



**ATHLETIC HANDBOOK  
2023-2024**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The St. Mary's Catholic School Athletics Handbook is a reference guide for coaches, students-athletes and parents concerning the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at St. Mary's Catholic School.

The coach of an athletic team reports to the Athletic Director and is primarily responsible for the compliance by his/her team members to the rules, regulations, and policies governing athletics at St. Mary's Catholic School. The Athletic Director will administer these rules and regulations as they relate to inter-team and inter-coach relationships.

Sound reasoning, good judgment, and adherence to the school's core values will be the standard by which situations outside these stated rules and regulations are determined and evaluated.

Interscholastic athletics is a voluntary program. Students are not obligated to participate and participation is not required. Thus, competition in athletics is a privilege not a right. Accompanying this privilege is the responsibility to conform to standards established for the St. Mary's athletic program. This privilege may be revoked if the athlete fails or refuses to comply with the rules.

It should be carefully noted that the policies and procedures detailed in this handbook are reflective of official action by the St. Mary's Catholic School Administration. As such, all policies will be followed as written.

Thank you for your participation in our athletic program. May God bless you as you use your God-given athletic abilities and desire to serve Him in this integral part of school life.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the St. Mary's Catholic School Athletic Department is to glorify God through the discipline of student athletes and the pursuit of excellence in athletics with our faith as the foundation and focus. Our core values encompass Christian faith, responsibility, integrity, trust, teamwork, enthusiasm and respect.

### **Our Coaches**

Coaches at St. Mary's Catholic School are significant components of the athletic program. They have the responsibility to be role-models for our student-athletes and model Christ-like behavior and attitudes at all times. All of our coaches are volunteers, who give their time and talent in order to work with the students and support St. Mary's Catholic School.

In order to be an effective coach and role model, St. Mary's Catholic School coaches must also be knowledgeable in their sport, able to motivate athletes, able to clearly communicate with the athletes and parents, and work effectively under the authority of the Athletic Director and Administration.

### **Our Parents**

Parents of student-athletes have a responsibility to both their child and to the team. Without strong parental support, the student-athlete will not be able to achieve his/her greatest potential and/or the team may suffer. It is important that parents provide positive reinforcement and understand their role as being part of the team. Parents, as well as players, should be supportive and encourage coaches and teammates at all times.

### **Our Athletes**

St. Mary's Catholic School athletes should be diligent in preparation, give 100% at all times, demonstrate personal discipline, be respectful in all situations, maintain self-control, show humility, and aggressively pursue excellence regardless of the situation.

### **Our Teams**

Our teams should in all things strive to:

1. Glorify God
2. Play Hard
3. Have Fun

### **Our Athletic Department**

Is committed to:

1. Discipline of our coaches and student-athletes.
2. Outreach to opposing teams and fans and to the large community outside of St. Mary's Catholic School.
3. Stewardship of our resources.
4. Pursuit of athletic excellence.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

St. Mary's Catholic School Athletic Department has a definite responsibility to contribute to the wholeness of St. Mary's Catholic School. All members, including student-athletes, parents, coaches, and administration, have a role in contributing to a tradition, which brings honor to the students, school, and community.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS**

- To teach the student-athletes to motivate themselves for excellence.
- To teach fundamental, social, emotional, and academic skills.
- To create opportunities for student-athletes to develop self-esteem.
- To effectively evaluate performance.
- To model appropriate behaviors.
- To develop teamwork and loyalty.
- To teach fundamental knowledge of activity.
- To share effective coaching methods.
- To teach responsibility, respect for others and property by developing teamwork and loyalty.

### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

- To promote involvement in activities and communicate effectively with parents, students and the community.
- To create high expectations for achievement.
- To promote high standards of academic performance.
- To offer multi-levels of opportunities.
- To encourage student participation.
- To utilize volunteers and resources effectively.
- To develop effective practices and schedules to maximize use of time.
- To encourage all participants to support each other and other activities.
- To develop a program for care of injuries and promote overall well-being.

### **INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

- To promote a positive relationship among team members.
- To develop positive leadership qualities in student-athletes.
- To promote appreciation for and acceptance of the differences of others.
- To show respect for the total person on social and emotional levels.
- To promote good working relationships with administrators.
- To promote a positive image of our programs.
- To develop an attitude of partnership, appreciation, and sportsmanship among coaches, parents, students and the community.

