



Parent Manual

2026

Jr Bolts Youth Football is not a partnership, joint venture, or agent of Pius X Catholic High School. Pius X Catholic High School has no administrative involvement in or oversight of Jr. Bolts Youth Football. Pius X Catholic High School is not responsible for the supervision of Jr. Bolts Youth Football practices, games, events, or activities. Any involvement of Pius X Catholic High School coaches or employees with Jr. Bolts Youth Football is in their individual capacities and not as a representative or agent of Pius X Catholic High School.

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Jr Bolts Core Values:

- Proud of our Catholic identity.
- Continue shaping the whole person through athletics as a tool to be successful in life.
- Develop the player's ability to succeed as they advance into interscholastic athletics at Pius X.
- Provide a fun and safe environment for teaching football.
- Supporting the Pius X football program, its current coaches and administration.
- Alignment with the core principles of Pius X Football (see next page)

Our Purpose:

- Get kids playing together earlier with their future high school teammates.
- Players will begin to learn the basics of the Pius X offense & defense.
- Focus on development & the fundamentals of football.
- Integration with current Pius X players & Varsity Coaches.
- Practice on the turf at Aldrich Field!
- Winning isn't everything. Our ultimate goal is that each and every player has such a great experience that they want to come back and play football next year.

Pius X Football: Core Values & Foundation

“Hence it follows that to restore all things in Christ and to lead men back to submission to God is one and the same aim.” -Pope St. Pius X

“And as we gaze upon the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces, all of us are being TRANSFORMED into that same image from glory to glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

- 2 Corinthians 3:18

*Culture of Transformation – How do I allow myself to be transformed?

*Surrender to the Process – surrender does not mean to give up, rather surrender to be transformed **by** something

Culture of Transformation

The Process:

- Embrace the Standard
- Receive & Respond
- Do the Next Right Thing

Embrace the Standard:

- How we meet
- How we train
- How we practice
- How we play

Receive & Respond:

“We love because He first loved us” – 1 John 4:19.

Everything we do in the program is a response to the GIFT of football

Do the Next Right Thing:

One day at a time, one moment at a time. What is the next right thing that is in front of me?

Player responsibility:

Not to “earn” a starting spot. Not to “prove” yourself.

You have one job: Surrender to the Process

Coach Responsibility:

Our job as coaches is to create this culture. Being a part of the Pius X Football program, you will be transformed.

Jr. Bolts Board of Directors:

Taylor Ashburn, Jr Bolts President

Michael Grindey, Vice President, Pius X Varsity Football Head Coach

Troy Martin, Treasurer

Brandon Reetz, Secretary

AJ Santos, Jr Bolts Director of Football Operations

Trevor Johnson, Pius X Athletic Director

Tim Aylward

Jim Hansen

Bill Hooks

Bill Ryan

Bob Montgomery

Jim Dowling

Joe Easley

John Determan

Larry Vrtiska

Rob Hansen

Ryan Mackling

Ashley Schueth

Player & Team Information

Equipment check-out & return

Your athlete will be provided with a Helmet, Shoulder Pads, Integrated football pant (for practice and games – these pants have the knee, thigh, hip and tailbone pads integrated), practice jersey, and game jersey.

You will need to purchase football cleats and a mouthguard for your athlete. You do not need to purchase an integrated football girdle.

Equipment check-out will be on Tuesday August 4th from 4pm to 8pm. Specific times will be scheduled for each grade level. If your time doesn't work for you, just let us know and we'll make other arrangements.

Equipment check-out will be held at Pius X in the Commons. A check for \$50 payable to "Jr Bolts" will be collected at equipment checkout. This check will not be cashed & will be returned to you at equipment check-in after the season ends. The check would only be cashed if you didn't return your equipment or if something is damaged due to negligence.

Equipment return will be scheduled for a date after the conclusion of the season. The game jersey, practice jersey and football pants must be washed & dried in order to receive your deposit check back.

