



JACKSON ACADEMY
Athletic Handbook



Jackson Academy Athletic Handbook

I. Introduction

Jackson Academy recognizes that athletics play a vital role in student growth and development. Our athletic program is designed to promote responsibility, cooperation, leadership, discipline, commitment, and integrity. Participation in athletic activities also allows our student-athletes to experience the values of teamwork, respect, and good sportsmanship along with being positive role models and developing healthy lifestyles.

All JA athletic programs are held to Jackson Academy's high standard of excellence. The commitment to excel will always be a priority for our program, but our most important benchmark for success will be to develop student-athletes who will be prepared to face the challenges of life both now and in the future.

The ultimate goal for the Jackson Academy Athletic Department is to provide each student-athlete with the opportunity to maximize his or her athletic skills and talents and have a very positive experience in the process. JA athletics play a very integral part in promoting a positive school climate by teaching lifetime values and developing leadership skills.

Obviously this handbook cannot cover every instance that will occur during the day-to-day activities of the athletic program, but it represents a good faith effort to inform all of those involved about the guidelines that will govern their participation. A student who chooses to participate in the Jackson Academy athletic program is voluntarily making a choice through cooperation, self discipline, and commitment to put the program or team above their personal goals or ambitions. Participation in the athletic program is a privilege and not a right and it should be treated as such.

Please use this handbook as a resource for both student-athletes and parents to better understand the guidelines, policies, and expectations of Jackson Academy athletics. We believe that participation in athletics provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that will prove to be beneficial to everyone involved both now and in the years to come.

II. Goals and Objectives

- To expect all student-athletes, coaches, administrators, and parents to demonstrate a positive image for Jackson Academy
- To strive for excellence that will produce quality teams and develop good sportsmanship and personal growth for the student-athlete
- To provide student-athletes the opportunity to participate as a team member in order to achieve team goals and in the process learn the importance of cooperation and teamwork
- To encourage academic and athletic achievement by emphasizing the importance of dedication, self discipline, sacrifice, and time management
- To provide an environment that allows student-athletes to achieve realistic individual goals within the framework of the team
- To maximize the opportunities for player development through proper instruction, practice, and encouragement
- To develop an appreciation for athletics that promotes life long participation and healthy lifestyles
- To provide an atmosphere that allows student-athletes to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat

III. Jackson Academy Code of Good Sportsmanship

- Total team effort
- Promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity
- Cheer for the Raiders, not against the opposition (this includes signs)
- Respect officials and their decisions. Games wouldn't be played without without them
- Win with humility (without boasting); lose with grace (without excuses or finger pointing); do both with dignity
- Demonstrate respect for opposing fans, coaches, and team members
- Realize that a ticket is a privilege to attend an athletic competition and support Jackson Academy activities, not a license to verbally assault others or be generally obnoxious
- Good sportsmanship should be contagious
- Self control is a virtue
- Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting and encouraging Raider team members and their coaches. Have fun promoting our teams
- Be a fan...not a fanatic
- Make good sportsmanship a conscious priority. It is simply the right thing to do
- Do unto others as you would have others do unto you

IV. Athletic Offerings

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cross country
- Fastpitch softball
- Football
- Golf
- Soccer
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track
- Volleyball

V. Expectations for Student-athletes, Coaches and Parents

Expectations for Student-athletes

- Adhere to all school and athletic policies
- Always represent the school with high character and good sportsmanship
- Treat all coaches, sponsors, and opponents with respect
- Respect officials and accept their decisions without argument or gesture
- Academic performance is your primary responsibility
- Exercise self control at all times, and set a positive example for others to follow
- Respect all team members, and do not participate in any activities that could be interpreted as hazing
- Class attendance is expected both the day of and after the competition
- Athletic participation is not an excuse for being tardy the day following competition
- Student-athletes should hold themselves personally accountable for their behavior and accept the positive or negative consequences of those actions
- Return any and all equipment issued by the athletic department
- Report any injury to the coach or trainer

Expectations for Coaches

- Provide for the safety of the student-athlete
- Encourage academic achievement and periodically monitor student-athlete grades
- Teach the skills necessary for player development
- Set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct
- Teach and exhibit good sportsmanship and respect for officials
- Be role models for honesty, loyalty, and integrity
- Be organized, efficient, and prompt
- Be supportive of sharing athletes, and support all athletic programs
- Implement any needed discipline for infractions within the athletic program
- Take proper care of facilities and equipment
- Communicate with students and parents regarding expectations, responsibilities etc.