## **EXPECTATIONS, PRACTICES & POLICIES**

### **Eligibility for Interscholastic Participation**

All student athletes at St. Mary's Catholic School must be exemplary members of the student body. Therefore, standards of academic achievement have been adopted in order for student-athletes to establish and maintain eligibility.

1. **ACADEMICS** – St. Mary's Catholic School academic standards are high. These standards acknowledge that academic achievement takes precedence over athletic participation.

#### **Process for Athletic Eligibility**

- Grades for all classes are checked when grades are posted for the 5 week notices and the end of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters.
- On these dates, if a student has an "F" in any subject, they are deemed ineligible.
- Once a student is determined to be ineligible, they will have their grades checked one week from the day grades were posted. The school will not check grades before the one week date. The student will not be able to participate in extra-curricular activities for the school during this week.
- At this weekly check, when ALL of their grades are passing, they will become eligible.
- During this weekly academic monitoring time, if ANY of their grades fall to "failing" they will remain ineligible. (not just the class they were initially failing)
- **If a student received an "F" on ANY of their QUARTER grades, they will remain ineligible for TWO WEEKS. This is to give them ample time to accumulate passing grades for their new Quarter grade.**
- **If a student receives an "F" on any of the Final grades at the end of the school year, they are ineligible until they pass ALL of their 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter classes for the next school year.**

#### **Consequences**

- Ineligibility will last for one (1) full week from the day ineligibility is posted. These dates change throughout the year.
- While ineligible, a student cannot attend practices, play in games, or be on the bench of a game. They can attend games as a spectator.
- During the ineligibility time, students may also be required to attend extra academic help times throughout the regular school day.
- If a student is ineligible more than two times during a season, the student will be reviewed by the St. Mary's Administration, including the Athletic

Director, to determine if the student will be able to continue with the rest of the season.

2. **CONDUCT** – Each student athlete is expected to conduct his/her life in accordance with the standard and principles set forth in Christian faith.

### **Financial/Volunteer Structure**

The St. Mary's Catholic School Athletic Program does not receive any funding through tuition. It operates primarily through participation fees, admissions/concession charges, and volunteer hours. The fees are essential to help fund the cost of interscholastic athletics, including game officials, tournament entry fees and supplementary equipment, uniforms and supplies. The volunteer hours are essential in order to keep fees as low as possible and practice servitude to our school community.

1. **PARTICIPATION FEES** – Fees are charged for each school year and are paid at the time of registration. No family will be turned away because of financial difficulty. Families unable to afford the fees should speak confidentially with the principal and make arrangements to provide a supplemental service to offset the fee.
  - \$35.00 one-time fee per athlete for unlimited participation
  - \$60.00 cap per family regardless of the number of participating athletes
2. **ADMISSION CHARGES** – The common practice for area schools are to charge an admission for basketball and volleyball games. Charges at St. Mary's Catholic School follow the agreed structure by the conference schools. Charges may vary at each school. St. Mary's Catholic School Athletic Department has also made a sports pass available to families for home games. These may be purchased for the basketball and/or volleyball seasons.
  - Family - \$8.00
  - Adults - \$4.00
  - Students - \$1.00
  - Sports Pass – Family (household)/Individual Passes Available – Pricing TBD once schedules are finalized each season.
3. **VOLUNTEER HOURS** – Parents and/or guardians of St. Mary's Catholic School athletes are required to volunteer by working the concession stand or admissions table. Volunteer work schedules are prepared and distributed at the start of each sport's season. Volunteer hours are not meant to be burdensome. The St. Mary's Catholic School Athletic Director and Assistant Athletic Director work diligently to create a fair and amenable schedule. **It is the responsibility of the parent to**



**review the schedule and to find a replacement if they are unable to work the hours assigned. A fee of \$15 per hour missed will be assessed if the hours are not covered.**

**Physical Forms and Parental Consent**

1. For a student to be allowed to practice or play a game with a team, he/she must have a current State of Illinois Certificate of Child Health Examination on file in the St. Mary's Catholic School elementary or middle school office.
2. For a student to be allowed to participate on any team, he/she and their parent/guardian must have signed and acknowledged they have read and understood the St. Mary's Catholic School Athletic Handbook.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Parents, fans and athletes of the athletic program may never use abusive language directed at the referees, players and/or coaches. All officials must be treated with respect and not criticized during and/or after games. Parents, fans and athletes are reminded that their actions reflect upon the reputations of St. Mary's Catholic School.

