

Athletic Handbook 2008-2009

But thanks be to God! He gives us the
VICTORY through our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 15:57

Mission Statement of School:

To glorify God, nurture the redeemed, and reach the lost through
Christian education.

Bethel Lutheran School
Morton, Illinois

Philosophy

Bethel Lutheran School strives to assist children in developing their God given talents through a competitive sports program. The athletic program of Bethel Lutheran School serves as an extracurricular arm of the school. Athletic ability is a precious gift of God and as such should be developed as such. We believe that participation in athletics can be a positive component in the growth and development of any child's physical, mental, and spiritual health. Our purpose and aim includes 1) Christian fellowship and sportsmanship; 2) opportunities for Christian witness; 3) an outlet for physical exercise; 4) an opportunity to participate in athletic competition; and 5) the development of an individual's self-confidence. These purposes rank higher than a team's achievement in winning games by score or a team's accomplishment of an "impressive" won-loss record. We believe that success will come if students are taught sound fundamental skills and challenged to develop their skills to the highest level possible.

Our Commitment to Excellence

We believe as Christians we are commanded by scripture always to do our best. As believers we are not to waste the talent God has given us by giving anything less than total commitment, thorough participation and maximum effort. We also believe we should strive to be our best at anything we do. Being the best at anything, whether it be an Honor Roll student or a state champion is a worthy and admirable goal of any Christian. Becoming the best may not always be the result of our athletic program, however doing our best must be!

Objectives

1. That each participant understand that the victory of eternal life in Jesus Christ, our Lord, is the major goal in life [this includes athletics]
2. That each participant honor God and offer Him praise for the blessings of physical health and the ability to participate
3. That each participant grow in Christian fellowship, teamwork, and sportsmanship in a setting that includes athletic training and competition
4. That each participant experience an increase in self-worth and self-confidence
5. That each participant develop a greater capacity for physical fitness
6. That each participant advances or improves in his or her individual skill level principally in the sports offered at Bethel.

What is Offered

Bethel currently offers competitive opportunities in:

- Baseball (Coop with Morton-Blessed Sacrament)
- Softball (Coop with Morton-Blessed Sacrament)
- Cross Country
- Volleyball (Girls Only)
- Basketball
- Cheerleading/Dance
- Track and Field

Participation

Participation in the athletic program is offered only for Bethel Lutheran School students in the upper grades (4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades). Team make-up is determined by the number of students per grade interested in participating in a particular sport. Younger student athletes are encouraged to participate in developmental programs at church, school or in the community. There are no tryouts all students eligible are permitted to participate. Additional teams may be added with the consent of the school board.

Students are required to take an annual health exam or physical before participating in a sport. One physical per year qualifies the student for entry into all sports. Parents are required to submit proof of exam to school secretary prior to participation.

Special Consideration in Participation:

1. If the number of players is limited on a team and the coaching staff desires to bring a student athlete up from a lower grade, they need to present their desire to AND gain the approval of the Athletic Director and Administration.
2. Fourth Grade participation
 - a. Is permitted on the 5th/6th grade teams with participation being determined based on the total number of participating athletes
OR
 - b. There is a fourth grade category of competition and enough 4th grade students interested to field a team. This will be determined by the coaching staff and athletic director.

Playing Time

Elementary School

The goal of this level of competition is to introduce and develop all student athletes the skill and strategies necessary to participate in their individual sports. Each student athlete will be afforded playing time to contribute to each game/match. Playing time on the court or field is determined by each player's skill, effort, and attitude as well as practice attendance. No player can accumulate playing time in a game following an unexcused absence from practice per the coach's discretion. At the coach's discretion and after conversation prior to game day with the parents and the approval of the administration a student athlete may not get playing time in a game.

