
St. Albert the Great Athletic Association Policy Manual

THIS POLICY MANUAL WAS OFFICIALLY ADOPTED BY THE ST. ALBERT ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION BOARD ON JUNE 22, 1987 AND IS REVISED ANNUALLY.

Revised 05/12/03

Policy Manual

The following are guidelines, principles and policies established by the St. Albert Athletic Association Board in order that the volunteer coaches can fully understand their responsibility to the school children, to the Parish community, and to the Athletic Association Board. Also, this manual will communicate policy between the Athletic Association Board, parents, and school administration.

- 1. Purpose.** The purpose of the Athletic Association is stated in the Constitution as follows:
 - A) To serve as the officially recognized organization which provides, promotes, directs and administers all athletic programs sponsored under the name of St. Albert the Great Parish;
 - B) To promote spiritual, physical, mental, and social growth through the various athletic programs sponsored by the Parish;
 - C) To cooperate with the Parish Council through the Education Commission to achieve the goals and objectives of the Parish;
 - D) To promote fund raising functions within the overall framework of the Parish in order to finance the sponsored athletic programs.

2. Philosophy. Grade school sports are frequently the student's only exposure to athletics as a Participant. The Athletic Association wants to provide that participation opportunity for as many Students as possible. Participation in amateur athletic programs should be a learning and growth experience while providing enjoyment. All players need to actually compete in games and practices to maximize their learning experience and to develop skills. Therefore, each coach is obligated to follow the participation guidelines outlined later in this St. Albert Athletic Policy Manual.

Athletic coaches should realize that students have other obligations and activities that may or may not be as important as athletic involvement. Family, church, school, scouting, choir, and part-time jobs all compete for the student's time and interest. As part of the process in becoming a well-adjusted adult (maturing), the student must use good judgement in developing their athletic commitments.

- 3. Eligibility.** The following eligibility requirements must be met before a student can participate on a team.
 - A) Team members must be:
 - A student attending St. Albert the Great Grade School or a Parish member enrolled and regularly attending St. Albert Religious Education Programs.
 - Students of adjacent Catholic Parishes that do not offer the particular sport in season.
 - If a student leaves St. Albert the Great Grade School or withdraws from St. Albert the Great Religious Education program, his or hers eligibility status will be terminated.
 - B) Students/athletes and their parents **are required** to review the Participation Policy and Behavior Policy, which is included in the School and Religious Education Handbooks, complete the acknowledgment card, and return it to the school office. Parents as well as students are to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the philosophy of St. Albert the Great Parish. Any violations in this policy may result in suspension or removal of either the parent or student from participation in athletic programs.

4. Sport Registration. The Athletic Board will conduct several sport registration periods per school year. These registration periods will be of two-week duration and conducted by the St. Albert Athletic Board Sport Coordinator according to the following guidelines:

Registration periods will be conducted during the following months:

<u>April</u>	<u>September</u>	<u>January (Spring Sports)</u>
Soccer (CYO and Stars)	Boys Basketball	Boy's and Girl's Volleyball
Football	Girls Basketball	Baseball (Pee wee & CYO)
Cheerleading	Basketball (Pee wee)	Track (Munchkin & CYO)

St. Albert Athletic Board Sport Coordinator will:

- A) Send flyer home with each eligible student (St. Albert School and Religious Education) on first day of registration period.
- B) Place announcements in Church bulletin for two weeks (Sunday before start and Sunday during registration period).
- E) Place weekly school newsletter announcements during two-week registration period.
- F) It is recommended that school PA announcements be made during registration period as a reminder for students.
- G) Ensure extra registration forms are available at the school office and church rectory.
- H) Place sign-up announcement on the Athletic Association website.

Parents are encouraged to contact the appropriate Sport Coordinator to arrange early registration, if they are going to be out of town during the sign-up period. Sport Coordinator names will be available on the Athletic Association's web site. If registration forms are postmarked after the registration deadline, the student will be put on a waiting list. The student will be placed on a team after team sizes are determined by the Sport Coordinator (first on the list is the first placed on a team if not enough players). **Late registrations will be charged a \$10 late fee if placed on a team.**

Students will not be permitted to register for another sport if:

- A) Uniforms and equipment have not been turned in from previous participation.
- B) There are unpaid fees from any previous participation.

Early sign-ups are necessary in order for St. Albert's to meet CYO deadlines, and to make sound decisions as to the number of teams to be entered. To provide CYO with the appropriate information, it is important that each student sign up by the announced registration date for St. Albert sports. The Athletic Association uses the registration numbers to determine number and grades of teams that will compete. Each sport's Coordinator must form teams with an adequate numbers of players, and secure two coaches per team before CYO league entry deadlines. Therefore, we cannot guarantee a spot on a roster for individuals who have not signed up by the registration date. In addition, refunds will not be provided for individuals who sign up for a team and drop off after the registration date unless due to a medical condition that prohibits them from participating.

