

**St. Anthony of Padua  
Catholic School  
Athletics Handbook  
2020-2021**



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## INTRODUCTION

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School (STAOPCS) offers school athletics for middle school students. A variety of sports are offered including co-ed soccer, girls' volleyball, football, boys' and girls' basketball, baseball, softball, cross country and track. There is no guarantee that a sport will be offered should there not be enough student participation to form a full team. The athletic program is under the jurisdiction of the school, and is administered by the Administration, Athletic Coordinator and part-time coaches. STAOP is a member of the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association.



## MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of interscholastic athletics at STAOPCS is to support the mission of the school which is centered on the continuous formation of the whole Christian person. The athletic program supports the responsibility that is shared by the school and the parents to encourage the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical development of our students.

STAOPCS believes that athletics provide a unique opportunity in which the student athlete can learn good Christian values such as teamwork and good sportsmanship. Athletics can also provide opportunities to learn values such as hard work, leadership skills, commitment, healthy competition, and fair play. In addition, athletics help provide a venue to aid in the physical development of the student. A secondary goal of the athletic program is the development and cultivation of school spirit.

## GREATER HOUSTON CATHOLIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

STAOPCS participates in the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA). Although some games may be scheduled against schools that do not participate in this league, the majority of our games will come from within the GHCAA. STAOPCS supports and abides by all rules and regulations, as well as the goals set forth by the GHCAA. The following is the mission statement and a list of goals provided by the GHCAA.

The GHCAA is an integral part of the educational mission of the Catholic schools of The Archdiocese of Galveston Houston. The GHCAA is dedicated to fostering human development, within the framework of a Christian environment, encouraging a positive vision in our young men and women through exercise, positive athletic competition, and fully recognizing the dignity of each student in Christ's image.

All affiliated schools agree to the following goals:

- To build a community which strives to image Christ
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit and personal acceptance
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the life - styles of the participants
- To teach participants proper attitude towards winning, losing and competing with dignity
- To develop an acceptance and appreciation of others
- To train and instruct in athletic rules
- To develop the student's physical abilities and coordination
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good health habits
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation
- To show the necessity of practice, work and management of time

These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God.

#### **PLAY LIKE A CHAMPION TODAY©**

The St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School athletic program is partnered with the University of Notre Dame Play Like a Champion Today© sports as ministry program. The Play Like a Champion Today© program strives to ensure that each athlete gets the most of their sports experience. This Catholic based program believes that athletics should be fair, inclusive, character-building, and fun. The program is based on the latest research in athlete development. Play Like a Champion Today© methods are proven to elevate the overall experience of all people involved with youth sports.

STAOPCS coaches attend a coaching clinic – “Coaching as Ministry” for Catholic sports programs at all levels. The “Coaching as Ministry” clinic is designed to teach coaches proven methods of developing athletes on and off the field. This clinic prepares coaches in Catholic schools and Catholic-affiliated youth sports organizations for their dual role as both coach and minister. Tangible tools are provided for coaches to use with their athletes,

focusing on honing individual skills and team performance, while demonstrating that sports can and should be an activity which develops skills and builds morals.

STAOPCS parents attend a Play Like a Champion Today© workshop. This workshop is designed to complement the coaching clinic and focuses on the appropriate roles and responsibilities for parents. Play Like a Champion Today© believes that parents working together with coaches will help make youth sports a spiritual and character building experience which is proven to elevate the overall experience of all people involved with youth sports.

## ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS

Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Student athletes must earn the privilege of participating through hard work, dedication, desire, and self discipline.

**Enrollment:** Students must attend St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School.

**Grade Level Requirements:** Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 are eligible to participate in athletics. However, certain sports may not be available to all grade levels due to league or school restrictions. 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to participate in JV Soccer, Cross Country and Track

**Financial Obligations:** Student athletes must be in good standing on all financial obligations to the school: tuition, fees, etc. Student athletes will also be required to pay an athletic fee for each sport in which they participate. Athletic fees are due before each season begins and are non-refundable. The fee will consist of \$150.00 per student per sport. *Student athletes who have not turned in their athletic fee will not be issued a uniform until payment is received. If more time is needed for payment, then an alternate payment date must be arranged with the Athletic Coordinator before that student may participate in games.*

