

**St. Charles  
School**

**Parent Athletic  
Handbook**

**Fall 2010**



## INTRODUCTION

This Parent Athletic Handbook has been prepared for the benefit of all parents and students involved in the athletic programs at St. Charles School. Please read through the contents of the book carefully with your son or daughter. Make sure that you understand the purpose, philosophy, and policies of our sports program. By working together, we hope to make your child's experience in the sports program at St. Charles a positive and enjoyable one. Aspects of the athletic program change from time to time. Many procedures or policies may change from season to season as determined by the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council (GRACEAC) or the leagues represented in the council. It is not possible to contain every aspect of every sport in a handbook such as this, but we feel this handbook will go a long way in helping every family have a greater understanding of the various aspects and complexities of running athletic programs in Catholic elementary schools.

Best wishes for a successful sports season.

Principal  
Athletic Director

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ST CHARLES ATHLETIC PROGRAM

#### Girls Sports

Volleyball Fall 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Basketball Fall 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Basketball Winter 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Co-ed Track Spring 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

#### Boys Sports

Basketball Winter 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Basketball Winter 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. The following items are required to have been completed and on file with the Athletic Director before an athlete is allowed to participate in the program.
  - a. A yearly (school year) physical or sports examination must be completed by their family doctor or any medical center.
  - b. A consent form must be completed by the parent giving permission for the student to participate in the program.
  - c. 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. Michigan Catholic Conference also provides accident insurance for each child enrolled in Catholic schools throughout the state.
  
2. St. Charles School is a member of the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council (GRACEAC). This is the governing agent of all interscholastic athletic programs participated in by the member Catholic elementary schools in the Grand Rapids area. GRACEAC is subject to all regulations which proceed from the Office of Catholic Schools of the Dioceses of Grand Rapids and to the veto of the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, respecting the responsibilities given to the superintendent by the Bishop of the Diocese of Grand Rapids.

## **St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School Philosophy/Mission Statement**

### **Philosophy**

The philosophy of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School is to assist parents in fostering total growth and development of their children by combining the Gospel message of Jesus with academic excellence.

### **Mission**

#### **St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School is dedicated to:**

- Teaching the message of Jesus.
- Building the Christian community.
- Providing a quality education.
- Participating in Catholic worship through instruction, example, and environment.
- Serving those in need.

### **Vision**

We endeavor to instruct our students as active and effective beacons in living and professing their Catholic faith.

### **Goals**

- Participate in prayer, prayer services, and liturgies.
- Plan and implement Church, community, and global services.
- Instill Christ – centered morals and values.
- Foster a desire in all students to achieve their highest potential.
- Address individual needs and different learning styles.
- Develop in each student a sense of responsibility to God, country and themselves.
- Provide a curriculum consistent with meeting the challenges of our changing world.

### **Athletic Philosophy**

The purpose of the St. Charles 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 to:

1. Recognize the need for physical fitness for the wholesome growth of the individual
2. Develop a healthy interest in sports by participation
3. Provide enjoyable recreational activities which develop Christian attitudes of sportsmanship and fair play.

The program is not intended to be the proving ground for high school, college, or professional sports. The program is developmental in its approach and should never harbor a “win at all costs” attitude.

## **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. The Pastor, as the spiritual leader and canonical power in a parish, as well as the School Commission have ultimate supervisory authority.

### **A. Principal**

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.

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.

### **B. Athletic Director**

The Athletic Director is the official representative of the school in interscholastic athletic activities. The numerous details which are essential for smoothly functioning educational contests (select and coordinate coaches, oversee student athletes, schedules, equipment, league rules and gym usage) 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 contestants. The Athletic Director is directly responsible to the Principal.

### **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.

### **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.

It is recommended that spectators:

1. Know and demonstrate the fundamentals of sportsmanship.
2. Respect, cooperate and respond enthusiastically to cheerleaders
3. Censure fellow spectators whose behavior is unbecoming
4. Respect the property of the school and the authority of the 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
11. Always remember: the players are just kids and the coaches are volunteers. They are not high school athletes, college athletes or professional players.
12. When visiting another school's gym/field, remember that you represent our school just as much as the children and coaches who are involved in the game.

