

St. Mary's STARS

SPORTS PROGRAM HANDBOOK

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Principal Wackenhut

Revision Log

Revision	Description	Date	Editor	Approval
0	Handbook Release	8/11/2010	Brian Salapatek	Ross Bubolz
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Welcome to St. Mary's School Athletic Program

Your decision to participate in St. Mary's School's Athletic Program will help to develop the athlete's individual sports skills as well as physical conditioning, sportsmanship, teamwork, and most importantly, the balance of academics and the participation in team athletics.

Participating in a sport at St. Mary's is a privilege, not a right.

St. Mary's Athletic Program Philosophy

Athletics is an important element of the total educational program that seeks to guide the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical development of each student-athlete. It is our desire to provide a Christian environment that instills in student-athletes participation in sportsmanship consistent with Catholic-Christian values.

We believe each student has a responsibility to develop their God given ability with the assistance of coaches who model Christ-like attitudes, behaviors, and desires for the student-athletes entrusted to their care. We recognize that God has given each student-athlete different skills and abilities. We believe it is our responsibility to provide each student-athlete the opportunity to develop through participation, competition, and lessons in sportsmanship. We **expect** each student-athlete to maximize this opportunity by consistently exhibiting **total commitment through participation and effort**. We seek to provide an athletic experience that provides a Christ-like witness to all student-athletes, spectators, and teams.

St. Mary's students will have access to several sports through the school program. These sports include: cross-country, basketball, and volleyball for girls and boys grades five through eight. As a Catholic school, this program follows the guidelines of the Diocese of Rockford and Elgin Deanery. The Sports Boosters support this program through fundraising and helping with uniforms, concessions, etc. The Athletic Director works with the Principal to administer all aspects of the Sports Program.

The students and parents have to sign a Code of Conduct which includes fair play and maintaining academic standards. As a Catholic school, our mission statement includes "academic excellence and Christian growth." Maintaining passing grades is essential. Any student with a D or F will receive a warning with a reasonable amount of time to raise the grade by the teacher and principal. If there is not sufficient effort to improve, the student will not be allowed to play sports until hem/she has a passing grade.

The student, parents, and coach will be notified if a student is ineligible for sports.

Christian growth implies the values that are inherent in good sportsmanship. These include fair play, following the guidelines, and respect for the referees by both players and spectators. Each game or session should begin with a prayer and pledge of allegiance. Making a commitment to practice and games is important while playing on a team. This includes submitting paperwork, fees, physicals, and signing up in a timely manner. All coaches are expected to comply with the rules and regulations that are in place. Sports should be a positive experience for all those involved in a Catholic school program. How the game is played is more important than winning. Christian values must be followed. The "Spirit" of the game dictates how to compete. As such, these are additional guidelines to be followed:

Athlete's Code of Conduct

During all times, the behavior of an athlete must be consistent with Catholic-Christian behavior. Students participating act as ambassadors of St. Mary's School. Accordingly they are expected to maintain the highest standards of conduct at all times. We expect our athletes to exemplify Catholic youth first, to be sports participants, second.

- ☆ Athletes will abide by this code of conduct at all times.
- ☆ Athletes will abide by the facility rules and regulations.
- ☆ Unsportsmanlike behavior, indiscreet or destructive behavior, and the use of obscene language will not be tolerated.
- ☆ Athletes will attend every practice and game scheduled by the AD, unless they are excused by their coach. Unexcused absences will result in a significant decline in game playing time. Excused absences are for illness, family emergencies, or other family obligations. They do not include obligations such as other traveling teams, outside organizations, etc. It is unfair to the coach's time and the team's development to miss practice time unnecessarily. Registering for a school sport demands a high level of individual commitment and a responsibility to his/her team and coach.
- ☆ Every effort should be made to avoid guilt by association with any code violations. If an athlete is present when conduct rules are broken, he/she must leave immediately or be assumed to have participated.
- ☆ During practice, all athletes are expected to work to their fullest capabilities at every session. They will be required to pay full attention to all instructions.
- ☆ At a game, each athlete is to conduct him/her self in an orderly manner so as not to cause embarrassment to St. Mary's School, him/her self, teammates or the coach.

