

Mount St. Mary Academy

**ATHLETIC
HANDBOOK**

2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

MSM STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK

Memo to: Parents and Student Athletes
From: MSM Coaching Staff

We are pleased to have your daughter as a member of one of our athletic teams. Our athletic program is an integral part of our education. It includes emphasis on the correct attitude and the value of keeping everything in the right perspective. We, in partnership with you, want your daughter to develop to her full potential. This development will help to foster a strong team concept; otherwise, we build only selfishness.

Three of the most important dimensions of a person's development are spiritual, mental and physical. Athletics has a direct relationship in the ability to accept responsibility and carry it through, the will to succeed, teamwork for a common goal, fair play, and sportsmanship. Being on a team helps build confidence, courage, character, patience, conditioning and relationships with God and others, thus contributing in all phases of a young person's development.

We are enclosing the Athletic Eligibility Requirements and Code of Conduct, which includes dress and appearance and consequences of major infractions so that you and your daughter will become familiar with these regulations. Also enclosed is the Major Infraction Contract for you and your daughter's signatures. Please go over these policies and consequences with your daughter and return the signed contract to the athletic office.

This information is for the benefit of you, your daughter, and the school. It is important that parents and athletes become familiar with the rules that govern athletics at Mount St. Mary Academy

If at any time the coaching staff can be of service to your daughter, or yourself, please feel free to call on us.

MOUNT ST. MARY ATHLETIC PROGRAM CREED

Our goal is that students will develop the skills necessary to become independent, problem-solving adults.

The Athletic program of Mount St Mary is made available to all students. In choosing to participate in this program, each individual should carefully inventory her own desires and ambitions and decide whether she is willing to make the sacrifices necessary for successful participation during her years at the Mount. Because this program is voluntary and because those participating represent the student body, it is imperative that high standards be in place. The student must maintain a 2.0 grade point average while also participating vigorously. This is not an easy task!

An athlete must be a devoted, sincere student who demands the finest performance from herself at all times. She does not confuse “good sportsmanship” with a “half-hearted attitude” of competition. She does not accept defeat easily, unless she is satisfied that she has prepared herself mentally, physically, and psychologically for the high level of competition which she must be ready to meet with each contest.

Winning is important! Only through individual and team success can the modern athlete achieve the total satisfaction and rewards that are a part of our society. To be an athlete of this type is not easy. It requires work and dedication. This type of devotion allows the athlete to realize her full potential as a student and as an individual. This is the type of person we encourage to be a part of the athletic program at MSM.

Because it is a privilege to represent the school in athletics, it also follows that the school has the authority to revoke the privilege when the student athlete does not conduct herself in an acceptable manner. Not only does this responsibility exist while she is on the field, court, or track, but good conduct will be required of her **at all times and most certainly while she is at school.** As a member of the school team, she brings attention to herself and the student body at MSM.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. All parents are expected to be involved with the Athletic Booster Club, by working the concession stand, gate and helping with events & tournaments.
2. All athletes as well as managers and Athletic Trainers must each pay a participation fee. These fees will be collected by the Finance office through FACTS. Athletes (\$200.00) **per sport**, Athletic Trainers and Managers (\$100.00) **per sport**. If an athlete quits after making a team, the participation fee will not be refunded.
3. All athletes must have a current sports physical on file before they can try out for any team. Managers and Athletic Trainers are not required to have a physical.
4. Before a student may try out for or participate on any team, she must have a 2.0 GPA and no failures from the most recent semester. No failures or “No Credit” due to attendance from the most recent semester. (Students exceeding 8 absences in a semester are given no credit for the course.) A student may regain or lose academic eligibility the first day of classes in a new semester. Eligibility shall be determined twice per year, once at the beginning of the fall semester (August/September) and once at mid-term (December/January). This does not mean cumulative GPA. **If you are on academic probation you may not participate in any sport activities i.e., practice, performance training, games, etc.**
5. An athlete must have the following on file in DragonFLy Max before she may practice or participate in athletics:
 - a. A Physical Exam from the doctor for the current year
 - b. Emergency medical release form
 - c. Signed contract for major infraction consequences
 - d. Signed transportation release and/or Student Driver Release
 - e. Concussion Facts
 - f. Disclosure of Protected Health Information
6. A student athlete is expected to follow all guidelines regarding her eligibility as designated by the AAA (Arkansas Activities Association). No student athlete may

participate in a Club sponsored sport during the same season as the sport in which she is participating.

