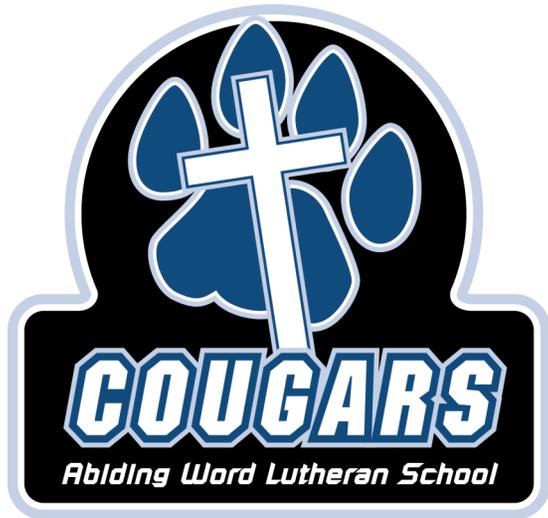


# Abiding Word Lutheran Cougars



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## Athletic Handbook

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## Philosophy

### **Mission**

Abiding Word Lutheran School exists to make disciples for the Lord's kingdom by providing a Christ-centered education that challenges and prepares students for lives of Christian service.

Abiding Word's athletic programs exist to provide students opportunities to let their light shine for their Savior, develop physical skills and mental knowledge of the sport, instill excellence, accountability and teamwork.

*“Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a Sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name.”*

Hebrews 13:15

### **Motivation**

God has blessed each Abiding Word Student and expects each student to use these gifts in a faithful manner to their fullest potential. This gives glory to God and not the individual.

*“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”*

1 Corinthians 10:31

## Goals of our Athletic Program

The Word of God is also the Word of Life and a Christian philosophy of life should govern and encompass every aspect and dimension of our school programs which certainly includes the athletic activities of our school. As such, the goals of our athletic program are:

1. To help children to recognize and appreciate in themselves and others the gifts they have received from God.
2. To develop character traits such as self-discipline, self-esteem, responsibility, accountability, leadership, teamwork, and self control under pressure, defeat, and failure, as well as proper acceptance of success and victory.
3. To develop to a greater degree the fundamental skills and knowledge of the rules appropriate to each grade level.
4. To help prepare our students for participation in advanced levels of athletics.
5. To provide a Christian witness to our community and to demonstrate by example the fruits of Christian faith in athletic competition.

*“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”*

1 Corinthians 10:31

## Expectations

### Student Athletes

All student athletes are encouraged and expected to:

1. Conduct themselves in a Christian manner both on and off the playing field.
2. Respect and follow the directions of the coach.
3. Accept all calls of the officials.
4. Play to win in a sportsmanlike manner as part of a team, and not for self glorification.
5. Give glory to God in victory and defeat.
6. Be respectful of equipment both in our school and in our opponents' schools.
7. Faithfully care for any issued uniforms.
8. Attend all practices and games. If a player is unable to attend a practice or a game, the coach should be notified as far in advance as possible.
9. Use their God-given talents to the best of their ability at all times, during both practices and games.
10. Players will maintain an academic level in keeping with your God-given abilities. Athletics is never to be used as an excuse for poor or incomplete work in school.

*“Do you not know that in a race all runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.”*

1 Corinthians 9:24-25

## Expectations

### Coaches

Coaches are representatives of Abiding Word Lutheran School and of Christ. They are approved by the school administrator and athletic director. They are informed of the goals and expectations of the Abiding Word athletic program. There is a high expectation for modeling Christian living placed upon our coaches.

Coaches will...

1. Submit forms for a background check.
2. Have knowledge of this handbook and the School handbook, and be in agreement with it.
3. Teach their players the fundamental skills, rules and strategies of the sport.
4. Encourage their players to use their God given abilities to their fullest potential. Coaches will also encourage their players by focusing on the positive and avoid over emphasizing the negative.
5. Realize that they are Christian role-models for their players.
6. Encourage prayer before all athletic events.
7. Treat each player, coach, parent, and administrator from Abiding Word, and the opposing team, and all officials with dignity and respect.
8. Make sure that all members of the team get appropriate playing time in the regular season games.
9. Be sure that the Abiding Word and opposing facilities are treated with care and respect. Coaches will make sure that the bench areas are cleaned before leaving.

