



St. Margaret Catholic School

# Athletic Policy

2017 - 2018

Revised October 15, 2016

*“Nurturing all children and achieving academic success in the Spirit of Christ.”*

### **School Beliefs**

#### **St. Margaret Catholic School Believes:**

- 1. Education is one of the most important ways that the Catholic Church fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the person and the educational mission of the Church.***
- 2. Students learn in different ways and should be provided with a variety of instructional approaches to support their learning.***
- 3. Teachers, staff, administrators, parents, students and community members share in the responsibility for providing a supportive learning environment, thus fulfilling our school’s mission.***
- 4. Each student is a valued individual with unique spiritual, physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs.***
- 5. The commitment to school improvement is imperative for the school to enable students to become confident, self-directed and lifelong learners.***

### **The Mission of St. Margaret Catholic School Athletic Program**

St. Margaret is a Catholic School with a comprehensive Athletic Program. The purpose of the Athletic Program is to provide an opportunity to advance the Gospel mission of Catholic education. The successful integration of the Gospel message into the SMCS Athletic Program will produce individuals who are faith-filled, have respect for others, value human life and are willing to sacrifice for those in need.

“Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things, they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one.” Corinthians 9: 24 – 25

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## **SCHOOL and STUDENT/PARENT AGREEMENT**

The regulations and other provisions outlined in this handbook are considered a contractual agreement between SMCS and each student/parent enrolled in the school. In developing the rules and policies for St. Margaret Athletics, the administration has tried to anticipate as many issues as possible. As new and unusual situations may arise, the principal has the authority to use his/her discretion. Parental cooperation is essential for the welfare of students. If, in the opinion of the administration, parent behavior seriously interferes with the athletic process, the school may ban the parent from the athletic event(s) and/or deny the student from participating in SMCS athletics.

### **St. Margaret Catholic School Athletic Program Philosophy**

St. Margaret Catholic School holds as its basic purpose the Christian development of the whole child. The school recognizes the need to provide a comprehensive athletic program for all interested students at all ability levels. This program should strive to foster the self-fulfillment of all participants as individuals and as members of a community.

Athletics are an integral part of the lives of the students at SMCS. Athletic competition adds to our school spirit and helps students, spectators, and participants develop pride in our school. Athletics provide students with the opportunity to experience self-discipline, teamwork, commitment, sacrifice, and dedication as a means of achieving goals. Through athletics, SMCS's goals are for its students to develop greater confidence, increased self-esteem and to learn to accept personal responsibility.

Athletics should promote discipline and responsibility towards oneself and others. Further, the need for sportsmanship is inherent in promoting attitudes of fair play, teamwork, and leadership. It is hoped that students will gain a valuable perspective about themselves and life beyond the classroom and SMCS. To this end, we recognize that supportive and involved parents are of paramount importance.

Athletics should provide an opportunity for fun and enjoyment along with teaching the fundamental skills to all participants.

This handbook is organized to provide helpful information about SMCS's athletic program and the responsibilities and privileges of students, coaches, teachers, administrators, and parents who are all a part of the SMCS athletic program.

### **Participants' General Guidelines**

1. As SMCS cannot anticipate all athletic situations that may arise, the principal has the authority to use his/her discretion as new and unusual situations occur. All SMCS school policies remain in effect and may affect eligibility.

