



# **PARENT/STUDENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

**Welcome to Salisbury Academy Athletics and Jaguar Country!**

**We believe every student can achieve success in and out of the classroom, and we strongly encourage participation in athletics. Our teams are highly competitive, yet what we value most is sportsmanship and respect. SA offers interscholastic teams in a growing number of sports for boys and girls.**

**Revised October 2017**

## Mission

To help each student-athlete excel in all areas and to be the best he or she can be both on and off the playing field.

## Philosophy

At Salisbury Academy, our athletics program is an important component of the educational structure. Athletics complement our academics and provide another arena in which students can excel. We pride ourselves on giving students opportunities to try a new sport. While we strive to make our teams as competitive as possible, our primary objective is to help our student-athletes build character by developing important life skills. Cooperation, teamwork, responsibility and self-respect are just a few life skills that become ingrained in our student-athletes. The personal growth and achievements realized by our student-athletes provide them with a balance between academic pursuits, physical endeavors, and social interaction.

Our coaches are focused on teaching student-athletes how to win yet are not solely focused on winning. Through positive reinforcement and intentional teaching, our coaches show our athletes how to be successful. Our student-athletes learn to be gracious competitors who embrace challenges, win with humility, handle defeat with dignity, advocate for their sports, and are positive role models.

Both individual and team sports are available to middle school students and several sports are available to lower school students. More than 19 teams play in 8 different sports which include basketball, cheerleading, cross country, golf, soccer, volleyball, track and field, and tennis. Over 90 percent of students in grades 5 through 8 participate in interscholastic athletics.

The focus of our program is on both individual and team progress. While winning is important, it is not our sole motivation, but rather a benefit of individual and team talent and character development.

### **There are 5 major characteristics we strive to encourage in our student athletes:**

**Academic Excellence:** As a lasting influence on lifelong success, we hold academic achievement above athletic achievement.

**Commitment:** We expect SA athletes to be committed to the sports in which they participate. This includes being at all practices, games, and team events on time and ready to work.

**Teamwork:** We expect each athlete to learn to value themselves and their teammates as different, but essential parts of a team effort.

**Sportsmanship:** Players are expected to display good sportsmanship and appropriate encouragement of their teammates without regard to score, fans, opponents, calls, etc.

**Self-discipline:** Athletes are expected to follow team and school rules and work hard to better their skills through attention to their coach's instructions and individual practice.

## Sports Teams

Salisbury Academy is excited to offer the following sports:

**Fall:** JV and Varsity Girls Volleyball, JV and Varsity Co-ed Soccer, Co-ed Cross-Country, and Girls Tennis

**Winter:** Varsity Cheerleading, JV and Varsity Girls Basketball, JV and Varsity Boys Basketball

**Spring:** Co-ed Golf, Co-ed Track, Girls Soccer, and Co-Ed Tennis

## Eligibility

**Academics:** Athletes must maintain an overall C average with no failing grades in core subjects (math, language arts, social studies, science) on grade reports (report cards, progress reports). The Athletic Director is responsible for determining eligibility at the start of the season and at the time of grade reports and notifying parents and teachers in the event of suspension. Once the season has begun, parents of students not meeting the above criteria will receive written notification of a suspension from the team. The administration will allow the students to return to the team once the grade has been improved to a D or the overall average is C. (This is a change from the previous policy that stated a player had to wait 10 days). An athlete may not have more than one suspension per season to remain eligible. Suspension is defined as no practice or play with the team and no participation in any team events or privileges (sitting on the bench, wearing uniform, etc.).

**Behavior:** Athletes must adhere to all behavior expectations and rules as set forth in the Family/or Parent Student Policies and Procedures Handbook and any other rules established by the coach or athletic department. Any athlete may be denied participation at the discretion of the Head of School or Athletic Director.

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to participate on varsity teams only in sports where a JV team is not offered.

