



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK 2024-2025

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Welcome to the athletic program at St. Mary's Catholic School. We are happy that you and your child have chosen to take advantage of the athletic program at St. Mary's. It can be an enjoyable and meaningful experience. The athletic program is dependent on adult volunteers, so it is our desire that YOU will be supportive and dedicated to our program's continued growth. Cooperation between all those involved is so very important to its success. We look forward to another exciting and rewarding year. Special thanks to our volunteer Athletic Director, Jalana Belding.

Mission

The purpose of the St. Mary's athletic program is to provide supervised athletic recreation for St. Mary's students; thereby, enhancing their spiritual, physical and social development. The athletic program promotes leadership, teamwork, attitude, discipline, academic achievement, and commitment in a Christian environment.

Athletic Director (AD)

The Athletic Director (AD) reports to the Principal. The AD and the Principal provide leadership and direction. The duties of the AD are as follows:

- Defining and administering athletic program policies and rules
- Coordinating student-athlete registration
- Selecting and assigning coaches
- Scheduling practices and games/meets
- Coordinating concessions for all home games/meets
- Communicating athletic program news and game/meet results
- Scheduling officials for the games
- Managing athletic program finances

Gym Manager (GM)

The Gym Manager (GM) reports to the Athletic Director. The duties of the GM are as follows:

- Set up chairs for the game (both benches for players and both locker rooms)
- Table for the scoreboard and scorekeeper/bookkeepers
- Set up card table and chair for admission with sign and money
- Set up concession stand (I always did this but in years past I think whoever the designated concession stand worker for the night did it) along with signs and money
- Make sure everything is put back at the end of the night (concession stand items where they need to be stored)
- Make sure balls are put up and closets locked
- Make sure all lights are shut off and doors closed
- Make sure trash is taken out and new trash bags are put in.
- Make sure money is counted and locked up.

Offered Sports

The following sports programs are provided for St. Mary's students depending on availability of coaches and facilities. Other sports may be added if there is enough interest.

- BOYS 5th 6th Competitive Basketball (4th grade may participate if coach and AD determines there is a need)
- GIRLS 5th 6th Competitive Basketball and Competitive Volleyball (4th grade may participate if coach and AD determines there is a need)
- BOYS and GIRLS 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Archery

Registration & Physicals

Parents of 4th, 5th, 6th grade students are required to register their children prior to the beginning of the sport season. Athletic program fees will be collected at registration. Current physicals are REQUIRED before a student can start a sport. Physical examinations must be conducted after May 1st of the calendar year to be considered valid for the upcoming school year. Late registration students that are new to the school or current students who decide to participate after the athletics registration period will be allowed to participate in the athletic program provided all fees are paid. However, students will not be allowed to join a team already in progress after the first game has been played or after teams have been established without the permission of the coach and the Athletic Director. These students will be expected to pay the athletic participation fee and to file the appropriate forms with the school, including, but not limited to, the physical examination form before participating in practices and games/events.

Practice

Practice days and times will vary with each team but will last no later than 9:00 pm. Our coaches are volunteers, and out of respect for their time, they should not be required to stay later than five minutes after the end of a practice to wait for a child to be picked up. As such, it is essential that parents make arrangements to drop-off and pick-up their child(ren) in a timely manner.

Games

Games and events are played during the week (after 5:00 pm) and on weekends.

Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities

Participation on a team is a commitment to the school and to classmates. Students are expected to come to practices, games, and meets. Parents are expected to be mindful of this commitment and support their son or daughter in meeting this commitment. An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities at the same time will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. Students are to be mindful of their commitment to St. Mary's teams when involved in non-St. Mary's activities. Students choosing to attend non-school related sports practices and games, such as soccer, baseball, volleyball and AAU basketball instead of attending a game or event for their St. Mary's team can be devastating when the pool of individuals St. Mary's has to choose from is limited. Students have a responsibility to do everything

they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This includes being cautious about participating in too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen and notifying coaches immediately when a conflict does arise.

Parent Meeting

Coaches and the AD will hold a meeting for the parents of all student-athletes prior to the start of the season or at the first practice to communicate the coach's expectations and other important information about the athletic program. Coaches are responsible for informing the parents about the date and time of the meeting. The parent meeting will cover: introduction of coaches, Athletic Handbook including parents' responsibilities, coaches' policies and expectations, team rosters, practice and game schedules, and uniform laundering instructions, if applicable. Coaches should pass out instructions and the schedule for parents to work admissions, concessions, score clock, and score book for all home games/events.

