



ST. MONICA CATHOLIC SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK
2016-2017

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed for coaches, student athletes, and parents to help define the role of educational athletics at St. Monica Catholic School (SMCS). These standards were adapted from Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools where a committee of teachers, coaches, and the Athletic Director initially developed the standards presented in this handbook. The SMCS handbook will be reviewed by our Local Advisory Council each year and revisions and amendments made as needed.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The athletic program at St. Monica Catholic School is a vital part of the total educational program and an integral part of the extracurricular activities. Athletics affirm, promote, and model Catholic values and engage student athletes fully in mind, body and spirit. Through athletic participation, we strive to help our students accomplish the following goals:

Participation in athletics offers unique lessons and experiences that prepare students for life in the community, workplace, and family. Students will participate in athletics with the long-term goal of preparation for a life of faith and service to others.

God has bestowed skills, abilities, and talents upon each of us. Students will develop known and unknown talents that promote confidence, self-discipline, leadership, and an appreciation of physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices.

The development of well-rounded, faith-centered individuals, as well as the safety and welfare of our student-athletes, is the primary focus of the athletic programs at St. Monica Catholic School. These programs complement the academic and spirituality focus of the school and strive to assist students in reaching their full potential as witnesses to Christ's teachings.

TO THE PARENTS

Your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and as parents. You have expressed your willingness to permit him/her to compete. Your family interest in this phase of our school program is gratifying. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences, which assists students in personal adjustments and enhances classroom learning.

We who are concerned with the educational development of students through athletics feel that a properly controlled well-organized sports program meets the students' needs for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each students' educational maturity.

A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and increased responsibility. These are the reasons we place emphasis on good training habits. Failure to comply with the rules of training and conduct means exclusion from the team. This concept of self-discipline is tempered by our responsibility to recognize the rights of the individual within the objectives of the team.

Parents must provide timely transportation for their student athlete from all practices and games. Parents may be asked to volunteer time at game venues, providing assistance during the contest and supervision of students as well as athletes.

The SMCS Administration is committed to certain responsibilities and obligations, as follows:

- To provide adequate equipment and facilities;
- To provide well trained coaches;
- To provide equalized contests with skilled officials; and
- To provide adequately supervised transportation.

Likewise, we feel that athletes, parents and coaches have committed to certain responsibilities and obligations. We feel that the specific policies and guidelines outlined in this handbook are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics.

It is the role of the Athletic Department to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the school. These rules can only be achieved through communication to the parent. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic publication for coaches, students, and parents.

TO THE COACHES

The National High School Athletic Coaches has issued the following Coaches Code of Conduct that will be followed at SMCS. As a professional educator and leader, the SMCS Coach or Athletic Director will:

- Exemplify the highest moral character as a role model for young people.
- Recognize the individual worth and reinforce the self-image of each team member.
- Encourage and assist team members to set personal goals to achieve their highest academic potential.
- Create a set of training rules for athletes, which reflect the positive values of abstaining from the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- Strive to develop the qualities of leadership, initiative, and good judgment in each team member.
- Communicate program goals and objectives to parents through a mandatory parent meeting.
- Provide a safe environment for practice and competition.
- Gain awareness of the importance of prevention, care, and treatment of athletic injuries.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the game official.
- Teach and abide by the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
- Build and maintain ethical relationships with coaches and administrators.
- Strive for excellence in coaching skills and techniques through professional improvement.
- Promote personal fitness and good nutrition.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- Encourage a healthy respect for the overall athletic program and its vital roles in education.
- Communicate team results and other important athletic events/activities to the SMCS Marketing Director.
- Recognize that each sport is part of a total athletic and educational program at SMCS.
- Work with other coaches to build upon necessary skills throughout the program.
- Attend Protecting God's Children workshop and fulfill other responsibilities associated with working with students in a school setting. The coach is also responsible for any assistant coaches or volunteer coaches to attend the workshop and to fulfill other requirements.

