

ST. JAMES ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Purpose

The purpose of the athletic program at St. James School is to supplement the spiritual and academic curriculum of the school. The St. James athletic program enhances the physical development of the students and promotes a sense of school spirit, pride and unity.

In approaching the question of how seriously we want to approach grade school athletics at St. James, we need to consider two questions: Do our teams play to win at all costs, or do we play solely to instruct the children in the basics of the sports, while totally disregarding the score of the game?

The answer lies somewhere between these philosophical extremes.

Generally speaking, the age of the players on the team, among other factors, determines how seriously the game is played. For younger children, those in grades 3rd-4th, the sports are almost totally instructive in nature and the score of the game should be of small consideration. At this level, if the player has finished the season with an improved basic knowledge of the sport and has enjoyed playing, it was a successful season, regardless of the win/loss record of the team. Players should be improving their skills in the sport, as well as their level of sportsmanship in playing as each season passes.

As students play volleyball, basketball and/or track, instruction, enjoyment and good sportsmanship play a much larger role in the approach than does winning.

In 7th and 8th grades, the adolescent shows a greater enjoyment in the competition of the game, though teaching the skills of the various sports, and certainly good sportsmanship, continue to be important. The Parochial League allows for "A" and "B" teams at the 7th and 8th grade level in volleyball and basketball. "A" and "B" teams are selected in accordance with Parochial League Rules and under the supervision of or at the direction of the athletic director and the coordinator for the given sport. No one is "cut" from teams because of lack of ability. Everyone makes a team and has the chance to play any sport in which he/she wishes to participate. Practices are limited to three times weekly for 7th & 8th grades and twice weekly for all other grades. We want our students to learn how to handle a win as well as a loss, realizing that the scoreboard only tells part of the story. We must not

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forget that the purpose of the athletic program is only one part of the total school experience. We want our sports program to be one of the many positive aspects of St. James School life.

It is the policy of the St. James School and athletic committee that, in case of a conflict, priority is given to school activities over sport activities.

League Affiliations

The Kansas City Parochial League is an association of Catholic schools organized by the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph to provide its member schools an opportunity to compete on the athletic fields and in the school gymnasiums in an atmosphere of Christian sportsmanship, competition and fellowship. As a school of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, we participate in this league whenever possible. The Kansas City Parochial League offers programs in volleyball, basketball and track.

Administration

The athletic program at St. James is administered under the principal through the athletic committee. The athletic committee is formed to assist the athletic director in the administration and operation of the athletic program for the children at St. James School. The athletic committee consists of the principal, athletic director, the assistant athletic director, treasurer and coordinators from various sports (volleyball, basketball, and track).

Members of the athletic committee for the 2007-08 academic year are as follows:

- Principal - Molly Doherty
- Athletic director- Alicia Brown
- Assistant athletic director -Michelle Strada
- Treasurer - Mario Usera

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- Girls Volleyball Coordinator – Raylondo Campos
- Boys Basketball Coordinator –
- Girls Basketball Coordinator –
- Track & Field Coordinator – Cindy Compton

The above persons were chosen based upon their dedication to the athletic program of St. James. Each will work for the development and improvement of their particular sport. Each has the authority to administer their duties in full confidence as they remain within the precepts set down by the Diocese and of St. James School. The athletic director and the coordinator of each sport shall determine use of school grounds for practices with the final approval by the principal.

Duties of the athletic director and his/her assistant include but are not limited to:

- Schedule and preside over meetings of the athletic committee. These meetings are to be held at the beginning and end of each sport season. The purpose of these meetings is to determine the needs of the coordinators and to be of assistance to them during the sport season.
- Attend all Parochial League sports meetings, select team coaches (with assistance of the sport coordinators), prepare for and assist with the sports sign-ups, coordinate and distribute schedules, procure and inventory equipment, monitor team selections, schedule and monitor sports-related gym activities, and manage the concession stand.
- Approval of sport program related expenditures with the exception of capital improvements.

The athletic director, the assistant athletic director and the individual sport coordinators are to maintain clear communication between each other, the coaches, students, parents/guardians and school staff.

Individual sport coordinators are selected because of their enthusiasm and knowledge of the sport they represent and for their past support and dedication to the school and its mission. The term for each sport coordinator

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is 2 years, which is renewable upon mutual agreement between the athletic director and the individual coordinator.

