

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

2021-2022

Assumption Catholic Church
Assumption Catholic School
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Dear Parents, Students, and Coaches,

"[I] consider sports as an instrument of education when it fosters high human and spiritual ideals; when it forms youth in an integral way in values such as loyalty, perseverance, friendship, solidarity and peace. Surmounting differences of cultures and ideologies, sports offers an ideal occasion for dialogue and understanding among peoples, for building the desired civilization of love. To put into practice these values, based on the dignity of the human person, in face of possible interests that might darken the nobility of sports itself."
- Pope John Paul II (Sept. 16, 2002)

Welcome to Assumption Catholic School! In choosing to attend Assumption you have elected a Christ-centered Catholic education and academic excellence. Many wonderful opportunities await you!

As a school community, we all must consider the appropriate role of athletics here at Assumption. A core characteristic of Catholic Christianity and Catholic schools is the concept of relationship and community and the conviction that human kind is "made for each other" (Educating for Life, Thomas Groome, p.60). Our prayer is stronger in community. Academic achievement is greater in a community with a similar mission and goals. Our athletic program adds another dimension to our school community. Pope John Paul II says that as manifestations of the communal body of Christ, athletics serve to unify all individuals, including coaches, student-athletes, and families in a spirit of peace.

This handbook outlines the philosophy and reflects the policies of the Assumption Athletic Program for the 2019-2020 school year. Please read this document carefully, sign the attached agreement, and return it to school before attending the first practice date. The agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of the Assumption Catholic School Athletic Program during the entire school year.

Assumption Athletics extends the work of the School by offering another environment in which high human and spiritual ideals can be fostered to help children grow towards a deeper understanding of themselves and their roles in God's great world. Thank you for doing your part to help positively affect and develop the lives of all children by building a peaceful environment within our school, our parish, and in our larger community.

In peace,
Anthony Polster, Athletic Director

Assumption Catholic School Athletics

Mission Statement of Assumption School:

The Assumption Catholic community provides a challenging, academic education where faith, children, and learning come first.

Mission of Assumption Athletics:

The Assumption School Athletic Program dedicates itself to the pursuit of excellence in athletics within the framework of a Catholic community and in accordance with its primary role as an educator and spiritual guide. The athletics program is committed to providing opportunities for each individual student-athlete to reach his/her highest potential while developing the qualities and spirit of a Catholic Christian.

Philosophy:

“Do you not know that the runners in the stadium all run in the race, but only one wins the prize? Run so as to win. Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one.”
Corinthians 9:24-25

We recognize that the imperishable crown offered by Jesus Christ far exceeds any of the perishable crowns or trophies offered by this world. As a Catholic school, Assumption upholds Christian values and principles. Though our athletic teams strive to win in the sense of having the best score, we recognize the real value of Catholic school athletics is realized only if it fosters the development of the human person—both in spirit and in body—by cultivating Christian character, strengthening personal integrity and responsibility, and promoting the pursuit of excellence in all endeavors.

Participation on a team is a privilege. With this privilege come responsibilities in the areas of preparation, attitude, sportsmanship, and academics. These responsibilities exist both in and out of school, both in athletic and non-athletic settings. We recognize the need for God’s support and guidance in meeting these responsibilities.

Conference Affiliation:

Assumption Catholic School participates in the Diocese of St. Augustine Division II Athletic Conference, a conference comprised of area Catholic schools with larger enrollments. In addition to playing conference games, Assumption teams often play other schools in the Jacksonville area. Thus, Assumption athletes play students from diverse backgrounds and skill levels.

Registration Information

Nondiscrimination Policy

Assumption Catholic School Athletics admits any students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its participatory policies, admissions policies, or athletic programs.

Procedure for Registration

A student can become a full, participating member of an Assumption athletic team once the following requirements are met:

1. Student and parent/guardian have completed and returned Assumption Athletic Permission Form (see Appendix A)
2. Students for winter and spring sports must have a signed recommendation form from each teacher.
3. Student and parent/guardian have read the Assumption Athletic Handbook and signed the Athletic Contract (see Appendix B)

Athletic Permission Form

Assumption students wishing to participate in a sport must fill out an Assumption Catholic School Athletic Permission Form. This form is accessible at the end of this handbook (see Appendix A) and in the main office of the school. Permission forms must be completed and returned on or before the deadline set before the first tryout/practice date. Any student who decides to participate on a team after the deadline should see the Athletic Director before attending practice. Deadlines are not intended to prevent a student from participating on a sports team, but they are necessary to make sure that team sizes do not become too large to allow for proper instruction of participants. A permission form need only be completed one time during the school year. Please indicate in the spaces provided at the top of the form, which sports the student may be interested in playing.