5. Sport Coordinator Responsibilities. To organize and coordinate all activities involving St. Albert team sports, under the policies set forth in the St. Albert Athletic Policy Manual.

- A) Determine equipment and uniform needs and work with Uniform/Equipment Coordinator (if one appointed) to address these needs. This should be done several months before the season begins to assure proper time to order uniforms.
- B) Coordinate sport registration process (see Section 4).
- C) Complete CYO team placement form designating which league team should be placed in, based on ability level of team members.
- D) Collect completed registration forms from school and rectory. Submit fees to Treasurer.
- E) In forming teams, if more players are needed to field a team, see if there are children in St. Albert who are one grade higher or lower (but not below 4th grade) that do not have their own grade team that might be eligible and interested to play. CYO allows a maximum of 2 older players to play on a lower level team and any number of younger players to play up a grade. In some cases, you may need to contact nearby parishes for additional players. This should only happen when the other parish is also having a similar need for players. Players cannot be “recruited” from other parishes.
- F) Schedule evaluations/tryouts. **Minimum of 2 sessions to evaluate 7th & 8th grade A&B teams, and 1 evaluation session to divide 4th, 5th, and 6th grade teams equally.** In competitive leagues (A & B teams), impartial observers should be used to evaluate players and make team selections. Prospective coaches will be able to offer input as to team makeup once impartial observers make initial selections. Setup time with scheduling coordinator for use of Parish Center and send out flyers announcing evaluations to players. Based upon the above mentioned evaluations/tryouts it will be the discretion of the Sport Coordinator and the coaches involved in the evaluations/tryouts to determine if it is the best interest of the students to have A&B teams (7th & 8th grades only) or to split the teams equally.
- G) Determine number of teams at each level.
- H) Select team coaches (2/team, a coach may only be listed as a coach or an assistant coach on one team per sport), and verify that coaches have attended Child Protection Class. If not arrange for them to attend next available session. Contact Director of Religious Education for schedule.
- I) Review the Athletic Board participation guidelines with coaches prior to practices starting.
- J) Complete team rosters listing all team members and obtaining signatures of Athletic Director, Pastor, and Principal.
- K) Copy roster and all registration forms (front & back).
- L) Submit roster, original registration forms, and entry fees (obtain check from treasurer) to CYO office by deadline. Also include scheduling conflicts, (ex. Sacrament dates, scout outings, musicals, etc. so that CYO will not schedule a game in conflict.)
- M) Copy of each roster and team schedule must be given to St. Albert Pastor, Principal, Religious Education Director, and Athletic Director.
- N) New team members can be added up to the third regular season game.
 - a) The St. Albert Athletic Director must sign and date the form indicating that he or she has checked to see that the new member is eligible to participate.
 - b) Copy registration form (front & back)
 - c) Submit original registration form to CYO office, specifying in upper right corner what team player should be placed on. (Ex. A1, B2).
- O) Give copies of individual registration form to coach to be used as medical release form.
- P) Provide notification to all coaches of date, time, and location of CYO coaches meeting. Coaches will receive game schedule at this meeting.
- Q) Assist Athletic Board’s Scheduling Coordinator in scheduling team practices.
- R) Arrange time with coaches to handout equipment and uniforms.
- S) Schedule team pictures. Contact Tom Suttman 832-0367 or 836-7628 or Brian Bergeron 435-7597.

- Request use of Parish Center or appropriate facility.
- T) Conduct Parent/Coaches Meeting. Topics of meeting:
- Behavior/Conduct (Coaches, Parents, Players)
 - **Distribute coach evaluation forms for all players.**
 - Calendar (Practice start, game start, end season)
 - Each coach should receive a copy of this Policy Manual. Make parents aware of Policy Manual and how to obtain from web site (Participation guidelines, suspension policy).
 - Inform coaches that any information to be supplied for publication (in newspapers, newsletters, or WWW sites) must be reviewed first by the Athletic Director.
 - Lines of communication (Coach, Sport Coordinator, Athletic Board)
 - Fund Raiser support (Gift Wrap Sale, Fish Fry)
- U) Collect uniforms and equipment at end of season.
- V) Order trophies for league/tournament winners as described in item #13.
- W) Review coach's evaluation forms and make notes for next year.
- X) Provide coaches' list to treasurer for refunds (head coach and one assistant coach per team.)
- Y) Provide a Coordinator Handbook for the sport, which includes rosters, coaches, practices and any other information that would be necessary to oversee that sport. This will be used for future references for new Sports Coordinators.
- Z) Provide a proposed budget to the Athletic Association for the upcoming year for their specific sport.