7. An athlete must be in school for the ENTIRE DAY of an athletic event (Friday if event is on Saturday) in order to participate unless prior administrative approval from the Athletic Director at least **24 hours (or more) from the appointment time** is given. If Athletic Director grants permission for athlete to attend a doctor's visit, the athlete must bring a doctor's note when she returns to school.
8. If in the sick room for more than 20 minutes the athlete will not be allowed to play. It is the responsibility of the athlete to keep up with time, not the attendance officer.
9. In accordance with Arkansas Activities Association, all athletes must be current with tuition payments. If the account is not current (over 60 days), the student will not be allowed to participate in practice or any team events until the account is up-to-date.
10. The school does not provide insurance; you must use your personal insurance.

GENERAL RULES:

1. Each coach will conduct his/her own practices and team rules will be given to the athletes involved.
2. Athletes must attend ALL practices, games and performance training sessions unless excused by the coach or she is absent from school. She is also expected to attend regardless of holidays, job, commitment, social activities or weekends.
3. All of our parents are expected to abide by our **24 hour no contact rule**. No parent or guardian is permitted to contact any coach through e-mail, phone, or in person until 24 hours after that contest. After that period please call to set up an appointment to meet with that coach.
4. Athletes are responsible for all equipment and uniforms issued to them. Reimbursement to MSM will be expected for all equipment and uniforms not returned in good condition or in the same condition as issued.
5. All equipment and uniforms must be returned to the coach CLEAN and in the proper condition within one week of the end of the season or upon the athlete leaving the school or team.

6. Proper care and respect for facilities should be given when we are playing at another school as well as at Mount St. Mary Academy. This means picking up after yourself after practices and games, especially in the bleachers and the locker rooms.
7. The visitor locker room is off limits on game days after 3:30. Athletes must put gear in the **home locker room**, in their school locker or make other arrangements.
8. No exams will be given or report cards issued to any student who has not returned her uniform and equipment unless other arrangements have been made with the coach.
9. All athletes are expected to maintain their physical conditioning throughout the summer and school year. Each sport will have a designated day(s)/time(s) throughout the school year and summer for weight training sessions that are required for participation in their sport.
10. Coaches may enroll their teams in organized team camps during the summer. Athletes are encouraged to attend if possible. The purpose of an off-season is to prepare a student physically and mentally for participation in athletics; therefore, it is in the student's best interest to have completed a conditioning program before participation in a sport. Required participation is left up to the discretion of the coach.
11. No athlete playing more than one sport shall be required to be involved in an off-season practice while participating in an "in-season" sport.
12. The head coach in each sport has absolute total discretion as to who plays, how long they play and under what circumstances they play or do not play.
13. Specific programs within the MSM Athletic Department will set rules, regulations and expectations in which athletes that participate in those sports are expected to comply. These rules may or may not be in writing but will be clearly communicated.
14. Athletes should always communicate with their coach prior to missing any practice or team activity. Practice attendance is an expectation and requirement for continued participation in the program.
15. Athletes are expected to be in school on days after travel just as a regular school day.
16. All communication about practice, games, conference tournament and state tournament comes from the coach or team representative.

STUDENT-ATHLETE AND SOCIAL NETWORKING

As a student-athlete, one is a representative of the school and community and always in the public eye. The Athletic Department advises student-athletes to exercise extreme caution in the use of social networking (ie; Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, Tic Tok, etc.). Student-athletes should not post or utilize information or pictures on social networking websites that damage or embarrass individuals, teams, the Athletic Department or the school.

