

Guidelines

For

Interscholastic Athletics

for the

Catholic Elementary Schools

in the

Diocese of St. Petersburg

Revised and approved
December 2008

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Mission Statement

We, the coaches of the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of St. Petersburg are ambassadors of the schools we represent.

We will constantly strive to instruct our athletes with competence and compassion. We will nurture their spirits with respect, dignity and purpose. We will instill in them the doctrine of our Catholic faith, which we believe is of the utmost importance to the formation of their characters. We will promote the development of fundamental skills and good sportsmanship.

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist and encourage coaches and principals to remain actively involved in providing their schools with quality athletic programs that provide strong, community-centered communication between principals, coaches, athletes and parents.

Introduction

In order to ensure a safe, educationally sound and worthwhile athletic program, all schools must adhere to the Diocese of St. Petersburg policies and guidelines for employees and volunteers.

Each coach or assistant coach, whether paid or volunteer, may not begin practices or games until the following items have been completed and approved:

- a. A completed school Volunteer Coach Application
- b. Proof of Diocesan approved level II background screen
- c. Completion of Ethics for Coaches workshop
 - o signed *Ethics for Coaches and Athletic Directors Statement of Compliance* on file in the school office
- d. Completion of Diocesan sponsored *Safe Environment Training*
 - o signed Statement of Compliance to Code of Conduct on file in the school office
 - o signed Certificate of Participation in Safe Environment Training on file in the school office
- e. Completion of Diocesan sponsored *Policy on Harassment in Non-employment Situations* training
 - o signed Certificate of Participation in *Policy on Harassment in Non-employment Situations Training* on file in the school office
- f. Recommendation by Athletic Director with approval from Principal

I. It is understood that all coaches must be skilled in the rules, regulations and strategies of the particular sport coached. They must further understand that the standard of care and supervision for students during practice and scheduled play is the responsibility of the coach.

II. It has been recommended by the Schools and Centers' Advisory Council that the principals of each regional cluster establish and oversee an **Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee** to facilitate and direct the schools' interscholastic athletic programs for that region.

III. The following sports shall be covered by these guidelines for both junior varsity and varsity teams:

1. Boys' Basketball
2. Girls' Basketball
3. Boys' Track
4. Girls' Track
5. Boys' Volleyball
6. Girls' Volleyball
7. Boys' Softball
8. Girls' Softball
9. Boys' Baseball
10. Cheerleading
11. Girls' Soccer
12. Boys' Soccer
13. Tennis
14. Boys' Flag Football
15. Girls' Flag Football
16. Golf

* Also included is any sport that may be endorsed by the school in the future.

The interscholastic recommended guidelines for all the above mentioned athletics shall be specific to the sport.

- IV. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
- V. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
- VI. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
- VII. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's

Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.

VIII. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.

IX. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

X. All students participating in athletics must have a sports physical and provide the results utilizing the Office of Catholic Schools form.

Basketball Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and the scheduling of games belongs to the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service, which will provide the opportunity for full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches, and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws, and the rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All games must begin with a prayer with the participation of all coaches and players from each school.
5. A team may have a maximum of 8 hours of contact time per week, including game time. (Contact time includes practice and game time. Game time is counted as 1 hour).
6. Teams are limited to only one league per season. Teams may, however, schedule non-league games and scrimmages provided it is within their 8 hours of contact time.
7. Varsity teams may schedule 20 games per season, including league games, scrimmages and non league games.
8. Junior Varsity teams may schedule 12 games per season exclusive of tournaments.
9. Junior Varsity and Varsity teams may participate in 2 tournaments per season.

10. No games or practices will be scheduled on Sundays. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
11. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
12. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
13. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's *Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee* for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
14. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
15. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

Cheerleading Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and scheduling belong with the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service, which will provide the opportunity for full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.(see below **
***)
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws and rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All cheerleading events must begin with a prayer with the participation of the coaches and players of each school.
5. A team may have a maximum of 8 hours of contact time per week, including game time. (Contact time includes practices and game time. game time is counted as 1 hour).
6. Teams are limited to participating in only one league per season.
7. No cheerleading squad shall schedule more than 15 games per season. (Cheerleaders may in addition participate in no more than 3 competitions per season).
8. Uniforms must have prior approval from the principal. Whether cheerleaders are stationary or performing, skirts must be appropriately modest with no slits, tops should not expose bare midriffs or backs.

