

St. Thomas School Newton, Illinois



Extracurricular Handbook 2023-2024

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Philosophy.....	1
Grades 5-8 Athletics / Extracurricular Activities.....	1
Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA)	1
Age.....	1
Physical Examination.....	1
Birth Certificate	1
Grades	1
Previous Participation	2
Concussions	2
Activity Fee.....	2
Rules of Behavior	2
School Rules	2
Team Rules	2
Misbehavior	3
Transportation.....	3
Parent Responsibilities.....	3
Team Equipment.....	3
Personal Equipment	4
Team Uniforms	4
Parent Permission and Student Approval	4
Student Athletic Injury and Student Accident Insurance.....	4
Chain of Command.....	4
Right to Amend.....	4
IESA Protocol for implementation of NFHS Sports Playing Rule for Concussions	5
Concussion Information Sheet and Sign-Off.....	6
Parent Permission / Student Approval Form	8

Dear Parents and Students,

This handbook has been prepared for the students who will be participating in athletics/extracurricular activities. Students who choose to participate are obligated to know the rules and expectations as described in this handbook as well as the consequences for not following them.

Our volunteer coaches give much of their time and energy to our students. The Parish Center is an excellent facility and the equipment used is in good condition. Our Booster Club works tirelessly to help provide for the athletics offered at St. Thomas School.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities need the guidance and support of their parents. Before a commitment is made, students should discuss their participation with their parents.

We encourage all students who participate to maintain their grades as well as to work hard in attaining the skills necessary for success in the activity they choose. As always we want our students to be good citizens and good Christians at all times.

Sincerely,

Jill Bierman
Principal

Father R. Dean Probst
Pastor

INTRODUCTION

The extracurricular program in Grades 5-8 offers instruction and competition in several activities. Any student who has the desire and is willing to devote the time and effort may participate in the program. Our purpose in preparing this handbook is to better inform students and parents about the athletic program and standards required of the participants.

PHILOSOPHY

The purposes of school-sponsored extracurricular programs are to teach the skills of games, to foster healthy exercise, to teach fair play, and to give enjoyment to students. Athletic programs which deny to certain students these opportunities, or that exert undue pressures on students, are inconsistent with these purposes.

We believe that participation in a sound extracurricular program contributes to the development of the student.

We believe that a sound extracurricular program teaches participants the value of cooperation as well as the spirit of competition. The student learns how to work with others for the achievement of group goals as well as individual goals.

We believe that the spirit of play and team involvement, with an emphasis on team effort, are valuable to the development of a healthy individual.

We believe that extracurricular activities are a wholesome equalizer because individuals are judged on what they can do, not on the basis of the social, ethnic, or economic group to which their families belong.

We believe that all interested students who are willing to follow the rules of the extracurricular handbook should have the opportunity to participate; therefore, we have a “No-cut” policy.

GRADES 5-8 ATHLETICS / EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Fall	7-8 Girls Softball (Co-op agreement with Jasper County Junior High)
	7-8 Boys Baseball
	6-8 Cross Country (Co-op agreement with Jasper County Junior High)
Winter	7-8 Girls Basketball (Co-op agreement with Jasper County Junior High)
	6-8 Girls Volleyball
	5-8 Girls, Boys Basketball
	6-8 Cheerleading
Spring	6-8 Girls, Boys Track
	6-8 Scholastic Bowl

If more students are needed to fill rosters, younger students may be asked to play. The grade levels who are invited to participate will vary from year to year depending upon numbers.

ILLINOIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

St. Thomas belongs to the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA). This association, composed of approximately 540 schools in Illinois, sets guidelines and rules which must be followed by the member schools in the areas of music, literary, and athletics. Some pertinent rules are as follows:

Physical Examination: All students who participate in athletics must have a sports physical examination. The physical examination is valid for a period of one year. Their physical information must be placed on a form available from the school or doctor, and the sports physical must be performed by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, a physician’s assistant, or a nurse practitioner. Students cannot participate in practices or games until the physical exam is on file in the school office.

Birth Certificate: Participants must provide the school with a birth certificate or hospital record of birth.