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade:** We want to allow our 4<sup>th</sup>-graders the opportunity to participate in athletics not only to help build their skill level, but to introduce them at an earlier age to good sportsmanship and teamwork. We feel that this will be beneficial not only for our 4<sup>th</sup>-graders but for our program for many years to come. We will gradually introduce the 4<sup>th</sup>-graders into the athletic program by allowing them to participate in practice.

Students may be allowed to play in games if the Head of School and Athletic Director determine it is in the best interest of the program to allow 4<sup>th</sup>-graders to fully participate on a team.

Students must understand that playing athletics at Salisbury Academy is a privilege and not a right. If a coach is unable to accommodate 4<sup>th</sup>-graders because of a large number of middle school students, then the 4<sup>th</sup> graders will not be allowed to practice but will be encouraged to help the team as a manager. If a coach feels that a student is being disruptive or is having a negative influence on the team, then it is their right to discuss this with the Athletic Director and a decision will be made as to whether or not

the student will be allowed to continue practicing. Finally, if a particular sport has a JV and Varsity team, the student will only be allowed to participate with the JV team.

### **Athletics Code of Conduct**

Expectations of Athletes – Salisbury Academy athletes share a commitment to themselves, their teammates and to the school. Student-athletes and parents are required to sign the Player/Parent Contract prior to athletics participation and turn the signed agreement in to the Athletic Director. The contract is included in this handbook and is also available on our website.

Student-athletes are expected to exhibit:

- Respect - For oneself, teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, fans, team managers, bus drivers, and athletic staff.
- Responsibility - By attending practices/games, being on time every day, and being prepared to improve in skill level and knowledge of the sport. Athletes are expected to adhere to the school rules and expectations as stated in the Athletic Handbook. Anyone in violation of this policy will be subject to consequences.
- Sportsmanship - Every action, body language, attitude and spoken word is a reflection of oneself and a reflection of the school. Student-athletes should be committed to being the “bigger” person in difficult situations.

### **Participation Policy/Sports Physical**

Students must have a sports physical form on file in the Athletic Director's office before participating on any Salisbury Academy athletic team. The form is located on the school website.

### **Expectation of Parents**

Salisbury Academy parents are expected to support the coach, all student-athletes and athletic policies. Parents are encouraged to cheer on Salisbury Academy teams while refraining from verbally abusing game officials or the opposing team. Parents who have concerns about their child's athletic experience should first contact the coach and, if unresolved, follow up with the Athletic Director.

### **Pre-Season Parent Meetings**

Prior to each team having their first practice, all parents are asked to meet with their child's coach for a pre-season parents' meeting. These meetings will be brief and informal, and will include the following: coach's expectations for practice/game participation, electing a team mom/dad, reviewing the team schedule and reviewing any sport rules that may make viewing more enjoyable.

### **Try-out and Cut Policy**

Participating on a sports team provides the student-athlete an experience in skill development, sportsmanship and teamwork. We strive to provide athletic opportunities for all eligible students. Some of our teams may have a cap that requires limiting the number of players so that all team members have a meaningful experience. If needed,

a tryout period will be held at the beginning of each season and, if cuts are necessary, the head coach will inform all players of their status on the team in a face-to-face meeting. Athletes who do not make the team of their choice may participate for another team if there is space on the roster.

### Playing Time

At the JV level coaches should attempt to get every player some playing time. The focus at this level should remain strongly on development. The exact amount of playing time may vary at the coach's discretion and may be influenced by attitude, effort, and talent.

At the Varsity level players should be aware that they will earn playing time through maximum effort, attitude, teamwork, and talent.

### Athletic Expenses

While Salisbury Academy tries to limit additional costs above and beyond tuition for athletic participation, there are a few exceptions. All student-athletes are required to return their uniforms, after cleaning, at the completion of each athletic season. The exception is a sport where uniforms are retained such as golf & tennis and those are purchased by each player. Any uniforms returned beyond normal wear and tear will be assessed a fee. Any unreturned uniforms will be invoiced the full cost of new uniform. Booster Club will assign and check in uniforms.

### Team Pictures/Awards

Team Pictures are taken during the early part of each season. Information will be sent home to notify parents.

