

III. Athletes

Member of the PSAL (Private School Athletic League)

A. Sports Offered

Boys (grades 3-8)

Flag Football (6-8)

Basketball

Track

Cheerleading*

Girls (grades 3-8)

Volleyball

Basketball

Track

Cheerleading*

*Cheerleading will be offered ONLY if we have volunteer coaches. Cheerleaders must choose between playing basketball or cheering for basketball.

BRLS will sponsor YMCA or BREC teams in sports we do not currently offer to our students if coaches are available.

B. Parent Consent

A parent/guardian "Athletic Participation form" must be on file prior to an athlete's first practice. The form must be signed by the athlete and coach. Athletes and parents/legal guardians must also sign a "Code of Athletics" that our league and school follow. (See the last page of this handbook.)

C. Insurance

BRLS carries a liability policy that includes coverage for athletes participating in a school sponsored event. This policy is secondary to the family policy. If a parent chooses to make a claim, they should contact the principal.

D. Extracurricular Eligibility

Every athlete MUST have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 based on their studies in math, English, reading/literature, spelling, social studies, science and foreign language. With the exception of handwriting, students may not have any "F's" or "N's" (not limited to the subjects above). Eligibility determination is based on grades earned at the midpoint of each quarter and on quarterly report cards, and ineligibility is effective on the day after these reports are issued. Students who fail to meet these standards will not be eligible to attend team practices or participate in extracurricular activities for two school weeks or four events--whichever is the shorter period. If, after two weeks or four events, the eligibility standards still have not been met, the student will be ineligible on a week by week basis until the teacher sees improvement and declares the student eligible. Students must also earn a conduct grade of "C-" or higher to be eligible. Students who receive three detentions or one suspension during a sport's season will be ineligible for the remainder of the season. This requirement applies to all sports including YMCA/BREC teams receiving funds from the BRLS Athletic Fund.

E. Training Rules

The use or possession of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, narcotics, or other undefined controlled substances will result in suspension from the athletic program and from the

school for a period of time to be determined by the athletic director and principal. It may also result in expulsion.

F. School Suspensions

Athletes suspended from school will be suspended from the athletic program for the remainder of the sport season. This applies to an in-school or out-of-school suspension. (A suspension also takes place on the third detention in any given quarter.)

G. School Attendance

Any student who is absent from school for more than 90 minutes due to illness or unexcused absence on the day of an extracurricular activity will not be allowed to participate in the activity. If a student is sent home from school sick or running a fever, he or she may not return to school the next day unless that student has a signed doctor's excuse allowing him or her to do so and cannot participate in any extracurricular activity on either the day of absence or the initial day of recovery. Students involved in any extracurricular activity may participate in a practice or event on the second day of his or her recovery if they have been fever free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication.

H. Games and Practices

1. Athletes will not miss practices or games without the coach's approval. When possible, a written excuse should be given at least one week in advance. Without the coach's approval and a written note or a parent contacting the coach, the absence will be unexcused. 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. Three unexcused absences will prevent the athlete from receiving an end of the year athletic letter or pin.

2. All games and practices played on Sundays or over holidays are not mandatory. Therefore, attendance requirements and penalties imposed by coaches and/or the BRLS Athletic Department may not be enforced. However, effort should be made to attend these scheduled events. If an athlete is unable to attend, it is strongly recommended that he or she notify the coach in advance. No games, practices or athletic activities may be scheduled to extend beyond 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. On days in which school has been cancelled for any reason, practices may not be held or organized at any location.

3. Athletes are encouraged to avoid participating in other clubs or leagues during designated BRLS sports seasons. Also athletes are encouraged to schedule dance classes, horseback riding, etc. on days that will allow them to attend all BRLS practices and games. At the junior high level, missing scheduled BRLS events due to participating in other clubs, activities, or leagues will be considered unexcused unless a written note is received in advance, signed by the parent, and approved by the coach(es). At the elementary level this will also apply unless prior arrangements have been made with the coach.

4. Practice attire should reflect the BRLS dress code. No short shorts or tank top/sleeveless shirts should be worn to practice. Please see the Family Handbook for complete guidelines.

I. Uniforms

School provided uniforms are to be worn only for contests. All uniforms not returned in good condition at the end 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.

Washing Instructions: Please wash uniforms in cool water; then hang to dry. Please do NOT put uniform in dryer and do NOT iron.

The school will purchase cheerleading skirts that need to be returned to the school at the end of the season. The school will also pay for the lettering on the “shell.” It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pay the cost of the “shell,” bloomers, socks, and shoes. Payment must be made prior to the cheerleader receiving any items.