2. If a player is dropped off for a game or for practice, the parent must make sure that one of the coaches for the team is on the premises before leaving the child unsupervised. Failure to do so will result in the child being removed from the team.
3. If a student is found anywhere outside the designated practice area without permission from the coach, the player will be disciplined according to the school's Discipline Policy.
4. All coaches and players are required to help maintain playing fields, practice fields, restrooms, and gym during practices and/or games. (i.e. toilets flushed, informing coach of supplies needed, picking up drinking bottles, putting equipment away, throwing trash away, etc.)
5. Athletes are required to attend all games. If an athlete is unable to attend a game then it is the athlete's responsibility to inform the coach. Athletes should meet at the gym no more than 10 minutes prior to the time designated by the coach. The only exception will be if your coach requires an earlier attendance or if you have a parent or guardian with you at all times.
6. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from all games and practices for their child.
7. Attendance at all practices and games is expected and required. An excuse for a practice missed will be required prior to being allowed to attend the next practice or game.
8. All players are to be on time for practice and are to be prepared to participate. Tardiness, especially if repeated is cause for less playing time and possible removal from the team.
9. Students must communicate scheduled absences to coaches with advance notice. Coaches are expected to work with students involved in other activities (dance, piano, art, club meetings, etc) and those students who miss due to illness. A missed practice because of detention will not be considered an excused practice and the discipline put forth by the coach will be honored.
10. Every player must participate for the entire season. That means the player must attend practices and games. If a player chooses to not attend practices but chooses to show up for the game, that student will not be allowed to play. He/she will also be removed from the team and will not be allowed to participate in the school pep rally for recognition as a player or receive recognition at the end of the year at the Athletic Banquet. Just because a student signed up for a sport does not mean he/she deserves recognition. If a player is removed from a sport because of grades, the player will not be recognized as having played that sport.
11. An athlete cannot quit his/her respective team to join another team until the season is concluded. When one sport ends the student is allowed to move to the other sport of his/her interest.
12. Players must be picked up within 10 minutes of the end of any school activity (practice and/or game).

13. A death in the immediate family is automatically excused. No written excuse is required.
14. Transportation by someone other than the parent is allowed, but stipulations are required. Any child riding in your car is required to wear a seatbelt. Players are not allowed to ride in the back of a pick-up truck. If a parent is transporting students other than their own child, they must have proof of insurance in the amount of 100,000/300,000/100,000 medical and liability insurance. (Diocesan Requirement)
15. Players shall cooperate with the coaches, the game officials, and other team members.
16. Players shall remain in the designated areas and not leave their team until the end of the game.
17. If a player remains for the following game as a spectator, his/her parent must be present. He/she will be required to sit in the bleachers. NO Exceptions. Friends who are not on the team cannot sit with the team on the sidelines.
18. A player should promote good sportsmanship and school spirit through cooperation with other students, faculty, and administrators.
19. Only positive, supportive, encouraging language will be used by the players and coaches.
20. A player shall not use foul, degrading, demoralizing, embarrassing, or suggestive language when participating in the sport and when not. SMCS Discipline Policy will be enforced.
21. The use of alcohol, tobacco or any illegal drug/substance is strictly forbidden.

## **Eligibility**

Being a member of an SMCS athletic team is a privilege not to be taken lightly. SMCS prides itself on achieving this end by having student athletes who exhibit high moral character, integrity, and respect for themselves and their opponents. The following guidelines are set up to establish a student's eligibility.

1. All participation forms must be returned in the specified time:
  - Parental notification and permission forms
  - Any and all other forms specific to each sport
  - All participants must provide proof of a physical by a physician before any practice, or present a waiver before the first practice
  - Signed athletic contract
2. Students will be expected to adhere to the following academic guidelines:
  - Students shall maintain at least a 2.0 average with no grade lower than a D, and a maximum of two (2) D's, in order to be eligible for participation in athletic events. This average shall include all areas listed on the report

card. Grades will be checked at the mid-nine weeks and at the end of each grading period. The student deemed ineligible may not participate in game play or practice, league or non-league. Ineligible students may be reinstated if they meet eligibility requirements when progress reports are issued. The principal may at his/her discretion allow a student to continue playing a sport even if the student's progress report does not meet the established levels, if it appears to be in the best interest of the student.

