

Immanuel Lutheran School

Athletic Department

Handbook

Changes to the Immanuel Lutheran School Athletic Department Handbook were prepared by the Athletic Council and approved by the School Board in June 2024.

2024-2025 Athletic Council

Heather Dyer, Athletic Director

Matt Burbrink, School Board Representative

Julie Tracey & BJ Sinclair, Faculty Representatives

Brad Henry, Supporting Congregation Representative

Sarah Whipker, Parent Representative

Jennifer Hopkins, Cheerleading

Amber Williams, Girls Basketball

Abby Stahl, Volleyball

Jim Hoffman, Boys Basketball

Todd Behmlander, Principal

I. Philosophy

"Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body." I Corinthians 6:19-20

The athletic program of Immanuel Lutheran School exists to give children, regardless of sex, creed, or race, another opportunity to honor their Lord and Savior as they learn and practice important values and principles of life, cooperation, discipline, fairness and hard work. The athletic program also exists to develop the overall athleticism of children as they learn the basic fundamentals of their given sports.

The athletic program of Immanuel Lutheran School is not a separate entity, existing in its own corner of the school community. Rather, it is an extension of the school, useful in developing the values, principles, and beliefs stated or implied in the school's mission statement.

A shared partnership between teachers, administrators, coaches, parents, and athletes is expected, ensuring the Immanuel athletic experience to be a beneficial link in the physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual development of all participants.

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

I Corinthians 10:31

II. School Mission Statement

The mission of Immanuel Lutheran School is to assist parents by providing a Christ-centered comprehensive education so that students live a life of service to God.

III. Athletes

A. Sports Offered

1. Boys

- 7-8 Tackle Football (SMS & TLHS)
- 5-8 Cross Country
- 5-8 Basketball
- 7-8 Wrestling (SMS)
- 6-8 Swimming (SMS)
- 5-8 Golf
- 6-8 Track (SMS)
- 5-8 Tennis

Girls

- 5-8 Volleyball
- 5-8 Cross Country
- 5-8 Basketball
- 5-8 Cheerleading
- 6-8 Swimming (SMS)
- 5-8 Golf
- 6-8 Track (SMS)
- 5-8 Tennis

B. Parent Consent & Athlete Code of Conduct

A signed parent/guardian consent form must be on file prior to an athlete's first practice. An athlete code of conduct form must be completed and on file prior to an athlete's first practice.

C. Insurance

Student accident insurance is provided for all students of ILS. This insurance is an excess policy and provides coverage for all students participating in the ILS athletic program. It does NOT provide coverage for students participating in SMS or TLHS athletic activities.

D. Mandatory Physicals

A yearly physical examination is required to be completed prior to an athlete's first practice in grades 6-8. The physical form must be signed by a physician and submitted to the Athletic Director. Physicals are not required for students wishing to participate in grades one through five. Physical forms can be found online at www.ihsaa.org or from the school office.

E. Academics

1. *Every athlete will maintain a minimum average of 75% and receive no failing grades, including all elective classes.* Special allowances will be made for those students who are defined as learning disabled/different or are involved with other special programs as defined by the state of Indiana. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in suspension from the team up to the mid-term of the next grading period, at which time grades are reevaluated and an athlete may become eligible again. Students who do not comply with the grading requirements in the fourth marking period, may result in suspension from joining a team during the first marking period of the following school year. Students and parents will be informed of a suspension, due to grades, through contact by the Athletic Director.
2. Athletes suspended from a team during the conclusion of a season in their 8th grade year due to academics or any other reason will not be recognized for that sport at the end of the season.

F. Training Rules

The use or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco/vape products, narcotics, or other undefined controlled substances will result in suspension from the athletic program for a period of time to be determined by the Athletic Director, Principal, and/or Athletic Council.

G. School Suspensions

Athletes suspended from school will be suspended from the athletic program for the duration of the school suspension. Students suspended from school may also be suspended from the athletic program for an additional period of time. This determination shall be made by the Athletic Director, Principal, and/or Athletic Council.