**Attendance:** Consistent and productive practice is essential for any athletic team to be successful. All team members are expected to attend all mandatory practices and meetings as well as games. If a student athlete cannot attend an athletic contest, meeting, or practice for any reason, the coach of that sport must be notified prior to the event. Student athletes that miss practices and games without prior notification or without valid reason may lose playing time in future games at the coach's discretion. Participation in other club or intramural sports is not a valid reason to miss a school sport game or practice. *If a student athlete is absent from school, he or she may not participate in athletic events including games or practices on that day. A student athlete must*

*arrive at school by lunch time in order to be eligible to participate in athletics that day. In addition, a student athlete that leaves school early due to illness may not participate in practices or games on the same day.*

**Academics/Conduct:** Student athletes must maintain acceptable grades in all classes and conduct levels.

Classroom and conduct grades are checked at the time of mid-quarter progress reports and at the end of each quarter.

***If a student athlete has a "D" average ("N" for Auxiliaries) in two or more classes or an "F" average ("U" for Auxiliaries) in any one class, then the student athlete is placed on probation.***

***If a student athlete has a conduct grade of "N" or "U" the student athlete is placed on probation.***

If a student athlete is placed on probation, the student athlete is expected to participate in all practices. However, ineligible student athletes are not allowed to participate in games for a period of two weeks. The student athlete is expected to attend home games and sit with the team in support of his or her teammates. Student athletes on probation may not be dismissed early for away games. **The two-week probationary period begins the day after progress reports or report cards go home and ends two weeks from that day.** At the **end of the two-week period** if the grades have been raised to the appropriate level, then the student athlete would be removed from probation. If the grades have not improved, the student athlete misses the remainder of the season for that sport. If a student athlete goes on probation twice in the same season, he or she is not allowed to participate in games or practices for the remainder of that season. If a student athlete is placed on probation three times in one year, then he or she is not allowed to participate in athletics for the rest of that school year.

***If a student athlete has an "I" for incomplete on a progress report or report card the student athlete is placed on probation.***

If a student athlete is placed on probation for incomplete work, the student athlete is expected to participate in all practices. However, ineligible student athletes are not allowed to participate in games for a period of two weeks. The student athlete is expected to attend home games and sit with the team in support of his or her teammates. Student athletes on probation for incomplete work may not be dismissed early for away games. **The two-week probationary period begins the day after progress reports or report cards go home and ends two weeks from that day.** At the **end of the two-week period** if the incomplete has been removed, then the student athlete is off probation. If the incomplete remains, the student athlete remains on probation until the incomplete is removed.

A student athlete who serves an **in-school suspension** may be allowed to practice or participate in games on that day at the discretion of the Athletic Coordinator and Administration. Any student athlete that serves an **out-of-school suspension** will not be allowed to practice or participate in games for the duration of the suspension and may lose the privilege of participating in St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School Athletics at the discretion of the Athletic Coordinator and Administration.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Uniforms and Equipment:** School issued uniforms and equipment are to be used exclusively for STAOPCS games and practices. These uniforms are not to be used for PE class or any non-school related function. It is important that all uniforms are treated with care as they will be used for future teams. At the end of the season, all issued uniforms or equipment must be returned to the school. The student will be responsible for replacing any lost or damaged uniforms that are the result of abuse. If a uniform is not turned in on time, and in good condition, a fee of \$50 will be charged. That student will not be allowed to continue to participate in athletics at St. Anthony of Padua until the fee has been paid. In addition, report cards and/or diplomas will be held until the items are returned or the fee has been paid. **All compression shorts, t-shirts and long sleeve shirts must be white. All other colors are not acceptable and will not be allowed.**

**Transportation:** All student athletes are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from practices and games. Normal pick-up procedures from school will apply. If student athletes wish to carpool to games or practices, arrangements must be made off campus. If a student athlete plans to ride home with another parent from practice or a game, they must have a signed Transportation Release Form on file with the school or a signed and dated note from their parent/guardian to be presented to the coach on the day of the event.

Parents picking up children from on or off campus practices or games must come to the gym or field of play to do so. Coaches should have visual confirmation that a student athlete is being picked up by a parent or other previously approved source of transportation. Student athletes will not be allowed to wait in front of the school or any other place that is not within sight of a coach.