Cancellations Due to Inclement Weather

All athletic games and practices will be canceled anytime that St. Mary's School is closed (or dismissed early) due to inclement weather. Parents should contact the coach or school office if they are unsure of the status of a game or practice. When there is inclement weather during school breaks and weekends, the AD will work with the opposing school to determine whether or not to cancel games. Coaches should not cancel any games without first coordinating with the AD. Coaches may cancel practices without approval of the AD; however, the AD and/or the school office must also be contacted.

Student-Athlete Opportunities (Basketball and Volleyball)

Fifth and sixth grade students of St. Mary's Catholic School are eligible to participate in the athletic program. Fifth and Sixth Grade Team Sports Team sports shall be competitive. Although all students will be offered a position on the team(s) for the sports they are interested in playing, students will be placed on teams based on their level of athletic talent. This is done in the effort of furthering the student's skill while also providing our students and teams with comparable competition levels. Playing time will also be determined by athletic skill, prior and/or other outside experience in that particular sport, sportsmanship, attitude, and other factors as determined by the coach. One of the goals of 5th and 6th grade athletics is to prepare students for the competitive and rigorous atmosphere of middle school and high school sports and to make sure they have the skills and training needed to move to the next level.

Student-Athlete Opportunities (Archery)

3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students of St. Mary's Catholic School are eligible to participate in the Archery program.

Academic Eligibility

Academic Eligibility standards must also be met. Student-Athlete Academic Eligibility Standards: If a student-athlete falls below an accumulative 'C' average (75%) on a midterm progress report or report card and/or receives an 'F' in any subject on a

midterm progress report or report card, that student-athlete becomes ineligible and will be suspended from practice and games until the next progress report or report card is issued. Suspension and reinstatement begin on the day of grade distribution. Reinstatement will occur if the above grade requirements are met at the next distribution of grades. The Principal or AD will contact coaches and parents of those who are ineligible at the time of grade distribution and when reinstatement occurs. Student-athletes, who have been determined by the teachers to be working to the best of their ability, but fall below an accumulative 'C' average (75%) and/or receive an 'F' in any subject on a midterm progress report or report card, may still be eligible to play based on a conference with administrators, teachers, and parents. A student on academic probation may register for athletics in anticipation of being reinstated, and may be a spectator at games, but may not participate in practices or games until reinstated. Athletes with specific emotional, mental, or physical limitations shall be allowed to participate with approval from the Coach, AD, and Principal.

Absenteeism

Any student-athlete with an unexcused absence from school is ineligible to participate in practices or games that day. Any student-athlete with an excused absence may participate in practices or games that day, unless the student-athlete is ill.

Behavior

School Administration and teachers feel strongly that high standards of Christian behavior and citizenship are necessary to the success of the athletic program. Participation in athletics is a privilege earned by the students and not a right. The privilege carries with it honor, responsibility, and sacrifice. Just as the student-athletes, as ambassadors of St. Mary's, are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner on and off the court, so too are the coaches, parents and fans. The actions of all student-athletes, parents, coaches, and fans should reflect positively on themselves, the team, the school, and the community.

Suspensions

Coaches and/or the AD have the right to suspend a student-athlete from participation if rules are violated or conduct unbecoming a Christian is displayed and will notify parents of the suspension. The Principal has the right to suspend a student-athlete from participation for violations such as unexcused absences, destroying/defacing school property, serious or repeated behavior infractions and the like; the principal will notify coaches and parents of the suspension. Any student-athlete engaging in conduct/behavior described above will be subject to the following:

- First Offense – appropriate short suspension of at least one (1) day or a slightly longer period as determined at the discretion of the coach.
- Second Offense –one week suspension from practices and games.
- Further Offenses – a longer or permanent suspension as decided by the Principal and AD.
- Any student-athlete serving an in-school suspension on the day of a practice or game will automatically be ineligible to participate on that day.

- A student-athlete serving out of school suspension will be ineligible to participate in games or practices for the duration of the suspension. The Principal will inform the coach and the student-athlete when the student-athlete may resume participation.

Any coach, parent or fan engaging in un-Christian like and/or unsportsmanlike conduct/behavior at a practice or sporting event, shall be asked to leave the premises immediately. Should this unacceptable behavior continue thereafter, the coach, parent or fan may be barred permanently from attending future sporting events and/or practices.