Duties of individual sport coordinators include but are not limited to:

- Cooperate with the principal and the athletic director in administering and managing their sport in full compliance with Diocesan regulations, the philosophy of the school and of the athletic program.
- Identify any potential conflicts with school activities through the use of the St. James School calendar.
- Select team coaches (with assistance of the athletic director).
Facilitate team workouts, distribute and collect equipment/uniforms, and prepare and submit rosters to the athletic director.

Eligibility

Any student registered 3rd through 8th grades participating in St. James athletic program must be members of the parish or attend the parish school.

A child not registered in the school may participate in our school athletic program if:

- The child and parent/guardian are registered members of our parish.
- The child is a full-time registered student in the parish religious education/youth group class in September or when the first day of classes begin. Any late registrants will not be allowed to participate in the schools athletic program for that current school year.
- Religious education/youth group students must maintain an acceptable attendance record of at least 75% attendance during the preceding and present school year. Records will be provided by the religious education/youth group director. The director must fill out the form, sign and give it to the parish athletic director for all religious education/youth group students seeking to participate in sports at the school.

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- Religious education/youth group students must submit to the school principal a quarterly report card for review. Any student who is home schooled must have a written statement from the parish pastor that the home schooling religion curriculum is approved. Any home-schooled children must play in the athletic program associated with the parish where they are registered.

Academic eligibility will be used to ensure that every child is working to his/her ability during sports seasons. It is intended to help the student athletes balance their time and their talent in the classroom as well as the court/field to ensure a quality educational experience. Eligibility determination is a weekly check of academic performance and not an arbitrary disciplinary action. It is a check of the student's work for that week only, not preceding weeks. If a child has no grades for a particular week, then he/she is eligible. The previous week's grades are not carried over.

For athletic eligibility, the minimum grade average in each class, each week, should be a C- or above or personal best. If the weekly grade average for any class is below a C-, the student will be warned but not made ineligible. If the weekly average is below a C- in the same class (es) for the second week, then the student is ineligible for that week. However, if the teacher feels that the student is working to the best of his/her ability and the weekly average for any class is still below C-, then the teacher and the principal should allow that student to participate in the athletic competition for the week.

Eligibility should run weekly from Tuesday to Tuesday. Teachers should notify the principal of ineligibility on Mondays. The principal will notify the athletic director who will notify the coaches on Monday regarding students' eligibility for that week. A notice will be given to the student athlete, a parent/guardian will sign the notice, and the student will return the notice to the reporting teacher. This will give the coach sufficient time to plan for the week's competition.

Athletic eligibility should be a tool that helps each child learn to budget and use his/her time and talent constructively. When inappropriate behavior or poor academic performance is related to sports, then the student's eligibility should be considered. Consequences should be logical, natural and/or instructional. For example, if a student is doing poorly academically because

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his/her primary focus is sports, then he/she should be declared ineligible for that week. Unsportsman-like conduct may also make a student ineligible.

Parent/guardian responsibilities

Parents/guardians are the heart and soul of the athletic program at St. James. They provide the manpower and support needed for a successful program. Parent/guardian of a participating student is often asked to assist in various ways including, but not limited to, coaching, scoring, judging and concession stand/gate duty. It is required that a parent/guardian volunteer their time in order for their child(ren) to play a specific sport.

The parent/guardian is responsible to see that if their child does not attend school on any day, then that child is not allowed to participate in practices or games on that same day. Special circumstances shall be presented to the athletic director by the coach for any waiver of this rule.

It is important to remember that the child's coach is in charge of the team during all practices and games. A parent/guardian is not to interfere with the coach at these times. During games, especially, a parent/guardian is to refrain from entering the team area. The coach is not available to answer questions or to take suggestions at this time. Should a parent/guardian wish to visit with a coach, it is necessary to make an appointment at a time outside the game.

A parent/guardian is expected to be a good fan at the games. A parent/guardian is encouraged to cheer for the St. James teams in an enthusiastic manner and in a spirit of positive and Christian sportsmanship. Our teams and coaches should know we are 100% supportive of their work. As we model good sportsmanship for our athletes, booing or any other type of unsportsmanlike behavior is not acceptable.

Coaching

At various times a parent/guardian may be asked to help coach a team at St. James. In fact, the greater majority of our coaches come from the ranks of a parent/guardian since each team generally needs more than one coach. Expert knowledge of the sport is not a requirement. If a parent/guardian does

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not feel qualified to be the head coach, perhaps she/he could assist another parent/guardian who may have more experience and expertise.

