

ST. HEDWIG



Athletic Handbook

2026–2027



CELTICS



Dear Students, Parents, and Coaches,

Welcome to the St. Hedwig Athletic Program! We are excited to have you as a part of our athletic community. Our goal is to foster an environment where students can grow not only in their athletic skills but also in their faith, character, and leadership. The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidelines and expectations for all involved in our sports programs, ensuring a positive experience for all participants. We are excited to watch your child grow, both as an athlete and as a young person of faith. Together, we will build a strong, vibrant community where sports provide opportunities for both physical and spiritual development. We look forward to a wonderful season of learning, growth, and fun!

Go Celtics!

Mr. Chris McGuinness - Principal

Mr. John Russell - Athletic Director

Mr. Steve Belloise - Athletic Director

St. Hedwig Catholic School participates in the Diocese of Orange Parochial Athletic League (PAL). The Parochial Athletic League provides the elementary schools of the Diocese of Orange and its students an opportunity for friendly competition in sports with other schools within the boundaries of the Diocese. It is an organization that further enhances the spiritual, academic, physical, social, psychological, and moral growth of its students. It is an organization that builds character in its participants. A Christian attitude of sportsmanship, honesty, teamwork, team spirit, respect, and responsibility are stressed. It is an organization where the growth and success of all its participants is more important than winning. It provides an opportunity for eligible students to enjoy team sports, while learning the proper etiquette, rules, and skills of that sport, encouraging the student into a lifelong participation in sports. Participation is open to all students who qualify under the guidelines and regulations of the local school and the Parochial Athletic League.

St. Hedwig School provides athletic teams through the Parochial Athletic League (P.A.L.) for students in Grades 5-8 throughout the school year.

Fall Sports

Boy's Flag Football

Girl's Volleyball

Cheerleading*

Winter Sports

Boy's and Girl's Basketball

Cheerleading*

Spring Sports

Boy's Volleyball

Girl's Flag Football

Cheerleading*

*not a PAL sport

Athletic Policy

The athletic philosophy is in keeping with the holistic education of the school. We emphasize the importance of personal growth in Christian values while being competitive in inter-school sports. We believe that participation in extracurricular activities contributes to the development of self-confidence, leadership, and the establishment of desirable interpersonal relations. Good sportsmanship, Christian conduct and the spirit of Christian Community are foremost. The athletic program supports the physical and academic emphasis as stated in the P.A.L. Handbook.

Students must maintain a 2.0 grade average in all academic subjects with no grade lower than 70%. This includes Spanish. Responsible Behavior and Personal Success Skills grades must be no lower than 80%. If grades drop below these levels, the athlete will be suspended until grades are raised.

Eligibility is reviewed mid-season.

Students must be present for at least ½ day to participate in any and all extracurricular activities, including any games or practices.

Detention Policy

As defined in the school handbook, students who receive a detention will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities suspension dates and length will be determined by the Student Conduct Team. Extracurricular activities include, but are not

limited to: cheer, basketball, football, volleyball, kickball, intramural sports, student council, yearbook, choir, and academic decathlon.

Policy for Participation in After School Athletics

An athlete must demonstrate a Christian attitude throughout the training and competitions. A student will commit to the team for practice, games, and tournaments until the end of the varsity season. If there is a conflict of interest, such as another league or organization, commitment priority must be to St. Hedwig School or the student may be dropped from the team.

It is imperative that students arrive and are picked up on time for practice and games. After a third late incident, the student may be dropped from the athletic program for the remainder of the year. In the event of unforeseen circumstances beyond our control, short notification may be given as to the date and time of various athletic events that are canceled. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Students remaining on campus after school for athletics are the responsibility of the school until they are picked up by a parent or designated ride. Therefore, they may not leave campus unattended to go to a restaurant or store and return to school. They must remain on campus at all times under the supervision of their coach, advisor or teacher.

Statement on participation in PAL

St. Hedwig Catholic School is a member of the Diocese of Orange Parochial Athletic League (PAL), which is dedicated to fostering human development, within the framework of a Christian environment, encouraging a positive vision in our young men and women through exercise, positive athletic competition, and fully recognizing the dignity of each student in Christ's image.

As a participating school, we agree to the following goals:

- To build a community which strives to image Christ
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit and personal acceptance
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the life-styles of the participants
- To teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing and competing with dignity
- To develop an acceptance and appreciation of others
- To train and instruct in athletic rules
- To develop the students physical abilities and coordination
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good health habits
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation
- To show the necessity of practice, work and management of time
- These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God

For more information on PAL, visit their website at www.parochialathleticleague.com

Obligations of the athlete, spectator/parent and coaching staff

IN THE SPIRIT OF GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP CODE **THE ATHLETE** SHALL BE...

- Honest, humble and gracious. Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend.
- Act respectfully toward coaches, teammates, opponents and officials
- Take pride in their school and treat home and visiting facilities and equipment with respect.
- Positive and encouraging to opposing players and teammates through words and actions. Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a courteous manner following either victory or defeat
- Respectful of the judgment of referees and coaches
- Accept responsibility as a team member on and off the court/field. It is your responsibility to maintain your grades and conduct

THE ATHLETE SHALL NOT...