Violations of the Athlete's Code of Conduct will result in a parent/guardian notified, and may result in the removal of the athlete from a practice and/or game, or a complete suspension from athletics. The length of the suspension shall be determined by the Athletic Director and Principal and shall be in keeping with the severity of the infraction.

If a student-athlete has received an In-School Suspension that student will not participate in a sport until the following school day. Students serving an after-school detention may not participate in any athletic event on that day.

Tobacco/Alcohol/Drug Policy

Abstinence from the use of tobacco products, alcohol, and/or illegal drugs is essential to the health and athletic performance of our athletes. We insist that our athletes pledge abstinence from these substances at all times.

Any athlete who is determined to have used or who is found to have possession of tobacco, alcohol and/or illegal drugs shall be subject to suspension or dismissal from the team.

Academic Eligibility

Participation in extracurricular activities is strongly encouraged. However, each student's first priority must be exemplification of Catholic ideals and academic achievement. Therefore, scholastic standing will be monitored and maintained as eligibility requirements for athletics.

Every Friday the faculty will be asked to calculate a percentage grade for all athletic participants for that grading period. The percentage will be determined in the following subject areas: religion, reading, mathematics, social studies, science, spelling and language arts.

- An **average below 70% (F) in any one** of these areas, **the athlete will not be allowed to participate in games or practices until the grade is restored to passing**. Suspension from the team will start the day after the student/parents receives notification. Once the teacher notifies the principal that the athlete is again passing, the student will be notified that they are again eligible to participate in sports and participation will then begin on the following day.

- Or an **average below 75% (D) in any two** of these areas will result in an immediate 7 day "academic watch," probationary period, in which the student must raise his or her grade to above 75% by the following Friday or the student will be suspended from athletics for one full week; Friday through Thursday. The student is not allowed to attend practices or participate in games while he/she is suspended. If the student shows improvement by the following Thursday, that student will become eligible to participate in sports. Suspensions begin on that Thursday and last one week (Thursday through Wednesday).

- All specials classes, including Spanish, will be evaluated regarding student effort and conduct. Students that hold deficient grades in these classes will need to demonstrate maximum effort to raise the grade to a satisfactory level.

Students will be notified by the Principal and a note will be sent home through the student. Parents will be notified by the Principal and Coaches will be notified by the AD.

A student who receives a failing quarterly grade is not considered to be passing the course at the start of the new quarter.

Effort will also be taken into consideration for all circumstances. Athletics is a student privilege that may be revoked due to disruptive or inappropriate conduct in the classroom.

The Principal has final decision on all disputed eligibility issues.

Attendance Requirement

Student-athletes must attend school for at least two-thirds (4.25 hours) of the school day in order to participate or compete in any sport that evening or receive approval from the principal.

Student-athletes must participate in P.E. in order to participate in athletic practice or games that evening or receive approval from the principal.

Team Eligibility

The Principal and AD will determine the number of teams at each grade level depending of the number of athletes registered for a given sport and grade level. Every effort will be made to keep all athletes at their grade level and keep rosters sizes as small as possible. However in instances where this is not possible, at the discretion of the Principal and AD, teams may be split or athletes may be moved up a grade level so as to maintain the best interest of the St. Mary's sports program and athletes.

Sports Booster Club

St. Mary's School's Athletic Program could not exist without the fundraising efforts and volunteers of the Sports Booster Club. Funds raised have enabled the Athletic Program to purchase uniforms, and equipment for their athletes as well as the gymnasium rental for practices and home games.

All parents who have children participating in the Athletic Program are automatically St. Mary's "STARS" Sports Boosters. Important issues are discussed concerning volunteering and funding of our Athletic Program at Sports Booster Club meetings. Sports Booster's Officers will then make decisions based on discussions and feedback from the General Membership Meetings.

Sports Boosters Meetings are held once a month, and the meeting date, place, time, and agenda will be posted in the Wednesday Notes prior to the meeting.