## Expectations

### Parents

1. All parents/guardians should give the Lord top priority in their lives.
2. It will be the responsibility of the parents to watch, care for, and discipline their children before and after all home and away games. The child's own parent/guardian will be responsible for finding a "caregiver" when the child is not under the direct supervision of the coach.
3. Parents/Guardians together with the athlete are responsible for the transportation of the athlete to and from all games and practices.
4. Brothers/Sisters are not permitted to stay after school for practices, unless special permission is granted.
5. Parents/Guardians should provide appropriate clothing and equipment for their children.
6. Parents/Guardians will attend the Parent Meeting at the beginning of each season. If a parent/guardian is unable to attend, he/she will set up a time to meet with the coach. Athletes will not be allowed to play/cheer in a game until that meeting has occurred.
7. Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to volunteer at home games by working admissions, concessions, book, clock, and line judging.
8. It is hoped that healthy relationships are maintained by all those involved in our sports programs. Communication is the key. Any problems which do arise should be worked out in a God-pleasing way.

## Expectations

### Questions and Concerns

Both parenting and coaching are challenging, as well as rewarding.. By establishing and understanding each position we are able to accept the actions of the other, providing greater benefit to the athlete. As the student becomes involved in the sports program at AWLS, he/she will experience some very rewarding moments. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things don't go the way the player wishes. At these times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

#### Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

1. The condition of the player, both physically and mentally.
2. Ways to help the player improve.
3. Concerns about the player's behavior.
4. Level of competition.

It can be difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may have hoped. The coaches follow the policy as best they can and make judgement calls based on what they believe to be best for the players and the team. Mistakes and misunderstandings will happen throughout the course of a season. As you see from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. However, other things must be left to the discretion of the coaches.

## **Expectations**

Situations may arise that require a conference between the coach and the parent. These may include playing time, team strategy, play calling, and matters concerning other student athletes. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following guidelines should be followed to help promote a healthy resolution to the issue of concern.

1. Call or speak to the coach to set up an appointment.
2. Do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a game. These can be emotional times for both the parents and the coach and rarely help in resolving a conflict.
3. Wait 24 hours before addressing such issues. This provides both sides with the time to let emotions settle and allows for a clear perspective.

Abiding Word, in conjunction with the Athletic Department, follows a chain of command listed in the graph below. Please observe the order of this line of communication when bringing forward concerns.

### **Grievance Procedures**

1. Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Board of Education

### **Spectators**

All spectators at Abiding Word's athletic events are encouraged and expected to:

1. Represent God and the school in a Christ-like manner.
2. Welcome visiting fans, players and coaches.
3. Always encourage every participant in the game/contest.
4. Respect all calls by the referees and all decisions by the coaches.
5. Supervise their child(ren) not participating in the game/contest.
6. Keep the facilities clean, offering to help set up or take down.

### **Athletic Director**

The athletic director at Abiding Word is encouraged and expected to...

1. Lead the sport's program in a Christ-like manner, setting a God pleasing example for players, coaches, and parents to follow.
2. Coordinate the school's athletic program for all sports.
3. Supervise all coaches within the athletic program.
4. Fill vacancies in the coaching staff with candidates qualified to coach the sport in which there is a need for help.
5. Represent Abiding Word at athletic league meetings and events.
6. Perform other duties mutually agreed upon by the administration.

## **Athletic Eligibility**

As a student athlete, your first responsibility is to your academics. Therefore, the following guidelines will be used to determine a student's eligibility for a sporting event:

1. All student athletes and parents must sign an Abiding Word and HLAC Conference Ethics Code and Medical Release form before a student athlete may play in a game.
2. One "D+ or lower" on a quarterly report card will be cause to declare a student ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities until the next quarterly report card is released.
3. If a student receives a detention for any reason, they will be ineligible for the next athletic contest.
4. Each quarter's eligibility is based on the previous quarter's grades. (e.g. 2nd quarter is based on 1st quarter grades) All students entering the first quarter will be eligible unless otherwise decided by the teacher, athletic director, and school administrator.
5. If a teacher/parent/guardian feels that a student athlete is not performing to the fullest measure of the gifts and abilities given to them by God, they may request a meeting with the athletic director, teacher, parent/guardian and coach to discuss appropriate discipline concerning athletic participation.
6. A player must be in school for no less than a 1/2 day in order to participate in that day's practices or games.

## **Medical Release**

All parents must sign a medical release form giving permission for their child to participate in Abiding Word's Athletic Program. This must be completed and turned in before any participation happens. This form will be handed out at Back to School Nights and are available for download from the website.

## **Athletic Fees**

Abiding Word funds its athletic programs through fees, gate, concessions and donations. Each 5-8 grade sport has a \$50 fee per athlete, while Jr. Cougars is \$25, which includes a game day shirt. Additional funds are used to provide new uniforms, gym improvements, P.E. and athletic equipment and helps pay for certified referees.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Parents are strongly encouraged to gain their PAWS service hours throughout the various sport seasons. For each game there is a need for parents to work admissions, bookkeeping, scoreboard and concession stand. Abiding Word also hosts three tournaments throughout the year: Varsity Dig-It Tournament, JV Bounce Off Tournament and the Varsity Southern Shootout. Parents of athletes are strongly encouraged to give their time on these occasions to show their support for the program.

