



ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

"Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." -Colossians 3:17

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

The philosophy of the athletic program at Divine Redeemer Lutheran School (DRLS) is guided by the mission statement and philosophy for the Christian education of the school. Three specific ideas from the mission statement form the basis of the DRLS athletic philosophy.

1. Divine Redeemer Lutheran School is a ministry of Divine Redeemer Lutheran Church seeking to provide an environment in which children may develop their full potential as Christians in faith, knowledge, and behavior.
2. The school sees itself in partnership with Christian parents, cooperatively working to develop in children their full potential as Christians in faith, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishment.
3. Through instruction centered around God's Word, the students learn a proper relationship to God, His world, and their fellowman, and they are led to relate their faith to every aspect of life.

To do these things, some development may involve the area of athletics. At Divine Redeemer Lutheran School, endeavors to provide opportunities for children to participate in athletics in as many areas as the environment allows.

As the skills of each sport are practiced and developed, it is important that the children develop and approach sports in a Christian manner. DRLS student athletes will be led to understand an appropriate relationship between reaching their full potential as individual athletes and their role as a member of a team.

Understanding this relationship causes student-athletes to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, graciously accept victory or defeat, cooperate and work with their coaches and teammates, and develop their full potential as Christian athletes in faith, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishment. In the same way, they recognize the talents and abilities God has given each of person, the ways in which God uses His people, and accomplish His plan of bringing salvation to all mankind.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN ATHLETICS

Divine Redeemer Lutheran School offers sports programs to all students in Grades 5-8. DRLS believes that athletic participation aids in developing well-rounded individuals. DRLS also believes that for an athletic program to be successful in developing well-rounded individuals, guidelines for participation need to be in place. The following are DRLS guidelines for athletic participation.

Academic Guidelines

Students participating in athletics at DRLS must meet all three of the following conditions to participate:

1. Must maintain grades of "C-" or above in all subject areas on report cards.
2. Participants must be working at an academic level that is considered keeping with the child's ability (according to his/her teachers) and must show effort in class participation and assignments.

Student conduct and behavior must follow the Code of Conduct as outlined in the school handbook.

If a student-athlete fails to meet any of the conditions above, the following measures will be taken:

1. The student-athlete will be suspended from play for a week (starting Tuesday of that week and continuing to the next week Monday). During the period of suspension, the child will not be able to practice but will use the extra time to improve the grades and get extra help.
2. Grades will be updated and checked every Monday. If the student is still ineligible at that check, the student will remain ineligible for another week. After numerous weeks of being ineligible, the student may be too far behind to continue with the team. This decision will be made by the coach and athletic director with agreement by the principal.

Spirit of the Guidelines

The spirit of these guidelines is to encourage the student athlete to be responsible, first and foremost, in their academics and in their behavior. Exceptions to these guidelines may allowed due to extenuating circumstances. When such circumstances do not exist, and responsibility is not demonstrated in the student's academic performance or behavior, then the letter of the guidelines will be followed.

Practice and Game Guidelines

Participants are expected to be at all practices and games. It is difficult for coaches to conduct a practice or prepare for a game when players fail to attend without any advance notification. Regular unexcused absences from practices and games can result in reduced playing time in games. Coaches are encouraged to apply the following policies regarding missed practices and games:

1. Players missing a practice or a game due to an unexcused absence will not be allowed to play in the first half of the next game.
2. Players can accumulate a maximum of a one-game suspension due to missed practices or games for an extended vacation. Another series of such absences would result in another missed game.
3. Players may not participate in practices or games if they were not in attendance at school prior to 10:30 a.m. on the day of the practice or game. In addition, if student leaves school early, that student would not be eligible to play in the athletic contest. Physician appointments would be exceptions to this policy.
4. It is expected that parents, or the students, inform the coach if a student will miss a practice or game. If the absence is not communicated, it will be counted as unexcused. This includes if a student is sick.

PLAYING TIME

One of the main goals of the athletic program at DRLS is to provide opportunity and experience in athletics to students in Grades 5-8. A concern that arises within all levels of many athletic programs is playing time for each child. At DRLS, if a child is considering joining one of our athletic teams, the child can know that he/she will be on a team and will play. The child also must realize that when he/she joins a team at Divine Redeemer, commitments on the player's part must be made as well. These commitments include the following:

1. Attending practices and games.

2. Paying attention and striving to improve during all practices and games.
3. Demonstrating a Christ-like attitude toward all coaches, officials, and players.
4. Maintaining acceptable grades in all subject areas in school.
5. Demonstrating proper behavior on the court/field, off the court/field, and in the classroom.

