

Newman Catholic Coaches/Sponsors Handbook

Mission Statement

Newman Catholic Schools, located in Mason City Iowa, is an early childhood through twelfth-grade Catholic school that welcomes students of all faiths while serving the parishes of North Iowa.

Our students are educated in a caring and faith-filled environment that focuses on the individual learner. Inspired by Christ, our Newman Catholic faculty, staff, families, and parishes are committed to forming disciples who lead, love, and serve.

Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook serves as a guide for coaches and sponsors to understand the expectations, policies, and procedures of all extracurricular activities at Newman Catholic. While not an exhaustive list of rules, it promotes communication, consistency, and professionalism. Coaches and sponsors are expected to review and follow its contents in alignment with the Newman Catholic School Board's standards. Strong extracurricular programs are vital to fulfilling Newman Catholic's mission.

Philosophy of Extracurricular Activities

Extracurriculars are a key part of Newman Catholic's educational mission, helping students develop life skills, responsibility, and moral character. Participation is open to students in grades 7–12 who meet eligibility standards.

- Grades 7–8 focus on participation, learning rules, and building a work ethic.
 - Depending on the activities and participation numbers, 7th and 8th graders will play on their current grade-level team unless the administration permits otherwise prior to the contest.
 - Ex. 7th grade will not play up, or 8th grade will not play down, if each team has enough to participate with their current roster numbers.
- Grades 9–12 emphasize skill and performance, so playing time may vary. While teams are open to all, only a limited number may dress for events.

Students represent the Newman Catholic community and are expected to uphold the school's standards for academics, behavior, and Catholic values.

Wins do not measure true success, but by character development, coach leadership, and community support. Coaches and sponsors are role models, responsible for student growth in faith, character, and teamwork, and will use the *Play Like a Champion* framework to reinforce Catholic values.

Goals of Newman Catholic Extracurriculars

- Provide students with meaningful learning experiences beyond the classroom.
- Promote discipline, commitment, and teamwork in line with Christian values.
- Shape responsible young Catholics through structured participation.

Program Objectives

School & Student Body

- Foster school spirit and pride.
- Encourage broad participation.
- Promote sportsmanship and Catholic values in all.

Coaches/Sponsors

- Support the mission of the school.
- Value competition without compromising student welfare or the school program.
- Model professionalism in all interactions.

Students

- Demonstrate sportsmanship, responsibility, and character.
- Maintain academic, attendance, and conduct standards.
- Prioritize team goals over personal interests.

Spectators, Coaches/Sponsors, and Students

- Show respect for all participants and officials.
- Understand and follow activity rules.
- Appreciate skill and effort, regardless of team affiliation.

Attendance to Participate

For a student to participate in a practice or event (game), they must attend all eight periods of the school day, as outlined in the student handbook. Work with the administrative assistant when checking attendance. Coaches and sponsors are responsible for conveying this policy to their students. The Athletic Director will help you with this policy.

Early Dismissal

Board policy requires that practice be canceled in the event of early dismissal relating to snow, sleet, tornadoes, or other hazardous weather that may impact travel. Early dismissal due to heat is handled differently according to the state. Many water breaks and moving practice to late evening or early morning are suggested, but practice does not necessarily have to be canceled.

Transportation Policy

Each sponsor will receive a transportation schedule. Please communicate details to students and verify that all events are covered. The Transportation Director will assign buses and drivers based on administration-approved departure times. Any questions or time changes must be communicated directly to the Athletic Director.

Students must use school-approved transportation, which must be insured and supervised by a designated adult.

For out-of-town events:

- Students are expected to return in a school vehicle unless a parent provides a written note and personally informs the coach or sponsor before departure.

Coaches and sponsors must be present on all trips and are responsible for student conduct, safety, and enforcing school and bus rules. The bus driver has final authority when the bus is in motion. Sponsors must also ensure that buses and vehicles are cleaned after use, including removing trash and properly storing equipment.

Practice Schedules

Head coaches and sponsors are responsible for setting practice times and must submit their schedules to the Athletic Director for approval.

- Sunday Practices: Strongly discouraged; if necessary, they must be varsity-only, optional, and start no earlier than 2:00 p.m., unless approved by administration.
- Wednesday Practices: Must end in time for students to leave campus by 6:30 p.m. to allow participation in church activities. Students attending church events earlier than 6:30 p.m. will not be penalized.
- Summer/Open Gyms: Off-season practices are optional and should not conflict with in-season activities or other extracurricular events.
- Gym Scheduling: Managed by the Athletic Director, but cooperation among coaches and sponsors is essential.

Reminder: Weekends should be respected as time for students and coaches to be with their families.

Communication

Social Media

Faculty and staff should never “follow” or “friend” a student on social media as directed by the Standards of Conduct for Personnel in Archdiocesan Entities.

