes must be worn at all times.
3. All lifts should be accompanied by a spotter.
4. Focus is critical; therefore, no horseplay, socializing or laziness will be tolerated.
5. When finished, all weights must be racked and areas cleaned.

### **Training Room Policies**

The training room is a co-educational sports medicine injury prevention and care room.

1. No student-athlete is allowed in the training room unless under direct supervision of the school's First Responder or Head (sport) Coach.
2. Coaches may use the training room to get ice but should not use any other materials or equipment unless directed by the First Responder.
3. Athletes needing assistance prior to a game have priority over other athletes who are preparing for a practice the same day.

### **Strength and Speed Training**

Successful athletic programs require a strong commitment to strength and speed training. High school student-athletes are expected to work hard on improving strength and speed throughout the school year, whether they are in or out of season. Program Directors (Varsity Head Coaches) will, in accordance with league rules, provide both voluntary and/or mandatory opportunities for student-athletes to train in the weight room, gym, fields, and track throughout the year.

### **Out-of-Season Expectations**

During the school year, student-athletes are expected to give the in-season sport in which they are participating first priority, and are not expected to train for another school sport in any manner during that time period unless approved by the current in-season head coach. Regardless of in-season versus out-of-season status, an emphasis will be placed on strength and speed training, both of which will be required of all 9th -12th grade student-athletes throughout the school year.

During the summer all 9th-12th grade athletes are expected to work on and develop their athletic abilities. It is understood that family and personal time take first priority during the summer, however, there are various opportunities for student-athletes to train when they can. If a student-athlete is in town and not committed to a family activity, it is assumed that he/she will be engaged in some sort of personal strength and speed development program.



# Parents

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Without a doubt, parents are the most influential models for young athletes. From modeling correct behavior during competition to prioritizing the sports' commitment in family life, parents make the biggest impact on a young person's athletic experience. Not only are parents influential, they are critical to the success of the SJA athletic programs. The athletic department needs parents support on all athletic teams. Parents may serve in one or more of a variety of volunteer positions throughout the year. Team moms, meal coordinators, overnight chaperones, statisticians, videographers, concessions, admissions, are just a few of the areas where volunteers can provide some much needed help. Serving the Athletic Department also sets a good example for our student-athletes.

The guidelines that follow are an attempt to provide a foundation for our joint effort to guide your sons and daughters through the challenging yet wonderful experience of high school athletics.

## **Presence at Games**

It is important to student-athletes whenever possible, that parents are present at games, both home and away. A parent's attendance tells the child that he/she cares and that they want to share in the joys and frustrations which are a part of competition. It also gives parents an opportunity to develop a bond with their child and other parents, as well as to observe the progress made throughout the season.

## **Presence at Tryouts or Practices**

Tryouts and practices, which are considered valuable instructional and evaluation time, are closed to all non-team or program personnel, with the exception of parents of the student-athletes participating. No one else should be present, unless previously approved by the Head Coach. Parents and/or Invited guests are expected to refrain from disrupting tryout or practice sessions, and from interacting with players and/or coaches. Disruptions by spectators will be reported to the Varsity Head Coach and Athletic Director the same day.

## **Perspective – Why Kids Play the Game**

Most young people participate in sports for the following reasons: to have fun, to develop the natural desire to play, to make new friends or be with their friends, to be part of a team, and to compete. "To win" or "to be a champion" is often not at the top of the list. Athletes must hear from parents and coaches that it is the process of competing that matters, the value of learning how to prepare to win that counts. Too much emphasis on the actual win or loss can put the value of sports out of context.

## **Recommendations on How to Help Your Child Compete**

### *Before Competition*

- Know their goals, roles, and needs, and accept them.
- Release them to the game, their team, and their coach.

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### *During Competition*

Model poise, confidence, and correct behavior.

Focus on our team!

### *After Competition*

Give them all the time and space they need.

Be a confidence builder.

### **Coach as a Leader**

Coaches work with the team on a daily basis in practice and in competition, evaluating character and performance, and therefore will make judgment decisions based on what they feel is in the best interest of the team. Playing times, players' positions, and strategy should and will be left to the discretion of the coach.

Parents and student-athletes must trust that coaches try to make the best decisions for the team, as well as for the individuals who make up the team.

A team will not function well with non-coaches trying to coach. Parents should not place a child in the difficult position of having to decide to whom they will listen – their coach or their parent. Parents are encouraged to be interested, supportive observers, but they should do so from a distance, allowing the coach room to instruct and the player space in which to perform without distraction from the stands.