### **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.

Desirable actions and behaviors for the players are to:

1. Treat opponents with respect which 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 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 privilege of representing your school.
10. Never condemn a fellow player for a mistake, never put down your teammates athletic abilities, but build up others on your team with encouragement. Play your sport as you think Christ would if He were on your team. And remember. He is on your team.
11. You represent your school. Your behavior is a reflection on the quality of our school.
12. Your faith, family and academics are the most important things in your life.

Athletics are a competitive pastime and should be treated as important but not THE most important thing in life.

## **THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SPORTSMANSHIP**

1. Show respect for the opponent at all times. The opponent should be treated as a guest, greeted cordially upon arriving, given the best accommodations and accorded to the tolerance, honesty and generosity which all human beings deserve. Good sportsmanship is the Golden Rule in action.
2. Show respect for the 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/her own bias or prejudice and the ability to prevent the desire to in 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 good will which should not be looked upon as "reason". 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.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

### **Academic Requirements**

Each student participating in athletics will be subject to eligibility. Eligibility will be based on two categories: Academic and Conduct.

Academics: If a student's cumulative grade for the quarter falls below a "C" average in ANY subject area eligibility will be invoked.

Conduct relates to behavior. If a student has been involved in a REPEATED behavior problem or a MAJOR OFFENSE (see Levels), eligibility will be invoked.

Major Offenses such as vandalism, destruction of school property, stealing, disrespect, truancy, etc... will invoke the eligibility and the student will be ineligible for a period of time determined by the school administrator.

Each teacher in grades 4 - 8 will receive a roster of students who are participating in sports that season. Teachers will check eligibility after school on Thursdays so that notification can be sent to the Principal and parents on Friday. The principal will report if a student is not allowed to participate to the Athletic Director, who will then notify coaches.

The teacher and principal may choose to wave academic eligibility requirements on an individual basis.

### **Levels of Eligibility**

Eligibility will be enforced in a progression of consequences from a period of warning to removal from the team activity. The levels are as follows.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Level. Probationary Period**

This level is considered a WARNING and the student/athlete is given ONE WEEK to show measurable improvement per season. The student does NOT miss any practice or games.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Level**

Second deficiency or behavior offense in a season and the student/athlete is NOT allowed to practice or play in any games for a one-week period

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Level**

A third deficiency or behavior offense in a season and the student/athlete will be dismissed from the team for the remainder of that sports season.

Any eligibility issue that occurs for any athlete must be immediately communicated to the Athletic Director.

## **Attendance at Practice and Games**

An integral part of any team is the relationship between players and their knowledge of each other's abilities and tendencies. Because each player and coach makes sacrifices by committing his or her time to the team, allowing individuals to miss practices is not fair. Coaches are required to keep track of the attendance of the athletes in writing should a question arise about the students attendance.

The following guidelines have been established to facilitate the individual responsibility to the team, coaching effectiveness, and team continuity. Athletes, who have unexcused absences from practice, may have their playing time affected in the next game. This could include, not starting the game, and/or being allowed to not meet the St. Charles mandated minimum playing times. Should the unexcused absences become excessive, the individual athlete may be excused from that team for the remainder of that season. This dismissal will NOT carry over into another sports season. Below are examples of what may be considered Excused & Unexcused Absences.

### **Excused Absences**

- Emergency situations
- Scheduled doctor appointments, notification to be given in advance
- Illness or death in family
- Illness of the student. If the student is absent from school due to illness for more then ½ of the day, he or she may NOT participate in practice or game play that day. If they are ill and miss school on a Friday, they will be allowed to participate in any Saturday games or practices.
- Activities directly related to St. Charles academic requirements or class functions.
- Homework/projects only if the parent has called in advance to inform the coach.
- Important family events i.e.: Baptism, First Communion, Graduation, and Vacation

### **Unexcused Absences**

- An unexcused absence is ANY extracurricular activity not allowed for in the previous list of excused absences. Unexcused absences include but are NOT limited to:
- Non School related music class, rehearsal, or performances
- Dance class, rehearsal, or performances
- Other league play i.e.: AAU, Little League, YMCA
- Any other sporting practices, games, or tournaments
- Non-family social activities
- Events or meetings within organizations such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H, etc.
- Any attendance at any practice without proper attire, combined with an unwillingness to actively participate

### **Communication of Absences**

Notification should be made in ADVANCE whenever possible. Written or verbal notification of excused absences must be communicated to the coach by the student's parents or guardian or student athlete themselves.

