



## **St. Mary School Junior High Athletic Handbook 2023-2024**

### **ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY**

St. Mary School believes that participation in athletics, both as a player and as a spectator, is an integral part of the student's educational experience. Such participation is a privilege, not a right, that carries with it responsibilities to the school, the team, the student body, the community, and the individual student athlete.

Interscholastic athletics are a supplement to the school's religious and academic programs, which strive to provide experiences that will help to develop the participant physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. Students participating in the interscholastic program are at a prime age to learn good sportsmanship, to learn the meaning of competition, to build character, and to develop personal qualities, which will enable them to become successful citizens as well as athletes.

### **ATHLETIC REGULATIONS**

St. Mary School is a member of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) and competes in the Cardinal Division of the Mid-State League (MSL). As a member of these two organizations, St. Mary voluntarily agrees to abide by the rules and regulations published in their official documents.

The following regulations will apply to all team members, cheerleaders, student managers, student-trainers, and auxiliary assistants, such as statisticians. Participation in athletics is a privilege, which should not be taken lightly.

#### **1. Participation Requirement**

Before any student may participate in interscholastic programs, they must fulfill the following requirements:

1. All potential athletes must have an approved and signed physical examination on file with the Athletic Director BEFORE participating in tryouts. (OHSAA requirement) Physical forms must be filed annually.

2. All individuals affiliated with a team must have an Emergency Medical Authorization Form on file with the Athletic Department. This form will be given to the appropriate coach who will have it accessible throughout the season.
3. All individuals must attend the pre-season OHSAA meetings at the beginning of the year and before each season, and additionally complete their Lindsay's Law training before they may participate in the season.

## **2. Student Responsibilities**

All athletes are students first and expected to abide by the standards set forth in the Student Handbook presented to them at the beginning of the school year and all St. Mary policies that apply to students. Violation of the student conduct code is also a violation of the athletic regulations. Consequences may include denial of participation privileges.

All school administrative disciplinary actions take precedence over athletics, which may include denial of participation for a stated period.

(For example: a student on out-of-school suspension is also denied the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities.) The principal, at their discretion, may also deny participation privileges for repeated school violations.

Additionally, Coaches may impose their own disciplinary actions for a student who violates the conduct code, should they feel the need. This may include sitting a student during a practice or game. Coaches will also report any violations that occur during an athletic event and/or practice to the school.

The Diocese of Columbus has concerns with conduct by students at school or away from school that may bring discredit or harm to the name of the school or the reputation of the student body. Consequently, conduct at school or away from school that is inappropriate to Christian moral standards, conduct that is in violation of the law, conduct that is detrimental to the common good, threatening, harmful, or offensive to other students, or staff, or conduct that is of such a nature as to jeopardize the good name of the school, may subject a student to discipline. Discipline for such conduct shall be at the sole discretion of the school.

As regards the enforcement of this policy, members of the St. Mary Discipline Committee met on Wednesday, May 3, 2006, to discuss this policy. It was determined at that time that incidents that occur off-campus which may be inappropriate to Christian moral standards, a violation of the law, or detrimental to the common good, threatening, harmful, or offensive to other students or staff or which may jeopardize the good name of the school will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Either the principal or recommendation to the principal by the Discipline Committee, which would include a meeting with the parties involved in the situation by either the Discipline Committee, the Principal, or both, will determine consequences for such inappropriate behavior. It was felt that maintaining a positive learning environment based on the rules and regulations as found in our St. Mary

School Handbook can be both challenging, as well as time consuming, on the part of the teachers and administration and that to include off-campus incidents may infringe on the rights and responsibilities of parents.

### **3. Academic Eligibility – OHSAA Scholarship Bylaw**

**Bylaw 4-4-3:** A student enrolled in the first grading period after advancement from the eighth grade must have passed 75% of those subjects carried the preceding grading period in which the student was enrolled.

**Bylaw 4-4-4:** A student enrolling in the seventh grade for the first time will be eligible for the first grading period regardless of previous academic achievement. Thereafter, in order to be eligible, a student in grade 7 or 8 must be currently enrolled and must have been enrolled in school the immediately preceding grading period and received passing grades during the grading period in 75% of those subjects in which the student received grades.

**Bylaw 4-4-5:** The primary responsibility for verifying eligibility rests with the receiving school. Eligibility shall be verified by reviewing school records or written verification from the sending school.

**Bylaw 4-4-6:** Summer grades and other educational options may not be used to substitute for failure to meet the academic standards specified in Bylaw 4 (all sections of Bylaw 4) during the last grading period of the school year.

