

**ATHLETIC
POLICY
MANUAL
2006 - 2007**

**ST. FRANCIS DE SALES
CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

I. Introduction

St. Francis de Sales School offers a variety of sports for both boys and girls in Middle School, including volleyball, basketball, soccer and track. The athletic program also includes cheerleading for all sports. Additional sports are periodically considered if there is sufficient interest on the part of the students and parents. The athletic program falls under the jurisdiction of the School, and is administered by the Principal, the Athletic Coordinator, full and part-time coaches, and parent volunteers. The St. Francis de Sales Booster Club serves as an advisory board to the Principal and assists with the administration of the program. St. Francis de Sales is a member of the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA) and is bound by all rules of the league.

II. Philosophy and Objectives

St. Francis de Sales School encourages wide participation in its athletic program so that students will have the opportunity to experience being part of a team and to develop their physical skills and athletic talents. Even though winning and excelling are desirable parts of any athletic program, the primary objectives of our program are the development of sportsmanship and leadership qualities. In order to provide this opportunity to as many students as possible, every effort is made to maximize the number of sports and teams, the roster sizes and each child's playing time within the practical limits afforded by the sport. However, because of the competitive nature of athletics, and because there are practical limits to team sizes, all students may not have the opportunity to participate in the sports programs to the extent that they may wish. By necessity, the process is selective. The primary goals of the younger teams are to instruct and develop skills. They will be as inclusive as possible, and all participants will be given playing time. Teams at the eighth grade or varsity level will also emphasize these goals but will include a stronger emphasis on competition and excelling and will be more selective in participation and playing time.

III. Details of Programs Offered

The following summarizes the sports programs offered at St. Francis de Sales.

A. Sports for Girls

Volleyball

Season: September through October

Teams: Varsity and Junior Varsity

Eligible Grades: 6th, 7th and 8th graders may try out

Soccer (Co Ed)

Season: September through October

Teams: Varsity and Junior Varsity

Eligible Grades: 6th, 7th and 8th graders may try out

Basketball

Season: November through January

Teams: Varsity, Junior Varsity and "C" Team

Eligible Grades: 6th, 7th and 8th graders may try out

Track

Season: March through April

Teams: One team, all inclusive (no tryouts)

Eligible Grades: 6th, 7th and 8th grades may join

Cheerleaders

Season: September through May

Teams: There is one all inclusive cheerleader squad (no tryouts)

Eligible Grades: 7th graders may join in the 4th quarter of their 7th grade year.

B. Sports for Boys

Soccer (Co Ed)

Season: September through October

Teams: Varsity and Junior Varsity

Eligible Grades: 6th, 7th and 8th graders may try out

Basketball

Season: November through February

Teams: Three teams

Eligible Grades: 6th, 7th and 8th graders may try out

Track

Season: March through April

Teams: One team, all inclusive (no tryouts)

Eligible Grades: 6th, 7th and 8th graders may join

For all sports, games are usually held after school, one or two days a week. Practices are also held after school, on non-game days. Tryouts are held in the first week of the season.

The Booster Club has purchased uniforms for the athletes. A usage fee is charged.

IV. Grade Eligibility

Eligibility requirements for sports are the same as those listed for extracurricular activities in the St. Francis de Sales School Student-Parent Handbook.

In order to participate in extracurricular activities, a student shall maintain at least a C average in each subject and satisfactory conduct in each subject, including homeroom.

Eligibility will be checked every 4-1/2 weeks and a progress report issued to a student not meeting this standard. Students doing below average work or making an N in conduct will be required to have written parental permission requesting that the student be allowed to remain in the activity until the next progress report.

Any student receiving an F or U on the report card is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities for a period of 4-1/2 weeks. Parental permission does not apply in this situation.

The Assistant Principal must certify that a student is eligible to participate before he or she can try out for a team. If a student becomes ineligible, that student is not allowed to participate in any practices or games. The Assistant Principal must re-certify the student's eligibility. A coach cannot certify or re-certify a student's eligibility.

Cheerleaders maintain their own policies governing initial eligibility in their "St. Francis de Sales Cheerleading Constitution." Eligibility during the school year follows the same guidelines as for sports teams.

V. General Rules of Conduct

1. Players, parents and coaches shall remember that they are ambassadors of St. Francis de Sales and shall conduct themselves accordingly at all times, especially at games. Good sportsmanship, mature conduct, and respect for opposing players, coaches, officials and parents shall be maintained at all times, in victory or defeat.
2. Discipline problems encountered during athletic activities will be dealt within the same manner and in accordance with the same rules used for dealing with discipline problems in the school.
3. Players shall obey and respect the coaches at all times.
4. Coaches shall treat all players with dignity and respect at all times.
5. Parents shall treat the coaches and the players with respect at all times.