9. Dance moves, words and routines should be age appropriate and appropriately representative of our Catholic School values.
10. There must be only 12 cheerleaders **on the floor at any time (whether during half time and time outs)**.
11. Students in grades 5 and 6 may participate in Junior Varsity cheerleading, and students in grades 7 and 8 may participate in Varsity cheerleading.
12. Cheerleading is classified as an athletic activity and as such is subject to the rules and regulations followed by every other sport. Where a student chooses to play a competitive sport and participate in cheerleading, close communication should be maintained between teachers, parents and coaches to assure that the student is fulfilling his/her commitment to both activities, as well as his/her academic and family responsibilities.
13. During routines, pyramids may consist of single or double stunts. Every stunt over half a body length high requires a spotter.
14. Shoulder sits require a spotter and there will be no flips off of any stunts.
15. Half-time routines are limited to 2 minutes and 45 seconds, a total of 3 minutes on the floor. **This includes entrance time and exit time.**
16. When a ball is in play, cheerleaders must cheer from their seats and remain sitting until play ceases.
17. Cheerleaders must not interfere with a player during the shooting of a free throw during basketball games. Behavioral and attitudinal courtesies must be maintained during any portion of any sporting event.

18. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
19. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
20. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
21. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's *Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee* for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
22. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
23. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

** Cheerleading coaches must attend an organizational and training meeting at the beginning of the school year. Every attempt should be made by the *regional cluster Interscholastic Athletics Steering Committee* to provide a training clinic for all cheerleading coaches.

*** The Hillsborough Elementary Cluster principals have unanimously decided that the Hillsborough Catholic elementary schools will not sponsor a cheerleading program until further notice.

(Effective August 2003)

Flag Football Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and the scheduling of games belongs to the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service, which will provide the opportunity for full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches, and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws and the rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All games must begin with a prayer with the participation of all coaches and players from each school.
5. A team may have a maximum of 8 hours of contact time per week, including game time. (Contact time includes practice and game time. Game time is counted as 1 hour.)
6. Teams are limited to only one league per season. Teams may, however, schedule non-league games and scrimmages provided it is within their 8 hours of contact time.
7. Varsity teams may schedule 15 games per season, including league games, scrimmages and non-league games.
8. Teams may participate in 2 tournaments per season.
9. No games or practices will be scheduled on Sundays.

10. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
11. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades, 6, 7, and 8 only.
12. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and junior varsity team in the same part in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
13. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
14. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
15. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

(Approved, November 2005)

Golf Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and scheduling of games belongs to the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service, which will provide the opportunity for full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches, and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws, and rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All games should begin with prayer with the participation of all coaches and players of each school.
5. A team may have 8 hours of contact time per week, including game time. (Contact time includes practice and game time. Game time is counted as 1 hour).
6. Teams are limited to only one league per season. Teams may however schedule non-league games and scrimmages provided it is within their 8 hours of contact time.
7. Teams may schedule 15 games per season. Scrimmages and non-league games are permitted as long as they are within the 8 hours of contact time per week.
8. Teams may participate in a maximum of 2 tournaments per season.
9. No games or practices shall be scheduled on Sundays.

10. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
11. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
12. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
13. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's *Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee* for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
14. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
15. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

Soccer Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and the scheduling of games belongs with the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service which will provide the opportunity for the full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws, and rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All games shall begin with a prayer with the participation of the coaches and players from both teams.
5. A team may have a maximum of 8 hours of contact time per week including game time. (Contact time includes practice and game time. Game time is counted as 1 hour).
6. Teams are limited to only one league per season. Teams may however schedule non-league games and scrimmages provided it is within their 8 hours of contact time.
7. Soccer teams may schedule 15 games per season, exclusive of tournaments but inclusive of non-league games and scrimmages.
8. Teams may participate in a maximum of 2 tournaments per season.
9. No games or practices shall be scheduled on Sundays.

10. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
11. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
12. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
13. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's *Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee* for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
14. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
15. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

Softball & Baseball Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and the scheduling of games belongs with the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service which will provide the opportunity for full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws and rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All games must begin with a prayer with the participation of all coaches and players from each school.
5. A team may have a maximum of 8 hours of contact time per week, including game time. (Contact time includes practice and game time. Game time is counted as 1 hour).
6. Teams are limited to participation in only one league per season. Teams may however schedule non-league games and scrimmages provided it is within their 8 hours of contact time.
7. Teams may schedule 15 games per season, exclusive of tournament games but inclusive of non-league games and scrimmages.
8. Teams may participate in 2 tournaments per season.