Junior High

The goal of this level of competition is to further develop and teach skills and strategies that enable them to be competitive at a higher skill level of competition. Coaches will determine each student athlete's playing time to contribute in the game based on skill, effort and attitude as well as practice attendance. Each player will be afforded playing time to contribute to each non-conference game/match. During conference and tournament games/matches playing time is not guaranteed, however coaches will make every effort possible to ensure each

student athlete is afforded playing time to contribute to each game/match. No player can accumulate playing time in a game following an unexcused absence from practice per the coach's discretion.

School Discipline

A student may lose his or her eligibility privilege if negative behavior violates any of the school rules as listed in the Parent Handbook. It is important that student athletes understand that the rules of the school day apply during extracurricular functions. The school dress code remains in effect at athletic events. Please be informed of the discipline policy in the Parent Handbook.

Academics and Grades

Academic eligibility requirements must be met for a student to participate in practice and/or games. Students are expected to maintain average grades [C] or higher while participating on an athletic team. The average will be computed by using a numeric system where an "A" equals 4 points, a "B" equals 3 points, etc. A "C" average means that after adding the numeric grade for all the classes and dividing by the number of classes, the student must have at minimum a 2.0 average. Teachers will notify the principal of any student failing to meet these requirements. The principal will be responsible to notify the athletic director and coach. Parents will receive notification from the principal, and a returned response from the parent and the player will be required. When the student's average is at least a "C" with no "F's" the student will immediately become eligible. The teachers and principal are always willing to conference with the parents and student in achieving solutions to academic struggles.

Team Rules

Participants are always expected to follow the rules set forth by the coach and those jointly established by the team. A failure to honor the rules would lead to the following sequence of actions:

1. A conference between the coach and the player
2. Coach and/or athletic director contact with parent
3. Reduced playing time or game suspension
4. Increase game suspensions as necessary

It is expected that a participating student notify the coach(es) if he or she is unable to attend a practice or game. Missed practices (especially unexcused) may result in reduced amount of playing time in a regular season game or being scratched from certain track events at the discretion of the head coach. Direct communication with the coach is very important. Students must be present at school for at least the second half of the day to participate that same evening.

Uniforms

The Bethel Booster Club shall be responsible for providing official school uniforms for each respective sport. Any additional uniform articles that a particular team wishes to be added to that uniform must be approved by the Bethel Booster Club. Uniform distribution and return will occur in the following manner:

1. Coaches will assign each player a uniform and record the identification number.
2. Any players whose assigned uniform is lost or unnecessarily damaged will be charged the replacement cost of the uniform to be determined by the Bethel Booster Club.
3. After the last contest of the season the coach will set a date that all uniforms are to be returned with directions to whom and how they are returned. After this date, a late fee of one dollar per school day will be charged each day the uniform remains out.
4. If the uniform has not be returned by the last day of school, the student athlete's final report card shall be held until the uniform is returned or the replacement fee is paid

Traveling to Away Games

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their child(ren) to all games. It is important not to expect or think that your child(ren) would ride with another parent without any communication. Teams will often travel in "caravan" style unless other arrangements have been made by the coach(es). Coaches will generally prefer or require that a team travel together and arrive at a game location at the same time.

Finances

The athletic department operates as a non-profit organization and a non-budgetary function of Bethel Lutheran School. Income to meet expenses is accumulated from the concession stand and admissions at home sporting events, tournament entrance fees and individual participation fees overseen by the generous support of the Bethel Booster Club.

Fees

A participation fee shall be assessed each year by the Bethel Booster Club per sport and paid to The Bethel Booster Club prior to participation. Fees are used to offset the cost of entries to tournaments, purchase trophies, athletic awards, home officials, etc. In order to keep the athletic fee reasonable each child's parent/guardian will be assigned work time at the admissions table or concession stand. It is the responsibility of each parent/guardian to find a replacement if necessary and to notify the Bethel Booster Club Vice President in the event they are unable to fulfill this work obligation. Failure to comply with these directions may result in a student athlete(s) not being allowed to participate in the next scheduled event; however their attendance at that event would be required.