Equipment and Uniforms

All school-issued equipment must be returned before a student may participate in another activity. Failure to return or reimburse for lost items will result in ineligibility.

Students may not use uniforms or equipment after the season ends unless they have been approved for school-related events (e.g., camps, senior pictures). In such cases, students are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and good condition of the items. Lost items must be replaced at the student's expense.

Uniforms follow a set replacement cycle. Proper care is essential to ensure they last through the full rotation and stay within budget.

Uniform Rotation

School Year	Fall	Winter	Summer
2025 - 2026	Volleyball	Girls Basketball - Home	Baseball
2026 - 2027	Cross Country	Boys Basketball - Home	Softball
2027 - 2028	Football	Girls Basketball - Away	Track - Girls
2028 - 2029	Cheerleaders	Boys Basketball - Away	Baseball
2029 - 2030	Football	Wrestling	Softball
2030 - 2031	Volleyball	Girls Basketball - Home	Track - Boys
2031 - 2032	Cross Country	Boys Basketball - Home	Baseball
2032 - 2033	Football	Girls Basketball - Away	Softball
2033 - 2034	Cheerleaders	Boys Basketball - Away	Track - Girls
2034 - 2035	Football	Wrestling	Baseball
2035 - 2036	Volleyball	Girls Basketball - Home	Softball

Lettering Requirements

Each head coach or sponsor must provide written criteria for earning a Newman Catholic letter prior to the start of the season. Copies should be shared with both students and the Athletic Director.

Physicals/[HEADS UP: CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS FACT SHEET](#)

Any athlete who wishes to participate in athletics or cheerleading within the Newman Catholic School must have on file a current physical and a signed “Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports Fact Sheet.” The coach must check that all athletes have both forms on file and are current before they are allowed to participate in a practice or contest. Both documents are to be submitted to the high school office. The office will maintain a current list of those who have returned the completed forms. Athletes not on this list are not permitted to practice.

Professional Organizations

Coaches and sponsors are encouraged to join their respective organizations. The Athletic Director builds membership dues into the budget. The Newman Booster Club will cover all state organization dues, not national dues, which are left to the coach's discretion.

Professionalism

Coaches and sponsors are vital to the success of Newman Catholic’s extracurricular programs. Professionalism—both in conduct and communication—is essential.

- Clearly explain expectations from the IHSAA, IGHS AU, Newman Catholic, and your program to students and assistants.
- Maintain high standards: no swearing, hazing, or sarcasm is allowed.
- Be honest with students about their roles and provide them with constructive feedback.

Specialization

Newman Catholic supports student participation in multiple activities. The in-season sport always takes priority. Coaches must:

- Follow official IHSAA/IGHSAU start dates.
- Avoid pressuring students to specialize.
- Do not hold out-of-season activities during in-season competitions.
- Limit pre-season meetings to one per sport unless in-season.

Sportsmanship

Coaches set the tone for sportsmanship. Athletes will mirror your behavior, so model respect at all times. Address concerns calmly and appropriately. Demand good conduct from players on and off the field.

Supervision

Coaches must supervise students until they leave the building. Supervision can be rotated among staff, but must include locker room oversight after practices and events.

Team Rules

- Review all team rules with the Athletic Director before distributing.
- Share rules with players and parents.
- Team rules must align with school and Archdiocesan policies.

Uniform of the Day (Game Day)- High School

The student-athlete must be in uniform at all times.

Volunteer Coaches

Qualifications: Must hold a coaching endorsement or certification and be approved by the Head Coach, Athletic Director, and Board of Education before the season begins.

Role: Assist the head and assistant coaches, fulfill assigned duties, and help maintain program consistency and quality.

Weight Room

- Coaches are encouraged to utilize the weight room and follow Newman's lifting program.
- The room should not be open during in-season practices or home games.
- Supervision is **mandatory** at all times.
- Keep music at a respectful volume.

Responsibilities

Athletic Director, in coordination with head coaches:

- Coordinate schedules, game changes, and departure times (Weekly Bulletin)
- Approve and monitor overnight stays (must be requested in advance)
- Ensure that administration is informed of all changes to games, departures, overnight stays, injuries, and any updates to sports rules and expectations.

- Oversee athlete eligibility (academics, physicals, concussion training)
- Approve and post practice schedules.
- Manage gym and facility use, as well as equipment inventory.
- Maintain updated files on coaches, activities, team rules, rosters, and lettering criteria.
- Assign game workers and ensure facilities are game-ready
- Track and report injuries
- Coordinate postseason awards and compile end-of-year stats
- Assist with budgeting and fundraising for each program.

