

2009-2010



# Sport's Handbook



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction:	1
Consequences of Competition:	1
Positive Effects:	1
Negative Effects	2
Parent Steps	2
Athletic Policies	3
Eligibility for Sports	3 & 4
Communication	4 & 5
Game Attendance	5
Parent's Christian Sports' Pledge	5
Parent's Code of Ethics	6
Conclusion	6

## PARENT' S PRAYER

Lord, please protect the team from  
    harm today.  
Let them learn greater confidence  
    in themselves,  
And become healthier and more  
    agile.  
Let the athletes learn how to win  
With compassion and humility,  
    And to lose  
    With dignity and grace.  
Please guide their coaches  
In their attempt to make the team  
    A faith community for all  
    teammates:  
Let them learn how to work  
    together  
And truly care for each other the  
    way  
    All Christians should.  
Help me to be the best parent I  
    can be,  
And show me daily how to be  
    **A real winner in life--**  
A follower of Jesus the Lord.  
I pray this in His name.  
    Amen

## TIGER PRIDE SONG

Cheer Cheer for St. Malachy.  
Upward and onward may we ever be.  
  
Aiming toward our highest goal.  
Steadfast and worthy to our role.  
Whether the odds be great or  
small.  
  
St. Malachy will reign over all.  
With our students true and loyal  
Onward to Victory.  
  
Rah Rah Rah  
Cha he Cha ha Cha ha ha  
ST. MALACHY TIGERS  
Rah Rah Rah!

(Tune to Notre Dame Fight Song)

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Catholic school athletic programs exist to enhance the relationship between faith, religious practice, and the activities of daily living. Sports' programs are an integral part of Catholic education and the mission of the Church.

All activities within the Catholic school environment are designed to assist with this mission by helping young people develop a strong moral character based on faith. This character development must underlie the total daily school experience. Every aspect of the school experience must contribute to this endeavor, from the quality and thoroughness of academic work, to the way in which students behave and treat one another in each and every circumstance. Formal athletic programs offer a unique opportunity for adults to supervise the youth and demonstrate the Christian principles learned in the school environment especially within the highly emotional pastime of sports. Athletics is one of the most effective ways to teach "APPLIED CHRISTIANITY."

We hope this handbook will help to reinforce the importance of Christian witnessing so that all our children will be true winners in life with God.

## **GOALS OF THE SPORTS' PROGRAMS**

The goal of our sports' program is to benefit as many children as possible. The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade program is inclusive, allowing students of all ability equal opportunity to play, provided that they adhere to the eligibility requirements and their coaches' guidelines. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade programs are more competitive which are meant to provide a challenge for players with greater ability. Both programs will encourage skill development and teamwork; effort will be made to keep competition in perspective for the appropriate levels of development.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF COMPETITION**

### **POSITIVE EFFECTS**

Of all the activities our children engage in, athletics may have the greatest potential to cause both good and evil in their young lives. And yet, most of us continue to register our children for programs with little thought of the possible long-term effects of this pastime, or the way in which we can assure that sports experiences are profitable and full of growth.

Some research has found that participation can be a rewarding and healthy

pastime for children:

\* when children join sports solely because of their own decision,

- \* when children receive parent's approval and loving concern during the sport experience
- \* when athletic participation is combined with school service and leadership activities

### **NEGATIVE EFFECTS**

We need to be grateful for sports' programs. They give our children opportunities. Sports can help the child to become a stronger and happier adolescent and adult. We also need to be sensitive to the potential dangers of athletics. Sports are a powerful force in the lives of our children. Here are some additional facts to consider that can all create a negative self-concept and lower self-esteem for the student athlete:

- \* Parent's disapproval or hostility during the sports experience
- \* Excess pressure from coaches and parents
- \* Coaches and parents being unaware that boys and girls do not have to be a star athlete or win games to feel good about playing sports
- \* Parents over identifying with their children to measure their own prestige and self-image by how successfully their child performs

There are three to five million sports' injuries every year. Many psychologists believe a chief factor in these injuries is from the stress caused by an overemphasis on competition and pressure to seek approval.