TO THE ATHLETE

Being a member of an athletic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad of SMCS, you have inherited a wonderful tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold. Our tradition has been to play with honor, while learning athletic skills. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned.

It will not be easy to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When a St. Monica athlete wears the colors of our school, it is believed that you not only understand our traditions, but also are willing to assume the responsibilities needed to uphold our traditions. However, the contributions that you make as an athlete should be a satisfying accomplishment for you and your family.

Responsibilities to Yourself

The most important of these responsibilities is to broaden yourself and develop strength of character. As an athlete you owe it to yourself to get the greatest possible good from your SMCS experiences. Your studies and your participation in extracurricular activities, as well as in sports, prepare you for life as an adult.

Responsibilities to the School

Another responsibility you assume as a member of a team at SMCS is to your school. SMCS will not maintain its position as having an outstanding system unless you do your best in whatever activity in which you engage. By participation in athletics to the maximum of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of our school.

As an athlete you assume a leadership role when you are on the athletic squad. The student body knows you. You are on stage with the spotlight on you. The student body, the community and other communities judge our school by the conduct and attitude of our athletes, both on and off the playing field. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and community pride. Make SMCS proud of you and our community proud of our school through your conduct on the playing field.

Responsibilities to Others

As a squad member you also bear a heavy responsibility to your home. If you never give your parents anything to be ashamed of, you will have measured up to the ideal. When you know in your heart that you have lived up to all of the training rules, that you have practiced to the best of your ability everyday, and that you have played the game "all out" you can keep your self-respect and your family can be justly proud of you.

The younger students in at SMCS are watching you. They will copy you in many ways. Do not do anything to let them down. Set good examples for them.

Responsibilities to your Team

As a squad member you have made a commitment to a team. Missing practice or games beyond illness, or becoming academically ineligible takes away from the team concept. As a team member it is your responsibility to always give 100% in the classroom and on the playing field.

ATHLETIC POLICIES

ELIGIBILITY

All children who attend SMCS are eligible to participate in those programs available to their grade level. Participation in athletic programs by non-SMCS students is at the discretion and direction of CSGK and Hackett Catholic Central's Athletic Department.

Participation can be denied any student who does not meet the academic, behavioral, medical and /or financial expectations of the school as established by the school administration and listed in the SMCS Athletic Handbook.

To be eligible to compete in a contest, the athlete must be in school for at least one-half day, except as excused by the principal. To be eligible to compete in a weekend contest, the athlete must be in school for at least one-half day the Friday prior to the contest.

Participation in athletic activities, regardless of any other standard stated herein, shall be in the sole and absolute discretion of the school.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Academic

Eligibility will be checked every Tuesday by 8:00 am and will start with the first practice for the sport. Athletes are required to maintain a minimum of a C in all subject areas. Athletes are also expected to complete and turn in all assignments on time. All assignments should meet expectations of quality work. Any grade below a C, or a student record that illustrates missing assignments, (not related to illness), or a lack of quality work, will result in academic probation. A student is not permitted to participate in any competition the week that he/she is ineligible. The student is required to attend practices and be present for competitions for which he/she is ineligible. Ineligible players are still bound to the rules and policies outlined in the SMCS Athletic Handbook.

If a student athlete is on the ineligible list three times during a semester the student athlete will be dismissed from the team for the remainder of that sports season and will not be eligible for any end of the season awards.

Behavior

Student athletes may also be placed on behavioral probation. If a student receives a discipline referral during a week, the student immediately becomes ineligible for the next upcoming game or meet.

Medical

Each child who participates in a sport is required to submit a physical form, signed by a physician. Physicals must be updated within the calendar year of the athlete's last physical. No student can begin practices without a physical.

Handicapped students may not be excluded from participation in a program solely on the basis of the existence of a handicap. Where a question arises as to the suitability of a particular program for any child, a physician's advice should be sought prior to making a determination.

Financial

Students participating in a St. Monica-sponsored sport or in a CSGK Unified sport must pay a \$60 fee prior to participation. Students will not be allowed to participate in any practices or games until the appropriate fee has been paid.