Parents need to be on time for designated pick up times from practices or games. The Coach may call a parent if the student athlete is not picked up within 5 minutes of the designated pick up time. A Coach is not allowed to leave a student athlete unattended, so it is important that parents be on time. If a parent is late for more than once, a fee may be incurred of \$1 per minute past the 5 minute "grace period" to help compensate the Coach for the extra time spent at the practice or game facility.

**For away games that require an early dismissal, please use the following athletic early dismissal policy.**

- Parents picking up student athletes and their siblings should park in MS Park & Walk.

- Student athletes are dismissed through the doors near the AMR to walk to Park & Walk. Parents please wait outside the AMR door to walk with them. A staff member will dismiss the student athletes and record the names of students released through the doors.
- Lower School & Middle School siblings are to be signed out through the front office before 3:00 (2:50-2:55). Parents would need to walk from MS Park & Walk to sign them out in the office. This will take care of the problem of extra cars in the dismissal line.

**Injuries:** While every effort is made to ensure the safety of student athletes at STAOPCS, there is always a risk of injury when participating in athletics. The school is not held responsible for injuries that occur during practices or games. STAOPCS provides a limited insurance plan for students participating in athletic activities. Information on this program is sent home at the beginning of the school year. However, this is not a primary insurance, and it is the responsibility of the parents to provide additional insurance coverage or to pay expenses incurred due to accidents and injuries.

**Head injuries:** At the suggestion of the GHCAA and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, STAOPCS follows the protocols and procedures to evaluate and treat head injuries, as recommended by Memorial Hermann Sports Medicine.

**Participation in Physical Education:** If a student-athlete is unable to participate in physical education class due to sickness/injury, coaches will be notified that the student will not be able to participate in school athletics (practices or games) that afternoon or evening.

**Playing Time:** Our “Varsity” level team in each sport is considered our “competitive” team. This means that the coach will try to make decisions that will increase the chance of the **team** being successful. This is meant to serve as a transition into high school where playing time and positions are determined in large part by performance. However, each member of the team will receive playing time throughout the course of the season. While every effort will be made to play all members of the team in each game, there is **no guarantee that each player on the “varsity” team will receive playing time in each game.**

For a “JV” level team, being competitive is still one of the goals, but there is more of an emphasis on player and team development. Each member of the team **will receive playing time in every game**. However, it is at the **coach’s discretion to determine how long each member of the team will play.**

For any “C” or “developmental team”, **each member of the team will receive a significant amount of playing time in each game.** The emphasis at this level is to be placed on development and experience as opposed to the number of wins and losses the team compiles.

Playing time for all teams will be determined by a variety of factors including - skill, strength, physical development, attendance, following directions, dedication, aggressiveness, accepting constructive criticism, attitude, work ethic, respect, willingness to be coached, potential for improvement, and performance in practice and previous games.

**Playing Up:** Depending on the number of student athletes on each team and certain circumstances (injuries, illness, and eligibility), a player or players who skills would allow them to truly contribute maybe asked to play up on the next level’s team. That player would be part of that upper level team and would **not** be able to play on both teams. The decision to ask a player or players to play up would be a joint decision between the coaches and the Athletic Coordinator.

**Parent Communication with Coaches:** STAOPCS both welcomes and encourages the communication between coaches and parents. There are many positive results that can occur as a result of these types of meetings. However, there is a proper time and place for this to occur. Immediately before, during, or after a practice or game is not the appropriate time for a meeting unless a prior agreement has been made with the coach. Parents may contact the coach and set up a time that is convenient for both parties to meet. The focus of such meetings should be on the student’s standing on the team and how he or she can improve to be more successful. The focus should not be on comparisons to other players or another player’s weaknesses. Coaches are not expected to explain or justify team strategy, personnel decisions, or accept coaching advice or suggestions from parents.