### **PARENT STEPS**

A great deal of research on youth sport programs still needs to be done. In light of the current research, the best way for a parent to protect a child from the possible negative effects of competitive athletics is to do the following:

- \* Learn what your child wants from sports. Do they want to participate? Why do they want to participate? What are their goals in learning and playing the game?
- \* Make sure you have realistic expectations about your child's capabilities in the sport. Help your child develop realistic expectations.
- \* Help your child understand the meaning behind the experiences associated with competitive sports. One of the most difficult lessons to learn in our culture is the difference between winning versus being a success and being a failure. Does your child know that winning or losing is just a contest? Does he/she

know that success means trying to do one's best and improve one's skills within the limit of one's potential? Make sure your child knows there is no failure for someone who gives his/her best effort.

\* Do not interfere with your child's coach or the referee. If you see a problem, do not make a "scene." You will cause more embarrassment than help to your child. Set up an appointment with the proper personnel after a "cool-off" period.

\* Be responsible for disciplining your child, and make sure your child meets the specific responsibilities for participating in the sport by upholding the sport eligibility guidelines.

\* Respect the decisions made by the referee and coaches.

You can reinforce the Christian attitude toward good sports' conduct by setting a good example with your behavior, especially in the emotionally-charged times of games and tournaments. Support the coach's effort to create a Christian environment for the team. As a parent with a child in a sports' program, the atmosphere of the practices, games, and tournaments is everyone's responsibility.

## **ATHLETIC POLICIES**

The policies in the handbook for academic and school conduct are there to support the overall mission of Catholic education. Student athletes and parents need to abide and support these policies to maintain the integrity of our mission. Please note the sports eligibility policy from the St. Malachy Parent-Student Handbook. Note number two relating to attendance. This includes attending the practice or game that day.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR SPORTS**

St. Malachy recognizes the value of extracurricular activities in the educational process and the value that young people develop when they have the opportunity to participate in an organized activity outside of the traditional classroom. St. Malachy further encourages the development and promotion of sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity in all phases of the educational process and in all segments of the community, including administrators, participants, adult supervisors, parents, and fans.

### **Eligibility:**

1. Sport's Physical Forms are required each year and must be on file before the first day of practice.
2. Athlete must be in attendance at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the school day in order to practice or compete on that day.
3. Athlete must maintain a passing grade in every subject area  
A student becomes ineligible when:
  1. He/she has an F average in any subject area.

2. He/she has a D in two or more subject areas.
3. A student's behavior is such that he/she is not representing our school properly—this includes the following school rules listed in the discipline policy as well as behavior according to the "off campus conduct."

-When a student is ineligible, he/she may not attend or suit up for games or practices during the time of ineligibility.

-When a student is on the ineligible list two times during a particular sports season, he/she will be dropped from the team if he/she becomes ineligible a third time.

-Eligibility checks are made every Friday. This is an accumulation of grades throughout the quarter. Any student who is receiving a D in two or more subject areas or an F in any subject area will be removed from the team for a period of one week. Ineligibility starts on the following Monday through Saturday and are not eligible to play, practice, or attend any school functions until the next Saturday, pending academic status.

-Detentions are to be served regardless of the sports schedule.

Players that receive detentions will have the following consequences:

1 detention - will not be allowed to start the next game

2 detentions - will not attend the next game

3 detentions - in the season for which they are currently participating,

will be suspended from the team.

It is important for athletes to learn that their behavior on the playing field

is as important as their behavior for everyday life. Participation is a privilege which may be forfeited if students are not willing to meet the expectations of athletic eligibility.