### **Communication Internal**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to student –athletes. As parents, when your children become involved in our SJA Athletics, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

### **Communication you should expect from your child's coach:**

1. His/her coaching philosophy
2. Goals and expectations for the team
3. Team requirements, special equipment, strength and conditioning programs
4. Procedure if your child is injured during participation
5. Team rules, guidelines, and consequences for infractions
6. Lettering criteria
7. Team selection process
8. Locations and times for all practices, contests, and travel plans to be updated on the Rank One Sports website, [www.rankonesports.com](http://www.rankonesports.com) or [r1s.mobi](http://r1s.mobi) on cell phone.

Direct communication between the coach and the players is very important. This is usually the best way for any questions or conflicts to be addressed. It is because of this, if a meeting between a parent and the coach is warranted, your son or daughter must be present at the meeting as well. A meeting will not take place between a parent and coach without the student-athlete present.

### **Guidelines to use when requesting a meeting with your Child's Coach:**

1. Please consider waiting 24 hours before placing a call or sending an e-mail to request a meeting.
2. Do not attempt to confront a coach or request a meeting before or after games or practices, this is never an appropriate time.
3. If a coach cannot be reached, please call the Athletic Director to help set up the meeting.
4. If the meeting with a team coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution and it is felt the situation warrants further discussion, request a meeting with the Athletic Director, Coach, Student-athlete and Parent.

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Please Note: The chain of command must be followed, please seek to address concerns with the team coach first.

**Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches:**

1. Concerns about your child's general welfare
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

**Things not appropriate for Discussion and are left to the Coach's Discretion:**

1. Playing Time
2. Player's Positions
3. Team Strategy
4. Play Calling
5. Other Student Athletes

**Communication External**

All Press Releases must be approved by the Athletic Director or his/her appointed contact person within the athletic department. Please do not damage the relationship our school has with media outlets by expressing opinions to them about lack of press coverage over our athletic events.

Parents may not contact opposing schools, officials, or the TAPPS office to voice complaints over athletic contests, opposing players, coaches, fans, or officials. All concerns, opinions, or complaints should be communicated directly with the SJA Athletic Director.

**Information on Rank One website**

The Rank One website on the internet will allow a person to view all practice times and game schedules for every Saint Joseph Academy Athletic Team, as well as access to a map of all away venues.

Steps to viewing Schedules on Rank One:

1. Access the internet and type in [www.rankonesport.com](http://www.rankonesport.com) or if viewing from a cell phone access the mobile website at [r1s.mobi](http://r1s.mobi)

2. Click on View Schedules
3. Type in Saint Joseph Academy (make sure to spell out Saint)
4. Click on View Schedule of the team you wish to see and the Game Schedule will appear
5. Click on View Practice Schedules if you would like to see upcoming practices

**Student Accident and Injury Plan**

Saint Joseph Academy does carry an “**excess**” **insurance plan** for student accidents and injuries that have caused them to seek medical attention. If a student-athlete is injured during a school practice or a game for a Saint Joseph Academy team, this insurance coverage is in place to cover medical costs after a student's primary health insurance has been used.

**The following procedures should be followed for initiating a claim.**

1. Student-athlete must report injury to coach and/or school trainer when injury occurs.
2. The schools Athletic Trainer will fill out Part 1 of the school's Notification of Injury Form and submit it to the Saint Joseph Academy finance office.
3. The injured athlete's parents fill out Part 2 of the injury form at the SJA finance office and a copy of the completed form is retained by the parents.
4. Parents should then follow step by step the “Reporting Injuries and Initiating the Claim Process” on the Notification of Injury Form.

**Please Remember:**

1. Student Insurance is an “excess” insurance plan only.
2. Reimbursements will only be issued for expenses after a student's primary insurance has been used.

# Saint Joseph Academy Fight Song

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Music & Lyrics: Frank J. Manna

Saint Joseph Academy we're true to you  
we fight for a victory and honor too –  
with courage and pride we stand as one strong band –  
to show we are the best in all the land –  
our motto is all for one and one for all –  
we bravely await the sign – to meet the call –  
no matter how great are the odds – we will not fall –  
go reach for the stars with all our might –  
we'll always be true to you Saint Joe

**GO FIGHT**

**GO HOUNDS**

Saint Joseph Academy (repeat....)

© January 20, 2012



 **SJA**  
**Bloodhounds**



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