**Bylaw 4-4-7:** Tutoring or examination to complete the preceding grading period requirements is permissible provided the inability to complete the required work on time is due to illness or accident verified by a physician and the procedure applies to all students in the school.

### **4. Academic Eligibility**

1. The academic performance of student athletes will be monitored and assessed every two weeks during the season of participation. The grades at the end of the grading period will be incorporated into determining the student's academic eligibility.
2. A student who is below 70% in two subjects will be ineligible for the next two weeks. The term of ineligibility will typically begin on Monday and it will end on the second Sunday. Ineligibility reports are due on Fridays at two-week intervals throughout each season.
  1. A student who is ineligible for the first time is allowed to practice with the team; however, he/she may NOT participate in official contest and may travel with the team.
  2. A student who is ineligible for the second time in a single season is NOT allowed to practice with the team, NOT eligible to play in the official contests, and NOT allowed to travel with the team.

3. A student who is ineligible for the third time in a single season is removed from the team. Student-athletes in this category can regain their eligibility for the next season based on the most recent quarterly report card.

3. The period of ineligibility will begin on the first school day following the distribution of the eligibility report and will continue until the second Sunday.

**ENFORCEMENT PERIOD:** The general enforcement period for all individuals participating in any St. Mary athletic program begins with the first allowable date of practice for the current school year in August as established by the OHSAA and continues until the completion of the final sporting event in the spring. Generally speaking, all athletes are to be considered under this policy for the entire calendar year.

## 5. Alcohol and Drugs

Any student involved with the athletic program is not to use, possess, sell, distribute, or transmit alcohol, harmful intoxicants, illegal substances, counterfeit, controlled substances or other mood-altering chemicals, which include over-the-counter mood-altering chemicals.

**POLICY ON CONSEQUENCES:** Consequences for violating the Substance Use and Unlawful Activities policy begin when an individual attends the first practice as a student athlete. The penalties are cumulative throughout the athlete's career and carryover from season to season and year to year.

*The Coach at his or her discretion may implement team rules and deny participation privileges. This will be communicated to the student athletes and their parents by the coaches.*

**First Violations:** The student must meet to discuss present options and future consequences with the Coach, parents, and the Athletic Director. The student athlete will be given the option to voluntarily enter an intervention program designed to educate the student. The athlete will be required to receive an assessment and provide written documentation from a certified drug and alcohol treatment center.

### **Consequences:**

The student athlete will be denied the privilege of participation in regularly scheduled contests (1 contest minimum).

By agreeing to participate and provide documentation of an assessment, St. Mary will allow the student athlete to continue to practice.

Refusal to agree to the terms listed above will result in the immediate dismissal from the team or sport.

**Second Violation:** For any second violations, a student athlete will be denied the privilege of participation in remaining regularly scheduled contests for that season.

The student must participate in and received counseling from a certified DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT CENTER and provide documentation. St. Mary will allow the student athlete to continue to practice at the discretion of the coach.

**Subsequent Violation:** Any additional violations will result in loss of participation privileges for one calendar year from the date of the violation, if expulsion does not occur.

All expenses related to any assessment programs and physical examinations are the responsibility of the athlete and his or her parents.

## **6. Tobacco Products**

Any student involved with the athletic programs is not to use, possess, sell, distribute, or transmit any type of tobacco product.

### **Consequences:**

**First Violations:** Any athlete violating Section 6 will be required to meet with the Coach, parents and Athletic Director to discuss the harmful effect of tobacco use. Materials will be distributed to reinforce the long and short term health risks involved with continued exposure. The coach, at his or her discretion, may implement team rules and deny participation privileges.

**Second Violation:** The student athlete will be denied the privilege of participation in regularly scheduled contests (1 contest minimum).

By agreeing to participate and provide documentation of an assessment, St. Mary will allow the student athlete to continue to practice.

Refusal to agree to the terms listed above will result in the immediate dismissal from the team or sport.

**Third Violation:** The student athlete will be denied the privilege of participation in 25% of the regularly schedule contests. (2 contest minimum)

By agreeing to participate and provide documentation of an assessment, St. Mary will allow the student athlete to continue to practice.

Refusal to agree to the terms above will result in the immediate dismissal from the team or sport.

**Subsequent Violations:** Any additional violations will result in the loss of participation privileges for one calendar year from the date of violation.

## 7. Other Unlawful Activities

Athletes are to refrain from committing criminal acts or participating in pranks that may be interpreted as criminal acts.

**Consequences:** will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

The head coach has the responsibility to report the unlawful activities to the athletic administration.

Consequences outlined above will be used as guidelines.