Expectations for Parents

- Enthusiastically support and encourage your child, their team and their coaches
- Maintain a positive attitude regardless of whether your team is winning or losing
- Exhibit good sportsmanship at all times
- Respect officials and respect their decisions
- Refrain from coaching or instructing your child at contests or at team practices
- Respect the judgement and strategy of the coach, and do not criticize players or coaches after a loss
- Refrain from confronting a coach before, during, or after a practice or game
- Communicate in an appropriate and timely manner any concerns regarding their student

VI. Conflict Resolution: Protocol

Our goal at Jackson Academy is to provide a positive experience for every athlete and family. Unfortunately, there will be times when an athlete or parent may have concerns during the course of the season. If the need arises, then please use the following protocol:

- The student-athlete should take his/her concern to the coach in a scheduled meeting environment
- If the meeting does not result in a satisfactory resolution, then the parents and the athlete should request a meeting with the coach (This meeting should be held at a mutually agreed upon time and place)
- If the concern remains after this meeting, then the parents may request a meeting with the athletic director

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with the Coach are:

1. The mental and physical treatment of your child
2. What your child needs to do to improve
3. Concern about your child's attitude or behavior

Playing Time

The athletic philosophy at Jackson Academy is to play as many players as possible in each contest. The individual's ability level, attitude, work ethic, and the team's specific needs or game situation will determine playing time. Playing time is a decision reserved for the head coach in each sport.

VII. Team Selection/Tryouts

In some sports it may be necessary to reduce the number of players to a manageable size for competitive teams, particularly when considering safety, fiscal resources, equipment, facilities, and coaching personnel. There will be a minimum of two days of tryouts for any sport that will cut prospective athletes.

VIII. Practices and Games

All athletes at Jackson Academy are expected to attend all practices and games throughout the season. A season extends from the first day of the activity until the last game is completed. Any conflicts that may arise need to be communicated to the coach in advance. Missing practices during school vacations or extended breaks is always a concern. It is vital and expected that the athlete, and the parent if necessary, communicate any vacation plans or other situations that may require the athlete to miss practices to the coach well ahead of time. When parent and student-athletes choose to take family vacations or trips during a sport season, then it must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete may affect team performance and team chemistry. Those student athletes who miss practices or competitions can and likely will have their playing time adjusted.

Non-School Sponsored Sports and Activities

School sport participation must take precedence over other non-school related activities in which the student-athlete may be involved. If the student-athlete misses a practice, game, or just is not able to perform up to their potential due to their participation in non-school sponsored activities, then the coach and the athletic director should decide appropriate actions.

IX. Physicals, Injuries and Secondary Insurance

Physicals

All student-athletes must have a current physical on file in the athletic office before any athletic participation is allowed. Physicals are valid for one (1) calendar year. Under no circumstances is any student-athlete allowed to practice or participate without a completed physical.

Injuries

As with all physical activity, there is always a risk of injury when participating in athletics. Any athlete who becomes injured in practice and/or a game should immediately report the injury to the coach for further evaluation. The coach will then contact trainer or school nurse if necessary for further evaluation and/or treatment.

Secondary Insurance

Jackson Academy carries a secondary insurance policy for all student-athletes who participate in any extracurricular activities. The parents of the student-athlete are eligible to file an insurance claim should the student-athlete become injured during practices, games, or team events. This secondary insurance goes into effect after the student-athlete's primary insurance policy processes the claim. This is not a primary insurance. A student accident report form must be completed and turned in within 30 days of the injury.