6. Practices. All practice sessions should be started with warm-up exercises. This helps avoid injury and establishes good exercise habits. At least two adult coaches or parents are to be present at all practices, and are required to attend a **mandatory** Archdiocese's Child Protection Class that can be scheduled through the Sport Coordinator.

Practices should be structured in order that all team members receive equivalent instruction and practice time. In no case, except for disciplinary reasons, should a coach consistently concentrate his/her instruction time on certain players (i.e. starters or regulars) due to the exclusion of other team members. The number and duration of practices should take into consideration the grade level of the children. The Sport Coordinator for a particular sport will decide if the number and length of practices are inappropriate.

The coach should differentiate between excused and un-excused absences. Conflicts will occur, but the coach should require that he/she be called whenever a child will miss a practice. Attendance at practice should not be the sole determinant of game participation. The overall situation must be considered, i.e. academic performance, the attitude of the child, the reason for absenteeism, the number of practices unattended, etc. Attendance problems can be avoided by publishing an attendance policy, team rosters, and the schedules for practices and games. Coaches are strongly encouraged to send home this information along with general team guidelines. A coach/parent/athlete meeting, early in the practice season is an effective way to communicate expectations and goals.

7. Games. The coach should assure that at least one assistant coach is available at all games for the order and safety of the children. Coaches should alert themselves to the nearest phone to use in case of an emergency. Like students, coaches are representatives of St. Albert Parish. It is important to remember that just being knowledgeable of a sport does not make for a good coach. There are many other aspects including being able to control your emotions during a game. Coaches should always demonstrate positive behavior and good sportsmanship. **Player participation in games is a subject of considerable concern to the Athletic Association and is discussed in Section 18.**

8. Coaching Eligibility. It is at the discretion of the Athletic Board as whether someone ought to be eligible to coach. Knowledge of the sport, prior coaching/volunteer experience at St. Albert, and personal circumstances are taken into consideration. The Athletic Board will make the final decision on coaching.

9. Gyms, Practice Fields, and other Facilities. The scheduling and renting of gyms and practice fields for games/practices must be accomplished through the St. Albert Athletic Association Scheduling Coordinator. Please refer to the

Parish Center Use Guidelines

Opening Parish Center for practice:

- A) If no team is practicing before you, coach will need to use the access code to gain access to the Parish Center through the south door (by playground). Sport Coordinator will provide coaches with an appropriate access code.
- B) Use something (e.g., security bar) to prop open door for arriving players. Require all people to enter the Parish Center from the south door. The outside doors in the lobby should not be propped open under any circumstances for security reasons.
- C) The four corner lights (switch located to the right as you enter the gym from the lobby) should already be on. If they are not, please turn these on.
- D) Go to light switches located between the kitchen and storage area and turn on all switches.
- E) Check bathrooms and note that everything is OK.
- F) **Sweep floors and place dirt/dust in trashcan.** (Required to provide maximum footing for players)
- G) Following scheduled teams should enter through south doors and stay in corner until their practice time starts. **No dribbling or running is permitted until your team's actual practice time starts.**

Closing Parish Center

- A) Put away all practice equipment in designated areas. (Unless another team is practicing later)
- B) Turn off all overhead lights using light switches located between the kitchen and storage area.
- C) Check bathrooms, make sure lobby doors to outside are closed, and turn off lobby lights. Please leave four corner lights on as a security precaution.
- D) Exit through south door (by playground).

To insure the safety of those inside and avoid vandalism it is important that coaches keep the main Parish Center doors (lobby doors) locked during practice. Late arrivals and coaches can enter through South doors.

10. Uniforms and Equipment. Uniforms and equipment are to be issued by the Uniform/Equipment Coordinator with assistance from the Sport Coordinator prior to the first game. An account needs to be kept of all equipment issued in order to facilitate its collection at the end of the season. If items are unreasonably worn, do not fit properly, or are missing, contact the appropriate Sport Coordinator. At the end of the season, coaches are responsible for collecting equipment/uniforms and forwarding them to the Sport Coordinator. The replacement cost for lost or damaged Athletic Association uniforms and equipment will be the sole responsibility of the student and parent.

Uniforms are only to be provided by the Athletic Association. No uniforms (including special warm up apparel, socks, etc.) are to be provided by anyone outside the Athletic Association without the approval of the Athletic Association. The Athletic Association will only approve such purchases if ALL teams in that grade and gender are getting the same apparel.