Fees

All sports offered at Assumption Catholic School have costs required for operation. Anyone participating in Assumption varsity and/or junior varsity sports (including cross country, basketball, volleyball, softball, cheerleading, soccer) will be required to pay a \$65 fee. Please make checks payable to Assumption Athletic Association. The fee helps cover the costs of uniforms, equipment. Team T-shirts or sweatshirts are NOT covered with the fee and will require additional monies. Students and their families may be asked to provide their own personal equipment for certain sports (like shin guards, shoes etc...).

General Information

Levels of Competition

Development of the skills fundamental to each sport receives primary emphasis on each athletic team offered at Assumption. Each team experience, however, may be slightly different depending on the level at which the team is competing.

LEVEL

Varsity

Teams at this level strive to prepare students for high school athletics

Junior Varsity

Teams at this level serve as transitions from the developmental level to varsity level teams.

Developmental

Assumption Parish leagues will be available for various sports to all students who wish to participate in basketball and soccer.

COMMITMENT REQUIRED

High

Students and families must commit to 5 events a week—practice, games, scrimmages, etc.

*attendance at Saturday practices and practices during holiday breaks may be requested.

Moderate

Students and families must commit to 4-5 events a week—practice, games, scrimmages, etc.

*attendance at Saturday practices and practices during holiday breaks may be requested.

Low

TRYOUTS

Yes

Varies according to interest and capacity

None

COMPETITION

Officiated games against other Diocesan schools as well as occasional non-conference games. Season ends with a conference tournament.

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Intramural games provide participating athletes opportunities to practice learned skills in informal, competitive game situations. These intramural games may be within-team games or played against other developmental teams. Intramural games are often officiated by the coaches and stopped occasionally for instruction.

PLAYING TIME

At discretion of teams' coach(es).

Coaches will make every effort to play every team member in each game.

All athletes participate with emphasis on **equal** playing time for each athlete

SKILLS EMPHASIZED

- Advancing game strategies
- Leadership skills on and off the field/court
- Individual fundamentals reinforced and extended

- Importance of team cohesion
- Individual fundamentals introduced and reinforced
- Formal game strategies introduced

- Basic individual fundamentals
- Introduction to team dynamics and rules of formal competition

Athletic Teams at Assumption

Assumption offers the following Varsity sports as recognized by the Diocese of St. Augustine Athletic Conference to students in grades 4 - 8 (unless otherwise noted): Boys and Girls Basketball, Cheerleading, Cross Country (5th-8th), Girls Volleyball, Coed Soccer, and Boys and Girls Softball. Junior Varsity teams in Soccer and Basketball are open to students in grades 4-7.

Transportation Policy

In accordance with the policies of the Diocese of St. Augustine, Assumption School does not provide any transportation to or from athletic events. All transportation is privately arranged by parents/guardians. Assumption and the Diocese of St. Augustine assume no liability for accidents that may occur en route to any sporting practice or activity.

Tryouts

Announcements of tryout dates will occur over the loud speaker prior to tryout dates. Tryout flyers will be posted in school on the athletic bulletin board near Coach's office, and appear at <http://assumptionjax.org/>. Students in grades 4 through 8 may try out for any Assumption sports team.

Coaching Expectations and Requirements

Coaches are first and foremost educators, and must work in coordination with the parents who are the primary educators of children. At all times, coaches must be examples of Christ the Teacher who serve as role models for student-athletes to emulate. They must be messengers of the school mission and ensure that athletic programs embody the Catholic characteristics prevalent at Assumption School.

Goal Setting

When working with Assumption student-athletes, a successful coach will work towards goals in the following three dimensions: team, personal, and school.

Team Goals

Assumption coaches build a team by:

- Advancing the athletes' understanding of their role as members of the communal body of Christ.
- Creating a positive and memorable experience that will be cherished by the student-athlete for the rest of his/her life.
- Teaching the specific and unique skills of this sport to the very best of his/her abilities by using all means, methods, and resources available.
- Teaching the skills of healthy competition that will prepare athletes and the team to succeed.

Personal Goals

Assumption coaches grow as individuals by:

- Modeling character, sportsmanship, self-discipline, and a lived faith.
- Appreciating the moments of grace throughout a season, at times of winning and losing.
- Becoming a lifelong learner of their sport.
- Maintaining perspective in and throughout all athletic endeavors, realizing teachable moments exist in all experiences.
- Fostering positive relationships with all school community stakeholders.