- Students must meet eligibility requirements to try out for any athletic team.
  - Fourth Quarter grades will determine eligibility for cheerleading for the upcoming school year because of summer activities required by this individual sport.
3. Students must be present at school from 11:30 A.M. until dismissal on a game day to be eligible to participate unless a student has a scheduled doctor's or dental appointment for which they present a doctor's excuse.
  4. A player must exhibit good sportsmanship and team/school spirit during practice and games.
  5. Students serving out of school suspension may not participate in any athletic event during the suspension.
  6. Students having discipline issues and have "leveled up" according to the Discipline Policy of SMCS may not be able to play for an extended period of time.
  7. In order for a student to be considered a member of a team for the athletic banquet, an award, or any other purpose, one must have participated in the complete season. A student who quits or is removed due to grades or behavior will not be considered a member of that team for that year.

### **New Student Eligibility**

Any student who has transferred from another school to SMCS must check in with the principal to ensure eligibility. The student is considered ineligible until cleared by the principal.

If a student enters SMCS after a sport season has begun, the student may join the team if there was no try out and if there is space available on the team.

### **Sportsmanship**

All coaches, players, and spectators shall conduct themselves in a Christian manner and in accord with the stated purposes, objectives, rules, and regulations of the St. Margaret

Catholic School Athletic Program. Any and all of the above individuals shall be subject to appropriate sanctions of the program instances when such conduct is not demonstrated.

Sanctions: Intentional Unsportsmanlike Technical Foul – Cumulative for the season depending on the severity of the incident, any player, coach, or spectator could be excluded from participation or attendance at any game as well as for the remainder of the season at the discretion of the principal and Athletic Director. However, the following guidelines will be used in most cases.

1. Player

- First Offense – taken out of the game, not to play for the rest of the game.
- Second Offense – suspended for the rest of the game and the next game.
- Third Offense – suspended for the remainder of the season.

2. Coach

- First Offense – must stay seated for the rest of the game.
- Second Offense – suspended for the next league sponsored game.
- Coaches suspended for two games in one year for any reason will not be allowed to coach at SMCS

3. Spectator

- First Offense – Spectator will be removed from the athletic field/gym and will not be allowed to attend the next league-sponsored game.

## **Reasons Disciplinary Actions**

### **REASONS FOR BEING BENCHED OR SUSPENDED FROM A GAME(S) AND/OR ISSUED A DETENTION OR OTHER CONSEQUENCES:**

1. Players who do not exhibit positive attitudes.
2. Missed practices/games/tournaments.
3. Cursing or use of profanity.
4. Any unsportsmanlike behavior.
5. If a student is suspended from a game his/her playing time for the next game may be affected because of the suspension.
6. Vicious or malicious acts to injure another player.
7. Ejected by the official from the game.
8. Being disrespectful to other players and/or coaches (i.e. spitting in hands, name calling, inappropriate gestures, refusing to shake hands, etc.)
9. Three unexcused absences (practice or games).

10. Violations to school Discipline Policy resulting in the loss of extra-curricular activities.

## **Grievance Procedure**

### **INFORMAL RESOLUTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL**

When a complaint is made by a student or parent to a coach, sports coordinator, or principal, the parties involved shall personally endeavor to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of the matter. A conference shall take place at which the problem is discussed and attempts are made to bring the conflict to a resolution. Without exception, informal attempts must be made to resolve the issue before the formal process is initiated.

### **RESOLUTION PROCEDURES**

The following procedures shall be strictly adhered to when complaints are made.

Some situations may require a conference between the coach and the parent and these are encouraged; however, it is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. To ensure this, please follow the guidelines listed below:

1. Schedule an appointment with the coach by contacting the Athletic Director of the school.
2. Do not attempt to confront the coach before or after a game or practice. These times can be emotional for both parents and the coaches. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

If meeting with the coach does not provide satisfactory results:

1. Contact the Athletic Director and set up a meeting with the parent, student athlete, and the coach. The Athletic Director will attempt to mediate a resolution.