- Cheat
- Lose one's temper
- Speak negatively of teammates, coaches, referees, and opposing players
- Blame teammates for mistakes or a poor team performance
- "Trash talk" and/or taunt opponents
- Showboat
- Argue referees' or coach's calls and judgments

PARENTS/SPECTATORS SHALL

- Set a Christian example by treating officials, coaches, teammates, opponents and fans with respect and dignity
- Remember that you are at the contest to support your team and to enjoy the skill and competition.
- Remember that school athletics is a learning experience for students and mistakes are sometimes made.
- Learn the rules of the game and the league, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student/athlete, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Use only cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.

- Be a positive role model at events through your own actions.
- Respect the buildings and property of the facilities that are used.
- Ensure the safety of children who are spectators by supervising them at all times.
- Care for uniforms properly
- Let the coaches coach
- Inform the coach when the athlete will be absent from practices or games
- Follow the established grievance procedure for addressing concerns

THE PARENTS/SPECTATORS SHALL NOT

- Intimidate or ridicule the other team or its fans.
- Lose one's temper
- Speak negatively of teammates, coaches, referees, and opposing players, whether verbally or through electronic means
- Blame teammates for mistakes or a poor team performance
- "Trash talk" and/or taunt opponents or teammates
- Showboat
- Argue referees' calls and judgments instruct or direct play of the team or an individual child

★ Visitors are subject to the same behavior guidelines established for parents. Violations of this policy would result in, but are not limited to: removal from contest, non-attendance at future contests and/or forfeiture of the contest. ★

Responsibilities of coaches

- Recognize that coaches are an extension of the school/parish
- Include a team prayer before each game and practice
- Treat officials, visiting coaches, players, parents and fans with respect and dignity
- Coaches shall comply with the meaning and spirit of the playing rules. Purposely ignoring or willfully violating rules is intolerable.
- Coaches shall show respect for game officials and opponents while conducting themselves in a manner that dignifies the game, the sport and their school.
- Coaches shall motivate players in such a way that the players control themselves at all times, thereby preventing unsportsmanlike behavior towards opponents, officials or spectators.
- Coaches shall not tolerate any actions by players that are physically dangerous to opponents and shall remove such players from the contest immediately.
- Coaches shall direct their remarks only to their team and never to the opposition in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage.
- Coaches shall conduct tryouts to allow each student an opportunity to participate in the PAL program.
- Check that athletes are using proper and safe equipment for each sport
- Abide by school administrative decisions regarding player eligibility
- Provide proper supervision at every practice and game
- Ensure that spectators abide by the following rules: When a game is in progress, an official has the authority to ask that a spectator be removed from the game, with just cause. If necessary, the coaches must assist in this task, or risk the penalty of forfeiting the contest.

A coach that is ejected from a game will not be able to coach the team from that point of ejection through the conclusion of their next PAL-sanctioned contest. This includes the postseason tournament. Postponement of a contest does not fulfill the requirement. An ejected coach must leave the site and cannot be at the site of the next PAL scheduled contest. If a certified person is present, he/she may coach the team for the remainder of the game and the next game. If no one who is certified is present, the team shall forfeit the contest.

Coaches shall attend a certification program through "Play like a Champion" every 4 years.

PLAYING TIME

Varsity Team: Our "Varsity" level team in each sport is considered a "competitive" team. Athletes will receive playing time and on-field/court positioning at the discretion of the coaching staff with the intent of giving the team the best chance for overall success. This is meant to serve as a transition into high school where playing time and positions are determined in large part by performance. Although winning is a point of emphasis, the rules of play, good sportsmanship, the welfare of team members, or the mission of the school will not be sacrificed. Decisions regarding playing time are the sole responsibility of the head coach and his or her staff for that sport. Playing time will be determined by a variety of factors including, but not limited to; skill, athletic ability, following directions, attendance, and dedication, accepting constructive criticism, attitude, work ethic, respect, willingness to be coached, potential for improvement, and performance in practice and games. While every effort will be made to play all members of the team in each game, there is no guarantee that each player on the "varsity" team will receive playing time in each game.

5th & 6th Grade "B Team": At the 5th & 6th Grade level the head coach will strive to involve all players in every game. While it may be difficult to play all athletes equally at each game, a fair and relatively equitable rotation may occur so that all players can participate and develop their skills. Fair and equitable playing time MAY NOT mean equal playing time and coaches may take into account in their decisions regarding playing time whether the athlete is regularly attending practices. It is not fair and equitable to those athletes who do attend practices regularly to lose playing time to an athlete who does not.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION / ISSUES

Any issues that arise during a season should be discussed with the coaches and/or coaching staff first, and then the Athletic Director only if a resolution cannot be made first with the coaches and/or coaching staff. The school administration should never be the first point of contact. Coaches are hired because of demonstrated ability, and should always be the first person to speak with when an issue arises. Parents are asked to wait 24 hours after the conclusion of the contest to approach a coach regarding an issue on playing time, position or other issue. Health, safety issues should be brought up immediately.