The actions of parents, fans and athletes must promote good sportsmanship among everyone present. Any parent, fan or athlete disregarding these guidelines shall be asked to leave the premises. If the parent, fan or athlete disregards the request to vacate the area, the game will not continue until the person(s) departs. The coaches of both teams will see that these regulations are enforced. Any parent or fan that consistently violates these regulations will not be allowed to attend games until determined by the principal or Athletic Director.

Any athlete that does not adhere to the code of conduct may result in suspension or expulsion from an athletic team. Any coach refusing to enforce these regulations shall be suspended temporarily or permanently as determined by the principal or Athletic Director.

### **Attendance at School**

A student-athlete must attend school on the days of an athletic practice or game in order to participate in that practice or game. Some specific circumstances are as follows:

1. Students who are absent from part of the school day and are granted a non-illness related excused absence (e.g. a dental appointment) will be allowed to participate in the practice or game that day.
2. Absence from school for ½ day or more due to illness will make a student ineligible to participate in athletic activities for the day, including practices and games.
3. Absence from school for ½ day or more due to illness on a Friday (or last day of the school week) will make a student ineligible to participate in athletic activities until they are symptom free for 24 hours.
4. Any unexcused absence from school, regardless if it is only for a partial day, will render an athlete unable to participate in the day's event. This would include in-school suspension or skipping class.

### **Attendance at Practices and Games**

Each member of a St. Mary's Catholic School athletic team must assume responsibilities with their attendance. The athlete has an ethical obligation to the team and the school. This obligation includes regular attendance at practices and games. If a practice or game is missed due to outside commitments, there may be consequences at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels.

It is possible, of course, that emergency situations may arise (e.g. illness, death in a family, etc.) that render it impossible for an athlete to attend a practice or game. Absences should be few and the coach should be notified as early as possible.

### **Athletic Dress Code**

St. Mary's Catholic School allows student athletes to modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with their religion, cultural values or modesty preferences.

### **Handling Problems/Solving Disputes**

Difficult issues must be dealt with at times, including, but not limited to discipline, player performance, and player dissatisfaction. Proper communication is necessary to result in the positive resolution of such issues.

The following is a guide for coaches, parents, and student-athletes. This guide provides a chain of communication that will maintain and build positive relations.

#### **Chain of Communication:**

##### **1. Step One: Coach-Athlete Meeting**

If a player or his/her parent has an issue or problems with his/her sport experience, the student-athlete is expected to address the coach.

##### **2. Step Two: Coach-Parent-Athlete Meeting**

If an issue has not been resolved in step one, this is the next step in the chain of communication. The guideline here is to set up a meeting at the coach's discretion. If the issue is emotional, the meeting should be scheduled at least 24 hours after the event so the parties involved are calm and problem-solving can occur. Also, the parent or player should define the purpose of the meeting when the appointment is set.

##### **3. Step Three: Athletic Director-Coach-Parent-Athlete Meeting**

If an issue is not resolved in step two, this is the next step in the chain of communication. This step may be initiated by any party. Using the same process

as above, a meeting is set and all parties define the purpose of the meeting. There may be cases where it is appropriate an athlete not be present. This is to be discussed and determined prior to the meeting.

#### **4. Step Four: Principal**

If the athlete and parent do not feel that proper process was followed, they may take the matter to the St. Mary's Catholic School principal by providing their concerns in writing.

It is absolutely necessary that this chain of communication be followed specifically. If not, the upper level authorities will direct the offended party to solve the problem at the appropriate level.

#### **Playing Time Policy**

While it is true that our coaches and administrative personnel believe it is important to broaden and enhance the experience of St. Mary's Catholic School athletes through their playing time, it is also an important goal of the St. Mary's Catholic School athletic program to strive toward excellence. Therefore, no minimum per game playing time provisions are established. The following guidance will be followed by all coaches and the playing time decisions are left up to the individual coaches:

- Elementary School (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> grade levels) – Effort, sportsmanship and respect to teammates and coaches will determine playing time. Individual talent will not be the determining factor for playing time at this level. Ample playing time will be earned as long as the athlete attends practice, is obedient in practice, and puts out an effort to learn.
- Middle School (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels) – Playing time will be determined on effort, sportsmanship, and talent of the athlete. Everyone should play in every game, but it may be minimal for some players depending on the situation of the competition. Coaches will be able to identify the situation of the competition and adjust the team accordingly.
- SIJHSAA Tournaments – Playing time will be determined on effort, sportsmanship and talent of the athlete. Rosters will be established prior to the tournament based on the SIJHSAA guidelines. Roster participants can be made up athletes from multiple different age levels. Although it is the goal for everyone to play in every game, the playing time at this level is not guaranteed.