If the meeting with the Athletic Director does not provide satisfactory results:

1. Contact the Principal and set up a meeting with the parent, student athlete, and the coach. The Principal will attempt to mediate a resolution.

If a resolution cannot be found after meeting with the principal, the Diocesan Grievance Policy will be followed (RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS DIOCESAN POLICY 6500).

In keeping with the Gospel Values of justice, compassion, and reconciliation, the following regulations and procedures are designed to facilitate an orderly and expedient resolution of complaints or grievances which may arise in Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Lake Charles. The intention of this procedure is to facilitate a resolution of the grievance at the lowest possible administrative level and in a cooperative and conciliatory manner. This procedure is not intended to be adversarial in nature and neither party to the complaint shall be represented by legal counsel during any phase of the process.

Any parent or guardian may complain on behalf of a student about any dispute relating to the application or interpretation of any school relate policies. Any school employee may complain about any dispute relating to the application or interpretation of any local or diocesan school policy. Constructive criticism of any facet of school operation and complaints brought against school personnel concerned therewith should be motivated by a desire to enhance the educational quality and effectiveness of the school as well as to secure justice.

## **Resolution Procedures**

The following procedures shall be strictly adhered to when complaints are made.

### **FORMAL RESOLUTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL**

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached an informal level, the complainant may initiate the formal process. The following steps must be take place in the order given. A formal complaint shall not be accepted if it is filed or appealed at an inappropriate level.

A complaint may be withdrawn at any level. The withdrawal is indicated either by a complainant's acceptance of the disposition of the complaint at the particular level of appeal as indicated by signature on the official diocesan complaint form, or the complainant's failure to pursue further appeal within the required time period.

#### **LEVEL 1 The School Principal**

1. A written complaint must be submitted to the principal within five (5) days of the informal conference. The complaint must be written on the official diocesan complaint form obtained through the school office. The school office shall maintain a sufficient supply of these forms for distribution when requested.
2. The principal will meet with the complainant within five (5) school days of receiving the completed form. The principal will hear the complaint and any other information the principal deems appropriate.

3. The principal indicates his or her decision in a written statement on the complaint form and shall also identify the person to whom an appeal may be directed should the complainant so desire.

#### LEVEL 2 Appeal to the Pastor and Local School Board

1. The official diocesan grievance form must be submitted to the pastor of the parochial school within five (5) days of the principal's decision along with a written statement by the complainant setting forth the specific reason(s) for the dissatisfaction with the disposition of the case at Level 1. The pastor will notify the president of the local school board within another five (5) school days of receiving the grievance form.
2. All materials submitted at Level 1 shall be submitted to the Level 2 committee. Written records of a committee meeting shall be carefully made.
3. The committee shall hear the appeal of the complainant and review all materials presented at Level 1 as well as any other information the committee deems relevant.
4. The committee shall make a recommendation to the pastor after the meeting with the complainant. The pastor may accept, reject or modify the committee's recommendation, and his decision must be communicate in writing on the official diocesan complaint form to the complainant within five (5) school days. He shall also identify the person to whom an appeal may be directed should the complainant so desire.

#### **FORMAL RESOLUTION A THE DIOCESAN LEVEL**

#### LEVEL 3 APPEAL TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

1. The official diocesan grievance form must be submitted to the diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools within five (5) school days of the final case disposition at Level 2 along with a written statement by the complainant setting forth the specific reason(s) for dissatisfaction with the disposition of the case at Level 2. The superintendent will review the documents and make a decision that will be submitted to the Bishop.
2. The superintendent will then communicate the decision to the Bishop with five (5) school days. The Bishop may accept, reject or modify the Level 3 recommendation. His decision shall be final for all purposes. The superintendent will communicate the final decision to the parties involved in the grievance with five (5) school days of the Bishop's decision.