J. Tryout And “Cuts”

BRLS does not hold tryouts or make “cuts” for any of the BRLS sports. At the junior high level, students may earn (try out for) starting positions, but all athletes will participate in each contest. However, athletes can attend the first two practices of a sport and then drop if they so choose. Once a student attends the third practice, we expect him or her to commit for the season. Normally athletes may not join the team after three practices have taken place. If there are a large number of athletes out for a team, the team may be split into two groups. This will be done only if additional coaches can be found. The groups will be divided by the Athletic Director and coach.

K. Participation Fee

There is a \$25.00 participation fee for participating in football, volleyball or basketball. This fee helps offset costs associated with the ISAA and our athletic program. The fee will be charged on the family’s monthly financial statement.

L. Playing Time

All coaches will provide appropriate playing time for each athlete in each athletic contest. Playing time will be more evenly distributed for elementary teams. However, fielding a more competitive team increases in importance in junior high. Playing time is allowed to be less evenly distributed in tournaments for both levels. All coaches will use their best judgment when determining playing time.

M. Conduct

All athletes will conduct themselves in accordance with Christian principles of proper behavior. 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).

N. Awards

All participants in the Baton Rouge Lutheran School Athletic program will receive a chenille letter and then a pin for each sport that they participate in from grade three through eight. Once an athlete has received a letter, he/she will receive a pin for each subsequent sport in which he/she letters. These pins will represent the sport in which the athlete lettered. An athlete who does not complete the season or is not available for a portion of the season due to ineligibility or unexcused absences may not be eligible for an award.

IV. Parents

A. Conduct

All parents will conduct themselves in accordance with Christian principles of proper behavior. Parents will NOT boo anyone, make noise that distracts the other team, say derogatory things to the referees, confront opposing fans, coaches, or players and cheerleaders, criticize our coaches or players, or act without deciding, "What would Jesus do?" 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. We do want parents to cheer for our team, serve as a role model for their child, (Think, "What would Jesus do?") compliment and thank our coach (win or lose), compliment our players, sincerely tell opposing players and coaches "good game" after the game, and thank the referees for his/her effort.

Parents need to be supportive of their children's efforts. Being at games, picking up children on time from practices, being a supportive spectator, discouraging unsportsmanlike conduct, and the like are ways Christian parents teach their children. Parents should teach their children to be humble winners and gracious losers.

We expect parents to support the coach(es), especially in the presence of their children. It is difficult to resist coaching from the stands, but remember the coaches are the coaches. Undermining a coach's authority is harmful to the team and the athlete. If a parent really wants to be involved, contact the Athletic Director. Parents are encouraged to make an effort to know all the names of the players on the team and then cheer in a positive, Christian manner for the entire team. Take time to thank the coach, officials, and others for their efforts and compliment all the players for playing hard.

Since our coaches, athletic directors, and principal are responsible for the behavior of our fans, it is important for our fans (students and adults) to obey any requests made by any of these people in authority. During a game referees are in charge of the gym/field where they are officiating. It is a PSAL league rule that fans (parents and others) cannot question an official's call. When this occurs a technical foul (basketball), an unsportsmanlike penalty (football,) or a yellow or red card (volleyball) can be issued against our team.

Parents are asked to sign a "Fan's Code" located at the end of this handbook. BRSL wants our teams to win or lose with grace, and we believe that every player, coach, AND PARENT should strive to be above reproach in the sportsmanship we display.

Parents need to always remember that they are responsible for nourishing their

children's faith by regular attendance at worship, Sunday school, Bible class, and home devotions. Never should athletics or any other aspect of our lives overshadow our worship lives.

B. Concession Stand/Admissions/Clean Up

Families of students involved in volleyball, cheerleading, and/or basketball are required to work in the concessions stand, take admission, or help at the scorer's table during at least one evening or one Saturday morning/afternoon in our gym. It is expected that parents will assist for all of the games for which they are scheduled. Assignments to work will be made by the Athletic Director. Parents are required to work their assigned shift even if their child is ineligible to play on the sports team at the time. If a parent cannot serve on his or her assigned day or time, it is the responsibility of the parent to find a substitute. All parents and players are expected to stay after the last game to help clean up after any event in our gym.