## **SAFETY**

### **Accidents/Injuries**

If an accident or injury occurs, the athlete will be evaluated by the coach. If the injury is serious, the coach will call emergency services and the parents/guardians. All coaches are trained and certified for CPR/AED, first aid and concussion safety protocols before the start of their season in the event of an injury or other emergency requires their immediate action. *See Addendum III for St. Mary's Catholic School Concussion Plan.*

All injuries should be treated with caution and handled with care. The parents will be contacted in the event of severe or significant injuries and consulted with in any decisions made in regard to treatment and rehabilitation.

Coaches treat any acknowledged condition in the confidential manner with which the information is related by the parent or guardian. If an athlete misses practice on the request of a physician, the athlete should have a note of clearance from that same physician before returning to practice.

### **Bad Weather**

Lightning, severe storms, hot and cold extremes: The Athletic Directors in consultation with coaches and officials (during contests), will make decisions based on the Southern Springfield Catholic Athletic Conference (SSCAC) and the Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association (SIJHSAA) guidelines for student-athlete safety. On the day of games, decisions are made by the host school as soon as possible.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Schedules**

The scheduling of all athletic events and practices is determined by the Athletic Director in cooperation with each coach. The coach will issue a schedule to the student-athletes and parents as soon as possible in each season.

### **School Equipment**

1. Athletes are responsible for all equipment issued to them. Athletic uniforms are supplied for the sole purpose of athletic participation. This equipment is not to be used for any other purpose.
2. When the season is over, all equipment and uniforms are to be returned to the coach who will keep inventory of all items issued to the team. The coach will then submit the end-of-season inventory list to the Athletic Director in a timely manner following the season.
3. **The parent is responsible for the dollar replacement cost of any lost or damaged school issued equipment or uniforms.**
4. Uniform budget will be allocated and reviewed by the Athletic Director according to a rotation schedule.

### **Scholastic Athletic Offerings**

The interscholastic sports currently being offered at St. Mary's Catholic School are:

- Boys and Girls Cross Country (August – October)
- Boys and Girls Golf (August – October)
- Boys and Girls Basketball (October – January)
- Boys and Girls Volleyball (February – March)
- Boys and Girls Track and Field (April – May)

### **Team Rosters**

The number of students permitted on some teams may be limited due to allowable roster sizes. SIJHSAA Rules limits the number of eligible players on their rosters. Those teams planning on participating in the SIJHSAA Conference Tournaments will follow the designated roster sizes to ensure that compliance is met. This is a discussion that will take place prior to the start of each season.

- Cross County (Boys and Girls) – Class S – No limit on eligibility list
  - A team may enter as many as seven (7) (runners) in the Regional and State Meet.
- Golf (Boys and Girls) – No limit on eligibility list
  - The State Individual Tournament will consist of a Boys and a Girls Division.

- A school may enter up to four (4) golfers per division.
- Basketball (Boys and Girls) – Fifteen (15)
- Volleyball (Boys and Girls) – Fifteen (15)
- Track & Field (Boys and Girls) – Class S - No limit on eligibility list
  - A member school may enter two (2) contestants per event, other than relays.
  - Each school may enter only one 4-member relay team per relay event.
  - An eligible individual contestant may compete in any 4 events.

### **Conference Affiliations**

St. Mary's Catholic School is a cooperating member of the Southern Springfield Catholic Athletic Conference (SSCAC) and the Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association (SIJHSAA). As a member, St. Mary's Catholic School is committed to adhere to the rules and regulations of the Athletic Conference and Athletic Association.

SSCAC By-Laws can be found in Addendum I.