## 8. School Attendance

1. Athletes must be in attendance the entire day in order to participate in practice and for games. This may be waived by the Athletic Director for doctor appointments with appropriate documentations.
2. A student must be in school by the beginning of the school day (8:00 a.m.) following the day of competition in order to be eligible to participate in the next contest. Delays due to busses, weather, etc. will be handled individually.  
**Exceptions to this rule will only be based on doctor's appointments (routine only) or extreme circumstances, and the student athlete must obtain permission from the Athletic Director in these situations.**
3. Any student who accumulates five morning tardies within a sports season will be required to meet with the Coach, Parents, Athletic Director and Principal to determine eligibility.
4. An athlete who is suspended (in-school and out of school suspension) from school, is also suspended from participation in practices and games for that given period. School suspensions can result in dismissal from a team.
5. All students who miss school due to illness must follow the COVID-19 St. Mary Athletics Protocols and/or receive a doctor's clearance to return to play.

## 9. Game Cancellations

Should St. Mary School close due to weather, all athletic practices and contests for that day shall therefore be cancelled. Attempts to reschedule may be made dependent upon schedule availability and time of year. If school is cancelled for inclement weather the day before a contest, all athletes shall be deemed eligible. If school is closed for reasons such as illness or state mandate, game rescheduling shall follow COVID protocol per School, OHSAA and government policy.

## 10. Hazing and Bullying

Hazing and bullying behaviors of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited at all times. Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another

to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that creates substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in the policy. Bullying is defined as the abuse and mistreatment of someone vulnerable by someone stronger, more powerful, etc.

**Consequences:**

**First Violations:** As a violation of Sportsmanship regulations outlined by OHSAA, first violations shall require a team assembly with the Athletic Director. In addition, the student athletes involved shall also meet with parents, school administration and the Athletic Director to discuss the issue and determine punishment.

**Second Violations:** A second violation will result in an individual meeting with the student, parent, principal and Athletic Director. The student shall be required to miss 10% of the regular season contests as punishment (1 game minimum).

**Subsequent Violations:** Upon subsequent violations, the consequences outlined above shall be followed, with a mandatory punishment of a 25% reduction in contest participation (2 game suspension minimum). In addition, a Coach may choose to dismiss a student from the team, if the student is not dismissed via school punishment

**11. Tryouts and Outing of a Team.**

1. Tryouts/Assessments should only be used in the St. Mary Athletic Program to determine starting positions and subsequent placement/position on the team. Tryouts should not be used to cut individuals from a team. If St. Mary Athletic teams shall have an influx of members for a team, all efforts shall be made to accommodate the additional members, or an A and B team shall be established.
2. Athletes who quit a team or are dismissed from a team after the first official contest (including scrimmages) may not try out for another sport or participate in any organized conditioning programs in the same sports season until the team is no longer represented in competition unless the head coach of the sport and the athletic director grant a release.

**12. Equipment**

Failure to return issued equipment or failure to pay for damaged or lost equipment will result in prohibiting the athlete from participation in another sport until the equipment is returned or paid for.

Some teams require the athletes to purchase uniform supplies such as hats, socks, personalized jerseys, or warm ups. Athletes are expected to pay for such items prior to their being issued. Participation privileges may be denied until uniform supplies are paid for. (Athletes with a financial hardship should contact the Athletic Director.

### **13. Transportation**

All St. Mary student athletes will travel to and from contests via coach and/or parent guardians. Any adult who is responsible for transportation shall keep the proper documentation on file with St. Mary School.

### **14. Individual Sport Regulations**

Each head coach has the authority to provide athletes with additional regulations and possible consequences for violations. A Coach's disciplinary actions may include denying the privilege of participation for periods of time. Such rules will be presented in writing to the athlete and Athletic Director. Appeals of disciplinary actions taken by the coach may be made by the athlete to the Athletic Director.

### **15. Game Day Attire**

Game attire for St. Mary athletes will be the school uniform as stated in the St. Mary School Handbook.

At the discretion of the Athletic Director in consultation with the principal, in a pre-published schedule to be distributed at the beginning of the season, athletes may wear the following attire on game day:

Boys:

Dress Pants or Khakis (No jeans of any color)

Button down dress shirt with necktie only

Socks must be worn

Dress Shoes

(No other attire may be substituted for daily school uniform)

Girls:

Dress Pants or Khakis (Capris may be worn before October 1 and after May 1 – No Jeans)

Blouse

- Or-

Dress that is knee length, not tight fitting or see through, is no low cut, and covers student athletes' shoulders (Leggings should not be worn underneath of dresses that are too short, no spaghetti straps, halter tops or clear straps).

