



**St. Paul of the Cross School**

# **Athletic Handbook**

***Basketball***

***Volleyball***

***Track and Field***

***Soccer***

***Cross Country***

***Baseball***

***Softball***

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The interscholastic athletic program at St. Paul of the Cross School is a volunteer program. Members of the Athletic Committee, coaches, and volunteers give freely of their time to help insure the program's success and to make it a meaningful, rewarding, and enjoyable experience for all who participate in it.

The Athletic Committee, whose members are approved by the Principal and the Pastor, administers the St. Paul of the Cross Athletic Program. The Athletic Committee selects team coaches and support personnel.

St. Paul of the Cross participates as a full and active charter member of the City-Suburban Catholic Conference.

This handbook states the philosophies, goals, rules, and responsibilities of all who are involved in the athletic program.

St. Paul of the Cross School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin in its admission policies, administration of education policies, loan programs, athletic or other school administered programs.

## **ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS ATHLETIC COMMITTEE**

### **PURPOSE & RESPONSIBILITY**

The purpose of the Athletic Committee is to administer the interscholastic athletic program at St. Paul of the Cross School and to establish interscholastic athletic related policy consistent with the academic policies established by the Principal, Faculty, School Board and the direction given by the Pastor. This includes the establishment, maintenance, and review of policies relating to the various team operations, the appointment and review of all coaches and volunteers, the raising of funds and the consideration of each athlete's growth, well-being, and safety.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

It is the philosophy of the Athletic Committee, through its members, programs, coaching staff and volunteers, to insure that participation in athletics is an enjoyable, rewarding, and learning experience for all who participate and to develop in our student athletes the following characteristics:

- 1) An interest in and an understanding of each sport's rules.

- 2) Advancement in a student's athletic abilities commensurate with his/her talents and dedication to the program.
- 3) To learn the values of sportsmanship and teamwork and to experience a sense of pride which accompanies personal growth and team achievement.

To master the discipline, dedication, and leadership skills that can be developed through participation in competitive team athletics.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

The St. Paul of the Cross Committee is a standing committee of the School Board responsible to the Pastor, Principal, School Board, and the parents of the students. All policies adopted by the committee are subject to review by and approval of the Pastor and the Principal. The Pastor and Principal reserve the right to unilaterally act prior to consultations with the appropriate committees.

### **MEETINGS**

The Committee holds regularly scheduled meetings as often as is needed to carry out its responsibilities. As dictated by its charter, the Committee holds two 'open' meetings during the school year at which all interested parties have the opportunity to direct questions to the Committee. Meetings involving personnel appointments and selection are closed.

Additionally, the Athletic Committee maintains open lines of communication with all parties involved. Each year, the Committee appoints a recording secretary who is responsible for recording, documenting, and reporting actions taken at the meetings.

### **ORGANIZATION, TERMS OF OFFICE AND SELECTION PROCESS**

The Athletic Committee consists of nine voting members. Membership on this Committee includes, but is not limited to: a) the Athletic Director (hired by Pastor and Principal), b) a School Board representative, c) the Physical Education teacher or other faculty member, and d) six at-large members who must be parishioners. The Athletic Director may appoint two non-voting members to act as Assistant Athletic Directors for consultation, assistance with the administration of gym/PLC supervision, and other related administrative functions. These appointments shall

be reviewed and authorized by the Pastor and Principal. The terms of office and selection process for the Committee members are as follows:

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR – This is a permanent and paid position by the school. The final selection is made by the Pastor and may be renewed yearly. The selection of a new Athletic Director takes place prior to the end of the school year. The guidelines are defined in the Athletic Charter.

FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE – The Physical Education teacher or other faculty member is a permanent member of the Athletic Committee. Selection is made by the Principal and subject to the Pastor’s approval.

SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE – A representative of the School Board is appointed annually by the School Board President, no later than on month following the School Board officer elections.