Student-athletes should keep the following information in mind before participating in social networking:

- Always represent one's self and one's school respectfully
- Once any text, photo, tweet, or video is placed online, it is completely out of your control, regardless of whether you limit access to your page. Assume that everything posted is permanent and public.
- Do not post information, photos, tweets, or other items online that could embarrass you, your family, your team, the Athletic Department or school. This includes information, photos, tweets and items that may be posted by others on their page or on your webpage.
- Do not post disrespectful comments or engage in inappropriate behavior such as the following:
 - Derogatory or defamatory language
 - Derogatory or defamatory comments about teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, athletics, or the school.

Student-athletes could face disciplinary action and even dismissal for violation of school, team, athletic department or Arkansas Activities Association policy or rules.

BULLYING

Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated (Refer to the Mount St Mary Student Handbook bullying policy).

DROPPING OR DISCONTINUING A SPORT

1. An athlete who desires to discontinue a sport must notify her coach as soon as possible.
2. An athlete who fails to complete the season in one sport may not participate in another sport unless agreed upon by the coaches involved.
3. An athlete wishing to be reinstated in a dropped sport will be dealt with on an individual basis by the individual coach in accordance with team rules.

4. If an athlete, who has a major infraction, quits a sport and then returns, she must serve the suspension before being allowed to participate fully.
5. All equipment must be returned to the issuing coach immediately upon the athlete's leaving or be paid for if lost or damaged.
6. NO athletic award is given if an athlete does NOT complete the season.

REMOVAL FROM AN ATHLETIC EVENT

Any athlete or family member(s) of an athlete removed from an athletic event by an official, police or administrator may not attend the next event in that sport, per AAA rule, and is subject to suspension from all athletic events for the remainder of the season or that year.

Any fan that disrupts an athletic event is subject to suspension from all athletic events for the remainder of that season or that year.

Parents are expected to be supportive of the team and coaches and respectful toward the officials.

REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARDS

1. To be eligible for any award, the athlete must comply with all rules set down by the coach, athletic director, administration, and AAA.
2. Special awards shall be determined by the coach in his/her particular sport due to the variances that occur. A player may be recognized for an award based on the coach's recommendation.
3. Major awards are voted on by all head coaches.

TRANSPORTATION

Athletes will travel to all contests by school van, bus rented by MSM, coach vehicle, and/or parent/personal vehicle. The mode of transportation will be approved by the Athletic Director and coach. All legal laws must be followed when using a personal vehicle.

There will be times when MSM deems it necessary to rent a bus to transport student athletes to and from a competition. On these occasions **ALL** athletes will be required to ride the bus to the event. It is expected that the athletes ride the bus back. If extenuating circumstances

do not permit the student to ride the bus back with the team, a parent or legal guardian must sign a release form. The signed form must be turned in to the coach at least 24 hours prior to the bus leaving campus.

*Coaches may only transport students if there are two or more athletes or 2 adults in the vehicle.

OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS

There are times when a team must travel and arrange for overnight accommodations. The following guidelines must be followed:

1. Athletes must stay in rooms together (up to 4 athletes per room) and may not share a room with coaches or parents.
2. Coaches will make travel and hotel reservations for the athletes.
3. Team meetings are to be held in common areas of the hotel or dorm and not in rooms.
4. At no time should a coach or parent be alone in a room with any of the athletes.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Coaches, athletic trainers, administrators and contest officials shall be educated regarding the signs indicating thunderstorm development. Mount St. Mary Academy follows the Thirty-Minute Rule.

- THIRTY-MINUTE RULE – Competition or practice shall be suspended once lightning has been recognized or thunder is heard. It is required to wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning is witnessed or thunder is heard prior to resuming practice or competition. Given the average rates of thunderstorm travel, the storm should move 10-12 miles away from the area. This significantly reduces the risk of local lightning flashes. Any subsequent lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count shall reset the clock, and another count shall begin.

Practice will be canceled in the event of a Severe Thunderstorm Warning or Tornado Warning in Pulaski County or surrounding counties that indicate a storm path headed to Little Rock or the practice area.

