



2019 Lutheran-Prairie Parent/Athlete Informational Handout

Lutheran-Prairie baseball has been among the most successful co-op programs in the state since it began in 2002, in large part because of the tremendous class of the players and families involved and the outstanding support it receives from both schools.

As an LP player, you represent both schools, the baseball program, and your coaches — this also applies away from school and competition sites. We have high expectations and standards for player behavior and sportsmanship.

The baseball season is relatively short. It packs a lot of games into an eight-week period. This means that practices have to be intense, and we expect players to work hard. It should also be a lot of fun — fun, after all, is the main reason you should be playing the game.

Baseball is a **team** sport. It demands that everyone work hard for the common goal of winning games. It demands that you accept your role and position on the team, and that you be flexible in finding that role. It requires that you set aside personal goals and statistics for the good of the team.

As coaches, we realize that everyone wants to play. That's good! That's what we expect, and that's what helps drive you to become a better player. Remember that there's no such thing as a "small" or "minor" role in a baseball game: Even if you enter the game only once as a courtesy runner or pinch hitter, the run you're trying to score can have a huge impact and mean a win or a loss for the team.

To be successful, you must support your teammates at all times, regardless of playing time or other circumstances. Criticism of teammates, lack of hustle, and poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated.

Goals

As a head coach, I care about two main things: How you treat others and how you approach the game of baseball. Regardless of your skill level, your basic goal should be to become a better player at the end of practice than you were the day before.

At the varsity level, our goal is to win games. At the junior varsity level, we are still trying to win games, but our main goal is developing skills and preparing players for eventual varsity play. Regardless of level, each player should approach every opportunity (every pitch, every defensive chance, every practice rep) expecting to succeed.

Player Expectations

- Players are to attend ALL team practices and games, and be on time for each. Excused absences must be approved in advance by the head coach or head JV coach. Unexcused absences will result in lost playing time; repeated unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the team.
- BUT — If you're running late, please be safe. PULL OVER and text or call Coach Wilson or Coach Gasau.
- Players are expected to attend practices and games during both schools' spring breaks. This time is vital to us, as we do the majority of team-related instruction and drills during this time.
- Athletes will treat teammates, coaches, umpires, teachers, and opponents with respect. Good sportsmanship is required at all times, regardless of opponents' actions or other situations.
- Athletes will take ownership-level pride and care of all facilities and team equipment, including city baseball fields; Prairie's fieldhouse, JAC, and soccer field; and all visiting fields.

- Players are allowed to continue practicing with their summer/travel teams (throwing/pitching requires clearance from myself or Coach Gasau), but they may not compete with another baseball team until the high school season ends. No outside practice may conflict with an LP practice or game — if you choose to play for LP, we require it be your No. 1 sports priority from March 18 until our season is complete. This includes workouts or competitions for other school or club sports (football conditioning, soccer, volleyball, etc.).
- Each player is fully responsible for knowing the game schedule, practice schedule and times, bus schedules, uniform for the day, and other requirements. Spring practice and game schedules change frequently. If in doubt, ask a captain or text/call a coach.

Player Rules/Requirements

- Use of alcohol, tobacco (including chewing tobacco) or illegal substances is strictly prohibited. Violation will result in a minimum of three games missed and may result in dismissal from team. Criminal activity is punishable by dismissal from team.
- Bullying, hazing, and harassing behavior (toward teammates or anyone else) is strictly prohibited and are grounds for immediate dismissal from the team.
- Players must attend school on the day of a practice or game to participate. If tardy to school because of an excused reason (i.e. doctor appointment, college visit, etc.), see the athletic director to be cleared.
- Posting negative comments about opponents or teammates on social media is prohibited; responding to negative posts of others is also prohibited.
- Players must be in good standing academically (following each school's specified requirements) to participate. School comes first — if eligibility becomes a chronic issue, the player needs to consider leaving the sport to concentrate fully on academics.
- Players must be registered with their school per each school's requirements and guidelines and have appropriate records completed before participating.
- Players are required to ride the team bus (when provided) to games. To ride home with parents, a clearance form must be signed after each game. Players doing this are **only** allowed to ride home with their own parents, not with friends or other families.