Athletic Program Funding & Volunteering

St. Mary's School's Athletic Program is funded in two ways, by registration fees and fund-raisers organized by the Sports Booster Club. The athletic registration fee is determined on a year-by-year and sport-by-sport basis and shall include a family cap limit. These fees are determined by the Principal, AD, and Sport Booster Treasurer and will be posted by the Fall Sports Registration meeting. This fee can be reduced by volunteering for a **Sports Booster Coordinator position** (see below). All fees must be paid prior to participating with the team.

St. Mary's sports program does not want to turn any child away due to lack of finances. Therefore an athletic scholarship program has been set up for those eligible student athletes. Requests for these scholarships must be submitted in writing to the Principal prior to the registration deadline for each sport.

However all families with children participating in sports are also required to volunteer at the games during that sport season. The following personal are exempt from this requirement: Athletic Director, Sports Booster Officers, and Head Coaches.

Two levels of volunteering are required; Coordinator and Game Worker.

You may buy out of your Coordinator level by paying the full registration fee; however every parent who has a child playing a sport must volunteer for our "game worker" positions.

Coordinator: One of the following (minimum of one position) : Assistant Coach, Draw Down, Drive-through Dinners, Sports Banquet, Concessions Coordinator, Scoreboard Coordinator & Basketball Scorebook Coordinator, Sport Volunteer Scheduler (i.e.: girl's volleyball, boys

basketball, girls basketball or boys volleyball), Uniform Manager and other positions at the discretion of the AD and Sports Boosters.

AND

Game Worker: volunteering during our home games: admissions/set-up, scoreboard, scorebook, gym monitor, admissions/takedown/clean up, concessions, baker, (number of times based on the number of athletes participating in that sport and the number of scheduled games).

Sports Registration

The Athletic Director will hold a registration meeting prior to each sport season (fall, winter, spring). At the sports meeting each student-athlete's family will be given their sports packet which shall contain the sports handbook, registration form, physical form, and volunteer form.

During the meeting the Principal, AD, and Sports Boosters shall talk about the current season's sports program, fee deadlines, and parent and student responsibilities. At the end of the meeting the registration form shall be submitted to the AD (payment of fees may not be required at this time).

Below is the list of sports for each season and approximate dates:

FALL:

Girls Volleyball: Girls in 4th through 8th grades are eligible.
Season: End of Aug. – Mid Nov.

Cross Country: Boys and Girls in 4th through 8th grades are eligible.
Season: End of Aug. – Mid Oct.

WINTER:

Boy's Basketball: Boy's in 4th through 8th grades are eligible
Season: Oct. – Jan.

Girls Cheerleading: Girls in 4th through 8th grades are eligible.
Season: Nov. – Feb.

Mini-Poms: Girls in K through 3rd grades are eligible.
Season: Nov. – Feb.

Girls Basketball: Girls in 4th through 8th grades are eligible (please note below)
Season: Nov. – March

SPRING:

Boy's Volleyball: Boy's in 4th through 8th grades are eligible.
Season: Feb. – April

***Note: According to the Tri-County Conference By-Laws 4th graders will only be permitted to play on a 5th grade conference level team where the school deems necessary to fill a 5th grade team.** The determination of whether or not 4th graders will be able to play basketball will be made by the Principal and AD annually prior to the season.

Exceptions to the registration deadlines will be made for new students and other circumstances. The Principal has final decision on all exceptions.

Specific dates for the sport seasons are subject to change and will be determined annually by Tri-County Conference ADs.

Before an athlete can participate on any St. Mary's School Athletic team, the registration form, student fee, and sports physical must be submitted to St. Mary's School Office.

Parents Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the parent to set a good example to the athletes and in their athletic development by adhering at all times to the following:

- ☆ Assist the student-athlete in fulfilling his/her obligation to the team, by closely following all schedules and prioritizing St. Mary's athletics over other outside activities.
- ☆ To let the coaches coach: No coaching of any kind from parents or other spectators is allowed during games or practices.
- ☆ To be a positive role model: Encouraging sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game, practice or other sporting event. Never ridicule the athletes, other participants, coaches, or referees. Never criticize the referee or coach openly or directly during or after games. (This should be in writing to the association). Be supportive, cheer and be appropriate.
- ☆ To support the program: Get involved by volunteering, being knowledgeable of the game and rooting on the athletes of the team.
- ☆ To encourage communication between the athlete and the coach. This promotes growth by helping the athlete take responsibility.
- ☆ To emphasize skill development and fundamentals: Give positive and constructional feedback from the nights contests or practices.
- ☆ To help the athlete balance academics with participation in sports. Encourage setting aside a specific time each day to do homework. Catholic values and academics are still their first priority!