Dress Shoes

Sock or tights must be worn

Items not covered in Game Day Attire can be found under the Dress Code section of the St. Mary School Handbook.

The Athletic Director and the Principal have the authority to update or change the game day dress code on an as-needed basis.



## **16. Proper Dress for all Athletic Practices and Contests**

Practice apparel for all student athletes shall be t-shirts and approved gym shorts as defined by the Student handbook. Spandex and compression shorts are not permitted. There shall be no wording on the back side of the shorts. T-shirts shall have appropriate lettering, devoid of offensive or threatening words, words referring to drugs or having sexual connotations.

If an athlete comes to practice wearing inappropriate clothing, the athlete will be asked to change clothes. If no extra clothes are available, the athlete will not be permitted to practice with the team for the rest of the practice session (extra practice jerseys or uniforms are NOT permitted to be distributed to substitute for replacement clothing).

Each Coach is responsible for the enforcement of this policy.

## **17. After School Procedures**

In the wake of COVID-19, a student athlete may only stay after school in the event that a practice or contest occurs immediately following the conclusion of the school day. If practice or a contest does not begin immediately following the conclusion of the school day, the student shall leave via their normal school pick-up procedure. Parents should make these arrangements in advance. A back up plan should also be made in the event that games are cancelled and/or postponed due to weather or illness. If this occurs, an email will be sent to parents and coaches and announcement made to all students.

## **18. Due Process Procedures**

The athlete will be informed of violations by the coach and/or athletic administrator. In situations where removal from an athletic team is part of the consequences, student-athletes and their parents may appeal the ruling to the building principal within five days of the notification of the ruling. The athletic administration will hear the appeal within five school days after the appeal has been filed with the building principal. The athletic administration at St. Mary school consists of the principal and the Athletic Director. The athletic administration reserves the authority to include coaches and school board members in the appeal review process.

## **19. Code of Conduct for Volunteers**

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. A volunteer is expected to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in the Volunteer's Code of Conduct as a condition of providing services to the children and youth of our school.

As a volunteer, I will:

1. Treat everything with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
2. Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at school activities.

3. Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
4. Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor or administrator.
5. Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator.
6. Report suspected abuse to the pastor, administrator or appropriate supervisor and the local Child Protective Services Agency. I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to Civil authorities is, according to the law, a misdemeanor.

As a volunteer, I will not:

1. Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
2. Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
3. Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
4. Pose any health risk to children and/or youth (i.e. no fevers or other contagious situations).
5. Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth.
6. Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth.
7. Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
8. Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
9. Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

A volunteer working with children and/or youth is subject to a thorough background check, including personal criminal history. Any action inconsistent with the Volunteer Code of Conduct may result in a person being removed as a volunteer with children and/or youth as regards to our school.

Any volunteer who interacts with the children farther than covering athletic contest shifts and transportation and assists with practices and/or contests must have a Pupil Activity Permit (PAP) on file with the Athletic Director as required by OHSAA bylaw.

## **20. Volunteer Driver Information Requirements**

In order for a person to be able to drive on field trips or athletic activities, the following must be verified through our school office:

Security Background Check (BCI report)

Verification of attending a Protecting God's Children training session

Verification of valid Driver's License and proof of current insurance company

Completion of Volunteer Drive Information form with signature of parent

Sign and return Volunteer Code of Conduct form

## 21. Participation Fees

To keep the Athletic Department funded, and to allow for routine upgrades of equipment and uniforms, there shall be a participation fee assessed for each athlete at the beginning of each season that they participate in. The fee for the 2023-2024 season shall be \$75.00. If a student athlete's family shall find themselves unable to pay the cost of participation, they should contact the Athletic Director to discuss alternative arrangements.

*After reading the Athletic Handbook, please detach and return the signed Athletic Handbook Agreement to St. Mary School.* For all parents willing to drive to athletic contests, please detach and return the signed Athletics Private Transportation-Recommended Insurance form as soon as possible.



## St. Mary School Athletic Code of Conduct Agreement

I will participate as an athlete defined by the Athletic Handbook of St. Mary School. I have read the Athletic Handbook 2023-2024, and I understand that I will be subject to the rules, regulations, and consequences of the Athletic Handbook while enrolled as a student at St. Mary School. I have been issued a copy of the Athletic Handbook 2023-2024, and I am keeping my copy at home with my parent(s) or guardian(s).

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

I, parent/guardian of the above-signed athlete, hereby grant my athlete permission to participate in the athletic programs of the St. Mary School and acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Athletic Handbook 2023-2024.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

THIS SHEET MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO THE

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT  
ST. MARY SCHOOL

RETAIN THE ATHLETIC HANDBOOK