Varsity/JV and playing time

Lutheran-Prairie is a no-cut program. All athletes will be placed on a team. However, there are no guarantees of being placed on varsity, of playing time, or lettering. **Juniors and seniors are not guaranteed a spot on varsity.** Varsity spots must be earned.

Varsity/junior varsity assignments and playing time are determined by coaches and are based on skill/ability, effort, attitude, baseball knowledge, respect for others, service in the program, and the team's needs at each position. Evaluations will take place over the first four days of practice, with Varsity/JV assignments posted before practice on Day 5. Depending upon positional needs, some players may play games at both levels during the season.

To letter, a player must be on the varsity roster for the entire season or, if called up during the season, make a significant contribution to the varsity during the season. Any senior who plays all four years in the program will earn a letter his senior year regardless of varsity/JV assignment.

Playing time will vary based on playing ability, game situation, positional needs, and attitude/effort. Baseball's unique lineup restrictions (no open substitutions; pitch counts for pitchers) make it more challenging than other sports to divide playing time. All players will not play every game; some players will see limited roles.

Concerns or questions about playing time may be respectfully addressed by athletes by talking to coaches at an appropriate time (playing time will **not** be discussed during or immediately following games). **Coaches will not discuss playing time with parents** — questions must come from the player. Coaches will also not discuss roles of other players. Any other parent questions, concerns, or grievances may be addressed by contacting the coaching staff.

Both schools follow the 24-hour rule: Please follow protocol if requesting a meeting with a coach. At minimum, two coaches and the player will attend any such meeting.

Injuries/Trainer

Lutheran and Prairie both employ licensed athletic trainers. One of them covers all home varsity games; one is on-duty for all practices at Prairie. If you are injured, tell a coach and then seek treatment and evaluation from the trainer. Any daily treatment or prep (taping, foam rollers, stretching, ultrasound, etc.) must be done before practice starts. Ice is available at the end of practice for arms.

Athletes with suspected concussions or head injuries will be removed immediately from activity/competition per school/WIAA regulations. They must be cleared by a medical professional before resuming activity (parents do not have authority to clear a player).

Uniform

Uniform: Players are responsible for care of team-issued jerseys and pants. Keep them clean. Players may opt to buy their own pants: Any brand is OK — they must be gray with black side piping.

Players must supply: Socks (plain black, no visible logos, no stirrups); **Baseball belt** (black; adjustable/elastic); **Undershirts** (plain black long- or short-sleeve; no patterns, no visible lettering allowed (small manufacturer logo at neck OK)). **Compression sleeves** are allowed; they must be plain black with no lettering/patterns. I highly recommend tights/longjohns for cold-weather games.

Caps: The team provides caps for purchase by players. Info will be provided at the first practice.

Game requirements: Players are expected to arrive at the field or board the bus in full uniform (except for spikes), with jersey buttoned and tucked in. Caps are mandatory and always worn facing forward. Pants may be worn long or cuffed high or low, as long as it is done neatly. Pants may not extend under shoe or be hooked on cleats. Belts are mandatory.

Practice requirements: Players must wear **pants**, not shorts (baseball pants preferred (any color); sweatpants or windpants OK), a **cap** (doesn't have to be LP — can be any athletic, school, or sport manufacturer logo), and a **shirt** (short-sleeve or non-LP pullover jersey OK indoors; no sleeveless shirts). Always have outdoor gear in your bag (long sleeves/jacket/sweatshirt/hoodie). Have **dry shoes** for practice indoors at Prairie, and non-spiked shoes to wear on artificial turf. Do not wear **jewelry** at practices or games.

Equipment

Spikes: Steel recommended; preferably black or gray. Pitchers may need turf shoes, tennis shoes, or plastic spikes when pitching at Carthage, Aaron Field, or other artificial turf fields.

Bats: Aluminum or composite, must have BBCOR stamp, with a weight drop of -3 (no -5 or -7 bats allowed; no BESR-certified bats allowed). Do not bring illegal/non-conforming bats to practice or games. We strongly prefer wood bats for practice (mandatory for varsity — ask Coach Schmidt for details).

Helmet: The team supplies helmets, but many players opt to provide their own. Player-owned helmets for games must be black: No other colors, no non-LP logos, and no metallic/reflective finishes are allowed. We will provide an LP sticker for it.

