

2025 – 2026



**STUDENT-ATHLETE
HANDBOOK**

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Cardinal Newman Student-Athlete Handbook

Objectives & Philosophy

Cardinal Newman Athletics exists to develop the whole student: Spirit, mind and body and to build life's champions through faith, leadership, academics, and a strong family atmosphere. Inspired by Cardinal Newman's Catholic values and the FHSAA's emphasis on sportsmanship, our mission is to foster team cohesion, integrity, self-discipline, respect for others, and academic excellence through interscholastic sports.

Athletic Program Overview

Cardinal Newman offers a wide range of sports to accommodate athletes of all interests and skill levels, and we strongly encourage every student to participate in at least one athletic program. Students in grades 9–12 may participate in one sport per season. Participation in two sports during the same season is allowed only with approval from both head coaches of the sports and the Athletic Director.

Some sports are designated as “cut sports,” where athletes may be released from the team during tryouts, while others are “non-cut sports,” where all eligible students are welcome to join. All sports provide a guaranteed two-day tryout period, with most programs extending this window to three days. Due to seasonal overlaps common in Florida, student-athletes participating in one sport are entitled to their tryout opportunity for the next sport once their current season concludes. Athletes are expected to fully complete their current season before moving on to the next. In limited cases, a student may participate at the end of one season while beginning another, but only with full approval and agreement from both head coaches and the Athletic Director.

All school rules apply to Athletics as well.

FHSAA Eligibility

Cardinal Newman High School follows all eligibility rules and regulations set forth by the **Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA)**. These guidelines cover academic performance, age limits, attendance, transfers, amateur status, and other areas related to student-athlete participation.

It is the responsibility of each student-athlete and their parent/guardian to be familiar with and follow FHSAA policies. Failure to meet these requirements may result in ineligibility to participate in athletics.

For full details, please visit the FHSAA website at www.fhsaa.com or contact the Athletic Director with any questions.

Transfer Eligibility “Good Cause” Policy

Student-athletes and parents/guardians should be aware of the most recent FHSAA eligibility requirements. Students who transfer schools during the school year may be “authorized for good cause” to participate in the same sport at a new school if certain “good cause” circumstances are met to the satisfaction of the President or President's designee. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Move to a new residence by the student (with a person/persons with whom he/she has been previously living)
 - Transfer of school within the first twenty days of school
 - Undue hardship
 - Approval by the Good Cause Committee
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Parent Responsibilities & Athletic Clearance

Parent Responsibilities

Parents play a critical role in supporting a child's development and upholding the values of our school community. We therefore ask that:

- Support and help enforce school rules, policies, and expectations.
- Regularly check on your child's grades, behavior, and attendance.
- Represent Cardinal Newman in a positive and respectful manner at all events.

Spectator behavior reflects not only on you but also on your child's team and our school. Rude, arrogant, immature, or disrespectful conduct, whether toward officials, coaches, players, or other spectators, undermines the spirit of high school athletics. As adults, we are responsible for modeling good sportsmanship: cheer for our team, do not boo the opponent, and remain respectful at all times. If you find it difficult to control your emotions in a competitive environment, we respectfully ask that you refrain from attending.

It is your responsibility to support your child's coach and team. Negative comments or undermining remarks about coaches, teammates, or the program can damage morale and take away from the positive values that athletics instill.

While we all strive to win, learning to lose with grace is just as important. If parents and school staff work together in mutual respect and cooperation, we will not only achieve our athletic goals but also help our children grow into responsible, respectful, and resilient young adults, which is the ultimate goal of our athletic program.

Athletic Clearance:

Parents/guardians must complete annual clearance before participation:

www.athleticclearance.com

All students need:

- EL2 (pre-participation physical) must be an EL2 form per FHSAA.
- 4 NFHS Course Certificates (Free) - Sudden Cardiac Arrest, Heat Illness, Concussion in Sports and Sportsmanship
- Notarized parental consent form (add all sports you may play)
- 2.0+ GPA
- Transfer students will also need to fill out an EL6 form.

Attendance & Lateness

To participate in any game, practice, workout, or team event, a student must attend **at least two full class periods** during the school day. This includes Mass or assemblies.

If a student misses more than **two periods**, they are considered absent for the day and **may not participate** in any athletic activities including practice and training.

This policy exists to reinforce the importance of academic engagement and ensure that student-athletes prioritize their responsibilities in the classroom.

Early Dismissal: For some athletic events, students must be dismissed from school before normal dismissal time. Early dismissal from classes for athletic reasons does not release student athletes from class work responsibilities. Each athlete must make arrangements in advance with the teacher to take missed quizzes or tests, or to hand in assignments.

Absence from Practice

Excused absences require prior notice. Make-up opportunities may be provided at coach discretion. Unexcused absences can affect playing time and may trigger disciplinary review.