Please note that uniforms are the property of Bethel Lutheran School. The uniform user is responsible for replacement costs if the uniform becomes lost or damaged.

Parental Concerns

If a parent has any concerns, please **follow** the Matthew 18 Principle as outlined below:

1. Talk to the coach in private away from a game or practice. For game situations a minimum 24 hours after the conclusion of the contest is required. If a parent goes to the Athletic Director or Administration without speaking with the coach first, the parent will be directed back to the coach. The parent shall notify the coach regarding his/her desire to meet. The parent will be asked to contact the coach within two days of this notification. If the parent does not contact the coach, the coach will contact the parent to discuss the concern.
2. If you are not satisfied with the results, talk with the Athletic Director, who may set up a meeting between the parent, the coach and the Athletic Director.
3. Should you feel further action need be taken the principal shall be contacted.
4. The school board will not become involved until steps 1-3 have proven unsuccessful. In these instances the school board chairperson shall be contacted and if necessary a request be made to be put on the next school board meeting agenda or a special meeting scheduled to deal with the situation in a timelier manner.

Please remember that a majority of all concerns can be resolved by talking directly to the coach. Please support the athletic program at all times with your son or daughter. Please understand that playing time is at the coach's discretion. We will adhere to this protocol for all issues related to the athletic program; issues addressed outside this approach will be referred back to the step where it was not followed before any school board action will be taken.

Parental Discipline

If a parent or coach at anytime prior to, during or after any athletic contest, has in the opinion of the athletic director, another coach or a member of the Bethel Administration, failed to be a positive representative of Bethel Lutheran School, the following consequences will occur delivered by a member of the Bethel Administration:

1. First offense will result in a verbal warning and the individual potentially being suspended from attending the next athletic event held at Bethel Lutheran School.
2. Second offense will result in the individual being suspended from attending the next athletic event to be held at Bethel Lutheran School unless suspended previously. Then the action proceeds directly to note #3 found below.
3. After suspension from one game the next step will result in the individual being suspended from attending any athletic event to be held at Bethel Lutheran School for the remainder of that athletic season.
4. After the second offense, the parent will not be allowed to coach during the next 12 months.

Examples of such behavior may include but are not limited to:

- Being ejected by an athletic official or building official from an athletic contest,
- Verbally or physically assaulting any individual,
- Confronting a coach in the presence of an athlete or other parent,
- Failure to abide by the expectations of a Bethel Parent listed in this handbook.

Expectations of a Bethel Representative

Being a member of a Bethel Lutheran School team is the fulfillment of an early ambition of many athletes. Attaining this goal carries with it certain responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people over many years. We desire to win, but only with honor to our Lord, our athletes, our school and our families.

A Bethel athlete is.....

- to represent Bethel Lutheran School as an ambassador for Christ
- to celebrate the opportunity to participate as a Bethel athlete
- to scholastically achieve in the classroom according to the abilities given to him or her by God
- to dress in a manner that is God-pleasing and consistent with the School dress code
- to maintain athletic eligibility by regular practice and game attendance, meeting the academic standard, and managing appropriate behavior at school and school events
- to maintain a uniform (not lose it) and return it at the end of the season
- to win games without boasting, and to lose games without excuse
- to respect the game or sport for its own sake and not what it can do for you
- to consider all "opponents" as friends and guests and to treat them with due courtesy
- to never hiss, boo, or express abusive remarks from the sideline or bleachers
- to applaud teammates and kindly support opponents for making good plays
- to HAVE FUN!

Expectations of a Bethel Parent

Bethel Lutheran School would like to encourage all parents to be a strong Christian role model in the stands. People's opinions of us as Christians are made by the behaviors that we exhibit in these types of environments. Our fans are watched by visiting teams as much as players.

A Bethel parent is.....