If school is canceled or dismissed early due to inclement weather, practice and/or gameplay will also be canceled.

COLLEGE RECRUITMENT POLICY

The MSM Athletic Department and our coaches will work with college coaches to provide them with the information and material needed for a complete evaluation. Our staff does not

make decisions regarding who gets recruited or offered scholarships. We have multiple college coaches that evaluate MSM athletes in all sports every year. Ultimately, it is their decision as to who they recruit.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Athletes are expected to conduct themselves as young Christian women at all times.
2. Studies and academics come first. Academic integrity is taken seriously and will be disciplined accordingly.
3. An athlete should be conscious of the fact that her conduct reflects on the school, the team, and the athletic department. Detrimental conduct throughout the school year could lead to suspension and/or dismissal from the program. This includes but is not limited to actions during school, breaks, on or off campus, on school related trips/functions, or summer. This means year round, **365 days**.
4. Athletes will maintain proper standards of behavior in class, on the school grounds, at athletic contests and on ALL school related trips.
5. On a game day, athletes are expected to be properly attired. Athletes may only wear their team shirt, warm-ups or game attire that has been approved by their coaches **for the first game of the season, early dismissals, conference, state, and pep rallies that involve their sport. All athletes must be dressed alike.**
6. Athletes are expected to refrain from the use or misuse of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs or abuse of prescription drugs. Please refer to the Major Infraction section for implementation of this policy.
7. Athletes must serve detention halls at regularly scheduled time.

MAJOR INFRACTION POLICY

NO POSSESSION, USE, MISUSE, OR ABUSE OF TOBACCO, VAPING DEVICES, ALCOHOL, OR OTHER ILLEGAL OR ABUSE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS BY AN ATHLETE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AT ANY TIME! THIS ALSO APPLIES TO ANY INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.

The use of chemical substances is harmful to the human body and could result in serious injury or permanent physical impairment. The athletic program exists to enhance the health of the student and to provide an arena for physical development and the attainment of habits and skills which will maintain quality of life in years to come. It is clear that tobacco,

vaping, alcohol, illegal drugs and abuse of prescription drugs are destructive to health, potentially dangerous to use and contrary to the goals of the athletic program as well as to the entire educational program at Mount St. Mary Academy.

Representing Mount St. Mary Academy, through the Athletic Program, is a privilege. Therefore, certain requirements must be met. The coaches and administration feel that a student athlete represents Mount St. Mary Academy throughout the school year, both during school and any breaks, including the summer. This means year round, **365 days**.

PROCEDURE: MAJOR INFRACTION POLICY

Any student who is observed (by a coach, faculty member, or staff member) having possession of, using or misusing tobacco, vaping devices, alcohol, illegal drugs or abuse of prescription drugs, fails a drug test or who voluntarily admits that she used any of these will be subject to the following consequences.

FIRST OFFENSE: Suspension from 30% of the scheduled events from ALL sport(s) participated in and an automatic referral to the Student Assistance Team. A parent conference will be held.

SECOND OFFENSE: Dismissal from the Athletic program.

The school reserves the right to use its discretion in determining the consequences appropriate for each case.

SPORTS OFFERED BY MOUNT ST. MARY ACADEMY

Volleyball, Golf, Tennis, Cross Country, Basketball, Bowling, Swimming, Soccer, Softball, Track, and Athletic Trainers.

The school reserves the right to review and update the handbook as it sees fit. The Athletic Director, in collaboration with administration, has the right to amend or revise any policy in the Athletic Handbook. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be given prompt notification in writing if changes are made.

Leave Blank on purpose

MSM ATHLETIC HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

2026-2027

We have read and understand the Mount St Mary Academy Athletic Handbook. We agree to abide by the rules and regulations as set forth in this handbook.

Athlete's Name (please print)

Date

Signature of Athlete

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

**THIS IS THE ONLY PAGE THAT SHOULD BE RETURNED.
KEEP THE HANDBOOK FOR YOUR RECORDS!!!**