Conduct During Practice

All athletes must maintain respect:

- Follow coaches and trainers
- No profanity, bullying, or hazing
- Proper sportsmanship at all times

Locker-Room Etiquette

- Keep lockers locked and area clean
- Obviously, no theft is allowed. Valuables should remain with students or at home
- Lockers are school property; staff may search when safety is a concern
- Foul play is unacceptable in any locker room.

Athletic Injuries & Medical Policies

- Report injuries immediately to athletic trainer
- Athletes are not allowed to practice without current physical.
- Our Athletic trainer is Nicole Albergo, nicole.albergo@cardinalnewman.com

All injuries must be reported to our athletic trainer. The trainer is responsible for evaluating injuries and determining when an athlete is cleared to return to practice.

If the injury requires a visit to a doctor, a doctor's note must be provided to the athletic trainer before the athlete can be released back to practice or competition.

Transportation

Team Transportation Policy

Our goal is to provide team transportation to and from athletic events whenever possible, and we are actively working to make the process more efficient and consistent.

When school transportation is provided, **student-athletes are expected to travel with the team.** This supports team unity, ensures safety, and simplifies logistics for coaches and staff.

If a parent wishes to take their child home after a game instead of using team transportation, this is permitted **only if the coach approves** and the parent **checks the student out directly with the coach** at the conclusion of the event. A proper **checkout process must take place**. No athlete may leave without it.

If school transportation is not available for a game, your coach will communicate this in advance. In such cases, it becomes the responsibility of the family to arrange transportation for the student-athlete to and from the event.

Off Site Practices: In some sports such as swimming, golf, tennis, and weightlifting, off campus facilities are used. Transportation is an issue that must be organized and planned. CNHS does not provide daily transportation for these activities. Parental assistance or individual driving may be necessary.

Cardinal Newman Athletics Off-Campus Overnight Trip Policy

Overall Goal

As noted previously, the goal of Cardinal Newman Athletics is to provide a safe, enjoyable, and enriching experience for all student-athletes. By adhering to these guidelines, we can ensure our trips foster both athletic and personal growth while maintaining a positive team environment.

All student-athletes, coaches, and parents are expected to uphold these standards to make each trip a successful and memorable experience. We appreciate the support of families in this endeavor and look forward to providing a rewarding experience for all involved. All school rules apply on overnight trips.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety, well-being, and positive experience of all student-athletes during off-campus overnight trips organized by Cardinal Newman Athletics. All trips must be approved by the Director of Athletics.

Policy Guidelines

Supervision and Responsibility

- **Coaches and Staff:** Responsible for student-athletes throughout the trip, modeling appropriate behavior. Consumption of alcohol is not allowed on a school trip.
- Coaches are not to stay in hotel rooms with students.

- Dress code is in effect for moderators.
- Chaperones are to be CNHS Coaches/faculty. Parents are not to be chaperones. If a non CNHS individual is to be a chaperone, he/she must be cleared through the Athletic Director.
- **Student-Athletes:** Must remain with the team at all times. No athlete is permitted to leave the group for any reason, including meeting with parents, unless explicitly approved by coaching staff.
- Students are not allowed to have students of the opposite sex in rooms with doors closed.

Pre-Trip Preparations

- **Code of Conduct:** All student-athletes must adhere to school rules.
- **Inform Team:** Coaches will review this policy with student-athletes prior to departure.

Handling Situations

- **Alcohol and Substance Use:** If an issue arises involving alcohol, drugs, or vaping, the following steps will be taken:
 - Notification of the athletic director to determine course of action (send student home, etc). The coach will also notify the parents after consultation with the Athletic Director.
 - A meeting with school administration upon return to determine disciplinary action.
 - Disciplinary actions will vary depending on the severity of the offense. For minor infractions, such as being late for curfew, the student may be required to report earlier the following evening. More serious violations, such as those involving drugs or alcohol, will result in stricter consequences.
 - In the event of a drug or alcohol violation, the Athletic Director should be notified immediately, followed by the student's parents. The student will typically be sent home immediately, unless circumstances suggest it is more appropriate for the student to return at the end of the trip.
 - If a drug or alcohol violation is suspected, the chaperone should gather as many facts as possible. For example, if alcohol is detected on a student's breath and there is suspicion that alcohol may be in the student's bag, the bag should be searched for evidence. The more evidence gathered, the easier it will be to determine appropriate consequences once the group returns.

Educational Experiences

For trips involving more than one overnight stay, an educational component will be included, such as:

- Visits to local museums or cultural centers.
- Team-building workshops.
- Guest speakers or leadership training sessions.

Team Mass/Sundays

If the trip extends into a Sunday or is on a Sunday, a mandatory team Mass will be held to promote team unity and provide a spiritual experience for all participants.(Note:FHSAA rules, no practice or competition on Sundays)

Emergency Protocols

- The athletic director must be notified immediately of any issues or situations.
- If an emergency happens contact local authorities and medical services.