Coaches also set up guidelines for their goals, rewards, and consequences for their sports. These are explained to the athletes at the beginning of the season. Athletes and parents must be willing to abide by and support these guidelines to enable the athlete to participate.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Coaches give their time, energy, and best efforts to teach your child the sport. Parents and coaches must commit themselves to teaching their children how to work as a team. This includes coping with frustration and adversity, and how to be a gracious winner. Communication will help parents, coaches and players to work together. Some steps that will help support the coach's efforts are as follows:

1. Let athletes follow their coach's instruction, and leave the coaching to the coach. Understand that you will not agree with or like every coaching

tactic, comment, or suggestion that is made by the coaches, but this does not warrant criticism. Contrary instruction from the parent will leave athletes confused and upset, and can undermine coach's leadership as well as weaken the team's accomplishments.

2. Allow the athlete to address his/her concern with the coach first. This not only promotes better communication with the coach and player, but also teaches the child to take the responsibility needed in personal development. None of the coaches should be considered unapproachable. Until the coach is made aware of the concern, nothing at all can be done to alleviate the situation. If the concern is not resolved, the player and parents may make an appointment to speak with the coach. If it is still not resolved, the parent may make an appointment with the athletic director/principal.

### **GAME ATTENDANCE**

As a parent and representative of St. Malachy Catholic School, it is important to set a Christian example. The following are game etiquette guidelines that will allow all of us to enjoy the game:

1. Exhibit a Christian spirit at all times. Players learn by example, and parents set the most powerful example.
2. Cheer good plays made by either team or player. Support the entire team, not just your child.
3. Be positive; never criticize or yell at the players, coaches, referees or other parents.
4. During play, remain seated in the gym. Breaks may be taken at time-outs or in between games.
5. No foods, drinks, candy, or gum-chewing is allowed in the gym. Food and drinks must be kept in the concession area. Gum-chewing is not allowed in the school.
6. Please report any concerns to the athletic director or supervisors on duty.
7. Keep sports in perspective; sports are meant to be fun.

### **PARENT'S CHRISTIAN SPORT'S PLEDGE**

I am registering my child in a Christian athletic program, which will emphasize Christian values and the importance of an active faith-life during practices and games. Although my child's team will practice hard and play their games to their best ability, faith in Jesus Christ—not just winning—will be the most important goal of the season.

I realize that my child will be expected to behave in a Christian fashion throughout the season, both on and off the court. Family and friends who come to their games will also be expected to act appropriately

for a Catholic sports program. As a parent, I pledge to do my part to witness Christian values at home and on the field, to support the coaches in their attempt to develop the team into a faith community, and to take seriously the faith dimension of the team's efforts.

### **PARENT'S CODE OF ETHICS**

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every game, practice, or other sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will support coaches and officials working with my child, in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol, and refrain from their use at all youth sports events.
- I will do my best to make youth sports fun for my child, keeping comments to my child positive, no matter what the score or how well they played.
- I will expect my child to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed, or ability.

### **CONCLUSION**

School athletic programs present ideal opportunities for teaching youth important life lessons: setting and meeting goals, controlling impulses, overcoming challenges and obstacles, and learning to sacrifice for the good of others. Playing sports can teach youth self-discipline, respect, responsibility and perseverance. Sports often generate moments of pride, satisfaction and joy, regardless of the wins and losses a team may experience.

All of these virtues and social and emotional abilities are at the core of the Gospel message. Making the connections between such virtues and abilities and the person and teaching of Christ are one of the challenges of making a sports program a truly Catholic Christian experience. Therefore it is imperative that school leader, coaches, and parents work closely together to ensure that the athletic mission contributes to the school's overall spiritual mission.

**St. Malachy's Sports Agreement**

While the school and the parish wholeheartedly believe in these policies and procedures, it reserves the right to alter, modify or terminate any policy or procedure at any time as the needs of the school or parish require.

I/We have read this handbook and agree to be governed by it.

Child/Children Name(s)  
(Print) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_

Date