H. School Attendance

1. According to the policy in the school handbook, students will be eligible to play in the sporting activity schedule for that day, **as long as the student arrives by 10:00am**. Exceptions to this policy include, but are not limited to, students who have sought prior approval via written excuses and/or personal conversations with the Athletic Director and/or Principal to participate as legislative pages, attend planned doctor's appointments, or attend funerals. In the event that ILS will observe a two-hour delayed start, student athletes will still be required to arrive at school by 10:20am.
2. Students leaving school, at any time of the day, for illness or any other unexcused reason, are not allowed to participate in that day's athletic activities.

I. Church Attendance

Every athlete will attend at least 50% of the church services offered by the athlete's home congregation, in a single marking period, this includes special services (i.e. Lent, Advent, Christmas, etc). Failure to comply with this requirement will result in a one game suspension for cross country, volleyball, basketball, and cheerleading. In sports such as golf and tennis, where participation in practices and matches is dependent on the number of participants, the penalty will include either a one week suspension from the practices/matches, a one match suspension, or a like penalty. Penalties will be determined by the Athletic Director and Coach. *The final determining factor will be the athlete's name as recorded in his/her church records. The Athletic Director will verify attendance in this setting. Note: this policy may differ from the attendance policy of a particular congregation.*

J. Games & Practices

1. All athletes will not miss practices or games without the coach's approval. Approval must be obtained at least one week prior to the planned absence. The first unexcused absence may result in a penalty not to exceed a one game suspension and extra conditioning determined by the coach. Additional unexcused absences may result in removal from the team. The Athletic Director and Coach shall make this determination.
2. All games and practices played on Sundays or on a holiday (Christmas Day, New Years Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Ascension) are not mandatory.

Therefore, attendance requirements and penalties imposed by coaches and/or the ILS athletic department may not be enforced. However, effort will be made to attend these scheduled events. If an athlete's absence is required, as a courtesy, prior notification is strongly recommended. No games, practices or athletic activities may be scheduled after 6:00pm on Wednesdays or 4:20pm during Advent and Lent. It is normal practice that ILS will not hold school activities on days which have been canceled due to inclement weather, unless non-mandatory practices are permitted by the Athletic Director and/or Principal.

3. Athletes are encouraged to avoid participating in other clubs or leagues during designated ILS sports seasons. *Missing scheduled ILS events due to participating in other clubs or leagues will be considered unexcused.*
4. Games scheduled for each grade level are not to exceed the following for grades 5-8: 16 games, plus 4 tournaments (excluding state or national tournaments).
5. No games, practices or athletic activities may be scheduled 10 minutes prior to the first Advent/Lent service time.

K. Uniforms

School provided uniforms are to be worn only for contests. All uniforms not returned in good condition at the conclusion of the season will be subject to a financial penalty not to exceed the cost of replacement. If a uniform is lost, the athlete will be charged the cost of replacement.

L. Cuts

There will not be cuts in grade five volleyball, basketball, or cheerleading. If there are fourteen or more athletes trying out for a basketball or volleyball team in grades seven and eight, a team may be cut to twelve. At the sixth grade level it is the philosophy of ILS athletics that students be allowed to participate whenever possible. Therefore, should the number of players exceed seventeen, the sixth grade coaches will split the players into two teams, dividing them as evenly as possible based on skill level. The team's schedule will have as close as possible the same number of games. The team's roster and season schedule will be approved by the athletic director. Final decision on whether two teams at the sixth grade level are required will be made by the Athletic Council. At the sixth grade level should the number of players exceed thirteen but be less than eighteen, players may be cut to twelve forming one team. If there are twelve athletes trying out for cheerleading in grades sixth through eighth, a team may be cut to ten. One person may not be cut from a team. Players will be given notice of making or not making the team by letter given to them by the coach involved or the athletic director. A list of players involved in try-outs and a final list will be provided to the Principal. Players that have been cut may request a follow-up meeting with the coach, athletic director and possibly the Principal.

M. Playing Time

All coaches will strive to provide playing time for each athlete in every game. Playing time will be more evenly distributed in grade five. However, fielding a more competitive team increases in importance in grade six through eight, and tournaments for all grades. Therefore, playing time could be less evenly distributed in aforementioned events. All coaches will exercise good judgment when determining playing time.