AT-LARGE MEMBERS – The balance of the Committee includes six parishioners serving alternating three-year terms. Notice of available positions will be posted in the Sunday bulletin and through school take-home envelopes. If there are more candidates than positions available, candidates will be reviewed by members of the Athletic Committee. Appointments are made by recommendation of the outgoing Committee. Candidates will be selected based on volunteerism and/or solicitation. Recommended candidates are reviewed with the School Board and the Principal prior to final approval by the Pastor.

## **ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

### **FOCUS**

The St. Paul of the Cross Interscholastic Athletic Program provides a wide spectrum of competitive sports so our students can develop strong, healthy, and disciplined bodies and minds.

With enrollment in the program, the student will learn the fundamentals of each sport, practice sportsmanship, and through teamwork, develop a sense of responsibility to their teammates and respect for their opponents.

The program is an extension of the St. Paul of the Cross academic curriculum and our Catholic principles will govern all participation in it. Participants will strive to make this an enriching, learning experience for all involved.

## **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

The following criteria are established for student participation in interscholastic athletics. In addition to meeting these criteria, all student-athletes must adhere to the rules and meet eligibility requirements of the Conference:

- 1) Student-athletes must have submitted their permission/insurance forms and appropriate fees by the established fall, winter, and spring cut-off dates. This is necessary to administer the various sport seasons in an orderly fashion. Failure to submit the required paperwork and fees by the deadline will disqualify a student from participating in that sport's season. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE ALLOWED!**
  
- 2) The student's academic success has priority at St. Paul of the Cross School. Athletic activities enhance the educational experience and give children opportunities to develop skills and experience achievement. However, athletic programs should not interfere with the student's academic work or inhibit his/her ability to achieve success in the classroom. Therefore, these are the guidelines for athletic eligibility: At the beginning of each season, a roster of teams will be made available to school administration. Teachers will check performance at mid and end of the grading trimester. Students who have two (2) grades below a "C," in all subject areas, may be subject to academic suspension, which is understood to include both practices and games. Within a week of notification, students must demonstrate effort in improving his/her grades. The principal will review academic progress.
  
- 3) Any disciplinary action taken by the school authorities against a student-athlete extends to athletic endeavors and may be cause for suspension or removal from the team. If a student receives a Disciplinary/Office Referral Form, that student may be ineligible to play in his or her next game.
  
- 4) All students will be considered eligible to participate in athletics unless the Principal and/or parents declare the student ineligible due to academic/disciplinary or physical reasons. Prior to any disciplinary action, Coaches shall contact the Athletic Director to discuss what actions will be taken. For disciplinary reasons, or for lack of dedication to a program (e.g. excessive absences, unsportsmanship), a student athlete may be placed on probation, suspended for a period of time, or excluded from the team as a disruptive force at the coach's discretion. At

its discretion, the Athletic Committee (and if appropriate, the school principal) will review all disciplinary actions taken by the coaches.

- 5) No student-athlete may participate in an athletic activity on a day that the student did not attend regularly scheduled classes.
- 6) Except for a case involving academic, administrative, or disciplinary action, there will be a no-cut policy employed for all teams.
- 7) Transfer students may apply for participation in a sport that has already begun if:
  - (a) the approval of the Principal has been obtained **and**
  - (b) a request to participate is made within three weeks of the student's first day at school **and**
  - (c) it is prior to the date established by the conference as to when rosters are frozen.

In all cases, the Conference rules regarding the freezing of rosters will be followed.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **GRADES**

At the beginning of each season, a roster of teams will be made available to school administration. Teachers will check performance at mid and end of the grading trimester. Students who have two (2) grades below a "C," in all subject areas, may be subject to academic suspension, which is understood to include both practices and games. Within a week of notification, students must demonstrate effort in improving his/her grades. The principal will review academic progress.

### **CONDUCT**

Since the student-athlete is representing St. Paul of the Cross School and Parish at all times, he/she must act in a manner that will reflect favorably upon the school and the athlete personally. This not only means on the sports field or court, but also wherever the athlete may be: at home, on the street, in the halls, in class, or at other schools.