SIJHSAA By Laws can be found here: [By-Laws \(sijhsaa.com\)](http://sijhsaa.com)

### **Publicity**

Please be advised that the St. Mary's Catholic School Athletic Department maintains a Facebook page at **St. Mary's Alton – Charger Athletics**. Your son or daughter's picture may appear online on this social media platform. If you do not wish to have your son/daughter photographed, please advise the Athletic Director.

## **ADDENDUM I**

### **SOUTHERN SPRINGFIELD CATHOLIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE**

#### **BY-LAWS**

Approved by the Principals November 14, 2012

[Revised and Approved by the Collinsville Region Principals—September 15, 2015]

[Revised and Approved by the Alton Deanery Principals—May 23, 2022]

#### **Section 1: ORGANIZATION**

- 1) The name of the organization is the Southern Springfield Catholic Athletic Conference SSCAC).
- 2) The SSCAC is an affiliation of the Catholic Elementary Schools of the cities of Collinsville, Edwardsville, Granite City, Highland, Godfrey, Bethalto, Alton, and Maryville. A school must agree to abide by the Bylaws, Rules and Policies as set forth by the Diocese of Springfield, the Illinois Elementary School Association and the SSCAC. Serious violations, as determined by the SSCAC Board may result in the dissolution of affiliation.
- 3) Members  
The conference will consist of the following schools:
  - a. Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic School – Collinsville
  - b. St. Boniface Catholic School – Edwardsville
  - c. St. Mary's Catholic School – Edwardsville
  - d. St. Elizabeth Catholic School – Granite City
  - e. St. Paul Catholic School – Highland
  - f. St. John Neumann Catholic School – Maryville
  - g. Holy Family Catholic Grade School – Granite City
  - h. St. Ambrose Catholic School – Godfrey
  - i. Queen of Peace Catholic School – Bethalto
  - j. St. Mary's Catholic School - Alton
- 4) Governance
  - a. A Board will consist of the Athletic Directors, Principals, Pastors and the Elected Officers.
  - b. Elected Officers of the Conference will be: President and Secretary.
  - c. Nominations for officers will be accepted by the current president two weeks before the first meeting prior to the school year. Elections will be held at the first meeting prior to the school year.



d. Role Descriptions/Duties

- Pastor & Principal
  1. Provide liaison and communication with the office of Catholic Education in Springfield.
  2. Provide interpretation of Catholic Education policies and by-laws.
- President
  1. Schedule meetings as needed and notify athletic directors and principals of each school participating in the conference.
  2. Call the meetings to order and preside over same.
- Secretary
  1. Take minutes at all meeting and distribute minutes to Athletic Directors, Principals, and Pastors.
- Athletic Director
  1. Attend all meetings or have a representative attend in their absence.
  2. Evaluate rules of each sport as submitted by the President.
  3. Be responsible for their home gym and equipment.
  4. Schedule games for their sports programs.
  5. Select and hire IHSA registered officials for their home games.

5) Frequency and Format of Meeting

- a The President shall notify all board members of the meeting schedule for the Board.
- b The President shall set the meeting agenda and distribute to all Athletic
- c Directors, Principals, Pastors and Elected Officers prior to the scheduled meeting date.
- d New Business – All matters of new business should be submitted to the President in writing prior to the meeting date.
- e All Athletic directors and elected officers are urged to attend all meetings.

6) Decisions of the Board

- a When voting, a quorum shall consist of three quarters of the voting members. Voting members will be the athletic directors from each school or their representative (one vote per school).
- b All decisions are approved by the conference principals before any resulting action takes place.

## 7) Responsibility of Schools

The following are League requirements of elementary school-sponsored athletic programs.

- a. Abide by the Diocesan educational policies and the SSCAC rules and regulations
- b. Require all volunteers to complete a background check and participate in Protecting God's Children workshop
- c. The following shall be obtained prior to any student participating in any practice or game:
  - Liability waiver signed by the parents or guardians
  - A certificate of physical fitness by a licensed physician, date of certificate must be within one calendar year of the student's participation in sports
- d. Provide competent supervision by qualified adult coaches who understand the sport, child growth and development, and some knowledge of first aid
- e. Students shall be grouped into teams on the basis of grade level whenever possible
- f. Promote proper physical conditioning prior to participation in games
- g. Require that students have proper fitting protective gear and uniforms
- h. Procure appropriate equipment and provide a well maintained facility
- i. Maintain a reasonable schedule of practices and games
- j. Coordinate a yearly coaches' clinic
- k. Abide by the IHSA, IESA, SIJHSAA & Diocesan concussion rules & guidelines

## 8) Amendment to SSCAC Bylaws

- a. The SSCAC Bylaws will be in effect for the period of one (1) year without change. Consideration for change must be presented to all board members in writing
- b. Any amendment to the SSCAC Bylaws, Rules and/or Policies shall only be permitted if authorized by the SSCAC Board.