UNIFORMS

Team uniforms remain the property of St. Hedwig school and are given to each athlete at the beginning of the season. They are to be well taken care of and cleaned after each use. At the conclusion of the season, all uniforms are to be returned to the athletic department. Missing or damaged uniforms must be replaced at the expense of the athlete. Equipment necessary for safety (mouth guards, knee pads, proper footwear, etc...) are the responsibility of the athlete and not part of the school owned equipment.

INJURIES

Students should never play with injuries. Every effort is made to ensure the safety of the athletes; however, there is always a risk of injury when participating in athletics. The school is not held responsible for injuries that occur during practices or games. Injuries caused as a result of participation on a school team must be reported to the coach immediately. Injuries caused from playing in a club, FNL, or other league or recreational activity must be reported to the coaches to prevent further injury.

Transportation to Away Games and Athletic Events

- Students may not be dismissed from the classroom until the designated time as approved by the Athletic Director.
- Athletes must sign out with the Athletic Director prior to leaving campus.
- Approved chaperone drivers must provide the school with the same expectation as drivers for field trips. See field trip policy.

The transportation to and from away games is to be arranged or provided by the parent. Teachers/staff who are not coaching the team are not permitted to drive students unless it is their own child.

Fees

There is a school fee of \$175 to compete in any given PAL sport, payable through FACTS. There is a 1-time annual fee paid to PAL for all athletes participating in PAL sport. Payable once per year, not per sport. A link will be provided by the Athletic Director prior to, or once the respective season gets underway. Cheer is not considered a PAL sport at this time. Therefore, the above fees for school participation and registration to PAL is not applicable for Cheer.

Post season awards

Englehaupt award

The Englehaupt award is given to at least one boy and one girl in 8th grade who has competed in at least 2 sports. This award is given to the student-athlete who has a competitive fire, loves to compete, puts forth unyielding effort and is committed to a solid team attitude. Athletes' names are submitted by the coaches and the final awards are chosen by the athletic department.

John R. Russell Scholar Athlete award

The John R. Russell scholar athlete award is given to a single 8th grade athlete who has competed in at least 2 PAL sports and has the highest cumulative GPA. In the event of a numerical GPA tie, multiple awards may be given.

Athlete of the Year

The athlete of the year is given to at least one boy and one girl athlete from the 8th grade class who has competed in all 3 available sports. Athlete names are submitted by the coaches and final selection is determined by the athletic department.

Varsity Cheer

The varsity cheer team functions, in part, to support both student activities and athletics. We are building a competitive cheer team that will compete in local, regional and state competitions. That team will be ready for the 2026-2027 school year. Separate tryouts will take place in the fall, and a monthly program fee and uniform purchase will apply. A cheerleader of the year will be selected at the end of the academic year and awarded at the sports awards.



St. Hedwig School
Parent / Athlete Code of Conduct/Agreement

By participation in an athletic team at St. Hedwig School, the parents and athlete agree to the following:

1. Parent will not force a student to participate in a sport
2. I will remember that athletes participate to have fun and that the game is for the student-athlete, not the adult
3. I will inform the coaching staff of any injury or physical disability that might jeopardize the safety of an athlete
4. I will learn the rules of the sport and policies of the Parochial Athletic League
5. Parents and guests will be positive role models for the athletes and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice and sporting event.
6. Parents and guests will not engage in any unsportsmanlike conduct directed at an official, coach or player, such as booing, taunting, refusal to shake hands or using profane language or gestures. This also applies to any online communication or posts that reflect negatively on a team, player or school.
7. I will not encourage any behavior or practice that would endanger the health and well-being of an athlete
8. I will teach my child to play by the rules without resorting to hostility or violence
9. I will encourage my child to advocate for themselves with the coaching staff
10. I will ensure my child treat teammate, opponents, coaches and officials with respect at all times
11. I will encourage my child that attitude and good sportsmanship come before winning
12. I will praise my child and his/her teammates for competing fairly and working hard, regardless of the outcome of the game
13. I will not ridicule any athlete for making a mistake on or off the field, either verbally or online or in a chat
14. I will not discuss coaching decisions in a public forum or privately with other parents
15. I will follow the protocol for reporting issues and speak first to the coach after a 24 hour grace period.
16. I will set an appointment with the athletic director(s) to discuss coaching practices and not speak about coaches, officials or the team in a public forum
17. I will do my part to ensure that the playing environment is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol at all times
18. I will not attempt to coach my child or their teammates during a game, and leave that responsibility to the coaching staff and athletic department
19. I will not expect or demand playing time or position on the field/court and be happy with their participation in the program, regardless of their positioning or time on the court/field
20. I have read the athletic handbook on the school website

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name of Parent _____

Print Name of Athlete _____

PLEASE PRINT, SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE ATHLETIC DIRECTORS PRIOR TO THE FIRST LEAGUE CONTEST