Losing self-control or using foul or abusive language or other signs of disrespect are reasons for disciplinary action, reduced playing time, or even suspension or expulsion from the team. Any student athlete who has a behavioral problem in practices or games will be reported to the Athletic Director and the Athletic Director will notify the parent of that child. A warning will be issued for the first incident, a one-game suspension for the second incident, and the student will be removed from the team for the third.

A dedicated student-athlete respects his/her team, coach, opponents and officials of the sport. Athletes will conduct themselves in a Christian manner reflecting Catholic values. School policy will govern in all cases and be enforced by the school administration and faculty.

### **DRESS**

Suitable attire is expected to be worn for all home and away games. The athlete is responsible for any school athletic uniform issued. If it is lost, stolen, or damaged you will be assessed a replacement fee.

### **PRACTICES**

Students are expected to be present and on time for all practice sessions. Not attending practices affects the entire team and the sense of teamwork that the coaches are teaching. Missing practices may mean reduced playing time at subsequent games. Excessive absences will lead to suspension or expulsion from the team.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents play an important part in the student-athlete's success and also that of their team. Parents are not only expected to encourage and support their child's efforts, but they are also expected to contribute their time and services in support of the team.

During the first three weeks of practice, each team's coach will hold a meeting with the parents of their players. Among the topics discussed, the coach will list his/her needs for support services. Some of the needs may be for scorekeepers, timekeepers, money takers, stand and chair setup and take down, cleaner-uppers, ticket takers, refreshment sellers, base coaches, spotters, etc. One or two parents

will be designated as team liaison parents and they shall see that the various tasks are filled and rotated on an equitable basis. A volunteer program needs everyone's support and help maintain a high level of quality.

Parents are expected to see that their children hand in their permission/ insurance slips and fees before the fall, winter, and spring cut-off dates. Risk of injury is always possible. This is the reason parents are required to indicate the form of medical insurance coverage you have for your child. You are also asked to provide us with information about any existing medical conditions that may impact your child's ability to perform under certain circumstances. (e.g. asthma, diabetes, etc.). This provides protection for everyone.

Parents will provide transportation for their children to and from practices and games. If a ride is needed, please arrange with another player's parent. The student-athlete is to be brought to practices and games at the time designated by the coaches - no sooner. When picking up your player, please be on time. Coaches are not covered with liability insurance for chauffeur service.

Do not drop off siblings with the student-athlete at practices. St. Paul does not have insurance coverage for injury to an unattended child who is not part of the program.

Parents will stress to their children the responsibilities that they now carry in regard to themselves, their team, their coaches, and their school.

Parents are asked to take an interest in their child's participation by attending the games and cheering for their teams. While attending games, parents should always act in a responsible manner exhibiting good sportsman-like behavior. Parents are responsible for other children that may accompany them to the game. Set an example for our student athletes.

If a parent has a question or concern about playing time or any aspect of the coaching staff's policies or practices, the parent is encouraged to first speak to the coach about the situation. If the issue remains unresolved the parent should bring the matter to the attention of the Athletic Director. If a solution cannot be found or satisfactorily worked out, the school Principal should be contacted.

Parents are an integral part of the St. Paul of the Cross Athletic Program. Their contributions and cooperation reflect in the program's success.

## **COACHES DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Athletic Committee appoints Head Coaches. They must be 18 years of age or older, have completed and submitted a volunteer application, completed the Archdiocesan criminal background check, be knowledgeable in the sport they are coaching, be able to conduct practices and coach in a knowledgeable manner, and be approved by the Athletic Director and/or athletic appointment committee.

Coaches are responsible for their team, its welfare and safety, the team's equipment issued to them and for coordinating and running practices and games. There is to be no team activity without two adults present.