In the event that more than one parent/guardian or volunteer desires to coach a team, the parent/guardian or volunteer may be requested to fill out an application so that a decision can be made by the sport coordinator, athletic director and athletic committee as to who is most appropriate to coach the team.

Coaches are chosen each year based on what is in the best interest of the players. Determination is made based on volunteer coach availability and who in that group will best meet the goals and philosophies of the St. James sports program. Coach selection will be made by the athletic director and the individual sport coordinator and then approved by the athletic committee. With regard to sports that allow A & B teams, the coordinator for that sport will meet with the existing coaches at the end of the preceding year to discuss interest for coaching the A & B teams. If the coordinator does not resolve the selection of coaches for the A & B teams, then the coordinator, athletic director, and athletic committee will determine the coaches (this may include a non-parent). A parent/guardian that will be coaching an A or B team can provide input but cannot select or be present when final team selections are made.

At St. James, winning is not top priority. No coach has been or ever will be denied the opportunity to coach again because she/he did not win enough games in a previous season. Coaches are viewed as role models and teachers of the sport involved and must set a good example for the players in language, sportsmanship and respect for the philosophy and mission of the St. James sports program. An individual coach who does not abide by the rules set down by the school administration and/or ethical standards of the athletic program will not be allowed to coach again.

Concerns or problems logged against a coach that are brought to the athletic director shall be presented in written form by the originator. The information provided shall clearly state the situation, include first hand facts (i.e. events or behaviors that were personally witnessed) and describe how the concern or problem violates St. James School policies and philosophies. The athletic director and the principal will review and investigate the complaint, this may include contact with a KCPL official and the athletic director or principal

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observing the coach during an athletic event. A plan of action will then be determined. An incident meriting suspension is defined as one that includes physical, mental or emotional abuse.

The St. James Athletic Committee endorses our sports program and will fully abide by the “Absence of Threat” policy as stated in the St. James School Handbook. Coaches should refer to that policy and consider the issues addressed therein when responsible for the student-athletes of our school.

Coaches are expected to abide by the rules set down by the Kansas City Parochial League, St. James School and by the St. James sports program. The coaches are required to attend these mandatory meetings:

- 1. PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN TRAINING:** All head and assistant coaches are required by the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph to attend a training session pertaining to the sexual abuse of children. Once a coach has attended the Protecting God’s Children training then all requirements have been met and the coach need not attend the training again.
- 2. PAROCHIAL LEAGUE MANDATORY COACHES ONLINE TEST:** Any head coach who doesn’t take the online specific sport test and receive at least 90% on the test will not be able to coach until they do so. That team will not be eligible to participate in league play until they have a certified coach in place.
- 3. PLAY LIKE A CHAMPION TODAY:** All head coaches must attend a Parochial League mandatory Play Like A Champion Today (Coaching Youth Sports As Ministry) training prior to the sport season they are coaching. Failure to do will make the coach ineligible to coach for the season. Once a head coach has attended the Play like A Champion Today training then all requirements have been met and the coach need not attend the training again. The KCPL also requires all athletic directors and specific sports coordinators to attend as well.

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4. Attend local preseason and postseason coaches' meeting with the athletic director. At this time coaches will receive a list of student athletes for his/her team.

5. All head coaches must receive Enjoy the Game accountability cards from their athletic director. Head coaches must hold a team meeting with their team players and their parent/guardian to discuss and have Enjoy The Game accountability cards signed by the coach, player and parent/guardian. Teams will be ineligible to play during the regular season until the coach submits Enjoy the Game to the Parochial League Director.

These meetings are offered through the Kansas City Parochial League at various locations to assist in meeting this requirement.

Coaches are responsible for and must have a current **Background Check** on file with the athletic director at St. James School. The cost for a Background Check is \$ 5.00.

Coaches will make sure all student athletes have registration forms, "Permission to play" forms and "Enjoy the Game " forms completed and returned to the athletic director no later than the start date of the current sport.

Coaches must have two adults present whenever the team is assembled for practice or games. If an assistant coach has not been assigned or is unavailable, make sure another adult (parent/guardian) will be present for the entire time that the team is assembled.

Insurance

Every child at St. James in grades 3rd through 8th who is participating in a given sport through the Kansas City/St. Joseph Diocese, holds catastrophic insurance paid for by our school.

Player participation

SIGN-UP for each sport has a deadline and registrations will not be accepted after the deadline date. The dates for sign-ups are published in the school newsletter, on the school website and in the parish bulletin. Sign-up for all

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sports teams will be at the Meet the Teacher night Aug. 12th, 2007. The final deadline for registration:

- Volleyball is Aug. 17th, 2007, Fee \$60.00.
- Basketball is Oct. 19th, 2007, Fee \$60.00.
- Track is Mar. 7th, 2008, Fee \$25.00.