## **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Athletic Director of St. Margaret Catholic School shall have charge over all school sports. This includes all grades and both boys and girls teams. The Director shall enforce the Diocese of Lake Charles's Code of Conduct for those who work closely with minor children. The Director shall cooperate and accept the decisions of school administrators as well as keep the best interests of the student athlete in mind when it comes to sharing resources and working with the myriad of activities that students enjoy participating in.

The Athletic Director shall:

1. Submit to the office any fees that need to be paid for particular sports as soon as possible.
2. Distribute and collect all physical forms and permission forms to coaches. The Athletic Director should be made aware of any unusual health problems an athlete may have at the beginning of the season or any that should develop during the season.
3. Verify coaches and volunteers have been fingerprinted and have attended a Safe Environment class prior to the season or the coach is ineligible to coach until all necessary documentation submitted to the office.
4. Attend league meetings
5. Provide schedules to coaches.
6. Compose rosters with coaches names and phone numbers/email addresses; players names, date of birth, and phone numbers/email addresses.
7. Submit league scores to league director if require by that league via e-mail or fax.
8. Find parents and volunteers for various activities during games and post games. Such as score keeper, score board, chain crew, concessions, etc.
9. Contact official and make sure they are paid.
10. Coordinate with coaches on referees and other essential crews.
11. Submit all requests for equipment to office for approval prior to purchase.
12. Collect all uniforms and equipment at the end of each season.
13. Attend CCAL coaches' meetings.
14. Submit concerns or issues to principal.
15. Assist in recruiting coaches for teams; final approval of any coach will be done by the principal.
16. Submit all requests for fundraisers to the principal.
17. Turn in all monies collected (fundraisers, fees, uniforms, equipment, donations) to the office immediately after receiving funds. Deposits will be made to the proper account(s).
18. Compile athletic awards list.

19. All notes, letters, etc. must be approved before sent home with students.

### **Athletic Coaches' Responsibilities**

The athletic coach of each sport shall have charge of the entire team and shall arrange and be responsible for the training and practice program for that group of athletes. He/She shall enforce the code of conduct adopted in the Athletic Handbook. He/She shall cooperate and accept the decisions of the school administrator as well as keep the best interest of the student athletes in mind when it comes to sharing resources and working with the myriad of activities that students enjoy participating in.

### **Coaching Standards**

All SMCS coaches are expected to be aware of, and supportive of, the school's philosophy, mission statement, and athletic program philosophy. Coaches are expected to model exemplary conduct and professional decorum at all times. Coaching, like teaching, is a profession that wields great influence over the lives of children. We have great power and with it tremendous responsibility; therefore, all that we do must be carefully orchestrated to achieve the most productive results.

All coaches must adhere to the following standards:

- Practice is intended to teach students the fundamentals of the sport and to provide opportunities for students to develop skills and teamwork.
- Students are to be afforded many opportunities for water or other fluids during practice sessions.
- Only constructive, or supportive language, is to be used by coaches and players. Never is a coach to use foul, degrading, demoralizing, embarrassing, or suggestive language. Further, such language by players is not to be tolerated and is punishable under the SMCS Discipline Policy.
- At no time is a coach to strike a student or touch a student in an inappropriate manner.
- The Athletic Director, with the knowledge and consent of the principal, must approve off-campus practice locations.
- Coaches are responsible for securing the gym after practices and games and for supervising players the entire time they are on the campus or at the games.
- Coaches are to be aware of policies regarding student eligibility and are to implement those policies.
- All notes, letter, etc. must be approved before sent home with student athletes.
- Coaches are expected to assist with the upkeep of the gym, or playing and practice fields, by having students clean up after themselves.