X. Uniforms and Equipment

Uniforms and equipment purchased by the athletic department are considered property of Jackson Academy. Uniforms in all sports are purchased on a rotation basis according to need, and it is important that the players take proper care of the uniforms that have been issued for that season. Damage to uniforms due to normal wear and tear will be the responsibility of the athletic department. However, for any uniform that is lost or in a manner that is not a result of competition, then the student-athlete will be responsible for the cost of replacement. All uniforms and equipment purchased by Jackson Academy must be returned to the athletic department at the conclusion of the season. Failure to return uniforms or equipment will result in the student-athlete being assessed a fee to cover the replacement cost.

It is necessary that some apparel and/or equipment be purchased by the athlete for a particular sport. Every effort is made to keep those costs to a minimum. Some items for purchase are optional and some are mandatory depending on the sport. Anything purchased by the student-athlete is his/her personal property.

XI. Athletic Transportation

The athletic department will make all travel arrangements for the team and team personnel. Student-athletes who participate in athletic events off campus shall be required to travel in transportation provided by the school to and from the event. Exceptions may be made if the athlete's parent requests that the student-athlete be allowed to ride home with the parent after a contest. This should be done in the form of a written request and should be approved by the head coach in advance.

Some athletic contests scheduled in the metro area may allow student-athletes to use private vehicles for transportation to and from the event with approval from the coach. Jackson Academy will not be held liable for any injuries, accidents, or harm that may occur when personal vehicles are used for transportation to and from athletic events.

XII. Inclement Weather

The safety of the student-athlete will always be the first priority in the event of inclement weather. School cancellation does not necessarily mean that athletic events scheduled for that day or evening will be cancelled as well. The athletic department will distribute the appropriate information once a decision is made.

XIII. Strength and Conditioning and Off Season Programs

The strength and conditioning program at Jackson Academy plays a very vital role in the development of our student-athletes. Both in season and off season programs are structured to help our athletes maximize their athletic ability and prepare them for the rigorous demands of their seasons. Each head coach is responsible for organizing and coordinating workout times for their athletes with the Jackson Academy strength and conditioning coach.

XIV. Athletic Facility Use

The proper care of athletic facilities at Jackson Academy is the responsibility of each coach and athlete. Damage done to any equipment or facility should be reported to the athletic director. No student is allowed access to any of the athletic facilities without proper adult supervision.

XV. Sharing of Athletes

It is the philosophy of the Jackson Academy athletic department to not only allow but to encourage student-athletes to participate in multiple athletic offerings during the school year. If conflicts arise, then it is the responsibility of the coaches or sponsors to work cooperatively to develop a plan that has the best interest of the student-athlete in mind. At no time should the student-athlete be put in a position to make a decision due to conflicts.

Surprising national research has shown that student-athletes who participate in multiple sports score higher academically and have better behavior during their playing seasons. Also, most individuals who go on to play at the collegiate level were multi-sport athletes in high school.

XVI. Hazing

Hazing in any form is strictly prohibited by the Jackson Academy Athletic Department. Hazing is any act directed against a student-athlete that endangers the physical or mental health or the safety of a student-athlete for the purpose of initiation into an athletic team or sport. Any student-athlete involved will be disciplined at the discretion of the head coach and the athletic director.

XVII. Quitting

Once a student-athlete makes a commitment to a team, then quitting a sport is highly discouraged. If a student-athlete does choose to quit after the season has started, then he/she will not be allowed to participate in another sport until the season of the first sport has ended.

XVIII. Athletic Dismissals

Early dismissals for athletic competition will be necessary from time to time. According to the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools rules and regulations, student-athletes are only allowed one early dismissal per week per sport.

XIX. Absences Due to Extracurricular Practice and Competition

Students will not be allowed to take part in any school-sponsored extracurricular competition, event, or practice if absent from classes the day of such activity, unless previously excused by the dean. This policy is interpreted to mean that the student must be in attendance during the school day prior to being eligible to participate in school-sponsored events. In addition, students who habitually are unable to attend school or who are tardy to school the day following an extracurricular event, will, for the sake of their health and academic achievement, be dropped from participating in such activities. Students leaving campus, including for school-sponsored activities, will take all scheduled tests **that day before leaving campus**. When extracurricular activities remove a student from the school day, then the previously assigned work in all classes is due before the student leaves campus. Assignments assigned during classes the student missed should be completed and turned in on time.