Formation of teams

Our philosophy is to put athletes on a team which will result in the most enjoyable and safe experience. There are many factors to consider including, but not limited to, height, weight, skill set, prior football experience and overall team needs at each level. During the first several days of practice, our coaching staff will work hard to place your athlete on the best team for them, based on the factors listed above. Situations where a player isn't on the same team as their friends or, for example, when a player plays up a level with older kids or down a level with younger kids, can be challenging – but in the end, are opportunities for growth. We want what's best for each player, and we will do our best to put them on the right team based on our assessment of each athlete.

When there are multiple Teams (typically at the D & Rookie levels), those teams will be balanced evenly. We will not "stack" one team with the best players, as that's not a positive experience for anyone. LYF has weight restrictions and age restrictions for certain levels, which we must follow. See the LYF handbook for more information. These rules are in place with safety being the number one priority.

Roster sizes are important to ensure each player gets meaningful snaps. While we won't establish a "maximum roster size", we feel that the following is a good rule of thumb:

A Team, 25-30

B Team, 25-30

C Team, 25-28

D Team, 23-25 per team

Rookie Team, 19-22 per team

Total athletes: 159 to 182

Practice schedule

A formal and complete practice schedule for the entire season is available at www.jrbolts.com/football.

2026 brings unique challenges whereby, for this year only, the grass fields at Pius X will be unavailable due to construction staging for the school's expansion project. All Jr Bolts teams will practice at Pius X on the turf when it is available. On certain days in the pre-season, which will be noted on the schedule, we will need to move our practice to our alternative site at Lux Middle School (7800 High St). Practice days and time will be the same for all teams. Our goal is consistent practice days.

Teams can practice 14 times prior to the first game. After the first game, teams are limited to 6 hours of practice per week. The practice schedule will be as follows:

Week 1: Thurs. Aug. 6th (helmets only) & Fri. Aug. 7th (helmets & shoulder pads)

Weeks 2, 3 and 4: Monday-Thursday (full pads)

After games begin: We will practice Tuesdays & Thursdays, plus a walk-through on Saturday mornings

We will start practice once Pius X varsity has finished their practice. For now, the plan is 6:15pm to 8:15pm. We will benefit from the fact that Aldrich Field has lights, allowing us to practice at the same time all season, even when it starts getting dark outside early.

We are guests at Aldrich Field. Obviously the needs of Pius X for the field trump our needs for the field. That being said, there will be some instances where our practice schedule will need to be modified. The full schedule is available on www.jrbolts.com/football so you know what to expect each week. While we plan to practice Tuesdays and Thursdays during the week, there are some nights when there will be a Freshman or JV home game. This may result in us having to move a practice to a Wednesday or move our practice to the alternate site. We ask for your patience with any unforeseen changes to our practice schedule.

Playing Time & Attendance Expectations

Our primary goal is to develop future Pius X Thunderbolts by fostering discipline, teamwork, and a strong work ethic. While we strive to provide meaningful playing time for every athlete, it is not guaranteed beyond established LYF minimum play requirements (see below). Playing time is earned through consistent practice attendance, a positive attitude, and maximum effort. We expect all players to attend every scheduled practice. Clear and timely communication regarding absences is critical to team success.

Attendance & Communication Expectations

- All absences must be communicated through the team's designated communication platform: SportsEngine.
- Notification must come directly from a parent/guardian. Messages relayed through other players or parents will not be considered official.
- For planned absences, notification must be provided at least 24 hours in advance.
- For illness or emergencies, notification should be provided as soon as reasonably possible on the day of practice.

Excused Absences

These are instances where a player's absence is unavoidable and will generally not result in a reduction of playing time, though missed practice time may still affect a player's readiness or role in that week's game plan:

- **Illness or Injury** (if too sick for school, do not attend practice. If injured, the player is still encouraged to attend and observe practice if physically able.)
- **Family Emergencies** (funerals, serious illness, etc.)
- **Religious Obligations** (mandatory church or religious education activities)
- **Mandatory School Activities** (graded events, concerts, academic functions, back-to-school night)
- **Pre-Planned Significant Events** (e.g., weddings), provided they meet the 24-hour notification requirement. Ideally a pre-planned significant event would allow notification to the Head Coach at the start of the season.

