

**ST. MARY SCHOOL**  
**BIG RAPIDS, MICHIGAN**

**ATHLETIC PROGRAM POLICY MANUAL**

**Revised 1-04**

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## **PHILOSOPHY**

The purpose of the athletic program is to complement the home, church, and school in the development of the “whole person.” Activities of the program are for the benefit of the students, suited to their age and physical growth.

The aims of the program are:

1. To foster Christian sportsmanship among teammates and other teams
2. To recognize the need of physical fitness for the wholesome growth of the individual
3. To develop a healthy interest in sports by participation
4. To allow any student who meets our program’s criteria the opportunity to play

## **POLICIES**

The St. Mary Sports Program is under the jurisdiction of the School Board, with policy being implemented and enforced by the Athletic Director. The policies are established for the benefit of all the students who participate in sports at St. Mary School. All students who have the desire to participate should be encouraged to take part in our athletic program.

St. Mary School student athletes must comply with all rules and guidelines contained in this athletic handbook, the St. Mary School Parent Handbook, and the policies of the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council. In the event of a conflict between this handbook and the GRACEAC handbook, the policies of St. Mary School shall supercede.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The following items are required to have been completed and on file with the school office before an athlete is allowed to participate in the program:

1. A yearly physical or sports examination must be completed by a physician.
2. A consent form must be completed by the parent/guardian giving permission for the student to participate in each sport.
3. Proof of insurance for medical coverage is required before participation is allowed. The name of the insurance company and the policy number are to be included on the consent form.
4. Student accident insurance is available through the school for families without other insurance coverage.

## **THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP**

1. Show respect for the opponent at all times. The opponent should be treated as a guest, greeted cordially on arriving, given the best accommodations, and accorded the tolerance, honesty, and generosity which all human beings deserve. Good sportsmanship is the Golden Rule in action.
2. Show respect for officials. The officials should be recognized as impartial arbitrators who are trained to do their job ~~and who can be expected to do it~~ to the best of their ability. Good sportsmanship implies the willingness to accept and abide by the decisions of the officials.
3. Know, understand, and appreciate the rules of the contest. A familiarity with the current rules of the game and the recognition of their necessity for a fair contest is essential.

Good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.

4. Maintain self-control at all times. A prerequisite of good sportsmanship requires one to understand his or her own bias or prejudice and the ability to prevent the desire to win from overcoming rational behavior. A proper perspective must be maintained if the potential educational values of athletic competition are to be realized. Good sportsmanship is concerned with the behavior of all involved in the game.
5. Recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of affiliation. Applause for an opponent's good performance is a demonstration of generosity and goodwill that should not be looked upon as "treason." The ability to recognize quality in performance and the willingness to acknowledge it, without regard to team membership, is one of the most highly commendable gestures of good sportsmanship.

## **LEADERSHIP ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Successful operation of elementary athletics in the Grand Rapids Diocese requires the commitment and hard work of countless adults. However, a number of people have the opportunity to play leadership roles and guide the program in the proper direction.

### **A. Principal**

1. Final responsibility for the athletic program rests with the principal. While authority for athletics may be delegated, it is essential that the principal set the proper course and closely monitor activities of the program.
2. The principal must also establish the importance of the fundamentals of good sportsmanship in the minds of the entire school family and all those associated with any of the school's activities. The quality of sportsmanship displayed at athletic contests reflects the leadership provided by the principal.
3. The principal will delegate a person to prepare an annual athletic budget.

### **B. Athletic Director**

The Athletic Director is the official representative of the school in interscholastic athletic activities. The numerous details which are essential for a smoothly functioning educational contest require the efforts of an individual dedicated to the true purpose of school athletics. The philosophy which this person holds is reflected in the policies and procedures which he/she initiates, the behavior of the coaches and players, and in the conduct of all athletic contests.

Responsibilities of the Athletic Director include:

1. Scheduling
  - a. Schedule all athletic events--home and away
  - b. Schedule referees
  - c. Work with coaches to make a practice/game schedule to be sent home to parents.
  - d. Make sure athletic events do not conflict with school or parish events.