Grievance Procedure

Any grievance with the St Mary's Athletic Program policies, or how they are administered, must be provided in writing to the AD prior to consideration of the Principal. If you have any problem with a coach and his/her policies, the AD asks that you first talk with the coach in a Christian way to express your concerns.

Responsibilities & Expectations Student-Athletes

Student athletes will:

- Display Christian behavior at all times during school hours, practices, games, and events sponsored by St. Mary's.
- Treat their teammates, coaches, opposing team, and officials with respect. For example, student-athletes should say thank you when officials hand them the ball, shake hands with competitors in the next lane, wait until all competitors have finished before leaving, etc.
- Take good care of gyms, restrooms, and other facilities used for practices and games and stay out of classrooms (and other areas) not associated with the athletic event.
- Commit to their team by attending all practices and games, (unless an excused absence is previously arranged with their coach). Whether or not an absence is excused or not is at the sole discretion of the coach.
- Dress presentably and in good taste at all times to present a positive image for your team and school. Hairstyles shall be consistent with school policy.
- Take good care of uniforms and equipment. Uniforms are not to be worn to non-St. Mary's events. Uniforms are to be returned to the coach or AD immediately after the last game of the season.
- Abide by the policies and rules of the Athletic Handbook.

Responsibilities & Expectations Parents

Parents of student-athletes will:

- Teach Christian values and sportsmanship through example at games and events. Inappropriate language and berating the officials will not be tolerated.
- Refrain from coaching your child(ren) from the stands. This parental "coaching" interferes with the instruction from the coach and results in confusion of the athletes.
- Treat all student-athletes, coaches, opposing teams, and officials with respect.

- Complete and sign a registration form for their student-athlete. Understand that a signature by either parent on the registration form gives permission to St. Mary's to discuss their student-athlete's academic and behavioral issues with the AD and coach(es) of the sports the student-athlete participates in.
- Attend the mandatory coaches meeting held by the coach at the beginning of the season.
- Provide on-time transportation to and from practices and games. Parents are not to leave their children unattended at a sporting event or practice. For example, a parent may not drop-off their son/daughter at a practice or event unless there is a coach or other responsible adult present who agrees to accept the responsibility for the child. In addition, parents are required to pick-up their child from practice and events within five (5) minutes of the end of the game, event, or practice. Should the parents of a student violate this policy more than three (3) times during a sport season the consequences could include either a temporary or permanent suspension of the student-athlete from that particular sport for the current school year.
- Work admissions, concessions, score clock, and score book. Parents must find a replacement if they are unable to work when scheduled. Children are not allowed to handle admissions or concessions monies. They may not help with admissions or concessions unless supervised by at least one adult.
- Help set up the St. Mary's gym for all home games and clean up after the last game of the day.
- Take good care of uniforms by following washing instructions. No alterations are to be made to the uniforms. Return uniforms to the coach after the season is over.
- Abide by the policies and rules of the Athletic Handbook.

Responsibilities & Expectations Coaches

Coaches will:

- Teach Christian values and sportsmanship through example at practices, games and events. Inappropriate language and berating the officials will not be tolerated.
- Will complete the Safe and Sacred training and pass a background check prior to beginning their season.
- Include prayer at all games and practices.
- Teach the importance of being good sports and playing fair all the time.
- Treat all student-athletes, parents, opposing coaches and teams, and officials with respect.
- Provide a safe environment for all student-athletes at practices and games. This includes having a first aid kit available at all times.
- Be responsible for the actions of their student-athletes at all practices and games.
- Be allowed to suspend a student-athlete at his/her discretion from participation in games or practices due to excessive absence, discipline, or behavioral problems. Coaches must immediately notify the AD if they suspend a student.

- Attend a mandatory coaches meeting conducted by the AD at the beginning of the season and conduct a mandatory parents meeting by the first practice.
- Collect all outstanding registration forms, physicals, and fees for their team and turn into the AD.
- Help maintain the St. Mary's gym by dry sweeping the gym floor after the last practice of the day and ensure upkeep of Parish Center rooms used as locker rooms. The coach of the last practice of the day is also responsible to ensure that the gym is locked.
- Be responsible for all equipment (e.g. balls) while in use.
- Coaches will ensure all uniforms are clean prior to returning the uniforms and equipment to the AD after the last game of the season.
- Abide by the policies and rules of the Athletic Handbook.