- Coaches are responsible for all athletic equipment assigned to them. If equipment is lost or stolen, the coach is responsible for the return of all equipment.
- Coaches may not hand out any medication to players. In the case of asthma pumps, the coach must hold it and give it to the player if it is needed. (A medical release with a doctor's signature must be on file in the school office for this situation).
- Practices are closed unless otherwise declared by coach.
- All eligible players are to participate in the entire practice.
- All coaches must have a copy of a parent's release form.
- All coaches must keep accurate game-by-game and season stats. These must be submitted to the Athletic Director.
- All coaches shall help with the Athletic Banquet, and all coaches shall be present at the Athletic Banquet to hand out awards.
- Coaches represent SMCS and are expected to present themselves as such. Coaches that are ejected from a game will be suspended from the next game. The Athletic Director and principal will meet to decide if further action needs to be taken.

#### **Communication expected by Parents from Coaches**

- Team meeting before season begins
- What expectations the coach has for your child and the team
- The location and times of all practices and games
- The team requirements, i.e. practices, special equipment, coach's rules, etc.
- Disciplinary action that may result in your child being denied the right to participate
- Set practice times after coordinating with Athletic Director

#### **Communication expected by Coaches from Parents**

- Notification of any illness or injury
- Notification in advance of missed practices and/or games
- Prompt arrival for practices and games
- Prompt departure from practices

#### **Appropriate Concerns to discuss with Coaches**

- Treatment of your child emotionally and physically
- Ways to help your child improve his/her skills
- Concerns about your child's behavior

It is very difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you had hoped. Coaches make decisions based upon what they believe is the best for all students involved. There are certain things that can and should be discussed with your coach. Other matters, such as those listed below, must be left up to the discretion of the coach.

**NON-APPROPRIATE** concerns that should not be discussed with the coach during practice time, game time, or in front of other parents or players.

- *Playing time*
- *Team strategy*
- *Play calling*
- *Other students/athletes*

### **Parent Responsibilities**

To make our Athletic Program financially possible we rely on the money paid in fees and made at the gate and at the concession stand. It is the responsibility of each parent whose child is a participant in a sport(s) to take their turn working the gate of a game or working the concession stand if called upon. The Athletic Director works very hard to make sure that this is done fairly and equitably. If you are unable to work your assigned shift, it is your responsibility to find a replacement.

### **PRACTICES**

- There will be no practice or games on Sundays unless approved.
- The maximum practice time per week is 10 hours including weekends. Maximum practice time on school days is 1.5 to 2 hours and 2.5 hours on weekends.
- Practice sessions must end no later than 8:30 p.m.
- Practice schedules and game information will be given in a timely manner.
- Practice may be canceled at a coach's discretion and when possible 24-hour notice will be given.
- Students in grades 6 – 8 will not be allowed to practice during the week of midterms and/or finals.
- If a student chooses to wear biker shorts at practice, he/she must wear shorts over them.
- There is a minimum of a 24-hour notice to call a practice.
- Students on medical or excused leave from a sport are required to attend games and practices at the discretion of their coach.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Parents must provide coaches with information listing the parent's home and business address and telephone numbers or additional information to be used if the parent(s) cannot be reached. In addition to the above, the parent(s) must provide the name, address, and telephone number(s) of another person who has agreed to assume the responsibility when the parent(s) cannot be reached. This information must be kept on file with the team coaches and must always be current.

## **UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS**

The player is responsible for the care of the uniforms. If a uniform is not returned in the same condition as issued or is not returned at all, progress reports and/or report cards will be held until the uniform has been returned or paid for. This rule applies to all athletic equipment as well.

1. Players are allowed to wear their uniform only in conjunction with school events.
2. On game days an approved Athletic T-shirt may be worn with official school uniform bottoms.
3. A player is required to keep their hair out of their face at all times.
4. Make-up, jewelry and/or hair accessories are not allowed.
5. Players shall wear only the uniform assigned by the coach for each sport.
6. All players are considered representatives of SMCS and must be dressed appropriately on school grounds and at all athletic events.
7. Uniform shirts must be tucked in at all times.
8. When a student is in the school uniform whether it be the official school uniform or athletic uniform, the student is a representative of SMCS and the School Discipline Policy will be enforced when inappropriate behavior is witnessed.