## **Reporting Injuries and Illness of Players**

Injuries or illnesses that are experienced by any athlete or coach are to be reported by the head coach or the coach in charge. Coaches are required to inform the parents, and the Athletic Director, in person, by email or phone of these injuries or illnesses. A report form is provided for the coach and when completed, the form will be turned into the school office within twenty-four (24) hours of the injury/illness.

Parents must be made aware of the injury so they may follow-up with a doctor or hospital visit should this be necessary. When a serious injury is incurred, the coach is to require that the student/athlete produce a written statement from a physician granting permission for the athlete to resume participation.

## **School Day Emergency Cancellations**

If school has been cancelled due to weather, sickness or other emergencies, there will be no practices or games taking place that day or evening. Should school be cancelled on a Friday due to weather or other emergencies, the Principals of the participating schools will make the decision to have the games played that Saturday or to cancel the games and have the Athletic Directors reschedule the games for another time. The Athletic Director will contact the coaches and have them call their team and let them know the status of the game.

## **Prayer Guidelines**

Our goal in the St. Charles athletic programs is to shape the individual in all areas of life: spiritual, social, intellectual and physical. To assist you in rounding out this holistic approach to coaching, it is required to hold one prayer at every practice. All coaches and team members are also required to participate in the team prayer prior to all games. Either the coach or any member of the team may lead all Prayers.

We understand that you may be uncomfortable with having to lead a prayer for your team. The main thing is to pray from your heart. Pray for the things that you want to get accomplished. Things like:

For Example:

- "Give us wisdom to learn our plays."
- That we play as a team.
- That we stay healthy during practices and game.
- Share your own thoughts.

### **Additional Requirements**

The parent must sign the "Parent/Legal Code of Conduct Agreement" form. Student athletes must have a physical examination annually. This examination must occur on or after May 15th for the subsequent school year. A "Physical Examination" form must be completed and signed by a physician, and must be on file in School Office.

An "Emergency Medical Form" must be completed by the parent or legal guardian, and be on file with the School Office and coach.

All other departmental and team eligibility requirements must be satisfied. Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations for their respective sports. Penalties will be imposed consistent with these policies. Specific policies will be on file with and approved by the Athletic Director. Parents will be informed of these rules prior to games beginning.

Athletic participation will be contingent upon adherence to the St. Charles Athletic Handbook as well as the St. Charles Student Handbooks confirmed by the St. Charles Board of Education; adherence to the handbooks will be determined by school administrators and/or coaching staff.

### **Disputes, Concerns, Grievances**

The nature of athletics tends to be competitive and can be very emotional. While constraint and common sense are always stressed, occasionally a situation occurs which requires greater study or review. When disputes, concerns or grievances arise, certain procedures should be followed to allow for quick resolution. Even in the resolution, not all parties may be perfectly pleased. But in an effort to guide the process of understanding and healing, the following procedures should be followed.

If a student or parent has a concern with a coach, a meeting with the respective coach should take place. If a resolution does not take place, the Athletic Director may become involved. If the concern still remains, the Principal may be brought into the process. Typically, the grievance procedure would stop after consulting the Principal but if the concern is of very serious nature, the School Board may be contacted following the grievance procedure outlined in the St. Charles Parent Handbook.

If a coach has a grievance involving another person (including a student, parent, fan, fellow coach, Athletic Director), the coach and the person should discuss the issue and try to come to some resolution. If it cannot be resolved, the Athletic Director may become involved. If the grievance is concerning the Athletic Director and, following a discussion with him/her, the grievance has not been resolved, the Principal may be consulted. Once again, the concern is of a very serious nature, the School Board may be contacted following the grievance procedure outlined in the St. Charles Parent Handbook.

Above all, disputes, concerns and grievances should try to be worked out initially between the parties involved. Students, parents, coaches and administration must always seek to act as Jesus would when confronted with a difficult situation.

## **Cell Phone Use**

Cell phone usage is not allowed during practice. This rule is to be observed by both the coach(s) and athlete(s).