Late sign-up for sports will be assessed a \$25.00 fee per child per sport and will only be accepted for one week after the sport registration deadline. Late fee exceptions may be made by the athletic director and/or the principal.

It is important that participating children regularly attend practice sessions set by the team coach. Attendance at practice may impact playing time for the child for some sports.

Uniforms

Students who have paid registration fees will be issued team uniforms during the first two weeks of practice. A parent/guardian can be of great help in the care of student uniforms. These uniforms are provided for the child to wear in games only, not to practices or for normal play purposes. Please observe laundry instructions attached to the uniforms. It is vital that the uniforms be returned promptly at the season's end. All uniforms are to be properly cleaned and returned to the child's coach after the final game of the season. Uniforms may not be used for games/leagues outside of the regular parochial schedule and approved tournaments. Uniforms, which are not turned in, must be paid for at the replacement cost of the uniform. In order for your student to receive his/her report card, all outstanding accounts must be paid in full; this includes returning and/or purchasing uniforms.

Volleyball

Volleyball is the fall sport for the girls in grades 4th through 8th. The teams play in the Kansas City Parochial League. Games are played in the gymnasiums of participating schools.

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Playing rules will be taken from the current year volleyball rulebook of the National Federation of State High School Association.

Each team member will participate in a minimum of one continuous complete game of each match as long as they meet the team rules and participate in practices. This is a league rule that is supported by the athletic committee and to which each coach must abide. Each player is responsible for informing the coach if she will miss a scheduled practice. Failure to attend practice and/or abide by the disciplinary procedures of the school or of the team will impact the player's participation in the games. Participation rules apply to pre-season, post-season and all tournament matches.

Sportsmanlike behavior will be expected from all coaches, participants and fans. Teams can be carded (penalized) for their behavior as well as their fans' behavior.

Basketball

Basketball is the winter sport for boys and girls in 3rd through 8th grades at St. James. Sign-ups are held in mid to late October with practicing beginning in mid November. The season ends in March.

3rd and 4th grade teams play in the St. Pius X instructional league. 5th-8th grade teams play in the Kansas City Parochial League, which is comprised of 20 parochial schools in the metro area. We typically have 1 or 2 teams per grade for both boys and girls. The Parochial League allows for "A" and "B" team divisions at the 7th and 8th grade level for boys and girls.

Each team member will participate in a minimum of one continuous quarter of uninterrupted play for each game as long as they meet the team rules and participate in practices. This is a league rule that is supported by the athletic committee and to which each coach must abide.

Each player is responsible for informing the coach if she/he must miss a scheduled practice. Failure to practice or to abide by the disciplinary procedures of the school, or of the game, will impact on the players' additional participation in games.

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Track

Track is a spring sport for boys & girls in 4th through 8th grades and sign-ups are usually held in March. It's the only sport at St. James that is co-ed and all boys & girls 4th through 8th grade participate together as one team. The track team participates in the Kansas City Parochial League. There are 2-4 track meets including the KCPL Invitational and the City Championship Meet.

All St. James students who go out for track will participate in each meet. At the meets, there are 4 Divisions for each event.

Division: Class A - 7th and 8th grade boys. 8th grade or below and have not reached 15th birthday before November 1st.

Class B – 4th, 5th and 6th grade boys. 6th grade or below and have not reached 13th birthday before November 1st

Class C - 7th and 8th grade girls. 8th grade or below and have not reached 15th birthday before November 1st

Class D – 4th 5th and 6th grade girls. 6th grade or below and have not reached 13th birthday before November 1st.

There are co-ed relays for 4th, 5th & 6th and 7th & 8th grades.

Participation:

- No more than four (4) events per athlete if at least one is a relay for classes A & C
- No more than three (3) events per boy or girl with relays counting as one for classes B & D
- Relays count as one event.
- No one will be allowed to run more than one (1) distance event per meet. A distance event is any event from 440 yds or more for classes B and D and 880 yds for classes A and C. An athlete competing in a distance event may run a relay or other event as long as it is less than 440 yds in classes B and D and less than 880 yds in classes A and C.

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Track practice will begin 2 to 3 weeks before the 1st meet (starting generally around the middle of April) and end at the City Championship, which is usually the 2nd week of May.