School Goals

Assumption coaches contribute to the school community by:

- Infusing the school mission in all athletic activities.
- Promoting academic excellence as an essential component in the development of student-athletes.
- Committing to effective communication with administrators, teachers, parents, and athletes.
- Supporting the development of student-athletes as leaders and role models in the greater school community.
- Creating a culture of school unity and spirit as exemplified through sportsmanship, positive fan participation, and respect for all.

Conduct of Coaches

Coaches are called to be models and witnesses to their faith each day and as such, coaches are expected to uphold high standards of conduct in and out of season.

Language

Language should be appropriate and constructive at all times. Coaches are expected to not only monitor their own language, but they should also set and enforce standards of appropriate language for their athletes. This includes, but is not limited to swearing, harassment, exclusionary language, sexual innuendo, personal attacks, and unsportsmanlike gestures.

Treatment of Opponents

Although opponents are not a part of our school community, they are members of the larger body of Christ and should be treated as such. Coaches should model such respect for their athletes and should instruct players on how to welcome their opponents and all visitors in a way that conveys a sense of hospitality and community.

Prayer

Athletic experiences play an important role in the spiritual formation of students at Assumption School. Genuine and lasting spiritual development is only possible through careful and conscientious preparation by those in leadership positions. Coaches, as team leaders, are chosen not just to be mentors and role models for student-athletes, but also to be witnesses. Prayer should become an intentional component to a team's culture, not just a rushed event before or after a game or practice. Rather than emphasizing winning, prayers should focus on embodying the spirit of Christianity. Coaches are encouraged to build and create spiritual traditions into their approach to coaching at Assumption Catholic School.

Holding Tryouts

In a Catholic school, it is essential to demonstrate respect for all members of the school community. All tryouts are closed to all parents and guardians. There is not an expectation that all students will be able to be members of a team, but when cuts are necessary, students should be treated fairly and with compassion. Coaches should provide individualized feedback to players rather than simply posting a list of team members. When individuals fail to make a team, alternative team roles can be considered, if possible.

Coaching Duties

In addition to serving as witnesses and models of faith, Assumption coaches are expected to fulfill the following duties:

- Plan out practices and games

- Supervise athletes at all times until they are picked up from practices/games
- Condition athletes properly
- Assess athletes' readiness for practice & competition
- Instruct properly on what to do and what not to do
- Maintain safe playing conditions
- Ensure cleanliness of facilities
- Provide proper equipment
- Communicate practice and game schedule to athletes and parents
- Select, train, and supervise assistant coaches

Communication with Athletes and Parents

Assumption coaches should establish clear procedures and guidelines for communication with athletes and parents that align with the philosophy and mission of Assumption Catholic School. E-mail should be used only to communicate basic information to parents, such as time and location of games and practices. Discussions of concerns should always be done in person. If a face-to-face meeting is not possible, a phone call is acceptable. Before meetings, establish clear agendas and communicate that certain topics will not be discussed. Coaches do not have to discuss playing time, coaching strategies and specific plays, or information pertaining to other athletes.

Awards and Recognition

The Assumption Athletics Program hosts an annual Sports Appreciation Night at the conclusion of the spring season. Coaches are expected to attend the evening to publicly introduce their players and summarize their season. Recognition of athletes, however, should be utilized throughout the season as a means of personal athlete formation and team-building. Particular recognition of athletes should embody the goals and philosophies of the athletic department and program, not only physical talent. Some areas of recognition may include one's academics, sportsmanship, and Catholic nature/spirituality.

Student Expectations and Requirements

Students and parents should recognize that participation in the athletic program is not a right of all students, but rather a privilege to those selected individuals who possess the ability, attitude, disposition, cooperative spirit, and desire to represent the Assumption community in a favorable way. By joining the school's athletic program, a student becomes a representative of his/her team and of Assumption Catholic School.

Eligibility and Probation

We expect student-athletes to maintain academic and behavioral standards in keeping with the Assumption Catholic School Student-Parent Handbook and the teachings of the Catholic Church. These regulations and procedures apply while on school premises, during practices and competitions, and in the public arena. A student will be considered ELIGIBLE to participate in interscholastic athletics at Assumption School if their most recent academic report reflects:

- A grade of C or better in each subject
- A Satisfactory grade or better in conduct for all subjects
- A Satisfactory grade in all Enrichment classes

A student-athlete will be considered ON PROBATION should his/her most recent academic report reflect any one or a combination of the following academic grades or conduct:

1. One D or F grade in any subject
2. Below Satisfactory grade in any special subjects
3. One Incomplete in any subject
4. Below Satisfactory conduct in any subject
5. 3 0's in any one class (immediate probation)