11. Purchasing. Purchases are not to be made by coaches or parents. Required items should be arranged for through the sport Coordinator in conjunction with the uniform/equipment coordinator. This should be part of the budget submitted by each Sport Coordinator.

12. Participation Fees. The Athletic Board will establish the fee for each sport. Fees must accompany required registration forms for everyone including prospective coaches. When coaches are selected, the Athletic Board will provide refunds to the Head Coach and the Assistant Coach of each team. For Track, the Athletic Board will refund each coach of the age groups and specialty coaches (shot, discus, and high jump). For Football, the Athletic Board will refund up to four coaches per team. If a fee cannot be paid because of a particular hardship, it should be brought to the attention of the appropriate Sport Coordinator or Athletic Director.

13. Liability. Parish or CYO liability insurance **DOES NOT** cover athletic volunteers. Therefore, you may want to check with your private insurance agent about purchasing some type of umbrella coverage. If you provide transportation for team members to and from practices or games, coverage for injuries while a passenger in your private vehicle would fall under your own personal liability coverage. The Athletic Board encourages all coaches to attend Sports Medicine and/or Coaching Clinics. Educational information can be obtained through the Sport Coordinator.

14. Awards. The Athletic Board's current policy is to award a trophy to each team member (unless provided by the league) whenever the team is League Champion, League Co-Champion or League Tournament Champion. If a team is both a league winner and a tournament winner, only one trophy is awarded. Trophies are not awarded for an intramural program like Peewee baseball or CYO leagues where team standings are ***not*** kept. All decisions regarding the awarding of trophies, plaques, patches, etc., is the exclusive province of the Athletic Board.

- A) **Parents and coaches should not purchase trophies or awards on their own for presentation.**
- B) No student permanently dismissed from the team for academic or behavior reasons should receive an award if the team should win league or tournament.
- C) Patches may be awarded in special situations, but only if specifically agreed to by the Athletic Board. Some special situation examples are:
 - A St. Albert team coming in second place to a first place St. Albert team.
 - An 8th grade team in second place to acknowledge special effort or improvement.
- D) The Athletic Board specifically forbids the issuing of individual awards for most valuable player, best point average, etc. **All awards are to be team recognition.**

15. Participation Policy. It is the philosophy of the St. Albert Athletic Association that athletics should be a meaningful and enriching experience for the student/athlete. This experience is intended to include all the benefits derived from a competitive athletic program, such as:

- A) The camaraderie that comes from sharing the total team experience with a group of peers;
- B) The learning experience of practice and games;
- C) Learning to put aside personal goals or desires for the group goals of the team;
- D) The realization that preparation, attitude, and commitment are all essential in the competitive process; and finally,
- E) Learning to win graciously and lose with dignity, as representatives of St. Albert the Great Parish.

Although St. Albert's administers a competitive sports program, it is within the framework of a no cut policy, geared towards a two-tiered system of participation. This two-tiered system is committed to a very strong emphasis on high levels of participation in the lower grades (1-6), while allowing a more competitive program in the upper grades (7&8) with the exception of Girls' Cheerleading in preparation for high school athletics.

With this philosophy as the foundation, the Athletic Association has developed participation guidelines. **The following guidelines are mandatory and do reflect the philosophy and intent of sports at St. Albert the Great.** Therefore, all coaches are required to become familiar with the content and spirit of these guidelines and lead their teams accordingly.

Should anyone involved with a St. Albert athletic program feel that a given team is not being developed within the intent of these guidelines, they are urged to bring this fact to the attention of the appropriate Sport Coordinator or a member of the Athletic Association Board. **All concerns should be placed in writing, with a signature, for review of the Athletic Board. Any violation of policy stated in this manual may result in coach/player suspension.**

The Athletic Association strongly believes that it takes the mutual understanding and cooperation of all parties involved to provide the kind of program we want, and have come to expect at St. Albert the Great. We rely on everyone to achieve this goal.

The participation guidelines listed below have been established for the various sports and grade levels. Each coach is responsible to abide by these guidelines in league games. In the case of the 7th and 8th grade coaches, they should try to exceed these minimums whenever possible. In the case where an athlete is habitually missing practices, or is frequently not exhibiting the sportsmanship that is expected of a St. Albert's athlete, it is at the coach's discretion to reduce playing time. It is highly recommended that a verbal warning be given before reducing playing time.