Finances

The athletic program is required to be financially self-supporting. The general operating fund of the school or the parish is not expected to subsidize the program. A complete financial report must be given to the pastor, the principal and the athletic committee on a yearly basis. The general financial statement is published at the end of the fiscal year. Financial records are to be accurate and are maintained by the athletic director and the treasurer. These records are to be made available to the principal and the pastor at any time. The athletic director is accountable for all of these records. Income is provided from participation fees for each sport and/or by the families of the participating students and concessions. The registration fees are to be set at a level sufficient to cover the costs of the sport. In the event of a refund of the registration fees (under the discretion of the athletic director or the principal) reimbursements will only be made at the end of the school year.

The athletic fund is not designed to make a profit for itself, the school, or the parish. It is the vehicle used to pay expenses incurred by the athletic program, to maintain minimum suitable cash balance and purchase needed equipment. Fees are considered to be adequate to meet the operating costs of the program.

Should any family, who is a member of St. James Parish community, be unable to pay the required fees and wish to participate in the sports program, the family may request a waiver of the fees. This request is made to the athletic director or the principal. No child is to be denied participation in the program due to genuine financial hardship.

Concessions

Parent/guardian volunteers staff the concession stand and the entry gate during games at the St. James Gymnasium. In addition to the child's participation fee, the parent/guardian is asked to serve periodic shifts in the

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concession stand or at the gate. **In general, a minimum of four hours per sport season is required.**

The concession stand is run by the athletic director and is staffed by the parents/guardians of St. James School. The concession stand must be supervised and operated by parent/guardian adult volunteers.

Monies received from the operation of the concession stand and gate are given to the athletic director for deposit in the bank following the games. The money is accounted for, but the concession stand is intended for the primary purpose of serving guests at the games and is not considered a primary fund raising activity for the sports program. The athletic department is responsible for an accounting of the money.

Volunteer sign-ups for time keepers, scoreboard, ticket sales will be made available at the beginning of each season.

ST. JAMES SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAM CODE OF ETHICS

To: Coaches, Student-Athletes, Parent/Guardian, Family and Friends

Thank you for choosing to participate in our sports program. We look forward to working together to make this season a positive experience for all involved; student-athletes, coaches, families, game officials, hosting schools and visiting schools, etc. Your commitment is necessary for skill development, team cohesiveness, and team success.

In addition to our mission and policies outlined in this handbook, our expectations and rules follow:

- **Student-Athletes shall:** Attend and be on time for every practice and game. Illness and academics are acceptable reasons for missing practice. Absences must be called in to your coach. Tardiness and absences from practices may adversely affect game playing time. Be prepared for, and work hard at, practice and games.
- **Coaches shall:** Be prepared, be on time, and teach the children at both practice and games. Fulfill the mission and policies set forth in this handbook.

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- **Coaches, student-athletes, parent/guardian, families and fans shall:** Represent St. James School and Parish. Therefore, we expect to leave only positive impressions on those we meet.

Show respect for coaches, athletes, opposing team, game officials and spectators. Speak positively and encourage others to do the same.

Show respect for property, such as the gymnasium or playing field. Place used or empty food and drink containers in trash receptacles. Team members should sit together in bleachers while waiting for games.

Understand that negative or derogatory behavior or unsportsman-like conduct may cause our St. James team some form of violation. A serious offense may cause our team forfeiture.

- **Concession/Gate Duty (parent/guardian):** Each family will be assigned a time to work the concession stand and/or the gate. If you cannot fulfill your assigned time, it is your responsibility (not the coach's) to find a substitute or switch with another family. Failure to fulfill concession or gate duty may result in a fine.
- **Have Fun (coaches, student-athletes and parent/guardian):** Help make this experience fun. Volleyball, basketball, and track are lifelong skills that can be used recreationally, and for some, played at a higher level (high school, college, adult competitive programs, etc.). Remember the games are for the children.

Summary

This handbook has presented a picture of the athletic program of St. James School. Through it, we have attempted to explain the philosophical approach the school takes toward sports, the financial support of the programs, and the functions of the director of athletics and the athletic committee. We have explained what sports are offered, why each sport is important, the importance of athletics to the total experience of the student and how our programs are administered.

We have made no attempt to answer each possible question you may have concerning athletics for young children. Should you have further questions,

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kindly contact the principal of the school, the athletic director or a member of the athletic committee.

St. James offers as complete and varied an athletic program of introductory athletics as we can provide. The success of the program depends on each of us to make it work!