



St. Mary's Athletic Policy

Athletic Goals and Program Philosophy

The goal of the SMS Athletics is to provide opportunities for student-athletes to excel in teamwork, team spirit, sportsmanship, self-discipline, acceptable personal and social behavior, and character. Members of teams and organizations must always serve as exemplars of high moral character and must demonstrate appropriate academic commitment, which is expected of all students.

Participation in athletics at SMS is a privilege, not a right. In addition to the rules established by SMS, each coach may have rules and expectations for the members of the team, which shall be distributed to all players and parents at the beginning of the season. The athletic program is intended to develop leadership skills, a sense of responsibility and accountability, and sportsmanlike attitudes of the student population.

Athletics is an extension for teaching growth of spirit, mind, and body. Catholic schools begin and end with the teachings of Jesus Christ – the Gospel mission – the teaching of the Good News. As such, Catholic schools teach dignity and respect for each person, fairness, the value of human life, and the development of the full human potential. Catholic schools teach that God has given us each unique gifts and we are obligated to develop our talents for our own good and to the benefit of others. Our Catholic teachings include the notion that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ who must live and work in harmony. We promote providing service to others, promoting the good of the community, achieving excellence in all human endeavors, and fostering the unique talents of each individual to reach his or her potential. The daily experiences provided by athletics and the desires to excel are consistent with living and promoting the Gospel values.

Coach's Pledge

As a coach, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I know that the principles of good sportsmanship are integrity, fairness, and respect. While teaching the skills of the game, I must also teach student athletes how to win and lose graciously, and that sport is meant to be educational and fun.

Student-Athlete's Pledge

As a student-athlete, I am a role model. I understand the spirit of fair play while playing hard. I will refrain from engaging in all types of disrespectful behavior, including inappropriate language, taunting, and unnecessary physical contact. I know the behavior expectations of my school, and hereby accept the responsibility and privilege of representing this school and community as a student-athlete.

Parent's Pledge

As a parent, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I will remember that school athletics is an extension of the classroom, offering learning experiences for the students. I must show respect for all

players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. I understand the spirit of fair play and the good sportsmanship expected by our school. I hereby accept my responsibility to be a model of good sportsmanship that comes with being the parent of a student-athlete.

Academic Eligibility

- *C or Better!*
- We will work with you so we can keep you moving forward with academics and continue to be able to play your sport, but communication with coaches and teachers is the key!
- If students fall into ineligibility, students/teachers will need to come up with an action plan to stay on track as we are STUDENTS first, athletes second.

Why We Play

At St. Mary's School, while there is always a goal to win, at the younger levels opportunities for each participant to participate and develop skills are equally, if not more, important. We will play to be competitive, ***we do not plan for "equal" playing time***. However, our goal is to get everyone on the court during a game as much as possible. Attendance, attitude, determination, and practice is the only way we can all succeed together as teammates.

Athletics can help meet physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs. Athletics provides:

- 1) An opportunity to belong to a group
- 2) Learning how to win and learning how to accept loss, improve, and move on
- 3) Physical exercise
- 4) Opportunities to express feelings
- 5) Opportunities for success and self-improvement
- 6) Experiences with peers in a social setting
- 7) A time every day to be involved in a fun activity

Communications/Expectations Coaches will expect FROM the Athlete and Parents:

- Notification of any schedule conflicts that may occur, well in advance of the season (vacations, etc.)
- Special concerns regarding the athlete (medications, health concerns, etc.)
- Support for the St. Mary's School rules of conduct and all team rules
- Communication of any concern to the coach or coaching staff, ideally by the student athlete
- Support for all team members and the coaching staff
- Positive support at games for student athlete, their teammates, the coaching staff, and officials
- Exhibition of good sportsmanship and appropriate language by the athlete and parents at games and/or practices
- Great work ethic at practices and in games

Player and Coach Conferences

All coaches will have an open-door policy for conferences with players. Players need to have confidence that their concerns will be heard and addressed with respect and confidentiality in a timely

manner, and that no punitive actions will be taken against players as a result of bringing up a concern/problem.

Parent and Coach Discussions and Conferences

It is very difficult to accept not playing as much as you or your student had hoped. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe to be best for all student athletes involved while following St. Mary's athletic philosophy .

***Parent/Coaches Conferences are asked to wait **24 HOURS** following a competition to initiate a discussion in order to give all parties a chance to reflect.

The following topics are appropriate for discussion and can and should be discussed with your child's coach, but only **AFTER** your child has talked with the coach individually:

- Playing Time
- Ways to help your child improve his/her skills

Parent/Coach/Player Conferences

If a parent /coach conference is scheduled (by appointment), the following guidelines will be followed and the meeting will follow the "Procedure for Handling Athletic Concerns and Issues" outlined below:

- The coach will meet with the parent/parents or guardians of one player at a time.
 - The coach is not expected to meet with larger groups.
 - Although not mandatory, **we highly recommend** that the student be present for the parent/coach conference. Bringing all parties to the same table can effectively bring important issues to light.
-

Procedure for Handling Athletic Concerns and Issues

This procedure has been developed for the purposes of establishing and maintaining the lines of communication between the school, parents/guardians, and students and for the resolution of concerns related to the athletic programs. This procedure is a means by which concerns about the St. Mary's School Athletic Program can be resolved. In order to maintain a positive atmosphere and assure that the proper channels of communication will be followed, a procedure has been developed for the use of the athlete, parent, coach/coaches, and administrators.

All participants will adhere to the guidelines listed below. The hope is that the majority of concerns will be resolved in Step 1.

Step 1

If a student and/or parent has any concern about an athletic program, decision, and/or coach, they should:

1. Encourage their athlete to speak with their coach in regard to the issue/matter. We will not go further until coaches have heard from/spoke with the athlete to ensure that athletes are taking ownership in the process as well.
2. Schedule a meeting to speak personally with the coach/coaches regarding the incident, decision, or action that is under question at a time convenient to both parties (preferably within one week) with the intent to solve the problem. **This will not be done immediately after a contest**. If the problem involves an assistant coach, the head coach of that sport will be involved in the meeting. Parents and student are to address themselves to problems/concerns related to **themselves only**. Problems/Concerns related to other players **WILL NOT** be discussed.

Step 2

If either party has not been satisfied by the proposed resolution of the problem during Step 1, they should request a continuation of the procedure:

1. The student/parent and coach will arrange to meet all together with the *Athletic Director* to discuss the concern with the intent to resolve the concern. If the concern involves an assistant coach, the head coach of that sport should be involved in the meeting. Parents and student are to address themselves to concerns related to **themselves only**. Problems/Concerns related to other players **WILL NOT** be discussed.
2. The Athletic Director is responsible for completing a written summary of the conference, which will include any resolutions/decisions reached in the conference. The Athletic Director will provide a copy of the summary to all participants in the conference and will forward a copy of the summary to the Principal.

Step 3

If the parent/student still is not satisfied by the meeting in Step 2, they should request a continuation of the process with the Principal, who will make the final determination:

1. The student/parent should make an appointment within one week to meet with the Principal to discuss the concern/problem with him/her with the intent to resolve any unresolved problems.
2. Parents and student are to address themselves to problems/concerns related to themselves only. Problems/Concerns related to other players **WILL NOT** be discussed.

Once you have read through the Athletic Policy, Please tear off at the line above & SIGN/RETURN TO KELCI HALVORSON BY NOVEMBER 12th!

Athlete Name _____

Athlete Signature _____

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____