St. Mary's wants your athlete to establish a constructive relationship with his/her coach. A good relationship between coach and athlete produces the best results for the athlete and the team. If a parent interferes with a coach's opinion as to how the athlete should perform a skill or train, it can cause considerable confusion for the athlete. If you have a problem or concern involving your athlete, please contact the coach immediately. If the concern is not satisfactorily addressed or resolved, the parent is to contact the Athletic Director. If the concern is still not satisfactorily resolved, the parent is to contact the Principal.

Your child's participation in St. Mary's School's Athletic Program implies responsibility. Parents must become involved through Sports Boosters and help at home games, i.e. working concessions, cleanup, admissions, or hall monitors for assigned home games/practices.

Parents are encouraged to attend games. Parents/guardians attending games are responsible for the behavior of their children at all times. Children will not be able to leave the gym without a parent. Children 6th grade or younger must be accompanied by a responsible adult during all games – home and away.

The uniforms your child wears for games are the property of St. Mary's Sports Boosters. Clean your athlete's uniform according to label directions for each game. At the end of the season, the clean uniform should be returned to the School Office. Parents may be held financially responsible for damaged, lost or stolen uniforms. **Athletes may not receive the June report cards until the uniform is turned in.**

Student-Athlete Responsibilities

- ☆ To follow the St. Mary's eligibility policy and athlete code of conduct.
- ☆ **To attend all games and practices.**
- ☆ To be punctual for all games and practices.
- ☆ To give your best effort at all times.
- ☆ Excess tardiness, missed practices and behavior problems may affect playing time.
- ☆ Loss of equipment will affect playing time.
- ☆ Disrespectful behavior, foul or negative language, temper tantrums, anger, disruptive behavior, laziness and no hustle will not be tolerated.
- ☆ 4th, 5th and 6th grade players will receive an equal amount of game time if they show up prepared and on time for games and practices. Primary emphasis will be on instruction and participation.
- ☆ 7th and 8th grade players will be expected to earn game time by showing up on time, with a good attitude at practices and games, along with working hard to improve their skill level and knowledge of the game. Primary emphasis will be on instruction, participation and competition.
- ☆ To treat coaches', officials, opposing coaches and team players with respect.
- ☆ To be gracious in victory and graceful in defeat.
- ☆ To be a good representative of St. Mary Catholic School.
- ☆ We are guests of all the facilities we use. Conduct yourselves as such before and after games and practices.
- ☆ Academics will always be your first priority. Since practices and games will occupy some of the free time you have to do homework, it is necessary for you to manage your time well.
- ☆ Athletes are also expected to have a good attitude at practices and games, along with working hard to improve their skill level and knowledge of the game, both on and off the court.
- ☆ All athletes that participate in the last game of the evening are required to help take down chairs and tables, and clean facility.

Student Rules for Attending Athletic Events

- ☆ Good sportsmanship should be demonstrated at all times.
- ☆ Students must remain in the gym. Entrance and exit should be through the gym entrance and only during time-outs or the end of games, quarters, etc.
- ☆ Students must be seated in bleachers or chairs.
- ☆ **Students must stay off the floor during time-outs, between games and at half times.** Only students participating in the athletic event are permitted to handle or play with the equipment, unless a coach gives special permission.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL COACHES

Coaches are representatives of St. Mary's Catholic School and primary role models for their student-athletes. All coaches shall abide by the following responsibilities and conduct.