## Interscholastic Teams

Abiding Word offers the following interscholastic opportunities for boys and girls:

### **Fall Sports**

Co-ed Soccer*	grades 5-8
Girls' Volleyball	grades 5-8
Co-Ed Cross Country	grades 5-8
Jr. Cougar Co-ed Soccer*	grades 3-4
Jr. Cougar Volleyball	grades 3-4

*\*Girls may participate in soccer OR volleyball.*

### **Winter Sports**

Boys' Basketball	grades 5-8
Girls' Basketball	grades 5-8
Cheerleading*	grades 5-8
Jr. Cougar Co-ed Basketball	grades 3-4
Jr. Cougar Cheerleading*	grades 3-4

*\*Girls may participate in basketball AND cheerleading.*

## Jr. Cougars

Jr. Cougars is a development program for all students in grades 3-4. They will practice weekly during the correlating seasons. Each season will set up internal games or tournament situations with the exception of basketball and cheerleading. Each year in the month of February or March, schools from our WELS district meet in Dallas for a two day tournament that includes a C Team division. This tournament is a wonderful opportunity for the athletes to put into practice everything they have learned and meet students from other WELS Schools.

## Junior Varsity

1. JV team level is primarily instructional in nature and therefore winning is not a priority.
2. All team members who are currently meeting their team expectations are guaranteed an amount of playing time in non-tournament games.
3. In tournaments, the desired goal moves towards winning. Competition levels may impact amount of playing time but all team members will play.
4. A team member's attitude, especially during practice, attendance at practice, and determination are factors coaches should take into consideration when giving team members playing time.

## Varsity

1. Winning is the desired goal of each contest.
2. Competition level provided by opponent determines how much an individual plays in a given game or match. Tougher competition means we will play our better, more experience players more. Weaker competition means we have the opportunity for weaker players to develop their skills more fully.
3. Coaches are not compelled to use all team members in a given competition, but coaches will make every effort to include all team members if possible.
4. A team member's attitude, especially during practice, attendance at practice, and determination are factors coaches will take into consideration when giving team members playing time.

## Uniform Care

1. Uniforms are property of Abiding Word and are distributed to all players and participants.
2. Uniforms are to be worn for games only. Uniforms **are not** to be worn while eating.
3. Uniforms are to be hung out to dry immediately after games.
4. Uniforms should be washed as needed or after every other use.
5. Wash in cold water by hand or using a gentle cycle. Be careful of numbers cracking.
6. Line dry. **Do not put uniforms in the dryer.**
7. Return uniform within **one week** to the coach (washed, dried, and folded) after the season.
8. Athletes and parents will be responsible to pay for the replacement of any uniform returned damaged, stained or lost. Replacements will be determined by the Athletic Director and will be settled prior to the athlete playing another sport.

## Contact Information

Please feel free to contact me at anytime.

Athletic Director: Matt Lange

Phone: (507) 217-6046

Email: [matt.lange@awlcs.org](mailto:matt.lange@awlcs.org)

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## **HLAC Conference**

### **Abiding Word Lutheran School**

*School Location: 17123 Red Oak Drive Houston, Texas  
77090*

Phone: (281) 895-7048

### **Epiphany Lutheran School**

*School Location: 14423 West Road Houston, Texas  
77041*

Phone: (713) 896-1843

### **Lutheran South Academy**

*School Location: 12555 Ryewater Drive Houston, Texas  
77089*

Phone: (281) 464-8299

### **Memorial Lutheran School**

*School Location: 5800 Westheimer Road Houston,  
Texas 77057*

Phone: (713) 782-4022

### **Our Savior Lutheran School**

*School Location: 5000 West Tidwell Road Houston,  
Texas 77018*

Phone: (713) 290-8277

## **HLAC Conference**

### **Pilgrim Lutheran School**

*School Location: 8601 Chimney Rock Road Houston,  
Texas 77096*

Phone: (713) 432-7082

### **St. Mark Lutheran School**

*School Location: 1515 Hillendahl Boulevard Houston,  
Texas 77057*

Phone: (713) 468-2623

### **Salem Lutheran School**

*School Location: 22601 Lutheran Church Road  
Tomball, Texas 77377*

Phone: (281) 351-8223

### **Westlake Preparatory Lutheran Academy**

*School Location: 23300 Bellaire Boulevard Richmond,  
Texas 77406*

Phone: (281) 341-9910

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