- to tell your child before and after each game that you are proud of him/her regardless how he/she plays
- fill your child's "Emotional Tank" through praise and positive recognition
- to let the coach do his/her job
- cheer good plays by both teams

- to be respectful to the game officials
- to never hiss, boo, or express abusive remarks
- expected to fulfill their work obligations as assigned by the Bethel Booster Club

The Athletic Director

The Athletic Director (AD) should be the spiritual leader of the coaches. The AD should exemplify the Christian Spirit in an effort to keep the proper perspective on grade school athletics. Bethel Lutheran School competes with area schools in several sports and in an effort to be consistent the Bethel Lutheran School Board has approved the following duties for the AD:

1. Determine which sports will be offered with the approval of the school board.
2. Compile a list of people interested in serving as a coach based on their request. The school board will appoint all coaching positions.
3. The AD should work with the school principal to review and update the job descriptions for the head coach and assistant coach as needed.
4. The AD is responsible for coordinating the season schedule for all sports.
5. For home games/events, the AD will be responsible for securing officials, securing a playing location, making sure the Booster Club has concession and admissions workers, people to set up and tear down, and to lock the school following home events.
6. The AD shall work closely with the school principal to ensure that all student athletes meet all eligibility requirements as developed by the school board.
7. The AD shall keep detailed statistics for all varsity teams. These will be archived for future reference.
8. The AD is expected to review annually the athletic policy. This should be done in conjunction with the coaching staff, and any recommendation brought before the school board for approval.
9. Is responsible for communicating gym usage needs for athletic events to the school secretary.
10. Provide schedule of all home athletic events to Booster Club.
11. Provide schedule and other pertinent information to school secretary for insertion in the Bethel Flame and to the church secretary for insertion in the Bethel Star.
12. Communicate with the principal, staff members, and coaches on items involving player discipline and academic eligibility requirements.
13. The AD shall coordinate with the principal regarding back ground checks on all coaches.
14. Work closely with the Bethel Booster Club in maintaining the athletic budget; monitor athletic equipment and uniforms then direct necessary purchase requests to the Bethel Booster Club.
15. Submit all tournament/meet applications with appropriate fee.
16. Attend all CILCON and Peoria Parochial Soccer League meetings.
17. Notify the media when necessary.

***At the School Board's discretion it may split the duties of the AD to better serve the needs of the ministry.

Coaches

Coaches serve as volunteers. Staff persons are permitted first preference in the assignment of coaches. Non-staff coaches are selected by the athletic director and approved by the principal and school board on an annual basis. Those wishing to be a coach, to serve as an assistant, or to help in another way are to seek out the athletic director. All coaches shall agree to submit to a criminal background check, coach training and first aid sponsored by the Booster Club as a condition to serving as a coach.

The responsibilities of the head coach are to develop, manage and make all the final decisions on all team policies, in conjunction with the coaching staff. This may include the following:

1. Communicate with the athletic director information involving equipment needs, traveling details, upcoming games and disciplinary concerns.
2. Supervise the scorebook and provide the varsity team statistics to the athletic director.
3. Supervise or designate someone to when not available all practice sessions and remain at the practice site until all student athletes have been secured.
4. Communicate to parents and student athletes a list of expectations and updated information as the need arises.
5. Distribute and record the team uniform only after the coach confirms the athletic fee is paid, annual athletic physical is on file and a signed copy of the athletic policy has been returned.
6. Coaches must be responsible for their team. This means you must be on time have the equipment ready.
7. Coaches must communicate the following information to the athletic director in a timely manner: outcome of games/contests/events/; final team statistics; discipline incidents involving assistant coaches, student athletes, or parents.
8. The final responsibility to determine team make up rests with the head coach in consultation with the athletic director and school administration. The head coach determines who dresses for games, who plays, where they play and how much playing time they get.
9. Each sport will have only one head coach and at a minimum one assistant coach. The head coach will coordinate the team program. He/She will have the responsibility to determine team make up and strategy (positions, practices, offense/defense) and communicate that information to the assistant coaches.
10. The head coach is responsible for all communications with the athletic director, officials, parents and other coaches.
11. The head coach may delegate any of these responsibilities to the assistant coach of their choice at their own discretion.