Cell phones/iPods: Must be stowed in bags and may not be used at games (including during warmups) or practices. They (and headphones) may be used on the bus, but must be stowed before exiting. Exception: With coach approval, cell phones may be used at practice to record swing or pitching motion.

Hydration/food

Bring plenty of liquids to games — water is often not provided. Pack several bottles, especially in warm weather. Water and/or sports drinks are OK; no soda or energy drinks at practice or in dugout.

No food allowed in dugout/bench area other than seeds, power bars, granola bars, or similar items.

Exception: sandwiches/small meals are allowed between games if we're playing a double-header.

Parent rules/requirements

- Parents are not allowed in the dugout/bench areas at any time (other than responding to an injury).

- Parents are not allowed in areas where athletes are practicing, meeting, or warming up. All indoor practices are closed — only players, coaches, manager, and trainer are allowed.
- Once an athlete arrives at the field, they are off limits to parents: Other than cheering or a simple greeting, please do not talk to or offer coaching advice to any player. This includes approaching the bench/dugout area to offer advice or communicate with players.
- Practices will end at their designated times (7 pm unless otherwise specified). There's no need for players to call/text when practice is done. Please pick up athletes promptly at the end of practice, as a coach must remain on-site until all players have been picked up. Pick up and drop off players at Prairie's fieldhouse entrance (doors to the south of the main gym/JAC atrium entrance).
- We require players to be respectful to umpires and opponents, we require that of ourselves, and we ask that of parents as well. Please do not criticize umpires or players of either team, and be respectful of opponents and their parents/fans. Cheer as much as you want.
- Feel free to talk to or ask questions of the coaching staff. If you have a concern or grievance, we ask that you adhere to the 24-hour rule. If you wish to request a formal meeting, the player and a minimum of two coaches will also attend. Playing time will not be discussed with parents, nor will other players' skills or situations.

Important dates

3/11/19 - 3/15/19 — Pitchers and catchers practice (5:15 to 6:45 at Prairie Fieldhouse). Voluntary but **invaluable**.

3/18/19 — First official day of full-team practice (5:15 to 7:00 at Prairie Fieldhouse).

3/29/19 — First game.

* If a player misses multiple practices over spring break, it WILL affect our evaluation, and it will affect playing time upon returning.

Easter week schedule: Varsity has games Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday (4/15-4/17); JV has games 4/15 and 4/17 with practice on 4/16. Thursday, 4/18 (Maundy Thursday): optional practice, players are excused for church/family events. Friday, 4/19 (Good Friday): no practice or game. Saturday, 4/20: morning practice, any players with family/church events are excused.

Prom and Memorial Day week/weekend (Prom/playoffs/graduations): Saturday, 5/18 (Prom): No practice and no game (unless it's an emergency makeup). 5/20 (Monday following Prom): regular practice — players are expected to be at school/practice; absence results in sitting next game. 5/23 (Thursday): First regional playoff game. 5/24 (Friday): Prairie graduation, no practice. 5/25 (Saturday): Lutheran graduation, no practice. Varsity will practice the evening of either Sunday, 5/26 or Monday, 5/27, as on Tuesday 5/28 and Wednesday 5/29 regional playoffs continue.

Notifications

Spring weather causes many scheduling changes, postponements, and cancellations, often on short notice. The best way to keep up is to go to the Metro Classic conference website (www.metroclassicwi.org), select either school to see the schedule, and select the "Notify Me" button on the right (a mobile app is available in the same location). The ADs do a good job of updating game info as soon as play/no play decisions are made. If you go to the Prairie site (www.metroclassicwi.org/public/genie/449/school/9/), you'll see practice schedules as well. I update these as soon as decisions are made regarding practice locations and times.

Players will receive practice plans and other communications regularly via the team email list. Parents, give me your email address if you would like to be included on this list.

Coaching staff

Jeff Wilson, head coach (jwilson@prairieschool.com; cell: 262-498-6300)

Mark Krekling, varsity assistant (mkrekling@prairieschool.com)

Adam Schmidt, varsity assistant (schmidty2832@gmail.com)

Lee Jaramillo, varsity assistant (lee@northterra.com)

Nick Gasau, JV head coach (ngasau@racinelutheran.org)

Bill Sweetman, JV assistant (bill@bweetmanins.com)