N. Playing Up

Since Immanuel is a school with a relatively large enrollment, it is desirable to field teams of players within their grade level, which assures that the maximum number of students may compete and learn from participating in team sports. This also provides a larger number of athletes prepared to play at the next level and avoids the hard feelings of having younger students play ahead of older students. In cases where a team has 8 or less players, whether because of injuries, illness, or a small number of students who have gone out for the team, a coach will have the option to bring up a minimum of 2 players from the grade level team directly below with the consent of the coach of that grade level, the athletic director, and the parents of the student(s). Adding lower grade level players to any team can only bring the team number to a maximum of 10 players. At no point should only 1 (one) child be brought up to play.

Examples:

- 10 players healthy and able to play = may not bring up additional players
- 9 players healthy and able to play = may not bring up additional players
- 8 players healthy and able to play = may bring up 2 additional players
- 7 players healthy and able to play = may bring up 3 additional players
- 9 players and one gets injured = may bring up 2 players. If the injured player recovers both players that were moved up will go back down. If a player remains injured throughout the rest of the season the players that moved up will remain on the team.
- 10 players and one gets injured = may not bring up any players

Players will be limited to the number of quarters per night as allowed by IHSAA rules (a player may only play in 6 quarters per night for basketball or 5 sets for volleyball). Playing time and disbursement of quarters/sets will be left to the discretion of the coaches with keeping in mind that the athlete's current grade level should be given precedence for the amount of quarters/sets if both teams have games on the same day. It is desired that coaches from both teams work together to use players quarters/sets most efficiently to benefit both teams, keeping in mind that the higher grade level teams are often participating in more advanced tournament play and opportunities that are only available to the higher grade level teams.

O. Conduct

All athletes will conduct themselves in accordance with Christian principles of Proper behavior as written in the Bible and explained in *Luther's Small Catechism*. With this understanding, any athlete who earns a technical foul, flagrant foul, intentional foul, or behaves in any other manner determined to exemplify poor Christian sportsmanship, may be suspended or removed from the team. This determination will be made by the athletic director upon consultation with the respective coach(es).

P. Locker Room Privacy Policy

1. The following measures are intended to protect the privacy rights of individuals using school locker rooms. The following provisions outline the extent to which that protection can and will be provided:
 - a. Locker rooms are provided for the use of athletes and coaches approved by the ILS School Board. No one else will be permitted to enter the locker room or remain in the locker room for any reason.
 - b. Under no circumstances can a person possess a camera, video recording device, cell phone, or other recording device in the locker room.
2. In a situation where an athlete is caught with such a device in their possession but not in use, the device will be confiscated by the coach and the parent will need to get the device from the coach. A second offense of this type will result in a one game suspension. Any further offenses will result in a suspension for the remainder of the season.
3. In a situation where the athlete is using such a device for any reason in the locker room, the resulting consequence will be confiscation of the device and a suspension for the remainder of the season. This policy will be posted in all school locker rooms.

Q. Awards

1. All participants in the ILS athletic program will receive a participation award and/or certificate. The serving champion of each Volleyball team will receive a trophy/plaque. The free throw champion of each Basketball team will receive a trophy/plaque. Cross Country, Tennis and Golf teams will award a Most Improved, Most Valuable and Warrior Heart awards each to both male and female participants. Athletes participating on eighth grade teams may receive up to three other individual trophies for criteria determined by the coach. Allowances will be made for ties or special circumstances determined by the coach. Coaches may purchase extra awards at their expense for their players upon approval from the athletic director.
2. Students participating in the same ILS sport in both their seventh and eighth grade years will be awarded an "I" letter to commemorate their athletic achievements. Only one letter will be issued to a student athlete.

R. Open Containers

No player, coach, or parent may have an opened container of any liquid during practice with the exception of water.