The responsibilities of the assistant coach are to:

1. Assist the head coach in fulfilling his/her responsibilities
2. Fulfill the head coach responsibilities at his/her request or in his/her absence.

Expectations of Coaches

Coaching is not a right, but rather a privilege in which the coach must ensure they embody and live the philosophy that has been established. In an effort to coach consistently in all sports the Bethel Lutheran School Board has approved the following expectations for all coaches. These expectations are not limited to practices and games but to extend to any event where players are present.

Coaches will be considered and approved based on the following:

1. All sports endeavors are to be considered learning opportunities. Coaches are to teach their sport not only during practices, but also during games. The focus should be on skills development, sportsmanship, learning the rules of the game and team play.
2. There should always be a coach present during practices and games. Parents may be asked to "fill-in" as an assistant coach pending the appropriate background checks should one of the coaches not be able to attend an event. The coach should not leave until all student athletes have been picked up by a parent or guardian, or have delegated this responsibility to an adult.
3. Bethel coaches should be men and women of faith. There should be an overriding atmosphere of Christian love whenever the team gathers for practice/game/event.
4. Coaches should pray with their teams and begin each contest or event with a team prayer.
5. Coaches should set a positive example for all student athletes.
6. Coaches should control their temper, cursing is strictly prohibited no matter how bad the call.
7. Coaches are encouraged to be prepared for their assignments. There have been many changes in rules, coaching methods and playing methods over the years so it is important to stay current.
8. Coaches are encouraged to participate during the practices when practical. Athletes respond more positively to coaches who are on the floor with them.
9. Any disagreement between coaches should be handled in a mature Christian manner, and these discussions are not to be held in front of the team. Assistant coaches are not to contact the AD unless they have spoken with the head coach first.
10. Coaches should never belittle or demean a student athlete for any reason. Any correction necessary should be done with positive discipline.

Coaches are to sign a declaration that reads.....

I agree to support the philosophy, policies, and procedures of the Bethel Lutheran athletic program as listed in the Athletic Handbook. I understand my role as a volunteer coach and willfully donate my time and talents accordingly. I also understand my limitations and realize the responsibilities of the athletic director and the school principal. I aim to uphold Bethel Lutheran School and be a witness of Jesus Christ in my dealings, communications, and actions.

Keys

The head coach of each team will be issued an exterior school key and a gym key by the school administration. Keys may be issued to an assistant coach at the discretion of the athletic director and school administration. At the conclusion of the season it is the responsibility of the head coach to return the keys to the school administrator.

Volunteers

Although each student athlete's parent/guardian will be assigned work times at the admissions table or concession stand by the Bethel Booster Club, the work of volunteers is highly appreciated and necessary to the overall success of our athletic program. Here is a list of ways in which you could help beyond your work assignment:

- concession worker
- concession scheduler
- concession purchasing agent
- scorekeeper
- game setup
- tournament program typist
- uniform collection and distribution
- photographer

In order to keep the athletic fee reasonable each child's parent/guardian will be assigned work times at the admissions table, concession stand, or scoring during home contests. It is the responsibility of each parent/guardian to find a replacement if necessary and notify the Bethel Booster Club Vice President in the event they are unable to fulfill this work obligation. Failure to comply with these directions will result in your student athlete(s) not being allowed to participate in the next scheduled event; however their attendance at the event is required.

Awards

The following awards are provided to student athletes:

1. Bethel Letter (Green Letter "B") is provided to each student athlete one time following their first participation in the athletic program.
2. A pin representing the respective sport is provided to each student athlete for each athletic team they are a member of.

Athletic Recognition

The athletic director will request the booster club purchase a banner to be hung in the gym to recognize the following team accomplishments:

1. A conference championship in any varsity sport.
2. Each time a team participates in the Lutheran Sports Association (LSA) state tournament it will be acknowledged by sport and year on a banner.