Head Coaches/Sponsors

- **Leadership & Accountability:**
Report to the Principal and Athletic Director. You are responsible for the overall conduct and success of your activity. Work closely with the Athletic Director to schedule, manage equipment, coordinate practices, arrange travel, and fulfill all administrative requirements.
- **Training & Compliance:**
Complete all required training, including sport-specific meetings and the Concussion Awareness Course. Begin practice on the first eligible date as defined by the IHSAA/IGHSAU and ensure compliance with all rules regarding season length and postseason play.
- **Practice & Game Management:**
Organize and oversee all practices. Coordinate equipment handout/return and travel times with the AD and Transportation Director.
- **Assistant Coaches:**
Clearly define responsibilities. Supervise and evaluate their performance. Align lower-level coaches with your coaching fundamentals and philosophy.

Review logistics such as:

- Scorebook and stat tracking
- Field/floor preparation
- Fully stocked medical/blood kits
- Locker room supervision
- Building security and lights
- Transportation coordination
- **Players:**
Teach proper equipment care and ensure all athletes follow school, team, and state training rules.
 - Athletes must travel with the team unless released directly to a parent.
 - Ensure all students have rides after road trips — **coaches must be the last to leave.**
- **Equipment & Inventory:**
Keep equipment clean and in good condition. Submit a completed inventory to the AD at the season's end.
- **Team Support:**
Recruit, train, and guide student managers. Cooperate with other coaches when sharing facilities. Accompany and supervise your team at all events. Promote respectful behavior and ensure athletes represent the school well.

- **Conduct & Discipline:**
Enforce school conduct rules. Report any violations to the Principal and Athletic Director. Maintain clean, supervised locker rooms. Secure and protect player valuables — a "valuables bag" is recommended for away games.
- **Injuries:**
Provide appropriate care and notify parents and medical professionals as needed. Submit injury reports to the AD.
- **Media & Awards:**
Share scores and stats with local media. Track stats for school records. Set clear award criteria at the start of the season, communicate them to the players, and submit the award lists to the Athletic Director.
- **Building Security:**
Ensure all lights are off and doors are locked before leaving, especially when no custodians are present.

Coach/Parent Meeting

We encourage each head coach to have a parent meeting.

Purpose and agenda:

1. Introduce yourself and your staff
2. Hand out the practice schedule/requirements
3. Letter procedure
4. Excused absences/unexcused absences
5. Equipment responsibilities
6. Explain that physicals are mandatory
7. Trip procedures and expected conduct
8. Explain the training rules/good conduct policy
9. Explain your process with the media and the public

Liability

Failure to Teach - Coaches can be sued for failing to teach the fundamentals of their particular sport and protective skills.

- Teach athletes to protect themselves.
- Teach proper fundamentals
- If an athlete is praised or encouraged for doing something improperly, it will come back to haunt them.

Negligent Entrustment - (entrusting authority/activity who is not qualified to carry out that particular authority/activity)

- Assistant coaches
- Student teachers

Failure to Properly Supervise

- If you are not there, you will be liable.
- The more hazardous or the greater the contact, the more closely the activity must be supervised. (Senior Captain(s) must never supervise any drill)
- You must be immediately accessible.
 - Accessible to all aspects of practice or activity.
 - Systematic overseeing of the practice or activity (the head coach spends time here and there).
 1. Systematic supervision
 2. Written itinerary

3. Emergency policies
4. Locker room rules and regulations are posted.

Preseason:

- o Meet with coaches
- o Ensure all equipment is in good order for the start of the season
- o When necessary, coordinate facility use with other coaches
- o Review athlete participation and eligibility with the AD (Handbook is online)
- o Check and review schedules with the AD
- o Review the transportation schedule with the Transportation Director/AD
- o Help AD arrange workers for games
- o Practice schedules for AD, students, and parents
- o Ensure all athletes have a physical and a Heads Up Concussion form on file
- o Rules / Expectations / Lettering requirements to AD, students, and parents
- o Team roster to AD (Breakdown of each team)
- o Team Meeting (1 per year – out of season)
- o Parent Meeting

Season:

- o Work with the media as necessary
- o Ensure all varsity scores/stats are reported into Bound
- o Keep the AD informed of all changes to the practice schedule and roster
- o Keep the AD/principal informed of any early departures and overnight stays. Must have prior approval!
- o Keep the AD/principal informed of all issues
 - o Discipline
 - o Parent issues/concerns
 - o Unsportsmanlike activities/fouls
- o Team Service Project

Postseason:

- o Conduct an end-of-year awards ceremony
 - o Discuss the date and location with the AD
 - o Order awards (discuss with AD)
- o Collect and inventory equipment, ensuring all is in good condition
 - o Inform AD of damaged or missing equipment
 - o Turn in the inventory to AD
- o Turn in the end-of-year book to include the following:
 - o Roster, which indicates students who have lettered
 - o Final stats for all teams
 - o Award winners identified (School/Conference/State)
- o Final review of the season with the administration (AD)