**Volunteers:** As with most Catholic Schools, we depend heavily on the generosity of the parents. Without the donations of time and money form the parent community, our school mission would not be achieved. This is true in all areas of the school including athletics. Each season we need lots of volunteer support to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Parents should not expect to help coach unless specifically asked by the Coach or administration. However, there are lots of other opportunities to help support the team. Some of the main things that a coach may need help with include; scoreboard operator, bookkeeper, helping to coordinate transportation to away games, and working the concession stand. ***All Volunteers are required to be current with the online Safe Environment program.***

Proceeds from the concession stand help support the athletic program. Not only is the concession stand a fundraiser, but it is meant to be a service to the parents and children attending on campus athletic events. At the beginning of each season a schedule of games with dates and times to work will be sent out. Each family should

count on working at least once during the season. If everyone participates, then this should ensure that no one should have to work more than once or twice in a given season.

**Branding:** Athletic spirit items can be a great way to promote the athletics program and can also be used to congratulate a particular team's accomplishment or success. However, anyone who wishes to purchase or produce any items containing the school name, logo, or images must follow the proper procedures listed below.

The school's logos and images (past and present), are protected under trademark laws. By no means is anything allowed to be printed, manufactured, or otherwise produced that contains any STAOPCS name, logo, image, or any other item associated with the school, without prior written consent from the Advancement Office and Athletic Coordinator. Items produced without approval may be removed and/or destroyed at Administration's direction. This includes but is not limited to, spirit wear, t-shirts, polo's, hats, i-Movies®, photo slide shows, etc. Anyone who wishes to mass produce an item that contains the school's name, uniform, student images, faculty images, building and grounds images, etc., must submit a proposal in writing to the Advancement Coordinator and Athletic Coordinator. The proposal will be reviewed by the Advancement Coordinator, Athletic Coordinator, and/or administration. If approval is given, the project will be under the direction of the Advancement Office and/or Athletic Coordinator.

### **Facilities and Safety Guidelines**

As our athletic program and school facilities continue to grow, there is an increasing amount of activity going on in our school and on our field. In addition, the facilities are used by parish ministries after school and we must cooperate with them so that all of our program needs are met. With more people on campus and more activities, there is an increase in the number of safety risks for athletes, younger siblings and visitors.

**After school hours, parents are responsible for any children on campus who are not participating in a practice or game at a given time. This includes siblings in attendance at a sporting event, as well as *the STUDENT ATHLETES before and after a game*. Children should remain "in sight" of parents at all times.**

**Students who are attending sporting events on campus as spectators, MAY NOT be left at the school without adult supervision. If a student is on campus without parent supervision, the parents or guardians will be called, and an infraction may be issued from administration in accordance with the school conduct policy.**

The following is a list of guidelines more specific to each facility that need to be followed to ensure the safety of our children.

**Outdoor Sports (field):**

- The playground is reserved for the Before and After School Program after school hours. If the Before and After School Program are inside children may use the playground, but must be supervised. It is also important to monitor children carefully as there is a high risk of foul balls from baseball and softball, even in the spectator areas.
- On the soccer/football field, the spectator area is on the same side as the bleachers. The sideline opposite the bleachers is reserved for players only.
- For baseball / softball the viewing area is behind the backstop and netting. Spectators should not sit anywhere past the dugouts, as there is a risk of line drive foul balls.
- Parents should not be in or near the dugout or team sidelines during games unless specifically asked to help in some way by the coach or Athletic Coordinator.

**Indoor Sports (gym):**

- **During an indoor sporting event, students should not be outside for any reason.**
- Children should not be in the hallways, fellowship hall, or any other part of the school building. The hallway between the gym and locker rooms is not a play space. Please monitor children going to the concession stand and restrooms.
- In the gym, the spectator area is the bleachers. There should not be any players or spectators on the ends of the courts as this is a distraction to players and officials. It is also a safety hazard. In addition, no one should be under the bleachers. Finally, **the bench and stage area is reserved for players, coaches, officials, administration, and volunteers working at the scorer's table.**
- During games or practices, siblings of players are not allowed to have balls of any kind or other toys that could be a distraction or potentially end up on the court or field. This can potentially be a dangerous safety hazard.

**If the guidelines listed above are not followed, then other measures may be necessary to insure the safety of our students and our children. This may include hiring professional security personal that may result in substantial increases to the athletic fees.**



## SPORTSMANSHIP AND CATHOLIC IDENTITY PLEDGES

“Sport is, in itself, an important moral and educative significance: it is a training ground in virtue, a school of inner balance and control, an introduction to more true and lasting conquests.”