Coach Selection

Each team will have a designated head coach and assistant coach. St Mary's parish bulletin and the St. Mary's school newsletter may be used to solicit for new coaches. Parents may sign up for available coaching positions during registration. Should more than one individual be interested in being head coach for a particular team, then the candidates will be interviewed by the AD. The AD will assign all coaches to teams. Candidates with previous St. Mary's coaching experience will be given preference.

Team Structure

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many student-athletes as possible participate in the athletic program while at St. Mary's, the following guidelines are used to help the AD decide how to structure the teams in the best interest of the student-athletes and the athletic program.

General

- Teams will consist of student-athletes within the same grade when there is sufficient numbers of eligible players in each grade to form a team.
- Basketball and volleyball teams are structured so that each team has a manageable number of players to facilitate practices and to increase individual playing time during games.
- If, in the opinion of the coach, there are insufficient numbers to field a team, players may be asked to move up. 4th grade students may be asked to participate on the 5th grade level, and 5th on 6th. The number of 4th grade students needed will be determined by the coach and AD. In general, the most skilled student-athletes that best complement the gaining team will be permitted to move up.
- Student athletes from lower grades may also be asked to "play up" on a temporary basis when a team's roster is less than the minimum necessary to put a team on the floor for a given game due to injury, illness or family emergency.

Uniforms and Equipment

The St. Mary's mascot is the Wildkat. Uniform colors are blue and white. The athletic program provides uniforms, balls, first aid kit, and other necessary equipment for each team. Parents must provide personal items such as shoes, mouth guards, etc.

Uniform

Uniforms are not to be worn to school unless approved by the Principal for school sponsored events such as pep rallies. Uniforms are to be returned to the coach immediately after the last game of the season. Students cannot wear their uniforms and present themselves as a St. Mary's team outside of school sponsored contests. Parents will be charged for lost or damaged uniforms.

Uniform Laundering Instructions

The following laundering instructions are to be used for uniforms so that they will look good for many years.

- Wash uniform separately on a delicate cycle in cold water with mild detergent. DO NOT USE FABRIC SOFTENER.
- Do not machine wash items that have zippers or Velcro.
- Allow uniform to drip dry. Do not put uniform in the dryer.
- Do not iron the uniform as this will permanently damage it.
- No alterations are to be made to the uniforms.

If you have a problem with your uniform, report the problem to the coach. Do not try to repair it yourself.

Forms, Physicals, and Fees School Registration

Parents are required to read the St. Mary's Athletic Handbook, sign the Athletic Program Registration Form, and pay all fees associated with athletics/individual sport before a student may participate on a sports team. Copies may also be obtained from the school office and are available on the school website.

Physicals

All participants in St. Mary's athletics must have an IHSAA physical examination. A completed and signed IHSAA Physical Form must be on file with the school office before a student may participate in preconditioning, practices or games, including those held during the summer months. The form must be filed with the AD or the school office any time after May 1 for the following school year and is valid for all sports the whole year.

Athletic Program Fees

There is a Participation Fee per sport. The fee for participation in any given sport is a non-refundable per student-athlete fee. It must be paid prior to the student-athlete receiving his/her uniform and before participating in preconditioning, practices, or events for that particular sport, even if the sports preconditioning, practices or games/events occur during the summer months when school is not in session. This fee will be set by the Principal/AD prior to the beginning of each school year. The participation fee will vary depending on the sport. Checks should be made payable to St. Mary's Athletics. Scholarships may be available to those families who cannot afford the fees. Parents

should contact the Principal for information on scholarships. Should the uniform from the prior season be reused, a discounted fee will be charged. The discounted amount will be determined by the Principal or AD.

Participation Fees per Child

- Girls Volleyball (5-6) \$50.
- Girls Basketball (5-6) \$50
- Boys Basketball (5-6) \$50
- Boys and Girls Elementary and Middle School Archery (3-8) \$50

Game Admissions

Admissions to St. Mary's home games, meets, or events provide revenue to support the athletic program. Admissions include: Preschool and under Free, Adult \$3, Students \$1, Family \$7.

Concessions

In addition to all of the other responsibilities, the AD and Coaches will share the responsibility of scheduling parents to work admissions, concessions, score clock, and score book for each home game.

Expenses and Income

The AD is responsible for collecting all income and delivering the income to the school financial officer for deposit in the school general account. Athletic program expenses include, but are not limited to, officials, gym rental, equipment, uniforms, and tournaments. The AD must approve all purchases of any items in support of the athletic program. Athletic program income includes participation fees, donations specifically earmarked for athletics, admissions, concession profits, and the sale of Spirit Wear.