2. Coaches
  - a. Recruit coaches for each sport
  - b. Inform coaches of policies concerning discipline, absences, and academics; and become involved as necessary in enforcing these policies.
  - c. Monitor coaches and inform them of responsibilities
  - d. Be a resource/help for coaches
3. Equipment and Facilities
  - a. Monitor sports equipment and request funds for replacements as needed.

### C. Coach

The coach bears the greatest burden of responsibility for sportsmanship. His/her influence upon the attitudes and behavior of the players and spectators is unequalled. In order for good sportsmanship to become a reality, it is essential that the coach subscribe to the values of sportsmanship and teach its principles through word and deed. For liability reasons, coaches are not to ~~give rides~~ provide transportation to students athletes. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide transportation to and from games and practices.

#### Qualifications include:

1. An ability to serve as a Christian sports-person role model consistent with the philosophy of St. Mary School
2. A desire to work with youth athletic programs
3. An adequate time to complete responsibilities
4. A knowledge of the sport (or willingness to learn)

#### Responsibilities of the coach:

1. Coaches ~~are to~~ should attempt to teach the fundamentals of the sport.
2. Coaches are to follow the Grand Rapids Diocesan Elementary School Athletic Policy and the St. Mary School Athletic Policy.
3. Support St. Mary School's Sports Eligibility Code.
4. Use the Eligibility Code Violation form to notify parents, athletic director, and principal in writing of misconduct.
5. Use the diocesan form and report in writing any personal injuries that occur.
6. Coaches are to give every player as much game time as possible. This enhances the building of skills.
7. Coaches are to allow no one to play or practice without the proper equipment.
8. Coaches are responsible for the supervision of the players, including locker room supervision after the practice session.
9. Coaches are to stay until all players have left the building and make sure equipment is put away and the Parish Center secured.
10. Report all property damage to the athletic director and principal within 24 hours of the incident.
11. If necessary, inform parents or guardians that brothers and sisters of players are not allowed to remain after school during practice times.
12. The coach should have the name and phone numbers of the players in case of emergency.
13. Prepare a practice schedule including dates, time and place. (Copies can be made and duplicated through the school office.) Practice sessions are to be coordinated through the athletic director and the school office.
14. Maintain a game and practice log for eligibility purposes.

15. At the end of the season, submit an inventory of equipment and uniforms and the needs as you determine them for another season.
16. All personnel (paid and volunteer) who have regular contact with minors will have a background check performed.

### Coach-Player Relationship

Coaches should

1. as often as possible, build up each player with positive encouragement.
2. encourage maximum effort from each player in games and practices.
3. maintain team discipline in a Christian manner.
4. be considerate of the feelings of players and parents.

## **D. Spectators**

The enthusiasm for sports among many spectators indicates that they play a vital role in the development of good sportsmanship. Their habits and reactions determine the quality of sportsmanship which reflects upon the reputation of their school.

Responsibilities and obligations:

1. Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of sportsmanship.
2. Respect, cooperate, and respond enthusiastically to cheerleaders.
3. Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is inappropriate.
4. Respect the property of the school and the authority of school officials.
5. Show respect for an injured player when he/she is removed from a contest.
6. Do not applaud errors by opponents or penalties inflicted upon them.
7. Do not heckle, jeer or distract members of the opposing team.
8. Never criticize the players, coaches, officials, or scorekeepers for the loss of a game.
9. Respect the judgment and strategy of the coach. Refrain from being a "second guesser".
10. Avoid profane language and obnoxious behavior which are contrary to good sportsmanship.

## **E. Players**

The responsibility of the players for sportsmanship is second in importance only to the coach. Because players are admired and respected, they exert a great deal of influence over the actions and behavior of the spectators. A player's actions must display a Christian attitude at all times.

Responsibilities and obligations:

1. Treat opponents with respect that is due them as fellow human beings.
2. Shake hands with opponents and wish them good luck before the contest.
3. Exercise self-control at all times, accepting decisions and abiding by them.
4. Respect the official's judgment and interpretations of the rules. Never argue or make gestures indicating a dislike for a decision.
5. Only the captain should communicate with the officials regarding the clarification of a ruling.
6. Accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion, never being boastful or bitter.
7. Congratulate the opponents in a sincere manner following either victory or defeat.