C. 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. 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.

D. Practice and Games

1. It will be the responsibility of parents to supply transportation to and from all practices and games. Athletes should not arrive at practices earlier than fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled starting time. Parents also should pick up their children immediately when practices are scheduled to end. However, if you cannot pick up your child right after practice, coaches have been instructed to send players to after school childcare. Childcare is available until 6:00 pm and there is a charge for this service. Parents and athletes should plan to arrive at games thirty minutes before the scheduled starting time and promptly take their children home after the scheduled games of the day have been completed. Please do not simply drop off your child for a game.
2. Parents may not approach the team bench, referees, or competing children during an organized competition, including half-times and time outs, unless injury has occurred.

V. Coaches

A. Coaches' Conduct

Coaches will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with proper Christian principles of behavior. 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 take his/her concerns about a coach to the principal after they have been addressed with the coach. As a disciplinary measure, the athletic director may recommend the removal of a coach from his/her position during the season. After hearing the concerns, the principal 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. 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 15 minutes before the scheduled starting time and will not leave until all of their athletes have been picked up or have gone to childcare.
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 have been picked up or have gone home.
4. Coaches will begin practice and games with prayer.
5. Coaches will adequately supervise all of their athletes during practices and games.
6. All coaches are approved by the athletic director and the principal on a one year basis. No coaching positions have tenure. However, the Athletic Director will attempt to pair a coach with a team on which his/her child is participating.
7. Should coaches wish to suggest particular dress for their players on any school day, the coach must contact the school office for approval of such wear as it may be in violation of the school dress code.
8. The continuing study of God's Word is vital to modeling His commands.

C. Coaching stipend (suspended for 2010-11 due to low enrollment)

The BRLS Athletic fund will provide the head coach and assistants with a stipend to help off set gasoline and/or baby-sitter costs. They will also receive a BRLS Polo Shirt to wear at games.

VI. Other Information

A. Funding

The athletic department may receive funds from the following sources:

1. Gate admission for away game is \$3.00 for adults and \$2.00 for students. All home games are free for BRLS parents and students or members of Trinity Lutheran church.
2. Fundraisers, upon school board approval, may be utilized to purchase special items.

3. The PTL and the Athletic Fund purchase uniforms for each sport.

B. Rule Enforcement

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

May God bless our players, coaches, fans, and all who are part of our athletic program.

Code of Ethics and BRLS Athletic Handbook Acknowledgement

In order for a student-athlete to participate in athletics, a signed “Code of Ethics” form must be on file. Also, the parent/guardian of each student-athlete must have a signed form on file. In addition, each coach will have a signed copy on file.

As a Lutheran school, we desire to teach and encourage Christian conduct and sportsmanship among our student-athletes, coaches and fans. To help us achieve that goal, we have developed the following guidelines to emphasize what we feel to be proper conduct for our student-athletes, coaches and fans:

The Student-Athlete...

- Accepts referees’ decisions in a proper manner; does not argue or make non-verbal gestures that indicate disagreement with officials, opponents or fans.
- Treats an opponent as a guest and a friend—as he/she wishes to be treated; appreciates his/her opponent’s good play, encourages his/her opponent when he/she makes a mistake.
- Does not use profanity or vulgarity at any time.
- Realizes that he/she is representing the Lord—as well as his/her school and team and reflects this awareness in his/her conduct.
- Win or lose, thanks the Lord for allowing him/her to take part in the contest and keeping him/her safe.
- *Has received, read and supports the BRLS Athletic Program Handbook. _____(initial)*

The Parent (Fan)...

- Attends the game to encourage and support all participating student-athletes.
- Shows respect for the judgment of the officials; does not question their calls.
- Recognizes and appreciates outstanding play by either team.
- Does not use profane or obscene language or gestures.
- Does not verbally assault others or in any other way is generally obnoxious.
- Is a positive example in setting the tone for those around him/her so that everyone may enjoy the game.
- Shows respect for those who are hosting our school; respects the rules and expectations of the host school.
- *Has received, read and supports the BRLS Athletic Program Handbook. _____(initial)*

The Coach...

- Treats each player, opposing coach, parent, and administrator with respect and dignity.
- Uses the game as an avenue to minister to children, parents and fans.
- Knows he/she is an ambassador for Christ, and as such, conducts himself/herself in a proper manner when dealing with student-athletes, parents and fans.
- Sets a good example for parents and fans.
- Maintains self-control at all times. The desire to win must not overcome rational behavior.
- Helps players appreciate the opponent’s good performance and encourage opponents who make mistakes.
- Expects good sportsmanship from his/her players.
- Removes players using profanity or showing any kind of disrespect from the game.
- Does not “run up” the score or embarrass his/her opponent in any way.
- *Has received, read and supports the BRLS Athletic Program Handbook. _____(initial)*

Print Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Role: (Circle One) **Student-Athlete** **Parent (Fan)** **Coach**

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

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