Grades: Junior high students involved in extracurricular activities (such as scholar bowl, athletics, etc.) must maintain a passing grade in all subjects, maintain appropriate conduct, and be present at school for half a day

(noon) to participate at practice and competitions. If a student is absent the whole day due to a funeral in the immediate family (siblings, parents, grandparents), he/she will still be allowed to participate in a competition on that date.

IESA rules state that eligibility must be checked weekly and that probation shall run from Monday to the following Sunday. Teachers turn grades in to the principal by 8:30 a.m. each Friday. A letter is sent home each Friday if a student is placed on the warning list or is ineligible. A student is placed on the warning list if he/she has any grades at 74% - 70%. A student is ineligible if any grade is at 69% or lower. A student on the warning list can still participate as normal. He/she just needs to work hard so the grade doesn't drop. During the week that a student is ineligible, he/she may participate only in practice. Parents have the right to keep their child home from practice to work on raising their grade. An ineligible student may not dress in uniform or participate in any way at a competition for the week. This includes all games and tournaments, either home or away. The student may sit with the team, but cannot wear any part of the uniform. An ineligible student is not allowed on the field/court the night of competition.

Eligibility runs for a complete week. Even if the grade rises above 69% in middle of the week, the student cannot play until the following week. Should the student fail to raise his/her grade above 69%, he/she will remain ineligible for another complete week. After two consecutive weeks of ineligibility, he/she cannot attend practice until he/she becomes eligible. A child who receives an ineligibility letter on Friday, is not able to play starting Monday until the following Sunday. If a student fails to maintain an overall 74% or above in all subjects for 6 weeks, the student will automatically be off the team of the present sport or activity for the remainder of the season.

In the case of a student with special needs, participation is controlled by his/her Individual Service Plan.

Grades shall be accumulative for each quarter grading period. The end-of-quarter grade determines eligibility for the first week of the new quarter.

Previous Participation: No student is eligible to participate at the same academic grade level for two different school years in the same sport. This is true whether the student attended a member or a non-member school. Participation in one interscholastic contest in a sport constitutes one season of eligibility in that sport.

Dual Participation: During an IESA season for any given sport, students who wish to practice or participate either as an individual or a team member in any non-school competition in the same sport must have it approved by administration.

Concussions: St. Thomas complies with the concussion protocols, policies, and by-laws of the Illinois High School Association and the Illinois Elementary School Association. (See pages 5-7). These require that:

- A. A student athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion in a practice or game shall be removed from participation or competition at that time.
- B. A student athlete who has been removed from an interscholastic contest for a possible concussion or head injury may not return to that contest unless cleared to do so by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois or a certified athletic trainer.
- C. If not cleared to return to that contest, a student athlete may not return to play or practice until the student athlete has provided his or her school with written clearance from a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois.

ACTIVITY FEE

A \$25.00 activity fee is charged for each extracurricular activity in which a child participates. This fee is due at the first practice. It is refundable if the child withdraws before the first contest. If a student is playing on a JCJH team, \$25 goes to JCJH.

RULES OF BEHAVIOR

School rules: All school rules of behavior are in effect at all times during practices, games, and on the way to and from contests and competitions. See the student handbook for the school rules of behavior.

Team Rules: All absences from practices and games will be handled on an individual basis. In general, and to teach students responsibility, students are required to attend all practices and contests. Students may be excused for the usual reasons of sickness and injury. Other absences must be excused by the coach in advance.

A student must have attended school for at least one-half of the day of any scheduled competition in order to compete. The half-day break is 11:30 a.m.

Profanity will not be permitted.

The use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs is not permitted. Strict rules will be enforced.

Practices may be closed to all but coaches, players, and managers.

Misbehavior: Along with the academic standards which have been established for extracurricular eligibility at St. Thomas School, certain behavioral guidelines must also be followed. The rules set forth in this policy are based upon the assumption that participation in athletics/extracurricular activities at St. Thomas School is a privilege and not a right.

Misbehavior which occurs during the time a student is participating in athletics or other extracurricular activities may be handled by the coach, the principal, or both. Any punishment will depend upon the severity of the offense. Should it be necessary to drop a student from the activity because of misbehavior, the parent will be notified.