A student-athlete will also be considered ON PROBATION should his/her behavior require:

1. Removal from a classroom
2. Saturday School or other Suspensions (in or out of school)

Probation is one, one week period* during which a student-athlete works to improve his/her grades and/or conduct. During this period, a student is still considered a full, participating member of the athletic team, but time should be spent wisely in improving one's grades and conduct. Students may not play or practice but may sit the bench in "street clothes" at the Coaches discretion. Student-athletes are encouraged to seek extra help from those teachers in courses where he/she is struggling either before school or after school. Assumption School faculty and staff are always willing to assist students in their academic studies and personal growth as young adults. After the probation period, all grades must be at or above 70% or an additional probation is given. For a probation period longer than 20 days, the student will be removed from the activity for the remainder of the season

*The only exception to the one-week probationary period is the Incomplete. As soon as the student-athlete makes up the work that caused the incomplete AND the work is to the satisfaction of the appropriate teacher, the student-athlete is no longer on probation.

Evaluating Probationary Improvement

A student-athlete remains a full, participating member of a team if his/her grades at the end of the probationary period reflect a C or better in every class, and the student-athlete maintained conduct in keeping with the Assumption Student-Parent Handbook and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Ineligibility

A student-athlete will remain INELIGIBLE for interscholastic sports at Assumption Catholic School should there be no improvement after the probationary period. Ineligibility means that a student-athlete may NOT participate in interscholastic athletics at Assumption Catholic until all criteria has been met.

Student-Athlete Expectations

A student-athlete's behavior is governed by the same rules, regulations, and procedures that apply to all students as set forth in the Assumption Catholic Parent-Student Handbook. Each student-athlete is expected to demonstrate and encourage in others behaviors that reflect good sportsmanship. If behavior infractions occur, student-athletes may face both a school and an athletic consequence.

Attendance

All student-athletes must be marked as present in school on the day of practice or a game in order to participate. Please see the Student-Parent Handbook for what constitutes an absence.

All student-athletes must recognize the time commitment made to a team. One is expected to attend all practices and games. If one cannot attend a practice or game, please make sure the coach and/or athletic director has been notified in advance. Consequences for a missed practice or game will be informed by the team rules as outlined by the coach/team at the beginning of the season in addition to the natural consequences that result from missing practice instruction or game experience.

Dress Code/Uniforms

Student-Athletes are highly visible representatives of the school and, as such, are responsible for using good judgment in their overall appearance. All teams, regardless of level, have a responsibility to ensure that their game attire speaks volumes of their class and excellence. All game shirts will be tucked in. No player should make modifications to his or her uniform. Athletes are to wear a school issued uniform and treat their uniform with respect. Teams that treat their uniforms with respect, exude class.

Uniforms must be returned to the athletic director within seven (7) days of the last game. Progress reports and/or report cards may be withheld until the uniform is returned. If a uniform is not returned, parents are responsible for the cost of replacing the uniform.

Sportsmanship

All student-athletes are expected to represent Assumption Catholic School in an exemplary manner. This behavior is expected both on and off the court or field. Student-athletes are expected to display the best of Christian courtesy and manners to all officials, coaches, opposing coaches, players, and spectators. At all times good sportsmanship is the rule, not the exception. The penalty for unsportsmanlike behavior during a practice or game will be left to the discretion of the coaches for each sport along with input from the athletic director. This can range from sitting out at practice to a one-game suspension. In extreme cases when an athlete has been ejected from a game, multi-game suspensions and dismissal from the team may be appropriate. The athletic director and principal will make the final decision following a meeting with the athlete, coach, and parent.

Transfer Students/Injured Students

Transfer students or students injured at the beginning of a season will be awarded a tryout for a team if it is before the first game. Transfer and injured students are guaranteed the same tryout duration as the other athletes, though they are not guaranteed placement.

Expectations of Parents and Stakeholders

“It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; in fulfilling their duty teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem.” (Code of Canon Law, 796)

Assumption Catholic School coaches and administrators respect the primacy of the parents as the first teachers of their student-athletes, and will partner with parents in the formation of student-athletes. Parents and other members of the community play a vital role in the holistic education of children including students' participation in school-sponsored athletics. Together, all stakeholders should actively work to ensure that the Catholic mission and identity of Assumption School permeates the athletics program.

No Person shall possess or consume alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs on campus or during sporting events. In the event this rule is broken one would be escorted out of the game for the duration of the event.