Unexcused Absences

These absences reflect a lack of commitment to the team and can result in reduced playing time:

- No-Call/No-Show (failure to notify prior to practice start time)
- Failure to meet advance notification expectations for non-emergency absences
- General Social Outings (non-family birthday parties, movies, time with friends)

Additional Sports Participation

Jr. Bolts expects football to be the primary commitment during the season. Missing practice for another sport will be considered an unexcused absence, out of fairness to other players who are consistently showing up to practice.

If a player plans to participate in another sport during the football season:

- This must be communicated to the Head Coach prior to the start of the season
- A full schedule of conflicts must be provided in advance
- The Head Coach will work with the family to establish expectations for attendance and playing time

Failure to communicate this in advance may result in unexcused absences and reduced playing time.

Tardiness Policy

- Players are expected to arrive on time and be fully suited up by the time practice is scheduled to begin. We suggest arriving 15 minutes prior to the start time of practice
- A tardy is defined as arriving more than 10 minutes after the scheduled start time
- Three (3) unexcused tardies will equal one (1) unexcused absence

Family Vacations

While we understand family time is important, we strongly encourage scheduling vacations outside of the football season.

- Vacations communicated to the Head Coach by the time your player has been assigned to a team will be considered an excused absence
- Vacations scheduled or communicated after the season begins may be treated as unexcused absences and may impact playing time

League Minimum Play Requirements

As a member of the Lincoln Youth Football League, we follow all minimum play rules:

- A-League: 10 plays per game

- B & C-League: 12 plays per game
- D & Rookie League: 14 plays per game

Per LYF rules, *“players who attend practice regularly (excused absences are an exception) and demonstrate a proper attitude must receive the minimum number of plays.”*

Jr. Bolts Night at Aldrich Field

2026 Jr Bolts Night at Aldrich Field will be on Friday September 11th for the Pius X vs Aurora Game. Your athlete can attend the game for free if wearing their game jersey. The Jr Bolts players will be on the field during warmups, sit together at the far north end of the East/Home stadium, and be introduced at half-time.

8th Grader “Official Visit”

New in 2026 is the 8th grade “official visit”. Much like a high school football recruit visits a college for an official visit, we are offering a unique experience for any 8th graders in the city of Lincoln (Catholic or not). Each 8th grader will get into the game for free and be issued a sideline pass. The players are welcome to attend pre-game events/meetings with the team and hear the Head Coach’s message to the team before kick-off. This experience offers them an inside look at what gameday is like for a Pius X varsity football player. Players are expected to be on their best behavior during this event & to take this unique opportunity very seriously.

In-season communication (Sports Engine App)

The SportsEngine app is how we will communicate with you. This includes general messages from the commissioner as well as individual communications from a coach to his team.

End of Season Banquet

We will host an end of season banquet on Tuesday November 3rd from 6:30pm to 8:00pm in the gym at Pius X. There is no cost to attend. This event is an opportunity to connect as a Jr Bolts family one last time as the season draws to a close. We will also formally send off our 8th graders as they take the next step toward beginning their Pius X Football career.

Player & Parent Questions/Concerns

Steps for a player to follow if they have concerns

If a player has a question/concern about their role as part of the team they should approach their coach and ask to discuss their question/concern. If a player doesn't understand, or feels their questions were not answered, then a meeting can be scheduled with the parent(s), player, and coach.

We do ask if you wish to have a meeting with your child's coach that you bring your child along to the meeting. The Jr Bolts Commissioner & Director of Football Operations will be included in this meeting. We ask that you follow the "24 hour rule". Please wait 24 hours before contacting your child's coach, if you have concerns about anything related to your child's role on the team.

If you choose to communicate via email with your child's coach, you must include the Jr Bolts President (jrboltsfootball@gmail.com) on all emails.

We are all in this together, working hard to make sure your player has a positive experience. We want what's best for our players.