3. Any team to win a LSA State Championship or State Runner-Up will be recognized with a banner of their own recognizing the sport and year of the accomplishment.
4. Any team to be accepted to participate in the Lutheran Basketball Association of America National Tournament will be recognized with a banner of their own acknowledging the year of the accomplishment. The final place the team is awarded will be recognized on the banner if the place is played out.

The athletic director will request the booster club purchase a plaque and have any individual name be added to it for the following individual accomplishments:

1. A top 8 finish in any individual or relay event at the LSA state track meet or cross country meet.
2. A selection to the all tournament team at the LSA state volleyball or basketball tournament; and/or the Lutheran Basketball Association of Illinois National Tournament

Coaches may make a request to the Bethel Booster Club to recognize extraordinary achievements at any level.

Athletic Records Policy

The following policy describes the guidelines coaches should use in tracking statistics for school record purposes:

- 1) School Records will only be kept for varsity level team sports. JV games are meant as a learning/teaching experience and records would not be appropriate at that level. Track records are best time/distance regardless of age.
- 2) Coaches should keep track of varsity statistics for the year and report them to the AD for tracking at the end of the season.
- 3) The following are guidelines for each sport. Records should include full name and year achieved.

Softball

Hits/Game -Top 1 RBI's/Game -Top 1 Homeruns/Game - Top 1
 Hits/Season - Top 5 RBI's/Season -Top 5 Homeruns/Season - Top 5
 Hits/Career - Top 5 RBI's/Career -Top 5 Homeruns/Career -Top 5
 Steals/Game -Top 1 Batting Avg. (2AB's/Game) - Top 5
 Steals/Season -Top 5
 Steals/Career -Top 5
 Strikeouts/Game - Top 1 Wins/Season - Top 5 Saves/Season - Top 5
 Strikeouts/Season -Top 5 Wins/Career - Top 5 Saves/Career - Top 5
 Strikeouts/Career - Top 5

Baseball

Hits/Game -Top 1 RBI's/Game -Top 1 Homeruns/Game - Top 1
 Hits/Season - Top 5 RBI's/Season -Top 5 Homeruns/Season - Top 5
 Hits/Career - Top 5 RBI's/Career -Top 5 Homeruns/Career -Top 5
 Steals/Game -Top 1 Batting Avg. (2AB's/Game) - Top 5

Steals/Season -Top 5

Steals/Career -Top 5

Strikeouts/Game - Top 1 Wins/Season - Top 5 Saves/Season - Top 5

Strikeouts/Season -Top 5 Wins/Career - Top 5 Saves/Career - Top 5

Strikeouts/Career - Top 5

Cross Country

Top individual time at each distance, one for boys and one for girls.

Volleyball

Points in a Match – Top 1 Aces in a Match – Top 1 Kills in Match – Top 1

Points in a Season – Top 5 Aces in a Season – Top 5 Kills in Season – Top 5

Points in a Career – Top 5 Aces in a Career – Top 5 Kills in Career – Top 5

Set Assists in a Match – Top 1 Blocks in a Match – Top 1

Set Assists in a Season – Top 5 Blocks in a Season – Top 5

Set Assists in a Career – Top 5 Blocks in a Career – Top 5

Basketball (boys and girls)

Points in a Game – Top 1 Rebounds in a Game – Top 1 Steals in game – Top 1

Points in a Season – Top 5 Rebounds in a Season – Top 5 Steals in Season –
Top 5

Points in a Career – Top 5 Rebounds in a Career – Top 5 Steals in Career – Top
5

Assists in a Game – Top 1

Assists in a Season – Top 5

Assists in a Career – Top 5

Track (boys and girls)

Top individual/team time or distance in each event. One for boys and one for girls.

REVISED 08-14-08

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the policies and procedures in the Bethel Lutheran School Athletic Handbook.

(Print Name)
(Date)

(Signature of Parent or Guardian)

(Print Name)
(Date)

(Signature of Athlete)