Severe infractions include fighting, stealing, cheating, use of profanity, belligerence, insubordination, harassment, possession, and/or use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, fire arms, explosives, lighters, weapons, or any other object that may cause bodily injury or endangerment to others, or any other action that is deemed severe.

Consequences of misbehavior are as follows:

- When a student in an extracurricular activity commits a serious infraction, such as those listed in the various handbooks, he/she will serve the appropriate detention, but will not have to miss the next event while waiting for the detention date to arrive. If a detention is assigned to be served on the date of an extracurricular event, the detention is to be served before participating in that night's event. If practice is missed due to the student serving a detention, the student will need to discuss the consequences with his/her coach. Detentions are generally served at the convenience of the teacher/administrator.
- However, if the infraction occurs within a sporting event, during an extracurricular activity, or during a practice or any situation that is activity-related or sports-related, or in a situation tied in with his/her sport or activity, the student will be required to miss the next scheduled event/activity. If the detention and next event/activity occur at the same time, that time served will count for both consequences being fulfilled.

TRANSPORTATION

St. Thomas normally does not have bus service for athletic contests and other extracurricular activities.

Therefore, parent transportation is used. Students are to follow School Behavior Policies during this time.

Drivers of athletes must have a valid driver's license, insurance, have a current criminal background check, and have attended the Protecting God's Children workshop.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to and from practices. Athletes need to be picked up promptly at the conclusion of practices and games. Parents are expected to volunteer working the door and cleaning the gym for the sports in which their children participate. The Booster Club will have sign-ups for door workers; so hopefully, parents can work the date that is best for them. It is the responsibility of the parents to know the games they are to work and to find a replacement if needed. With everyone helping, it should take no more than 15 minutes to sweep the bleachers and the floor, push the bleachers in, flush the stools, and make sure no water is

running in the gym. These responsibilities are divided among parents so everyone is volunteering about the same amount of time. Parents of players are also responsible for helping out where needed (score keeper, timer, etc.). It is crucial that all parents help out so that we can continue to offer all the extracurricular activities.

TEAM EQUIPMENT

The school provides some equipment for use by the students. Students are responsible for these items when they are in their possession. Students are not to abuse the equipment.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

The school does not provide certain items of equipment or clothing. In this case, the students are expected to provide their own.

TEAM UNIFORMS

Students will be issued team uniforms by the coaches. The coaches will keep a record of the uniform used. Any student who loses or abuses a uniform beyond regular wear will be expected to pay for the article.

PARENT PERMISSION AND STUDENT APPROVAL

- Parents: Parents must sign the Concussion Information Sheet (page 7) and the Parent Permission form (page 8) before their child may participate in extracurricular activities.
- Students: Students who have decided to participate in extracurricular activities and who have parent permission must sign the Concussion Information Sheet (page 7) and the Approval Form (page 8) and turn them in to the school office.
- Coaches: No student may participate in extracurricular activities without a signed parent permission slip.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

In order for matters to be dealt with directly and openly, it is necessary to follow the proper Chain of Command. If a parent/student has a problem with a coach, the parent/student must go directly to that coach to discuss the concern. If, after talking with the coach, the parent/student is not satisfied that the matter has been taken care of, the parent/student should talk with the Principal. If after discussion with the Principal, the parent/student is still dissatisfied with the results, then and only then, should they contact the Pastor to discuss the issue. It may be necessary for a conference of parent/student, coach, Principal and Pastor, to settle the issue.

We encourage our students to speak to his/her coach if there are any questions. Learning to advocate for themselves is an important part of growing up. At times there may be a conflict for students who participate in more than one activity at the same time. This should be handled at the beginning of the season when schedules are complete. The student may choose which event to participate in, but it must be done well in advance so that coaches can plan appropriately. Parents are asked to encourage their son/daughter to speak with their coach before becoming involved.

RIGHT TO AMEND

The administration/Principal retains the right to make exceptions and/or amend any policies in the St. Thomas Extracurricular Handbook. The administration/Principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule at his/her discretion. Parents will be notified if changes are made.



IESA Protocol for Implementation of NFHS Sports Playing Rules for Concussions

August, 2012

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) implemented a new national playing rule regarding potential head injuries. The rule requires “any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.”

Definition of a Concussion

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness (be “knocked out”) to have suffered a concussion.