9) Violation of conference bylaws and general rules will be reported to the principals who will determine consequences.

## **Section 2: GENERAL RULES**

- 1) The purpose of the school-sponsored athletic programs are to teach the skills of the game, to foster healthy exercise, to teach fair play, to give enjoyment to the students, and to instill a good Christian sports ethic. All athletic programs are open to boys and girls, and all are encouraged to participate.

2) The conference can offer the following sports:

- a. Baseball/Softball
- b. Volleyball
- c. Basketball
- d. Track

The following sports can be offered as intramural sports:

- a. Soccer
- b. Cross Country
- c. Golf
- d. Tennis

3) Any individual having concerns relating to the SSCAC must first submit their concerns in writing to the appropriate person(s) at their school. If further discussion or action is necessary, the principal or the athletic director of your school will contact the President of the SSCAC.

4) Teams

Every effort should be made to ensure that teams are of appropriate size. There should be adequate numbers to avoid forfeits, provide substitutes, and yet provide reasonable playing time for all players .

4.1) Teams may include another grade level if numbers are small, or a school may split the team if numbers are too large. A player may be added to the permanent roster anytime during a season as long as that player is not on the roster of another team in the SSCAC.

4.2) It may become necessary to temporarily add players to avoid a forfeit or to field a reasonably sized team. A player may be brought up a grade level but may never play down a grade level, unless prior approval is granted by the coaches of both teams. The principal must be notified in advance of any player moving down a grade level.

4.3) All participating players in any SSCAC league sanctioned event must be registered students at the school they represent.

5) Unsportsmanlike conduct is defined as the following:

Fighting, verbal abuse/dissent directed toward an official or opponent, racial or ethnic slurs, profanity/obscene gestures, flagrant/violent fouls, taunting/trash talking/baiting,

cheating, throwing/abusing equipment, physical intimidation or abuse of an official or opponent, and unauthorized leaving of the team bench.

5.1) Any player, coach, or bench personnel who is ineligible for a contest due to a suspension for unsportsmanlike conduct may not travel with the team to the game or attend the game.

5.2) Any player, coach or bench personnel ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible for the next contest played by their team, and remains ineligible at any level until the suspension is served at the level of ejection.

5.3) Any player, coach, or bench personnel ejected from a tournament game is ineligible for the remainder of the tournament.

#### 6) Schedules

6.1) Basketball schedules shall not exceed fifteen (15) regular season games, plus two tournaments. The conference tournament and state tournament are not to be counted against the two tournament rule.

6.2) Volleyball schedules shall not exceed 15 matches, plus two tournaments. The conference tournament and SIJHSAA or IESA tournaments shall not count towards the number of matches and are not counted against the two tournament rule.

6.3) Game time Start Limits: Basketball games can't be scheduled to start before 5:30pm. Basketball games can't be scheduled to start after 7:30. Volleyball games can't be scheduled to start before 5:30pm. Volleyball games can't be scheduled to start after 7:45pm.

#### 8) Conference Tournament

The SSCAC will sponsor a conference tournament at the conclusion of regular league play for eighth grade only.

8.1) The conference tournament will be held at sites on a rotating basis as agreed upon by the athletic directors.

8.2) Tournament seedings will be based on the league standings at the end of the season. In case of a tie, comparative records will be used to determine the seedings. The following comparisons will be used to determine placement.

a) The number of basketball games or volleyball matches, won or lost;

- b) The number of basketball games or volleyball matches won or lost head to head between those two teams with an identical record.
- c) In volleyball, the point difference in the aforementioned matches above in (b), head to head, between those two teams with an identical record;
- d) A flip of the coin.

8.3) **Tiebreakers and Conference Tournament Seeding** - In the case of inclement weather postponements during basketball season that cannot be rescheduled, the season banners shall be determined by the number of conference losses. Seeding for the tournament shall be based upon overall winning percentage. The AD who is head of the conference shall order the conference banners and collect funds from each conference school.