Top Five Ways to Support your Student-Athlete

1. **Be present** – Show up to games, cheer, and support our teams!
2. **Be positive** – Children learn from modeling. When talking about the game, season, performances and decision-making, please share the gift of a positive outlook on life! Make sure that your child knows that win or lose, he/she is loved and supported.
3. **Encourage independence** – Encourage student-athletes to be responsible for the care of their athletic gear and to be prepared for practices and games. In addition, student-athletes should speak directly with their coach about any questions and/or concerns.
4. **Observe the “24 Hour Cushion”** – As do all good educators, Assumption Catholic coaches will naturally and deliberately reflect on game situations and decisions. Please allow coaches the time they need to process their decisions before approaching them with any questions. As stated above, coaches need not discuss playing time, coaching strategies and specific plays, or information pertaining to other athletes.
5. **Model Assumption Catholic’s behavior expectations for visiting spectators** – Take pride in our athletic program and model for visitors how we...
 1. cheer for our team rather than against our opponents.
 2. respect the integrity and authority of game officials.
 3. allow coaches to coach without criticism from the spectators.
 4. help clean up at the end of athletic events.

Transportation

Transportation to/from practices and games is the sole responsibility of the parents. Please ensure that your student-athlete is picked up promptly at the end of each practice/game. If your child is sent to after-school care at anytime before or after practice you will be charged the appropriate fee.

Removal from Team – Parent Decision

The principal, athletic director and coaches will respect and support the decision of a parent to remove his or her child from a team for any reason. However, once the child is removed, he or she may not return to that team for the remainder of the sport season.

Revisions/Modifications to Policy

The Principal may make changes to any policies outlined in this handbook as needed, and has the final decision with regards to any policy. Changes will be made public in the weekly Tuesday reminders or told to the team via Athletic Director

The Principal has the authority to remove a student or cancel a season if student-athletes or parents are not adhering to Assumption Catholic School standards.

Appendix A

Athletic Permission Form (need only 1 for the year)

2021-2022

Name of Athlete _____

Grade: _____

Sports: Basketball _____, Soccer _____ Softball _____ Volleyball _____,
Cheerleading _____, Cross Country _____, Other _____

Insurance

The following information must be completed and signed by the appropriate parent or guardian and turned in to the main office before participation in student athletic activities will be allowed. If the following information is not complete, this form will be returned to you.

Parent Guardian: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZipCode: _____

Home Phone: _____

WorkPhone: _____ Cell/Emergency Phone: _____

All students participating in student athletic activities at Assumption Catholic must have their own medical coverage. Students will not be allowed to participate in student athletic activities unless the following information is submitted and the form is signed by the parent or the guardian of the student.

Insurance Company:

Policy Holder:

Policy and Group Number:

Address or phone number of insurance company:

Wavier of Liability

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that I (we) am (are) the parent or legal guardian of the student. I hereby give permission to the staff of Assumption Catholic School to seek during the period of school athletic activities, appropriate medical attention and for the student to receive medical attention and treatment to be covered under the student's insurance policy detailed on page 1 of this form. I/We the undersigned, for ourselves, our heirs, our executor and administrator, waiver, release, and forever discharge Assumption Catholic

School and its staff, officers, agents, employees, representatives, successors and assigns from any and all liability claims, demands, actions, and causes of action whatsoever arising out of or related to any loss, personal injury or property damage that may be sustained or occur during participation in student athletic activities or while at school.

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____ Date: _____

Appendix B

ATHLETIC CONTRACT

Please initial each statement below to acknowledge your agreement to this contract. Then, sign the form at the bottom and return to the Athletic Director to be eligible for participation.

As a Assumption Catholic Student-Athlete...

____ I will strive to give my best to the team in every practice and every game.

____ I will be on time for all practices and games.

____ I will not miss a practice or game because of another outside sport or extra-curricular activity unless approved by the coach or athletic director.

____ This experience is an opportunity to learn not only _____ (sport), but also teamwork with all its inherent responsibilities. There will be times when I will follow someone's lead and there will be times when I must assume that lead – I always have a contribution to make to my team.

____ I will take my coaches' directions and comments as constructive suggestions, which make me a better athlete and my team a successful unit.

____ Practice is where I learn the concepts of the game. How I apply those concepts in mind and body in practice will carry over into the game situation.

____ I will always play hard, but always will be a fair sport whether we are winning or losing the game, realizing that everyone on my team and my opponent's team is playing for fun and the competitive experience.

____ I will carry these principles to my schoolwork and my family life with the realization that these are of greatest importance and take precedence to any sport.

____ I will be an example of Christ in all my actions on and off the field/court of competition.

____ I have read the athletic handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures as stated.

Player Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