Coaches have the responsibility to:

- 1) teach and create an understanding of the rules of the sport.
- 2) develop each player's skills within the framework of a team concept.
- 3) develop self-confidence, discipline, sportsmanship and leadership in the players.
- 4) make this a rewarding learning experience for all involved.
- 5) always act in a manner reflecting Christian behavior.
- 6) use common sense and maturity in resolving problems and conflicts.
- 7) adhere to the rules, directives and policies of school authorities and the Athletic Committee.
- 8) work together in practices that are scheduled with the split team that is on their grade level. By working together in practices, it will be easier to move players from one team to another each year. A coach's inability to work together with other coaches on their grade level will result in the coach's dismissal from their duties as a coach.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines and carry out these responsibilities will result in a warning and a meeting with the Athletic Committee to discuss the matter or immediate dismissal by the Athletic Director under the guidance of the Pastor or Principal.

## **CONDUCT OF GAMES AND PRACTICES**

All St. Paul of the Cross team participants and spectators are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship while attending any St. Paul of the Cross practice or contest. All are reminded that they are ambassadors of St. Paul of the Cross and their behavior reflects not only on themselves, but also upon the entire St. Paul of the Cross community. Players and spectators are encouraged to be gracious in a defeat, humble in a victory, and to treat coaches, referees, opponents and fans with respect. Any individual who has difficulty complying with these principles may be subject to disciplinary action by St. Paul of the Cross, including being barred from athletic events.

St. Paul of the Cross recognizes that the coach and/or assistant coach of any St. Paul of the Cross team has immediate responsibility for maintaining proper behavior of St. Paul of the Cross students and spectators (including parents, guardians, relatives, or friends of a student) during athletic contests and practices. As such, the coach and/or assistant coach may, at their discretion:

- (a) close the PLC or SPC-rented venue practices to all but participating students.
- (b) require students exhibiting improper behavior to leave a practice or contest and to notify their parent or guardian to immediately come to pick up said student.
- (c) require that a parent, guardian, friend, or relative of a student who exhibits improper behavior at a practice or contest to leave such practice or contest.

Failure of the individual requested to leave any such practice or contest after request by the coach and/or assistant coach may result in the immediate suspension of the student member of the team and/or the barring of any non-team individual from future St. Paul of the Cross athletic practices and/or contests.

Any such decision of a coach and/or assistant coach shall be reported immediately to the St. Paul of the Cross athletic director and shall be reviewed, for affirmation or reversal, as soon as practicable by the Athletic Director and the Pastor and or Principal after discussion with all involved parties.

## **MANDATORY RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The Following rules must be followed:

- A) There is a **no-cut** policy. However, each player's portion of playing time must reflect their abilities, efforts, grade level, and dedication to the team and attendance at practices. Except for academic or disciplinary reasons, these rules will be enforced:
1. At the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade levels, every player must play in each game. Coaches are instructed to provide equal playing time for all participants.
  2. At the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level all players are to play six minutes a game unless they are suspended for reasons stated below.
  3. At the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels, coaches will be instructed to give each player a minimum of two minutes of playing time in each game. This is a rule enforced by the St. Paul of the Cross administration. This rule is always in effect unless a player is suspended for reasons stated below.
- B) Missing practice shall be cause for reduced playing time. Excessive absences can be cause for exclusion from the team. (This must be reported and a decision will be made with the input from the Athletic Director).
- C) A player designated by the faculty and principal as being ineligible will remain ineligible until reinstated by the faculty or principal.
- D) Losing self-control or exhibiting conduct unbecoming of a Christian athlete will be cause for disciplinary action (benching, suspension, or exclusion). The athlete will be advised of the reasons for disciplinary action and what may be done to correct the situation.
- E) It is the coach's responsibility to communicate any change of schedule or location for practices or games, etc. to players and parents. How communications are handled is important. Coaches should not assume that players will get the message home.
- F) The coaching staff is responsible for having a meeting with the team and parents during the first two weeks of practice. The coach will explain his/her policies and secure the necessary support services from the team members'

parents. Among those services required are official scorers, timekeepers and the operation of the clock for basketball games (adults must fill these positions).