#### 9) Playing Time/Limitations

9.1) Basketball players will be limited to six (6) quarters per day. Overtimes count as part of the fourth quarter. Upon entering the game, the player will have played in that quarter regardless of the amount of time. This proviso does not apply to tournaments where more than one game may be played in one day.

9.2) There is no limit on other sports.

9.3) In volleyball, matches will have a sixty (60) minute time limit unless playing a third decisive game. During the finals there is no time limit for matches.

#### 10) Sport Seasons

10.1) The **basketball season** may begin October 1 for practices and after Columbus Day for games (conference or non-conference). The conference season shall end before Christmas break. The fourth grade instructional league may continue into January. The conference tournament will be held the first full week of January. Schedules must be finalized by September 15th each year.

10.2) The **volleyball season** may begin the second week of January for practices and the fourth week of January for matches. The season shall end the second week of March with the conference tournament held the third or fourth week of March dependent on Holy Week. Schedules must be finalized before schools leave for Christmas break.

10.3) The **track season** may begin the fourth week of March and shall conclude with the conference meet.

Fr. McGivney and Marquette Catholic High Schools have offered to rotate hosting the basketball and volleyball conference tournaments.

## ADDENDUM II



### IMPLEMENTATION OF NFHS SPORTS PLAYING RULE FOR CONCUSSIONS

*The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) institutes a national playing rule regarding potential head injuries. The rule requires "any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional."*

**DEFINITION OF CONCUSSION - A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete doesn't have to lose consciousness to have suffered a concussion.** *NOTE: The persons who should be alert for such signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion in an athlete include appropriate healthcare professionals, coaches, officials, parents, teammates, and, if conscious, the athlete himself/herself.*

BEHAVIOR OR SIGNS OBSERVED THAT ARE INDICATIVE OF A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY A PLAYER THAT ARE INDICATIVE OF A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Loss of consciousness</li><li>• Appears dazed or stunned</li><li>• Appears confused</li><li>• Forgets plays</li><li>• Unsure of game, score, or opponent</li><li>• Moves clumsily</li><li>• Answers questions slowly</li><li>• Shows behavior or personality changes</li><li>• Can't recall events prior to or after the injury</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headache</li><li>• Nausea</li><li>• Balance problems or dizziness</li><li>• Double or fuzzy vision</li><li>• Sensitivity to light or noise</li><li>• Feeling sluggish</li><li>• Feeling foggy or groggy</li><li>• Concentration or memory problems</li><li>• Confusion</li></ul>

#### PROTOCOL

This protocol is intended to provide the mechanics to follow during the course of contests/matches/ events when an athlete sustains an apparent concussion. For the purposes of this policy, appropriate health care professionals are defined as: physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois and certified athletic trainers.

#### POLICY

1. During the pre-game conference of coaches and officials, the official shall remind the head coaches that a school-approved appropriate health care professional will need to clear for return to play any athlete removed from a contest for an apparent head injury, unless that injury is the result of the student-athlete losing consciousness for any period of time. In such a situation, the student-athlete shall be removed from the practice or contest and will not be allowed to return to activity that day and will be subject to the Association's Return to Play policy.
2. The officials will have no role in determining concussion other than the obvious situation where a player is unconscious or apparently unconscious as is provided for under the previous rule. Officials will merely point out to a coach that a player is apparently injured and advise the coach that the player should be examined by the school-approved health care provider.
3. If it is confirmed by the school's approved health care professional that the student did not sustain a concussion, the head coach may so advise the officials during an appropriate stoppage of play and the athlete may re-enter competition pursuant to the contest rules.
4. **RETURN TO PLAY POLICY**  
Background: With the start of the 2010-11 school term, the NFHS implemented a new national playing rule regarding potential head injuries. The rule requires "any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional." In applying that rule in Illinois, it has been determined that only certified athletic trainers and physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois can clear an athlete to return to play the day of a contest in which the athlete has been removed from the contest for a possible head injury. In cases when an athlete is not cleared to return to play the same day as he/she is removed from a contest following a possible head injury (i.e., concussion), the athlete shall not return to play or  
(continued on next page)

practice until the athlete is evaluated by and receives written clearance from a licensed healthcare provider to return to play. For the purposes of this policy, licensed health care providers consist of physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois and certified athletic trainers working in conjunction with physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois.