9. No games or practices shall be scheduled on Sundays.
10. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
11. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
12. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
13. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's *Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee* for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
14. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
15. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

Tennis Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and scheduling of games belongs to the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service, which will provide the opportunity for full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches, and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws, and rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All games should begin with prayer with the participation of all coaches and players of each school.
5. A team may have 8 hours of contact time per week, including game time. (Contact time includes practice and game time. Game time is counted as 1 hour).
6. Teams are limited to only one league per season. Teams may however schedule non-league games and scrimmages provided it is within their 8 hours of contact time.
7. Teams may schedule 15 games per season. Scrimmages and non-league games are permitted as long as they are within the 8 hours of contact time per week.
8. Teams may participate in a maximum of 2 tournaments per season.

9. No games or practices shall be scheduled on Sundays.
10. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
11. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
12. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
13. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's *Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee* for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
14. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
15. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

Track and Field Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and the scheduling of games belongs with the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service which will provide the opportunity for full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws, and rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All meets must begin with a prayer said with the participation of all coaches and players from each school.
5. A team may have 8 hours of contact time per week, including meets And practices.
6. Teams are limited to only one league per season. Teams may however schedule non-league meets provided it is within their 8 hours of contact time.
7. Teams shall be allowed to participate in 4 meets per season.
8. Every attempt must be made to schedule track meets during the week or on a Saturday. Meets shall be scheduled on Sundays only when it is impossible to reserve a safe and appropriate site.
9. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.

10. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
11. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
12. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's *Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee* for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
13. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
14. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.

Volleyball Regulations

Specific Regulations:

1. The principal is ultimately responsible for the selection and supervision of coaches. The responsibility for student participation and scheduling of games belongs to the principal.
2. All coaches must abide by the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church. All coaches must participate in an in-service, which will provide the opportunity for full understanding of the Diocesan Code of Ethics for Coaches, and the Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics.
3. All participating schools must abide by each individual league's by-laws, and rules of any other sanctioning bodies.
4. All games should begin with prayer with the participation of all coaches and players of each school.
5. A team may have 8 hours of contact time per week, including game time. (Contact time includes practice and game time. Game time is counted as 1 hour).
6. Teams are limited to only one league per season. Teams may however schedule non-league games and scrimmages provided it is within their 8 hours of contact time.
7. Teams may schedule 15 games per season. Scrimmages and non-league games are permitted as long as they are within the 8 hours of contact time per week.
8. Teams may participate in a maximum of 3 tournaments per season.
9. No games or practices shall be scheduled on Sundays.

10. Participants on a Junior Varsity (JV) team will be students in grades 5 and 6 only.
11. Participants on a varsity team will be students in grades 6, 7, and 8 only.
12. A 6th grader may not play on a varsity and a junior varsity team in the same sport in the same season. In addition, once a player has been "moved up" to a varsity team, he/ she may not be "moved back down" to the Junior Varsity team during that same season.
13. When additional players are absolutely needed for a school to "field" a team, a petition must be filed with the regional cluster's *Interscholastic Athletic Steering Committee* for consideration and written permission to play a 4th grader on a junior varsity team or a 5th grader on a varsity team.
14. Designated girls' athletic teams shall consist of female participants.
15. Designated boys' athletic teams shall consist of male participants.



DIOCESE OF ST. PETERBURG

ETHICS FOR COACHES AND ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The Catholic School is unique because of its total commitment to the three-fold purpose of Christian education: message, community and service. It creates an atmosphere where Catholic faith can be integrated with life and learning. All those involved in a Catholic school- parents, pastors, faculty and staff, administrators and students - must strive to make it a community of faith which indeed is living, conscious, and active.

As the Athletic Director or Coach of athletic programs at _____ Catholic School, I, _____, attest that I have read, understand, and will abide by the guidelines and regulations of the *Diocesan Ethics for Coaches*, and as appropriate, *the FHSAA standards*, or, *The Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics: Elementary and Middle Catholic Schools*.

I also understand that I must participate in training, at the first available offering, which will reinforce my understanding and the implementation of *Ethics for Coaches* and *The Diocesan Guidelines for Interscholastic Athletics: Elementary and Middle Catholic Schools*. I further agree to complete the Diocese of St. Petersburg *Safe Environment Training* and participate in a successful level II background screen prior to engagement with students.

Signature

Title

Principal/Director Signature

Date