## **Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities**

Participation in numerous extracurricular activities may result in conflict of obligations. The athletic department encourages students to have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in extracurricular activities. This is a personal choice you and your child must make together. We ask that you consider the potential conflict that may arise as you determine your child's ability to participate in various activities. However, the commitment to the St. Charles Athletic program should be considered and we strongly encourage that that activity take precedence when such conflicts should arise.

## **Financial Obligations and Equipment**

Athletes may be required to supply a portion of the equipment needed for participation. Any equipment supplied by the athlete will remain the property of the athlete. All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of issued equipment. Fees will be charged for lost equipment as well as equipment returned in poor condition, such as uniforms, as determined by the coach and/or the athletic director.

## **Injury Risk**

Athletic activities inherently place participants at risk for injury. It is the responsibility of athletes and parents to assess the potential risks involved in making the decision to participate in athletics.

## **Insurance**

All individuals participating in the St. Charles Athletic Sports program are covered under the Michigan Catholic Conference Insurance for any School events. For the information on the specific coverage amounts and guidelines please contact the School Office.

## **Policies Relating To Awards, Certificates and Trophies**

### **Certificates**

A certificate will be awarded to all participants

### **Trophies**

Individual trophies will be given if a student participates in four years (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade) in the same sport. (A book in the School Office will contain a form, Athlete Participation Form, for each student who has participated in sports and will indicate all sports played and the grades in which played).

### **Individual Awards Disallowed**

Coaches are not permitted to purchase individual awards of any kind for student athletes (even if all players on a team would receive an award).

### **Dismissal From the Team**

Any student athlete dismissed from a team for academic or disciplinary reasons shall neither be permitted to attend the Awards Ceremony nor receive a certificate or trophy.

### **School Discipline Referral**

Any student guilty of a school violation or unlawful act may be denied the privilege of participation in athletic activities for a period determined by the principal or Athletic Director. Athletes with out-of-school suspensions will not be allowed to participate in any athletic program for the duration of the suspension. Those athletes serving an in-school suspension will be required to practice but will not be permitted to participate in contests for the duration of the suspension.

### **Student Athlete Resignation Procedure**

When a student athlete intends to resign from a sport, the athlete is expected to first discuss the situation with the head coach. The coach will report any resignation to the athletic director as soon as possible.

### **Taunting**

Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators, which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic background and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs or personal matters. Examples of taunting that would lead to ejection include but are not limited to “trash talk”, physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, reference to sexual orientation, “in your face” confrontation by one player to another or standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player.

In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanship foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from the contest/day of completion and the next contest/day of completion. A

warning may be given, but is not required before ejection. Spectators may be given one warning for taunting. Offending spectators are to be removed from the contest area by the contest/game/gym administrator. All incidents of taunting are to be reported the next day to the schools principal, athletic director and League president.

### **Vacation Policy**

Should an Athlete plan on taking a vacation during an athletic season, the athlete is required to communicate the dates to the head coach as soon as possible. Vacation absences may negatively impact an athlete's position on the team; the head coach will determine penalties for absences, in consultation with the Athletic Director and Principal.

# PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT AGREEMENT

As of parent/legal guardian of a child involved in a sports program at St. Charles School, I agree to abide by and follow the rules and guidelines below.

- I will promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire to win.
- I will remember that my child plays sports for his/her enjoyment, not mine.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship through my actions, by demonstrating positive support for all players.
- I will provide support for coaches and officials working with the athletes to provide a positive experience for all.
- I will demand my athlete treat all players, coaches, officials, parents and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex or ability.
- I will treat all players, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators with dignity and in language, attitude, behavior and mannerisms.
- I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my athlete or the safety of others.
- I will respect the property and equipment used at any sports facility, both home and away.
- I will volunteer to work concession stand or other needs during my child's current sport season.
- I will maintain and clean the issued uniforms properly.
- I will return uniforms to either the coach on a timely basis (coaches will give you a date).
- I will reimburse for lost or damaged uniforms due to neglect.

I understand that by signing this document I am agreeing to support and promote this Parent/Legal Guardian Code of Conduct Agreement and I have read the St. Charles School Parent Athletic Handbook. Further, my failure to comply with this Agreement or my participation in any of the defined will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from St. Charles School Sports.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name (Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name (Parent)