S. Cheerleaders

1. The ILS Athletic Council recommends that all sixth, seventh and eighth grade girls participate in either basketball *or* cheerleading during the winter sports season. Ultimately, however, the

parents will make this decision. If parents believe that their daughter is capable of participating in both basketball and cheerleading, the following rules apply:

- a. Participation in basketball games always takes precedence over cheerleading activities. This holds true under all circumstances, even rescheduled games that suddenly conflict with previously scheduled cheerleading events.
- b. Cheerleading performances take precedence over scheduled basketball practices. During regular season play, cheerleaders at the 5th and 6th grade level will cheer at home games only. They may cheer at all tournaments.
- c. Scheduled basketball practices take precedence over scheduled cheerleading practices.
- d. Failure to comply with these rules may result in immediate removal from both teams. This determination will be made by the athletic director upon consultation with the respective coaches.

2. Cheerleading tryouts may be held in the spring.
3. Summer camps and/or other summer activities are encouraged, but are not mandatory.
4. Cheerleading is a sport with recognized risks and perils. The Athletic Council of ILS, in cooperation with the ILS School Board of Education, will monitor the progression of techniques taught to each squad by the cheerleading coaching staff. This means that each squad's coach will be given a written progression of building techniques and skills. However, the cheerleading program at ILS will not include skills that require a mat to be performed. All cheerleading coaches will be required to complete and maintain cheer safety certification.

T. Fall Sports

The ILS Athletic Council recommends all fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade athletes participate in a single sport during the fall sports season. Ultimately, however, the parents will make this decision. If parents believe that their child is capable of participating in both Cross Country and Volleyball, or Cross Country and Boys' Tennis the following rules apply:

- a. Participation in volleyball games always takes precedence over cross country activities. Likewise, cross country meets will take precedence over tennis matches. This holds true under all circumstances, even rescheduled games that suddenly conflict with previously scheduled cross country events.
- b. Cross Country meets take precedence over scheduled volleyball practices and tennis practices. However, this may impact the athlete's participation in subsequent volleyball and tennis matches.
- c. Scheduled volleyball practices take precedence over scheduled cross country practices. Likewise, scheduled cross country practices take precedence over scheduled tennis practices.
- d. Failure to comply with these rules may result in immediate removal from both teams. This determination will be made by the athletic director upon consultation with the respective coaches.

IV. Parents

A. Conduct

All parents will conduct themselves in accordance with Christian principles of proper behavior as written in the Bible and explained in *Luther's Small Catechism*. Parents who conduct themselves in a manner inconsistent with this philosophy may be removed from the building for the remainder of the game(s) and/or season and required to meet with the pastor before re-admittance to any athletic event.

B. Complaints

If a situation arises that necessitates voicing a complaint, parents will follow the guidelines indicated in Matthew 18 and Luther's explanation of the 8th Commandment. This means that parents will use the following Chain of Communication:

1. Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Athletic Council
5. School Board

At no time is talking to other parents about private concerns acceptable. At no time shall a parent or spectator bring a concern to a coach the day of the contest. Concerns may be addressed the following day.

C. Practice & Games

1. It will be the responsibility of parents to supply transportation to and from all practices and games. *Parents should not bring their child(ren) to practices earlier than fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Parents also should pick up their child(ren) immediately when practices are scheduled to end.* Parents should also plan to bring their children to games thirty minutes before the scheduled starting time and promptly take their child(ren) home after the scheduled games of the day have been completed.
2. Parents wishing to observe practices must seek the approval of the coach. If approval is not granted, the guidelines followed in Paragraph IV.B should be followed.
3. Parents may not approach the team bench or competing children during an organized competition, including half-times and time outs, unless injury has occurred.

V. Coaches

A. Conduct

Coaches will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with proper Christian principles of behavior as written in the Bible and explained in Luther's Small Catechism. If coaches conduct themselves in a manner inconsistent with this philosophy, they may be suspended for one or more games and/or removed from their coaching positions. The athletic director will bring his/her concerns of a coach to the athletic council after they have been addressed with the coach. As a disciplinary measure, the athletic director may recommend the removal of a coach from his position during the season. After

hearing the concerns, the athletic council will determine the retention or removal of a coach from his/her position. The athletic department will provide replacement coaches in the event of any suspensions or removals.