Near the end of the school year, we hold an annual awards banquet recognizing team and individual accomplishments. Parents are encouraged to attend.

### Transportation

Students must ride in assigned vehicles to and from the events. Students wishing to ride home with their parents must notify their coach directly.

### Attendance

Players may only miss games or practices for excused absences. Reason for absences include illness, injury, or situations for which advance permission has been granted **by the coach**. Coaches may request a note from the parents or physician in the case of illness or injury. Two unexcused absences will result in a one-game suspension. **Three unexcused absences will result in dismissal from the team. Athletes must be in school by 10:00 a.m. on the day of a game or practice in order to participate.** Exceptions to this policy will be handled on an individual basis by the AD. An athlete's first commitment must be to the school program. Coaches are not expected to excuse

athletes from school games due to conflicts or commitments with outside community club or travel team practices, contests and/or tournaments.

### **Communication/Alerts**

**Athletes and their parents must be responsible for checking for text, Jag Weekly, and e-mail messages.** This is the most efficient means of communicating, especially regarding last-minute changes. If you are not on the AD's e-mail list &/or phone list, please send him your e-mail address so you can receive these timely messages.

### **Social Media**

"Like" the Salisbury Academy page on Facebook as scores and announcements will be posted there.

### **Inclement Weather Policy/Alerts**

If rain, snow, ice, or other inclement weather impacts the practice or game schedule, parents will be updated as soon as the school has all necessary information to make an informed decision. Please keep in mind that safety is our top priority and will steer our decisions if changes need to be made. Parents are also encouraged to sign up to receive alerts via cell phone so they are notified immediately when changes are made.

### **Dress Code**

*Uniforms:* Uniforms will be issued by the school. Parent-purchased school warm-up suits may be used as part of athletic uniforms. Uniforms will be provided for most of our sports. In cases where students get to keep their uniforms after the season (usually tennis and golf), students should be aware that they must purchase their own uniforms. Exceptions to this policy will be handled on an individual basis by the AD.

*Dress Code at school:* Students may wear game jerseys or dress uniforms on game days per their coach's instructions.

### **Purchases/Donations/Fundraisers**

All athletic purchases must be approved in advance by the AD. All donations made to the Athletic Department must be approved as well. Additionally, all fundraising events must be coordinated with and approved by the Head of School.

### **Senior Recognition**

SA celebrates all eighth grade athletes participating during each athletic season at a selected contest. Senior recognition events will take place during the pep rallies.

## **Conference Information**

Salisbury Academy is one of the founding members of the Western Carolina Christian Athletic Association (WCCAA). Conference members include Concordia Lutheran, Iredell Charter, Statesville Montessori, St. Stephens Lutheran, and Tri-City Christian.

## **NC Dental Society Position on Mouth Guard Use for Athletes**

The North Carolina Dental Society strongly recommends the use of mouth guards for male and female athletes in all sports, particularly football, basketball, soccer, baseball, wrestling, and volleyball. The use of mouth guards has proven to reduce the severity of injury to the lips, teeth, cheeks, and tongue. Mouth guards should be used in all practice and game situations.

Fast Facts:

- Soccer players have the highest potential for orofacial injury.
- Basketball players have an oral injury chance double that of football and ice hockey players.
- The American Dental Society estimates that mouth guards prevent about 20,000 oral injuries per year.
- Evidence shows that mouth guards may offer additional protection against concussions, jaw fractures, and other jaw injuries.

The Mouth Guard:

- Stock mouth guards are available through retail sporting good stores, wholesale team division sales, and dental offices.
- Athletes wearing braces should seek guidance from their orthodontist.

## **Salisbury Academy Position Statement:**

Salisbury Academy strongly recommends the use of mouth guards for male and female athletes in soccer, basketball, and volleyball.

For more information on mouth guards, go to [www.ncdental.org](http://www.ncdental.org), and then click on "Mouth Guard Project."

## PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION PLAN

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

### Communication You Should Expect from Your Child's Coach

1. Philosophy and expectations of the coach
2. Locations and times of all practices and contests
3. Team requirements, i.e., practices, and special equipment

### Communication Coaches Expect from Parents

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

A critical aspect of communication is our utilization of e-mail and the school's website, on which locations of schools against which we compete will be posted.

As your children become involved in the programs at Salisbury Academy, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

### Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

**It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved.** As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those below, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

### Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches

1. **Playing time**
2. **Team strategy**
3. **Play calling**
4. **Other student-athletes**

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue or concern.



**If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, the procedure you should follow:**

1. Call to set up an appointment
2. If the coach cannot be reached, please contact the Athletic Director. A meeting will be set up for you.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parents and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

**The Next Step – What a parent can do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution:**

1. Call and set up appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

Because research indicates that a student involved in co-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood, these programs have been established. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote a successful life after middle school. We hope the information provided makes both your child's and your experience with the Salisbury Academy athletic program less stressful and more enjoyable.

## Player/Parent Contract

The following rules and regulations govern all Salisbury Academy athletes:

- All student athletes and their parents agree with the policies and guidelines that are set forth in SA's athletic handbook.
- All athletes are representatives of Salisbury Academy and are expected to behave in an appropriate manner.
- Players and parents understand that competitive athletics can result in injuries. Although SA takes every possible precaution, athletes can suffer not only minor injuries, but potentially life-long or even life threatening injuries.
- Athletic functions, games, practices, special events, etc. are all school related functions and all school rules apply during these events.
- Practice times are very important for the development of skills and teamwork. No player should miss a scheduled practice, except for illness or injury, without the prior approval of their coach.
- Playing time is a decision solely for the coach or coaches. Playing time is based on a player's ability, attitude, and the game situation. Parents with questions about the amount of playing time of their son/daughter need to schedule an appointment with the Athletic Director. Parents should not confront coaches before or after a game.
- Athletes are expected to pursue academic excellence. All athletes must maintain a C average with no failing grades in core subjects on grade reports. Any player whose grades do not meet the above criteria will be suspended from the team until the grade has been improved to a D or the overall average is C. See The Athletic Handbook for further details.
- All SA uniforms are the property of the school and must be treated in an appropriate manner. All uniforms must be returned washed and in good condition at the end of the season. Any player who does not return his/her uniform will be charged the appropriate replacement fee from the required uniform deposit. Parents are responsible for lost or damaged uniforms.
- Playing for a SA team is a privilege and not a guaranteed right of our students. Any player whose actions are deemed by the coach or Athletic Director as detrimental to the team or as portraying a poor school image will be removed from the team. A player may be either suspended briefly or permanently depending upon the athlete's actions and history. When a suspension is pending, the Athletic Director will notify the parents.
- Parents are responsible for picking up their child immediately after athletic events and practices. Families not following this rule will be asked to confer with the Athletic Director to work towards a solution. Athletes will generally be placed in after-school study hall, and their parents will be charged the standard fee.

Parents are responsible for providing the AD with their e-mail address(es) &/or phone number(s) to ensure proper notification regarding scheduled events.

I have read and understand the rules and consequences set forth in the Player/Parent Contract.

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Athlete's signature

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Parent's signature

## Information for Emergency Call

(Be prepared to give this information to the EMS dispatcher.)

1. Location:

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City or town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Directions (e.g., cross streets or landmarks) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Telephone number from which the call is being made \_\_\_\_\_

3. Caller's name \_\_\_\_\_

4. What happened \_\_\_\_\_

5. How many persons insured \_\_\_\_\_

6. Condition of victim(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Help (first aide) being given \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Do not hang up first. Let the EMS dispatcher hang up first.*

### Injury Report

Name of athlete \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

First Aider (name) \_\_\_\_\_

Mechanism of injury \_\_\_\_\_

Type of injury \_\_\_\_\_

Anatomical area involved \_\_\_\_\_

Extent of injury \_\_\_\_\_

First aid administered \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other treatment administered \_\_\_\_\_

Referral action \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

First Aider (Signature)