5. Following the contest, a Concussion Special Report must be filed by the contest official(s) with the IESA Office through the Officials Center.
6. In cases where an assigned IESA state finals event medical professional is present, his/her decision to not allow an athlete to return to competition may not be overruled.

#### **MANDATORY CONCUSSION COURSE FOR COACHES**

Senate Bill 7 (Public Act 99-245) amends the School Code and will go in to effect for the 2016-2017 school year. The legislation requires ALL interscholastic athletic coaches to take a training course from an authorized provider at least once every 2 years. The IESA makes the IHSA online concussion awareness and education program available to IESA member schools through the IESA Member Center. The program includes information on concussion awareness training, concussion recognition, best practices for avoiding concussions, return to play guidelines, and sub-concussive trauma. The presentation and other supplementary materials included in the presentation should be reviewed by ALL interscholastic athletic coaches prior to taking a required exam over the curriculum.



## ADDENDUM III

### St. Mary's Catholic School Concussion Plan

#### Concussion Team

1. Mary Rivera – Principal
2. Abbie Hough – Athletic Director
3. Allyson Beaber – Assistant Athletic Director

#### Concussion Symptoms

Physical	Cognitive	Emotional	Sleep
Headache	Feeling mentally foggy	Irritability	Trouble falling asleep
Dizziness	Feeling slowed down	Sadness	Sleeping more than usual
Balance difficulties	Difficulty concentrating	Nervousness	Sleeping less than usual
Nausea/Vomiting	Difficulty remembering	More emotional than usual	Drowsy
Fatigue	Difficulty focusing		Altered sleep schedule
Sensitivity to light			
Sensitivity to noise			
Visual changes			
<p>Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest or practice and shall not return to play or practice until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.</p> <p>If this occurs, the coach will contact the Athletic Director and school administration.</p>			

### **Return to Learn Protocol**

- A. Once an administrator, teacher or coach has been made aware of the possibility of a concussion or that a student is displaying concussion-like symptoms, the student must be evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional and documentation must be provided to the school.
- B. The student will not be able to participate in physical activities until that documentation is received.
- C. If the student has been diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of the severity, the team will meet to determine the implementation of the Return to Learn process.
- D. The information on the doctor's note will be taken into consideration for the planning of the Return to Learn process.
- E. The Case Manager will communicate the plan to the parents and the students.
- F. The protocol emphasizes allowing the student to participate in school in a graduated and modified fashion so symptoms do not worsen. Determining what is too much, will be fluid and by trial and error.
- G. The student will be given adequate time to complete missing assignments as determined by the administration.
- H. If at any point in the Return to Learn Process, the student displays regression, they may be pushed back to any of previous phases. This will be determined by the Concussion Team and communicated to the students and parents.

### **Return to Learn Phases**

- A. Phase 1: No School & No Physical Activity
  - i. Student experiences high level of symptoms and the focus is on brain and body rest
- B. Phase 2: Part-Time School with Accommodations
  - i. Symptoms have decreased to manageable levels
  - ii. Re-introduction to school on a limited basis with limited tasks.
  - iii. Accommodations
    - 1. Limit or eliminate "screen time"

2. Limit or eliminate sustained reading
  3. Provide student with a copy of class notes
  4. Homework load based on symptoms
    - a. No due dates on homework
    - b. Focus on material that is essential for learning the subject
    - c. Allow student to leave class a few minutes early
    - d. No physical activity (gym or PE)
    - e. Make list of student work (list 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc.)
- C. Phase 3: Full-Day Attendance with Accommodations
- i. Student's symptoms are decreased in occurrence and severity. Some activities may still trigger symptoms
  - ii. Gradually increase demands and work, as long as this does not trigger symptoms.
  - iii. Accommodations
    1. Continue to prioritize assignments
    2. Continue to list assignment for student
    3. Gradually increase amount of homework
- D. Phase 4: Full-Day Attendance without Accommodations
- i. Student may have no symptoms or mild and infrequent.
  - ii. Accommodations are removed and student participates fully with no symptoms.
- E. Phase 5: Full School and Extracurricular Involvement
- i. No symptoms are present during any school involvement.
  - ii. Before returning to physical activity, student must provide documentation from a licensed healthcare provider that allows student to participate in all physical activities

## **Return to Play**