Obviously if your concern is related to player safety, you should contact us immediately.

Parent-player relationship, Coach-player relationship, Coach-parent relationship

Parent-Player

The sport of football presents daily experiences, circumstances, successes and failures. Away from the field, the "Parent-Player" relationship is vital to the athlete in understanding and using these experiences, circumstances, successes and failures to grow. The parents help the athlete by showing support and focusing on growth within the core values of Jr Bolts Football. The parent is also able to reinforce the importance and value of being part of a team, similar to a family or the body of Christ, trying to achieve something greater than the individual would ever be able to do on their own. By fostering a positive "Parent-Player" relationship, the parent has the opportunity to use football to grow themselves, and to strengthen the bond between them and their athlete.

Parent-Coach

Both parent and coach are dedicated to service and sacrifice to help the athlete achieve success. The "Parent-Coach" relationship is cooperative in nature using their settings to

educate. The coach focuses on the athlete's success through daily growth and improvement in understanding of the core values via the vehicle of football. This is done always with an emphasis on the importance of team success, being a sign of the individual's success. Similarly, the parent focuses on the athlete's success through daily improvement or understanding of the core values via the home setting and within the family.

The "Parent-Coach" relationship is not cooperative in nature when it is focused on less meaningful measurements of growth such as winning and losing, individual success or failure, or specific positions/roles on the team. These more superficial measurements of success can be contrary to our core values and, honestly, become barriers to our goals.

Parent-Parent

Often overlooked is the relationship from one parent to another or from the parent(s) of one athlete to the parent(s) of athlete. This relationship in many ways parallels the team dynamic that the student athletes share. The "Parent-Parent" relationship has the opportunity to be a powerful example of cooperation, service, and sacrifice that goes to the heart of the core values that are being learned and developed by the athlete. To a degree, the "Parent-Parent" relationship gives parents the opportunity to live the same experience as the athlete. It can also present the opportunity for a parent to grow within the core values deepening the relationship formed between the parent, student athlete, coach, and Lincoln Catholic School community. This relationship, if embraced, only serves to make the overall learning experience of football greater for the student athletes.

Code of Conduct for Activities at Pius X High School

Purpose:

Living our Catholic identity and showing good sportsmanship is identified by living our Catholic faith before, during, and after all activities. We want everyone to have a fun, safe, and respectful experience while supporting Pius X high school activities. By attending these events, you agree to follow these expectations:

1. Show Respect

- Respect players, coaches, referees, and other spectators at all times.
- Use kind and appropriate language—no yelling insults, teasing, or inappropriate chants.
- Listen to and follow directions from school staff and event supervisors.

2. Practice Good Sportsmanship

- Cheer *for* your team, not *against* others.
- Accept wins and losses respectfully—no booing, taunting, or negative behavior.
- Remember that the athletes are students doing their best.

3. Stay in Designated Areas

- Remain in approved seating or student sections unless given permission to move.
- Do not enter the playing area, locker rooms, or restricted zones.

- Stay with your group or supervising adult.
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4. Follow Safety Rules

- Walk at all times—no running, pushing, or roughhousing.
 - Keep aisles, stairs, and exits clear.
 - Report any problems or unsafe behavior to an adult immediately.
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5. Be Responsible

- Clean up after yourself—throw away trash and respect the facility.
 - Follow school rules regarding phones and personal items.
 - Do not bring prohibited items, or personal sports equipment (ex. Footballs, basketballs, etc).
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6. Represent Your School Well

- Remember that your behavior reflects on your school and community.
 - Be someone others can be proud of.
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Consequences

Students who do not follow this code of conduct may:

- Receive a warning
 - Be asked to sit out or move seats
 - Be removed from the event
 - Face school disciplinary action if necessary
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Final Reminder

Have fun, be respectful, and cheer loud in a positive way!

This “Jr Bolts Parents Manual” is as of 6/29/2026 and is subject to changes and modifications as we get closer to the season. The most recent version will always be available on our website: jrbolts.com/football