St. Albert the Great Athletic Participation Policy

<u>Sport</u>	<u>6th Grade and under</u>	<u>7th & 8th Grades</u>
Boys & Girls Soccer	Equal playing time. This includes tournament play.	Each student should play in every game.
Football	Each student should play a minimum of four offensive or four defensive plays per half when possible. Due to the physical nature of this sport, it will be the discretion of the Coach as to the appropriateness of playing time based solely on the safety and well being of the player.	Not Applicable. Provided by Alter.
Volleyball	Each student should play a minimum of one-half of each game. This includes tournament play.	Each student should play in every game.
Boys & Girls Basketball	Equal playing time. This includes tournament play.	Each student should play in every game.
Baseball & Softball	Each student should play at least two innings of defense, bat once, and start every other game.	Each student should play in every game.
Boys & Girls Pee-Wee Baseball (Grades 1-4)	Each student should play at least two innings of defense and start every other game. (All children bat in a continuous batting order).	Not Applicable.
Cheerleading (Grade 7,8)	Since Cheerleading is only done in the 7 th and 8 th grade for the first time, it has been changed to a non-competitive sport and all students should participate equally.	
Track	Due to the nature of this sport, a participation policy is not applicable. It is expected, however, that reasonable participation will be promoted.	

Only those players listed on the team roster shall be permitted to participate in any game (regular season/tournament) unless prior approval has been obtained from the St. Albert Athletic Association. Under no circumstances should someone not listed on the team roster, receive playing time in a game. Violations of this policy may result in the suspension and/or permanent replacement of the coach.

16. Lines of Communications. The coach is an important representative of the Athletic Board and St. Albert The Great Parish. The coach has greater exposure to the students, parents, parishioners, and people outside St. Albert's than the Athletic Board members. Therefore, coaches will often become aware of problems or concerns before the Board. The Coach's access to the Board is through the Sport Coordinator and Athletic Director. If they do not or cannot resolve a problem or concern, it should be brought to the attention of the Athletic Board in writing with signature, by attending the next regularly scheduled Athletic Board monthly meeting.

The *Coach/Sport evaluation form* provides a means for players and parents to list comments or concerns regarding St. Albert athletic programs, league play, and coaching staff. All evaluation forms should be signed and returned to the Sport Coordinator, Athletic Director, School Office, or Rectory. A Review Board will address all concerns regarding coaching staff, **any comments will be kept confidential**, and a letter summarizing the concerns to be addressed will be forwarded to the coaches. Any matter that cannot be resolved by the Athletic Board to the individual's satisfaction can be brought to the attention of the Parish Council via the Youth Laity Commission.

17. Duties & Responsibilities of Coaches. The Coach is his/her Parish's Team Leader and is an agent of their parish/school at scheduled contests. The Coach's responsibilities to CYO and St. Albert the Great Parish is:

- A) To attend a mandatory Archdiocese's Child Protection Class.
- B) To provide Christian leadership and supervision for the student/athlete.
- C) To create an atmosphere where the athletes have fun.
- D) To teach the basic skills of the sport.
- E) To encourage each participant to develop their God-given talents.
- F) To set a good example by his/her behavior (treating athletes fairly and with respect).
- G) To follow the St. Albert Athletic Association Participation Policy.
- H) To encourage athletes to demonstrate good sportsmanship by respecting coaches, referees, Opponents, and teammates.
- I) To convey to athletes and fans that good behavior is expected.
- J) To encourage athletes to respect all fields, facilities, and equipment.
- K) To convey to parents that the athlete is not allowed to be dropped off unless the coach is Present and that their child needs to be picked up directly after practice.
- L) To contact parents and Sport Coordinator if a behavior problem arises.
- M) To enforce the guidelines of St. Albert's Participation and Behavior Policy, and discipline the Student/athlete when necessary, up to and including loss of playing time and/or suspension.

18. Student/Athlete Suspension. The St. Albert Athletic Board adheres to the guidelines set forth in the St. Albert School Handbook, therefore:

- A) Any student who receives a failing grade in one or more subjects due to lack of effort, and/or receives four (4) demerits, will be placed on STEP II Suspension from participation for a period of two weeks after notification of parents.
- B) STEP III: REMOVAL from participation will be initiated if needed improvement has not been noted by the child's teachers during the two weeks after STEP II has been initiated, or the student reaches the prescribed number of demerits for dismissal from team.

In dealing with these matters the following steps will be followed by the Athletic Association:

- 1) Written notification will be sent directly to the parent/guardian by the school Principal notifying them of a two-week suspension.
- 2) The principal will notify the Athletic Director who will then notify the Sport Coordinator who will notify the coach of the student/player suspension.
- 3) When improvement occurs, suspension will be lifted. Written notification will be given to the parent and student. The student can return to practice by showing letter to his/her coach.

Please refer to the Parent/Student School Handbook for further information on the St. Albert the Great Parish Participation Policy.