XX. Eligibility

Jackson Academy offers a wide range of athletic activities. All students are encouraged to participate regardless of ability and every reasonable effort is made to allow students to participate in multiple activities.

Athletes must meet academic eligibility requirements set by the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools and the school. Each student must have passed four units for the term preceding the sport in which they intend to participate in order to be eligible for that sport. In addition, athletes are expected to exemplify positive leadership in the area of behavior throughout the school year.

XXI. Parent Meetings

At the beginning of each season, it is expected that the head coach of each sport schedule a parent meeting to define expectations for the season. Topics such as team rules and regulations, procedures, practice times, etc. will be discussed. At least one parent must be present at this meeting.

XXII. Concussions

Athletes who engage in contact sports and female athletes are at increased risk of concussion. Timely diagnosis and prompt treatment can help prevent more serious concussion complications. Athletes with signs and symptoms of concussions should be removed from play immediately and evaluated by a licensed, qualified medical professional as soon as possible. If the athlete has sustained a concussion, then the athlete should be referred to a licensed physician with experience in managing sports concussion injuries. Return to play after a concussion should occur only after full recovery and clearance from a physician along with gradual return to competition.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do athletes need a physical to participate in athletics? Yes. An athletic physical is required before any athletic participation is allowed. Physicals are valid for one calendar year.
2. What is the length of a typical practice? 1.5-2.5 hours
3. Is it possible for a student-athlete to return home with a parent after a contest? A child may be allowed to ride home with a parent if a written request is made and approved by the coach in advance.
4. Is a student allowed to participate in a practice or game if he/she was absent from school? Students will not be allowed to take part in any school-sponsored extracurricular competition, event, or practice if absent from classes the day of such activity, unless excused by the dean in advance.
5. Can a student-athlete participate in multiple sports? Student-athletes are not only allowed but encouraged to participate in multiple athletic offerings during the school year.
6. Is playing time guaranteed for my child? Playing time is not guaranteed, and it is a decision reserved for the head coach of each sport.
7. Where do I find athletic team schedules? All athletic schedules can be located on the Jackson Academy website under athletics.
8. Where can I find directions to other MAIS schools? Directions to all MAIS schools may be located on the MAIS website www.msais.org under "Directory of Schools."
9. Are sixth graders allowed to participate in athletics? A sixth grade student is allowed to participate in golf, track, cross country, tennis, swimming, girls volleyball, and fast pitch softball.
10. How many athletic dismissals are allowed per week? According to MAIS rules, students are allowed only one (1) early dismissal per sport per week.
11. Must my child pay a participation fee for athletics? A fee is not required for athletic participation. It is necessary from time to time that some apparel and/or equipment be purchased by the athlete for a particular sport. Every effort is made to keep those costs to a minimum. Anything purchased by the athlete is the personal property of the student-athlete.
12. What sports require tryouts? In some sports it may be necessary to reduce the number of players to a manageable size for competitive teams particularly when considering safety, fiscal resources, equipment, facilities, and coaching personnel. Currently, tryouts are conducted in baseball, soccer, basketball, and tennis. A student must be enrolled in order to have an opportunity to try out for an athletic team.

13. What athletic teams practice during the school day? Sports teams that utilize part of the school day for practice are seventh grade football, seventh grade basketball, eighth grade basketball, and ninth grade basketball.
14. What are the summer requirements for athletes? Summer workouts and/or practices vary from sport to sport. Some coaches require strength and conditioning workouts along with individual and team work sessions.
15. Is there a minimum grade requirement in order to participate in athletics? Athletes must meet academic eligibility requirements set by the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools and Jackson Academy. Each student must have passed four (4) units for the term preceding the sport in which they intend to participate in order to be eligible for that sport.