8. Cooperate with the coach and fellow players in trying to promote good sportsmanship.
9. Accept seriously the responsibility and privileges of representing your school.
10. Students are expected to be present from the first day of practice to the last athletic contest.

#### **F. Responsibilities of Parents**

Participation in sports can be a rewarding experience when parents join with the school in providing the best program for the children. It is important for parents to help in supporting their child's athletic experience in various ways by:

1. Attending games
2. Giving encouragement and moral support to coaches and players
3. Parents and athletes are expected to remain after the game until the Parish Center has been cleaned.
4. You must take your turn: helping where needed during games (concession worker, running the clock, etc.)
5. Carefully supervising your other children during the games.
6. Making arrangements so that brothers and sisters of players are not left at school during practices.
7. Picking players up promptly after practices and games.
8. Handling problems with coaches or officials in a Christian manner.
9. Participating in functions that raise money for sports activities
10. Providing the required sports physical for your child
11. Taking care of uniforms, washing them regularly, and returning them clean. Uniforms are only to be worn during games--not practices or for playing.)

#### **NUMBER AND LENGTH OF GAMES**

- Each sport will be permitted to have up to 20 games (including tournaments) per season.
- Basketball quarters will be limited to six minutes each.
- During preseason, teams will be allowed to practice up to 10 hours per week, five days per week.
- During the season, team will be allowed to practice eight hours per week, four times a week, which includes games.
- ~~Lead~~ Athletic Director, coach and principal need to set up schedule.
- Fourth and fifth grade, if we have fourth grade--three practices/games per week.

#### **PLAYER FEE**

All participants are required to pay a \$20 player fee for each sport. No student will be denied the opportunity to participate based on financial limitations.

#### **CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND GAMES**

At St. Mary School, we consistently stress the importance of attending Mass regularly. In order to participate in games, the player must attend his or her regular weekend worship service.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR STUDENTS IN SPORTS**

Students at St. Mary School, with their parent's permission, may choose to participate in the St. Mary School Sports Program, beginning in the 4th grade. (Grade levels may vary for programs sponsored through the Big Rapids Public Schools.) Only St. Mary School students may participate in the athletic program.

In order to participate, a student must maintain satisfactory conduct and effort. Teachers will evaluate the students in each area. Evaluations will take place each Friday. The following situations will be considered unsatisfactory and a violation of the eligibility code:

1. Academic Progress
  - a. A participant becomes ineligible when he/she receives a 69% or lower (F) in any one class.
  - b. The participant will receive a verbal warning if his/her cumulative grade in any class falls below 77% (C-) during the marking period. If a participant has two or more classes with a D average (76%-70%), he/she will be ineligible.
  - c. The participant remains ineligible until his/her classes each average at 77% (C-) or higher.
  - d. The ineligibility period of one week goes into effect for all contests starting the Monday immediately following the Friday when the student receives the F or two D's to the completion of all contests on the following Sunday.
2. Conduct
  - a. All students are on a Behavior Expectation Plan which consists of behavior expectations and consequences for failing to maintain proper classroom behavior. This plan was signed by the students and their parents at the beginning of the academic year.
  - b. If a sports participant reaches level four on the disciplinary chart (a phone call home), he/she shall be ineligible for the next seven days beginning with the day of the offense.
3. The principal reserves the right to bypass normal procedures in the event of a serious violation.
4. If a student is ill or has an unexcused absence from the principal, he or she may not participate in any practice or game held that same day.
5. Players must attend all games and practices unless absent from school.
  - a. Parents will be expected to notify the school and /or coach by note or phone of the reason for any absence.
  - b. An unexcused absence will result in a one-game suspension with attendance at the game required.
  - c. Unexcused absence is anything other than:
    - (1) family emergency
    - (2) medical reasons
    - (3) conflicting school event



**Note:** Choosing community/social events over school events will be considered an unexcused absence.

Students who are ineligible will not be allowed to participate in practice or represent St. Mary School in public competition. Parents and coaches will be promptly notified by the school if a student is ineligible. They will not be allowed to practice but will be required to attend practices.