- G) The head coach is responsible for obtaining funds from the Athletic Director in order to compensate officials.
- H) Practices must begin with stretching and warm up exercises and conclude with cool downs.
- I) Sign-ups will be handled by the Athletic Committee. These will take place as follows:

**Fall Sports: Soccer/Cross Country/Basketball**

Spring sign up at the end of the preceding school year.

**Winter Sports: Volleyball**

Mid-November

**Spring Sports: Softball/ Track & Field/Baseball**

Two weeks after the start of the spring academic term.

The Athletic Director will determine date and times. Rosters will be distributed as soon as possible after sign ups.

- J) For the purpose of scheduling games, seasons for the various sports are currently defined by the Conference and are generally summarized as the following:

**Soccer-** late August to mid-October

**Cross Country-** early September to mid-October

**Basketball Boys & Girls -** mid-October to mid-January  
(Practice will begin mid-September)

**Volleyball-** mid-January through early April

**Softball/Baseball-** mid-April through the end of May

**Track & Field-** mid-April through end of May

Conference rules require that any school wishing to remain in the CSCC may participate in only one league per sport at any time while representing their respective schools. Coaches may not place their teams in other leagues while participating in the CSCC.

Requests for play outside of the “season” (e.g. tournaments) must be made to the Athletic Director and approved by the Athletic Committee. Criteria for approval included budget, number of games played, equity with other teams, scheduling in the same sport, and conflicts with other sports.

### **Basketball Tournaments:**

The Committee has adopted the following criteria for participation in outside tournaments:

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys & Girls: 3 tournaments each (combined teams)

7<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys & Girls: 2 tournaments each (combined teams)

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys & Girls: 1 tournament each (combined teams)

K) There will be no “playing up” in tournament play allowed unless the player from a lower grade is a “rostered” conference player on the higher team.

L) Each grade will play at its own level except when there are an insufficient number of players from a grade to form a complete team. The lower grade will be combined with the higher grade as allowed by City Suburban Catholic Conference rules.

### **M) Splitting Squads (Basketball):**

In order to consider splitting teams at the same grade level into more than one squad, the following conditions must be met:

- 1) There must be a minimum of 16 players who have submitted their permission forms and fees at the registration cut off date, **and**
- 2) Sufficient coaching candidates are available.

Should conditions be met, the Athletic Committee will consider a split squad. Criteria used in the evaluation will be budget, available facilities, and conference requirements. In all cases, conference rules will be adhered to.

If approved by the Athletic Committee, grades will be split into two teams if less than 29 players sign up for basketball. Grades with more than 29 players will be evaluated to split into 3 teams. All splits are subject to gym availability. The maximum size for any basketball team permitted by the conference is 17.

Squads will be split each year by a draft. The draft will include the head coaches, the Athletic Director, the Assistant Athletic Director or The Physical Education teacher. An athletic board member may substitute if the AD, assistant AD or PE teacher are not available at the time of the draft. The respective coaches should have a fair rating on all of the players who are participating and must agree on the rating system. If the player participates in the athletic program for a all five years, he/she will not have the same coach for more than three of those years unless his/her parent is the coach. No draft will be final until the Athletic Director, along with the Physical Education teacher, approves and assigns the final teams to the coaches. Coaches may not enter the draft with a pre-determined assistant coach in mind.

The first one or two practices of each grade will be full participation by all players. The coaches who will be drafting will rate each player. One coach will draft each team. That coach's sons or daughters will be assigned automatically. First choice will be determined by a coin toss or awarded based on the rating of the coach's child. Siblings will be automatically assigned to the same team once the first child is selected. The other squad will have the next selection(s) equal to the number of siblings. All drafts should have an athletic committee member present.

N) Splitting Squads (Volleyball):

Grades with more than 36 players for volleyball will be evaluated to split into 3 teams. All splits will be subject to gym availability. The maximum size for any volleyball team permitted by the conference is 20. All other requirements are the same as basketball noted above.