Curfew and Room Policies

To ensure the safety and accountability of all student-athletes during overnight trips, a curfew will be established. All student-athletes must be in their assigned rooms by the designated curfew time, which will be communicated prior to the trip.

Expectations:

- **Room Checks:** Coaches or designated staff will conduct room checks to ensure all student-athletes are present and accounted for at curfew.
- **Consequences for Non-Compliance:** If a student-athlete is found outside their room during curfew hours without permission, the following may occur:
 - A meeting with the coaching staff to discuss the situation.
 - Potential disciplinary actions, including loss of privileges or participation in current and future events.

Financial Responsibility and Participation

To foster a sense of ownership and commitment among student-athletes, a fee structure will be implemented. This ensures that everyone has "skin in the game" and is invested in the experience.

Fee Structure:

- **Trip Fee:** A fee will be charged to cover transportation, accommodations, and other related expenses. This amount will be communicated in advance.
- **Meals:** Students are responsible for their own meals during the trip, encouraging thoughtful choices and personal accountability.

School & Community Conduct, Citizenship, Theft

- Student-athletes are role models and represent school at all times
 - Theft or other infractions documented by coach or school admin will invoke due process
 - Consequences may include suspension, restitution, or removal from the team.
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Drugs, Alcohol & Tobacco

Cardinal Newman Athletics has a strict zero-tolerance policy. A violation of our policy will incur immediate suspension from competition, a review of the situation, a parent meeting, and potential expulsion from team or school.

Communication Protocol / Chain of Command

At Cardinal Newman, we believe in open, respectful communication and resolving concerns at the appropriate level. If a student-athlete or parent has a concern related to athletics, the following chain of communication should be followed:

1. First, speak directly with the coach.
Most concerns can be resolved through honest, respectful conversation.
2. If the issue remains unresolved, not simply because the outcome was not desired, but because the conversation was handled unfairly or unprofessionally, please request a meeting with the Athletic Director.
3. If further resolution is needed, a meeting with school administration may be scheduled.

It is important to follow this process to maintain trust, professionalism, and accountability within our athletic program. Skipping steps in the chain of command undermines that process and is strongly discouraged.

In order to promote healthy communication and avoid emotionally charged conversations, we ask that parents and guardians follow the 24-hour rule when it comes to addressing concerns with a coach.

Unless the situation is regarding safety or is of an immediate nature, this means waiting at least 24 hours after a game, practice, or incident before initiating a conversation with the coach. This cooling-off period helps ensure that discussions are productive, respectful, and focused on solutions, not emotions.

Uniforms and Equipment

At the beginning of each season, all necessary uniforms and equipment are distributed. Each student-athlete is responsible for the care and return of all issued goods at the end of the season. The head coach and/or designee will determine the collection times. Failure to return uniforms or equipment will result in grades/report cards being withheld and/or a financial obligation for replacement of the outstanding items.

Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) and Related School Policies

Cardinal Newman High School, as a member of the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA), adheres to FHSAA regulations governing athletic competition. Pursuant to FHSAA rules, student-athletes must, with the limited exception of permissible NIL activities, maintain amateur status in order to participate in FHSAA-regulated athletic activities. Consequently, student-athletes are prohibited from competing for monetary compensation, capitalizing on athletic fame by receiving money or gifts of a monetary nature, and/or signing a professional contract in any sport or having an agent to manage a student-athlete's athletic career. The school expects all student-athletes to strictly adhere to these conditions of athletic participation. Student-athletes are permitted to benefit from their name, image, and likeness in accordance with FHSAA rules. This includes the ability to receive compensation for endorsements, appearances, and other activities related to NIL. No employees or agents of the school, including its coaches and administrators, are authorized to involve themselves with student NIL, or in contract offers or negotiations with any agents or other third parties offering any monetary compensation to students and/or parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are specifically advised that they should seek independent professional counsel in communications and negotiations with any agents or other third parties offering compensation and/or services to students. All NIL agreements must be disclosed in writing to the school administration within seven days of signing. Student-athlete NIL activities may not conflict with any team practices, games, or other school-related activities. Student-athletes are prohibited from making any reference to any school of the Diocese of Palm Beach when engaging in any commercial activity. For example, students may not wear a team jersey or otherwise display a Diocesan school's name, mascot, or logo while engaged in any commercial activity not specifically authorized in writing by the Diocese of Palm Beach. Likewise, a student may not wear the apparel or display the logo, insignia, or identifying mark of any third party during any school-based team activity. The names, mascots, and logos of Diocese of Palm Beach schools have legal protections and their commercial unauthorized use by a student or by a parent/guardian will constitute a serious violation of school policy and may have additional legal repercussions. In addition to compliance with FHSAA rules, student-athletes

may not endorse products or services that are inconsistent with the values of Cardinal Newman High School and must at all times comport with the Conduct provision in this handbook and the policies and mission of Cardinal Newman High School and the Diocese of Palm Beach.