### **BENCHING OF AN ATHLETE**

The coach shall bench an athlete for one game under the following circumstances:

1. Unsportsman-like conduct
2. Missing practice without a legitimate excuse
3. Missing one game without a legitimate excuse

If a student is benched for any of the above reasons, he or she is still expected to attend the game.

### **DROPPING OUT OF A SPORT**

Quitting a team in mid-season is a serious matter. It is only fair and reasonable to expect that the student and parents will consult with the coach and talk over the problems that may be occurring.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

The principal, in consultation with the Athletic Director and opposing team, will determine whether or not a game will be held if there are inclement weather conditions on the day of a game. In the event school is canceled, there will be no game.

**CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION OF ATHLETIC SPORTING EVENTS**

1. I hereby give permission for my child to engage in sports at St. Mary School.
2. I am familiar with the common hazard of sports and fully understand the dangers associated with them. I hereby release and discharge St. Mary School, its agents, employees, and officers, from all liability whatsoever for personal injuries or damage to property arising out of the sports activities on the premises at school or at any other location where games or practices are conducted or in transportation to or from contests at other locations.
3. I understand that I am responsible for all equipment issued to my child and I personally guarantee to return it at the close of the season and to make restitution for any undue damage or loss of the equipment.
4. I understand that it is my responsibility to provide medical and insurance coverage for my child in case of accidental injury. St. Mary School or any of its agents or coaches will not be responsible for medical bills incurred due to injury to my child. Our family is presently covered by the following medical policy:

Name of Company \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

5. I understand that my child will not be allowed to practice sports unless this consent form and a physical are filed in the school office.
6. I have read the Parent Athletic Handbook. My signature below indicates that I understand and support the policies and procedures included in this handbook.

**Child's Printed Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Birth Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent or Guardian Printed Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Parent or Guardian** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE OF SPORTS ELIGIBILITY CODE VIOLATION**

Name of student \_\_\_\_\_

Sport/Coach \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Class involved \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Violation      \_\_\_      Failure to complete at least 3 assignments during this academic quarter, resulting in his/her staying after school twice.

   \_\_\_      Has a combination of two D's or an E average in any subject.

Conduct Violation      \_\_\_      Has received two detentions this academic quarter.

Other serious violation \_\_\_\_\_

Students who are ineligible will not be allowed to participate in practice or represent St. Mary School in public competition.

Other/comments \_\_\_\_\_

Disciplinary action taken by school \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date/time/expectations when student may resume participation \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**ST. MARY SCHOOL CHECKLIST FOR COACHES**

Coach \_\_\_\_\_ Sport \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I want to thank you for volunteering your time and talents to coaching at St. Mary School. I want to be sure you have all the information you need to coach. Please return this checklist to me so I know you are aware of the following:

- \_\_\_ I have received and read the St. Mary School Athletic Handbook
- \_\_\_ I understand the rules related to participation, eligibility, age and grade requirements of participants, coaches and assistants.
- \_\_\_ I am aware of rules related to sports physicals and insurance for all participants
- \_\_\_ I am aware of safety measures for injuries and I've received a safety kit.
- \_\_\_ I have the names of team members and parent and/or guardian phone numbers
- \_\_\_ I am aware of the uniform availability and requirements
- \_\_\_ I am aware of player's fee
- \_\_\_ I have general information related to practices and games (when to schedule, length of practices allowed, etc.
- \_\_\_ I know I am not permitted to give student athletes rides to and from games or practices.

Are there any other questions you have, or further information I can provide to you? List below:

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This checklist must be turned into the school office before your first scheduled practice. Thank you for your cooperation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Coach

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**ST. MARY SCHOOL**  
**927 Marion Avenue**  
**Big Rapids, MI 49307**

**SCHOOL RELATED ACCIDENTS**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_M \_\_\_F Date of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Accident \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person submitting report: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of accident: \_\_\_\_\_

Cause of accident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did injury take place during school sponsored activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of injury: \_\_\_\_\_

Were the parents/guardians contacted? \_\_\_\_\_

How? \_\_\_\_\_

Names of witnesses to accident \_\_\_\_\_

Was disciplinary action indicated? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, what action was taken? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_