Behavior or signs observed indicative of a possible concussion	Symptoms reported by a player indicative of a possible concussion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of consciousness • Appears dazed or stunned • Appears confused • Forgets plays • Unsure of game, score, or opponent • Moves clumsily • Answers questions slowly • Shows behavior or personality changes • Can’t recall events prior to or after the injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Nausea • Balance problems or dizziness • Double or fuzzy vision • Sensitivity to light or noise • Feeling sluggish • Feeling foggy or groggy • Concentration or memory problems • Confusion

NOTE: The persons who should be alert for such signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion in an athlete include appropriate health-care professionals, coaches, officials, parents, teammates, and, if conscious, the athlete him/herself.

Protocol

Background: This protocol is intended to provide the mechanics to follow during the course of contests/matches/ events when an athlete sustains an apparent concussion. For the purposes of this policy, appropriate health care professionals are defined as: physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois and certified athletic trainers.

Policy:

1. During the pre-game conference of coaches and officials, the official shall remind the head coaches that a school-approved appropriate health care professional will need to clear for return to play any athlete removed from a contest for an apparent head injury, **unless that injury is the result of the student-athlete losing consciousness for any period of time. In such a situation, the student-athlete shall be removed from the practice or contest and will not be allowed to return to activity that day and will be subject to the Association’s Return to Play policy.**
2. The officials will have no role in determining concussion other than the obvious situation where a player is unconscious or apparently unconscious as is provided for under the previous rule. Officials will merely point out to a coach that a player is apparently injured and advise the coach that the player should be examined by the school-approved health care provider.
3. If it is confirmed by the school’s approved health care professional that the student did not sustain a concussion, the head coach may so advise the officials during an appropriate stoppage of play and the athlete may reenter competition pursuant to the contest rules.
4. **RETURN TO PLAY POLICY:** In cases when an athlete is not cleared to return to play the same day as he/she is removed from a contest following a possible head injury (i.e., concussion), the athlete shall not return to play or practice until the athlete is evaluated by and receives written clearance from a licensed health care provider to return to play.
5. Following the contest, a Concussion Special Report must be filed by the contest official(s) with the IESA Office through the Officials Center.
6. In cases where an assigned IESA state finals event medical professional is present, his/her decision to not allow an athlete to return to competition may not be over-ruled.

Concussion Information Sheet

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches • “Pressure in head” • Nausea or vomiting • Neck pain • Balance problems or dizziness • Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision • Sensitivity to light or noise • Feeling sluggish or slowed down • Feeling foggy or groggy • Drowsiness • Change in sleep patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amnesia • “Don’t feel right” • Fatigue or low energy • Sadness • Nervousness or anxiety • Irritability • More emotional • Confusion • Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays) • Repeating the same question/comment

Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears dazed • Vacant facial expression • Confused about assignment • Forgets plays • Is unsure of game, score, or opponent • Moves clumsily or displays incoordination • Answers questions slowly • Slurred speech • Shows behavior or personality changes • Can’t recall events prior to hit • Can’t recall events after hit • Seizures or convulsions • Any change in typical behavior or personality • Loses consciousness 	

Concussion Information Sheet

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often fail to report symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key to a student-athlete's safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The Return-to-Play Policy of the IESA and IHSA requires athletes to provide their school with written clearance from either a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches prior to returning to play or practice following a concussion or after being removed from an interscholastic contest due to a possible head injury or concussion and not cleared to return to that same contest. In accordance with state law, all schools are required to follow this policy.

You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions, you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

Student-athlete Name Printed

Student-athlete Signature

Date

Parent or Legal Guardian Printed

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

Date

PARENT PERMISSION

My son(s)/daughter(s), _____
has/have my permission to participate in extracurricular activities at St. Thomas School and/or Jasper County Junior High. I have read the Extracurricular Handbook and as a parent will help him/her respect these standards.

Parent Signature

Date

STUDENT APPROVAL

I have read and understand the rules and regulations in the Extracurricular Handbook. As a member of a team representing St. Thomas School and/or Jasper County Junior High, I agree to conduct myself at all times in accordance with these rules.

Signature of Athlete

Signature of Athlete

Signature of Athlete

Signature of Athlete

Date