B. Safety Certification

In compliance with the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), all head coaches and all assistant coaches must complete a test demonstrating comprehension in player safety content on concussion awareness, sudden cardiac arrest, and heat illness and present a certificate to the athletic director upon successful completion of the courses. The training and successful completion of the course must precede before any coaching begins for a particular sport.

C. Games and Practices

1. It is the responsibility of the athletic director to schedule all games and practices. Coaches must work through the athletic department to schedule extra games and/or practices not indicated on the posted schedule.
2. Coaches will arrive at all practices at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled starting time and will not leave until all of their athletes have been picked up.
3. Coaches will arrive at all games at least thirty minutes before the scheduled starting time and will not leave until all of their athletes are in their parent/guardian responsibility.
4. Coaches will adequately supervise all of their athletes during practices and games.
5. All coaches are approved by the athletic council and the board of education on a one year basis. No tenure to coaching positions is followed.
6. Coaches wishing to suggest particular dress for their players on a school day, the coach must contact the school office for approval of dress as it may be in violation of the school dress code.
7. The continuing study of God's Word is vital in modeling His commands. For that reason, the church attendance of our coaches is of great importance as they are required to meet the same attendance requirements set for their athletes.
8. Recognizing the valuable service Immanuel coaches give to their team, fans, and school, upon the coach's departure from the ILS sport program he/she will be recognized with a plaque in honorarium. A coach must have served a minimum of five years for such recognition.

VI. Miscellaneous

A. Funding

The athletic department may receive funds from the following sources:

1. **Gate admissions, which will be set and approved by the athletic council on a yearly basis. The 2024/2025 admission rate is \$5.00 per adult, \$3.00 per senior citizen (age 60+), and \$3.00 per child (grade K-12). ILS students will be admitted for free.**
2. **A sport punch pass, which may be used in place of adult admission for all home games, excluding tournaments, will be made available for purchase at the**

beginning of the school year. The punch pass rate for 2024/2025 is \$30 for 10 punches. Punches may be used for volleyball and basketball games.

3. Fundraisers, upon school board approval, may be utilized to purchase special items.

B. Concession Stand

The Immanuel Lutheran School athletic department will be responsible for running the concession stand during regular season games and tournaments. Proceeds will go toward the general athletic fund to cover uniform and equipment replacement, tournament entry fees, and other miscellaneous costs. A parent for each athlete participating in any ILS sponsored team will be required to donate their time and work concessions for at least one regular season game or tournament game throughout the volleyball and basketball seasons.

C. Gymnasium Usage

Rules and regulations regarding gymnasium usage are addressed in the Policy handbook of the Immanuel Lutheran School Board of Education.

D. Rule Enforcement

1. The enforcement of the rules and penalties outlined in the Athletic Handbook will be the responsibility of the athletic director, Principal, athletic council, and the school board based on the following criteria:
 - a. Admission of specific rules infractions by the athlete;
 - b. Observation of specific rules infractions by the faculty, staff, or school representatives;
 - c. Charges of specific rules infractions established by law enforcement officials.
2. To ensure due process, an athlete and parent/guardian may request a hearing before the athletic council and/or school board to appeal a decision. School Board decisions are final.

E. Out of Town Tournaments

Recognizing that we exemplify Christ in all that we do and say, our participation in athletic events should reflect Him in our words and actions. When an athletic event necessitates an overnight stay, outside of Seymour, parents and athletes will be required to attend a pre-tournament meeting to be led by the athletic director and principal to discuss expectations of encouraged behavior and participation. In addition, a faculty or staff member of ILS will attend the tournament and stay in the hotel being used by the team.

F. Outside Sport Heat Policy

For the health and well-being of student athletes, Immanuel will follow heat recommendations from Indiana High School Athletic Association (ISHAA) and Occupational Health and Safety (OSHA) guidelines for outside sport activities. This recommendation will utilize the Heat Index, which is a calculation including air temperature and humidity, to determine activity level. Heat index of 104F and above will have no outside activity. Heat index of 100-103F will be limited to 1 hour of outside practice and extra breaks. There will be no competitions allowed in this heat index

range. Heat index of 99F and below may have regular practice and competitions. This may be further restricted based on the discretion of coaches and the athletic director.