O) If in doubt about any rule or procedure, consult with the Athletic Director first.

P) The Conference has established a policy that each game will begin and end with a handshake between the coaches and players.

Q) The conference has established a rule to eliminate unfair splitting teams. The rule is stated as follows: The City Suburban Catholic Conference has several rules that many of us believe make our league one of the best in the area. Two of these rules are on A/B splits, and minimum playing times. An eight game won/loss differential rules has been instituted to create a disincentive on doing A/B splits. It states that if a school splits a grade into more than one

team, there cannot be more than an eight game difference in their records. If there is more than an eight game difference in wins versus losses for the teams, then the team with the better record is not allowed to participate in the playoffs, and forfeits will be assigned for each game won. For example, your school splits its 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls class into two teams, one ends the season with a 15-5 record while the other ends up with a 5-15 record. Since the won/loss difference in this example is 10 games, the team with 15 wins would be assigned forfeits for all of its wins, and would have a final record reflected on the website of 0-20. Although this rule seems punitive, it is important that we abide by our philosophy of no A/B splits.

The league does grant the opportunity to reshuffle team rosters to avoid this problem. If a school believes there is a strong possibility of an eventual eight game won/loss difference, the school can reshuffle the players to a more equal playing level. Any school can make unilateral changes on or before the date determined by the conference at the start of each season for a feasible reason. If the school wishes to change rosters for any reason after the date assigned by the conference, the change in rosters must be approved by the CSCC Executive Committee. Rosters may also be changed after the date assigned by the conference due to injuries or student athletes new to the school; however, the additions or changes must also be approved by the CSCC Executive Committee. All changes must be communicated to the Chairs of the respective programs.

## **BASKETBALL SCHEDULING-DEFINITIONS & RULES FOR COACHES**

In order to maintain balance and control of scheduling basketball games, the following rules have been enacted.

- 1) The Athletic Director and his/her assistants will maintain schedules, schedule all games, and approve and log all practice games and scrimmages. Each coach will receive no more than the maximum of three practices a week once any sport's pre-season begins. Once the season begins, no team may play or practice more than five times a week. No team during the CSCC conference basketball or volleyball seasons may contract an outside gym for use of practice unless the gym was included in the St. Paul of the Cross contract agreement and that time is made available to all St. Paul of the Cross students participating in the SPC athletic program. If a coach contracts an outside source for practices

during a season, he or she will be issued a warning and a second offence will result in the removal of head coaching for the remainder of the year.

2) There are three categories of games that are scheduled. These are as follows:

- a) Conference Games- These are games played within the City Suburban Catholic Conference schedule and against CSCC member schools.
- b) Tournament Games- Those games played in an approved (by the Athletic Director) tournament. Only guaranteed games count.
- c) Non-Conference Games- Those games scheduled against opponents (preferably non CSCC schools) during the regular season, but not part of A or B above.

In addition to above SCHEDULED games, teams may participate in the following:

- a) Practice Games- These are competitions against other schools that are refereed (official refs) and part of the practice season but are played PRIOR TO the start of the official basketball season. Each team is limited to ONE practice game. Uniforms may be worn.
- b) Scrimmages- These are extensions of practices where competition is against another school rather than intra or inter squad. These will be “refereed” by the coaches or a parent and NO UNIFORMS will be worn. Each team is limited to three scrimmages prior to or during the official season.

3) Teams will be limited to the following number of SCHEDULED games.

- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – 30
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade – 26
- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 24
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade – 14
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade – 12

4) Calculation on the number of games is done in priority order as follows:

- a) City-Suburban regular season games and GUARANTEED playoff games.
- b) Add the number of GUARANTEED tournament games.
- c) Add Non-Conference games.

NOTE: A team may exceed the limit by advancing beyond the guaranteed games in a tournament or the Conference Playoffs.

5) 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Instructional:

According to Conference rules, there will be 10 to 14 games for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grades. There will be NO standings and NO playoffs for either grade. Games can end in ties.