Failing in any of these commitments can result in a reduction of playing time.

Divine Redeemer addresses the concern of playing time on two different levels.

1. At the 5/6 level, there is an “equal play” policy.
2. At the 7/8 level, there is an “all players play,” policy.

PLAYING TIME IN FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADE

DRLS’s goal for Grade 5 and 6 programs is to provide an opportunity for students to experience various sports, learn the rules of the games, and develop the skills necessary to compete through practice and playing time. Coaches should provide all players on their team with equal playing time as much as possible. DRLS wants all fifth and sixth grade boys and girls who join to experience practicing and playing the games.

Parents should understand this may not work out to exactly equal minutes of playing time for every game. Playing time should be close to equal throughout the entirety of the season. A student-athlete’s desire to participate, attitude during games and practices, specific circumstances of a given game, and missed practices and/or games are all factors that can contribute to playing time not being equal, even at the Grade 5/6 level.

PLAYING TIME IN SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE

DRLS’s goal for Grade 7 and 8 continues to focus on developing players’ skills through practices, competition, and involving all players in games. During these years, the competition level of the games becomes more advanced and the idea of winning, although not the central point of emphasis, becomes more evident in practices and games. Coaches at the seventh and eighth grade levels should find meaningful opportunities to play every player and to make the most of those opportunities.

This does not mean all players will receive an equal amount of playing time. It could also mean, depending on game situations, that a player may not see any playing time in some. Coaches should make strong attempts to get each player some playing time in every game. Actual playing time on the seventh and eighth grade levels is determined by the following factors: attendance at practices and games, attitude during practices and games, individual skills of each player, academic eligibility, and the circumstances of each individual game.

TEAM SELECTION

It is the policy at Divine Redeemer Lutheran School not to cut any player wishing to participate in any sport. To accommodate the large number of students wishing to participate at some of our grade levels, more than one team may have to be formed at those levels.

TEAM SELECTION POLICY WITH MORE THAN ONE TEAM AT A GIVEN LEVEL

1. Coaches will hold a try-out of basic athletic ability as well as measurable fundamental skills for the specific sport.
2. Coaches will create multiple teams based on data from the try-out and present it to the athletic director.
3. The athletic director and coaches will split teams based on ability, finalize the teams, and communicate the decisions to parents and students.

TEAM SELECTION: COMBINED TEAMS BETWEEN GRADE LEVELS

1. Combined teams will only be created in 5/6 when the situation requires a combined grade level team to be formed.
2. Combined teams in 5/6 will be grouped according to ability to create playing opportunities at the skill level of each player, while taking into consideration unique circumstances.
3. Once the rosters for each team have been created and approved by the athletic director, only the athletic director has the authority to change those rosters.

QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COACHES

Only persons approved by the athletic director and the principal may serve as coaches, conduct practices, or coach a game. Current members of the teaching staff will be given first consideration for coaching. They will also be given first consideration as to which team they would prefer to coach. Parents of DRLS students, spouses of the teaching staff, and other members of Divine Redeemer Lutheran Church and School will then be given consideration with first preference of a school parent who does not have a child on the team.

Coaches may serve as the coach of any one team for a maximum of two consecutive years. They may coach the same team in fifth and sixth grade but would not be able to coach that same team in seventh grade. The goal is to provide the students with exposure to at least two coaching styles. **This rule is the case only if other volunteers are willing to coach a team. If no one volunteers to coach that team, then the previous coach may continue beyond the two years.

Teams are limited to three coaches per team with one of the coaches being designated by the athletic director as head coach. Assistant coaches must also be approved by the athletic director.

Coaches are required to attend a coaches' meeting prior to the sport season in which they will be coaching. The purpose of the meeting will be to finalize the coaching assignments, review athletic philosophy, establish practice schedules, and discuss the upcoming season.

Scheduling of all games and tournaments is done by or through the athletic director of the school. All scrimmages, games, or tournaments must be approved by the athletic director. Coaches will become familiar with and strive to coach according to the philosophy of athletics of DRLS and its policies, guidelines, and coaching code of ethics for athletics.

ATHLETIC FEES

Fees help the Divine Redeemer Booster Club cover the costs of league fees, officials, purchase and replace uniforms, tournament fees, and equipment replacement and repair.