- ☆ Coaches must agree to be a good example to all students in their athletic development by being a positive role model: encouraging sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators at every game, practice, or other sporting event.
- ☆ Inappropriate behavior will be reviewed by the principal and athletic director.
- ☆ Comply with all requirements in the Diocese of Rockford, Elementary School Athletic Programs, Philosophy, Goals, Rules and Regulations, and the Tri-County Conference By-Laws.
- ☆ Teach the spirit of team play.
- ☆ Bring a positive attitude to coaching.
- ☆ Build the self-confidence of each athlete.
- ☆ Teach the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship.
- ☆ Teach an appropriate and healthy spirit of competition.
- ☆ Be uncompromising in regard to their team's integrity.
- ☆ Teach the fundamentals and basic strategy and rules of the sport.
- ☆ Differences of opinion between coaches must be dealt with on a one on one basis, never in front of the athletes. Unresolved issues must be brought to the attention of the Head Coach first, Athletic Director second.
- ☆ **Email scores of conf. games to AD**
- ☆ Always bring a first aid kit, blood-borne kit and athlete registration forms (emergency numbers) to all games and practices.
- ☆ **Must be at practices/games 10/15 minutes prior to start (before any student arrives) and not leave any practices/games until all students have been picked up.**
- ☆ Keep the game and practice facility in good condition and report any damage to the AD/principal.
 - ★ Check bathrooms, hallways, locker rooms, etc. after last game.
- ☆ Maintain equipment (basketballs, volleyballs, etc.) and inform AD of any equipment needs immediately and following season.
- ☆ Follow rules of Athlete's Code of Conduct and Academic and Behavior Eligibility.
- ☆ Serve as a model of Christian behavior and sportsmanship in dealings with officials, coaches, and players of opposing teams, and St. Mary's student-athletes and parents.
- ☆ Follow and cooperate with the directions of the AD.
- ☆ In the event of an injury to a student-athlete, seek medical assistance and notify the child's parents and AD as soon as possible.
- ☆ Consult with the AD and principal regarding problems which cannot be readily resolved.
- ☆ Hold a Parent / Coach meeting at the start of each season.
- ☆ Coaches must support the philosophy that the 4th/5th and 6th grade players will receive an equal amount of game time if they show up prepared and on time for games and practices. Primary emphasis will be on instruction and participation.
- ☆ Coaches must support the philosophy that the 7th and 8th grade players will be expected to earn game time by showing up on time, with a good attitude at practices and games, along with working hard to improve their skill level and knowledge of the game. Primary emphasis will be on instruction, participation and competition. Abide by the rule that every athlete listed on roster must play and must sit.
- ☆ **Receive permission from the AD to call up a player from another level to avoid forfeiture of an event.**

Athlete Director Responsibilities

- ★ With approval from the school principal, select head coaches and assistant coaches.
- ★ Negotiate and schedule gym space for practices and games.
- ★ Organize and schedule gym time for practices and home games.
- ★ Distribute rosters, and game/practice schedules to all coaches and update as needed
- ★ Update schedules on Athletics page of school website
- ★ Submit annual budget to Booster Club and attend Booster Club Board meetings.
- ★ Conduct coaches meeting prior to each season and as needed.
- ★ Communicate with coaches regularly and keep track of wins and losses for each team.
- ★ Schedule and organize fees for all officials for games.
- ★ Schedule games and tournaments with ADs from other schools.
- ★ Assist in keeping inventory of uniforms, sport equipment, etc. and order necessary items with approval from Principal and Sports Boosters.
- ★ Attend monthly Tri-County Conference AD meetings.
- ★ Work with Sports Boosters regarding coordinating game volunteers.
- ★ Work with Sports Boosters regarding fundraisers.
- ★ Review the Sports Handbook annually with the Principal.
- ★ Help organize and schedule summer camps.
- ★ Maintain the Athletic Web Site

Facilities

Practices and home games will be held at the Sycamore Middle School or another suitable facility (Kishwaukee YMCA, Sycamore Field House, Opportunity House, etc.).

If school is canceled due to weather, all gym activities (practices and home games) are canceled as well.

A practice and home game schedule will be distributed at the beginning of the season to the facility coordinator that defines the dates, times and location of each. This schedule is subject to change throughout the course of the season.

Amendment Procedure

St. Mary's Principal and AD reserves the right to update/amend this handbook annually or as needed. Revisions shall be noted on the revision page with brief description, date, editor, and approval signature.

The final approval of all revisions must be made by the school principal.