- St. John Paul II

Sports play an important role in the development of the “whole child” at STAOPCS. Students, parents, and coaches are all expected to conduct themselves as a Disciple of Christ, in a way that will positively reflect on our faith and STAOPCS. Any student athlete whose conduct, dress, or other display of behavior may discredit the reputation of the school, may be declared ineligible for athletic competition. Such decisions are made by the coach in consultation with the Athletic Coordinator and Administration and are final.

The following pledges for STAOPCS student athletes, parents and coaches exemplify the Play Like a Champion Today “Grow Approach”© and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

### As a STUDENT ATHLETE of STAOP I will:

- *Treat opponents with respect; including before, during and after contests.*
- *Win with character and lose with dignity.*
- *Respect the judgment of officials and abide by the rules of the contest.*
- *Accept the responsibility of representing my team and St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School in a positive way.*
- *Compete in a way that exemplifies my Catholic faith and values, as a disciple of Christ.*
- *Show respect for my coaches at all times.*
- *Recognize that I am not just an individual, but part of a team, and to respect, encourage, and work together with my teammates at all times.*

### As a PARENT of a STAOP student athlete, I will (from Play Like a Champion Today©):

- *I will be positive and support my child in his/her individual sport journey.*
- *I will not force my child to play sports.*
- *I will remember that sports are games meant to be played by and for the kids.*
- *I will accept that my child plays sports for his/her enjoyment, not for mine.*
- *I will be realistic in my expectations for my child in sports.*
- *I will encourage my child in the GROW model of developing as an athlete. I will help him/her to set goals. I will help him/her foster positive relationships on his/her team. I will ensure that he/she has an opportunity to make his/her own decisions in athletics. I will guide him/her in winning and losing gracefully.*

- *I will help my child grow with the cardinal virtues through sports (Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance).*
- *I will live by the cardinal virtues in my own behavior/attitude at sporting events.*
- *I will help my child feel like a Champion by offering fair praise and constructive feedback.*
- *I will be aware of the signs of abuse and report any inappropriate behavior.*
- *I will support a nurturing sideline environment.*
- *I will applaud good play, by both my child's team and opponents.*
- *I will respect the game officials and their decisions, understanding their task is challenging.*
- *I will respect and show courtesy to my child's coaches at all times.*
- *I will commit to ensuring my child's coach follows the standards of Christian coaching and acts as a youth minister for my child in his/her sporting experience.*

**As a MINISTER (COACH), I will** (*from Play Like a Champion Today©*):

- *Respect children at all times.*
- *Promote children's physical and emotional well-being.*
- *Promote children's competence through positive strategies and refrain from practices that belittle and humiliate children.*
- *Promote healthy relationships among the children and a commitment to the values of the team.*
- *Foster in children a sense of ownership and autonomy proper to their age.*
- *Avoid all forms of intimidation and exploitation of players.*
- *Maintain a proper physical and emotional distance from children.*
- *Contact children only through their parents.*
- *Be aware of signs of abuse.*
- *Report suspected abuse or improper behavior and/or attitudes by another coach.*
- *Treat athletes, officials and opponents with respect, including before, during and after contests.*
- *Win with character and lose with dignity.*
- *Respect the judgement of officials and abide by the rules of the contest.*
- *Accept the responsibility of representing my team and STAOPCS in a positive way.*
- *Coach in a way that exemplifies my Catholic faith and values, as a disciple of Christ.*
- *Foster each athlete's development of physical skills, sense of worth, and good sportsmanship.*
- *Supervise athletes at all times: insure that athletes are picked up after practices and games.*
- *Be knowledgeable of all policies, rules, and regulations in the STAOP Family and Athletic Handbooks and Play Like a Champion Today Sports as Ministry Program ©. Observe and enforce procedures and policies with consistency and without discrimination or favoritism.*

- *Work with Athletic Coordinator to maintain inventory of equipment and uniforms, maintain accurate records, schedule days/times/facilities for practices and game, organize transportation of athletes to and from games and prepare facilities to host games as needed.*