Fees are collected at Preparation Day prior to the start of the school year. Students may sign up for these athletic programs on Preparation Day, or through the sports survey that is sent out in the summer months.

The fee schedule is as follows:

# of Sports	Cost
1	\$50
2	\$85
3	\$110
4	\$130
5	\$145

Uniform Fees

If a student does not return their uniform at the end of the season, the family will be responsible for compensating the school for the missing uniform. Fees are different based on each sport.

Volleyball-\$45

Basketball \$90

Soccer \$30

Track/Cross Country \$30

CODE OF ETHICS FOR COACHES

- I will treat each player, opposing coach, official, parent, and administrator with respect, Christian love, and dignity.
- I will become familiar with the philosophy of athletics at Divine Redeemer Lutheran School and with its policies and guidelines for athletics and will strive to coach according to them.
- I will do my best to learn the fundamental skills and strategies of the sport I am coaching.
- I will become familiar with the rules of the sport.
- I will learn the strengths and weaknesses of my players so that I might place them in situations where they have a maximum opportunity to achieve success.
- I will cooperate with the athletic director in the enforcement of policies and guidelines.
- I will protect the health and safety of my players by insisting that all of the activities under my control are conducted for their welfare.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR PARENTS

- Above all else, I will demonstrate a Christ-like spirit in all my words and actions.
- I will become familiar with the rules of the sport(s) in which my child(ren) is/are participating.
- I will always support every player on the team with encouraging words.
- I will recognize the authority of the coach or coaches to make all coaching decisions during the game and will, therefore, not verbally complain in the stands about coaching decisions.
- I will wait 24 hours after a contest to present any concerns. I will bring concerns first to the coach, then to the athletic director, and finally to school administration. I will do this privately and not on the field or on the court or while players, parents, or other fans may still be present.
- I will not attempt to coach my child or any other child from the sidelines or stands during games. I will allow the coach to coach.
- I will be verbally supportive of the officials, or I will say nothing at all.

LIST OF ATHLETICS OFFERED

All sports are offered to Grades 5-8, unless noted differently. When participation is low, DRLS may consider opening a sport to students in other grades.

Fall Sports

Girls Volleyball

Volleyball competes in individual matches, as well as tournaments from early September to mid-October with practices usually beginning in August. Divine Redeemer competes in the Milwaukee Lutheran Elementary Schools Athletic Association (MLESSA). Our Grade 7/8 "A" division teams are eligible to apply for State.

Coed Cross Country

Cross Country competes in several meets each year. Meets are usually held on the weekdays and range from half mile to two-mile courses. Students have the opportunity to participate in the Lutheran Sports Association of Wisconsin (LSA) state meet, held annually at Concordia University-Wisconsin. Teams and individuals can also qualify for the National Championship Meet.

Winter Sports

Boys' and Girls' Basketball

Basketball season takes up most of the months between November and February. Teams at all levels participate in individual games and tournaments throughout the season. All levels compete in the MLESSA league. Our Grade 7/8 "A" division teams are eligible to apply for the LSA State Tournament and qualify the National Tournament.

Girls' Grade 6-8 Spirit Squad

The Spirit Squad was formed as an alternative to a cheerleading program. Members of the Spirit Squad practice and train for three events. They perform at the season-opening pep assembly, pep assembly prior to the beginning of the Divine Redeemer basketball tournament, and they may perform and cheer at the basketball tournament itself.

The Spirit Squad director may also choose to involve the squad in other competitions at his/her discretion. Practices are determined and scheduled by the Spirit Squad director prior to the start of the basketball season. Members of the Spirit Squad may participate on the basketball team as well. Practices and performances will not conflict with 7 & 8 basketball games.

Girls' Grade 3-5 Pep Squad

Pep Squad is offered for younger students to experience what it is like to be on the Spirit Squad. Students practice before or after school to learn a dance and several cheers to perform at the basketball pep rally and the DR basketball tournament.

Spring Sports

Boys' and Girls' Track

Track and Field takes place in the spring season. Students compete in multiple meets and may qualify for the LSA State Meet. Various running, throwing, and jumping events are offered and taught to the students.

Grades 7/8 Boys' Volleyball

Boys' volleyball competes as part of the MLESSA league. Teams compete in individual matches and tournaments. They may qualify for the LSA State Tournament.

Coed Soccer

Soccer is offered, but an actual season could be dependent on if there are enough teams to compete in the MLESSA league.

Girls' Softball

Softball has been offered in the past, but over the last several years, MLESSA has not had enough interested teams to have a season.