PROCEDURE FOR QUITTING A SPORT

Students wishing to be released from a sport during the season (after games have started) must arrange for a meeting with the parents, coach and the Athletic Director and express their reasons for wanting to leave the team.

APPEARANCE

All athletes will be expected to be neatly and appropriately dressed and groomed when traveling to and from athletic contests during competition. Coaches will be given the acceptable game day dress code from the Athletic Director prior to the start of a season.

All uniforms must be washed after each contest.

EJECTIONS FROM CONTESTS

The SMCS Athletic Department will suspend any athlete or coach ejected from a contest plus an additional contest date.

TRAVEL

Behavior on all away trips holds the same expectations as in the classroom. Food and beverages on the bus are prohibited unless prior approval has been given. It is the responsibility of the students and the coaches that the bus is clean and that all trash is picked up and removed from the bus. The coach is required to ride the bus on all trips, unless he/she has permission from and will be covered by the Athletic Director.

TRANSPORTATION

Team members must travel to and from contests in an authorized school provided vehicle, except in situations of emergency with permission of the coach or Athletic Director, or if arrangements are made prior to the game and approved by the Athletic Director. If athletes miss the bus, they will not play in that particular contest.

Riding Home with Parents

Players may ride home with their parents or a parent designee, if they sign their player out after the game on the sign out sheet that the coach will provide. Under no circumstances can an athlete ride from games with anyone other than a parent or an adult designated by their parent.

CANCELLATION POLICY

All middle school practices will be cancelled when school is cancelled. All practices will be cancelled in the case of a Tornado Warning or other weather that is deemed potentially harmful to students. Appropriate precautions will be taken if a Tornado Warning occurs once practice is in session.

INVENTORY

All equipment and uniforms are the property of SMCS. All coaches are required to inventory all equipment and uniforms and record all equipment and uniforms issued to all players. Equipment and uniforms must be turned in at the end of the season. The Athletic Director will be informed of any missing equipment and/or uniforms. A replacement charge will be issued to any students that fail to turn in their uniform and/or equipment. Outstanding obligations must be taken care of before being allowed to participate in the next sport.

Since the required athletic uniforms are provided by the school, no additional warm-ups may be purchased for a team.

LOCKER ROOM

It is the responsibility of the students and the coaches that the locker room is kept clean. This is required for both at home and all away contests. The locker room must be left in the same condition as when you entered the locker room. Coaches are ultimately responsible for the behavior of the students in the locker room and the physical condition after every practice and contest.

Locker Room Procedures

- An athlete is responsible for his/her valuables. All clothes and equipment should be removed from the locker room after each practice or game.
- Conduct in the locker room should reflect the mature judgment of young athletes.
- Team managers should be treated with respect at all times.
- No phones/cameras, camera phones or similar technology should be used in the locker room areas.

PLAYING TIME PHILOSOPHY

SMCS is committed to offering an athletic program that will benefit our students in many ways throughout their careers and on into life. This program should be an extension of the classroom. Consequently, we have developed a philosophy for team sports playing time that will best enhance our athletic program and service our student-athletes simultaneously.

Development Stage (middle school teams)

The optimum goals at this stage include teaching fundamentals of the sport, emphasizing sportsmanship and to provide practice and game playing time for all participants. Winning can be discussed to build team spirit, but should not be stressed as to circumvent the original aforementioned goals.

AWARDS

All athletes who successfully complete a sport season will be recognized for their accomplishments at an end of the season banquet.

SIGNATURE PAGE

As an athlete for St. Monica Catholic School I agree to adhere to its rules and regulations. I believe that I should be a positive representative for St. Monica Catholic School and the Diocese of Kalamazoo.

Signature of Athlete

Grade Date

Having read and understood the St. Monica Catholic School Code of Conduct for Athletes, I/we agree to cooperate with the school in guiding our son/daughter towards living up to the rules and regulations.

Signature(s) of Parent/Guardian

Date

This form must be returned to the St. Monica Catholic School office before a student-athlete can participate in an athletic competition.