6. No student shall be allowed to participate in any athletic program unless a signed Parent/Guardian Consent Form, Medical History Form, and Physical Examination Form are on file in the office of the Athletic Director.
7. A student must be in school in order to participate in a sport or other activity on a given day.

B. Athletic Coordinator's Responsibilities

1. The Athletic Coordinator shall represent or see that the school is represented at all GHCAA (Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association) meetings.
2. The Athletic Coordinator shall be responsible for turning in the team roster to the Principal at the start of each sport season and for verifying that the signed forms are on file for each player.
3. The Athletic Coordinator shall collect all applicable fees on the first day of practice.
4. The Athletic Coordinator shall verify that uniforms are available.
5. The Athletic Coordinator shall attend all parent meetings.
6. The Athletic Coordinator shall confirm the master schedule, and distribute copies, including maps or directions for all away games, to parents.
7. The Athletic Coordinator shall assist the coach in collecting uniforms at the end of the season.

C. Coaches' Responsibilities

1. Coaches shall have responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the team and shall have authority to make decisions accordingly. However, the Principal is the final recourse on all matters.
2. Coaches shall have the responsibility to supervise the student athletes entrusted to their care at all times. This includes waiting for all students to be picked up after practices and games.
3. In preparation for tryouts, for each sport, the coach shall:
 - ~ Discuss with the Principal his proposed plans for the tryouts and his philosophy for team formation, roster size, etc.

- ~ Tell the prospective players when the practices and games will normally be held so that each player is able to commit to making the practices and games.
 - ~ Explain in detail to the contenders what the tryouts will include, how they will be conducted, and what exactly the coach will be looking for in the contenders. Procedures shall be given in writing.
 - ~ Verify with the Assistant Principal that those players participating in tryouts are eligible to do so.
4. Coaches shall ensure that tryouts for all teams are fair and equitable and that they are conducted in such a manner as to ensure that all contenders have a chance to be fairly and adequately evaluated. For all teams, a minimum of four practices shall be held before any cuts are made.
 5. When tryouts have been completed, the coach shall personally contact each of those players who did not make the team and explain to them the reasons they were not selected. This shall be done before the others are notified who is on the team.
 6. After team selection is complete, the coach shall call a parent meeting to explain to parents all parent and student responsibilities and to answer any questions. Participation by at least one parent per child is mandatory.
 7. The coach shall be responsible for passing out, and collecting if applicable, all required forms, game schedules, etc.
 8. Before each game, the coach shall verify with the Athletic Coordinator that the game time and location shown on the schedule is correct and that referees have been assigned. He shall also verify with the Team Parent that they have made arrangements for field set-up and take-down, if applicable.
 9. For each game, the coach shall bring First Aid Supplies and copies of the players' Parent/Guardian Consent Form.
 10. At the end of the season, the coach shall collect all uniforms that belong to the school.
 11. At the end of the season, the coach shall submit to the Principal his nominations for Most Improved Player, Best Sportsmanship and Most Valuable Player awards

D. Players' Responsibilities

1. Before joining a team, the player is expected to commit to attending all practices and games unless there is a legitimate reason for an absence. If a player must miss a practice or game, it is his responsibility to inform the coach in advance.
2. Players are expected to show up for practices and games on time, with the proper clothes and equipment, ready to play. Players must be in regulation uniform to play in games.
3. Players are expected to abide by all rules set forth herein and any other rules established by the coach. Players failing to abide by the rules are subject to being dropped from the team.
4. Players should remember that they are part of a team and should be team players. They should be supportive of their team mates both on and off the field.

E. Parents' Responsibilities

1. At least one parent shall attend all team meetings.
2. Parents shall see that fees and all required forms are turned in promptly. A player will not be allowed to play in a game if proper forms and fees have not been turned in.
3. Parents shall pay a fee for bus transportation of their children to all sports events. Parents are responsible for arranging for the transportation of their children from all sports events to their homes. Players will not be allowed to solicit their own rides with other players' parents without their own parents' consent. Coaches will not be allowed to transport students home.
4. If a parent is volunteering to transport students - other than the driver's child, the school must have the following on file:
 - a. A recent copy of each parent's Motor Vehicle Report. "Application for Copy of Driver Record" may be obtained from the school and is to be returned to the school for mailing and fee payment. A single conviction for DWI or two at fault accidents will result in ineligibility to transport children
 - b. A copy of the parent's driver's license.
 - c. The "proof of insurance" for the vehicle(s) being used.

These documents will be kept in a “volunteer” file for a maximum period of three years. The definition of volunteer includes parents using their own vehicles who may wish to drive other than their own children in conjunction with specific activities.

Volunteers who assist with school activities on a regular basis must attend the **VIRTUS Protecting God’s Children Workshop** (Safe Environment Program) and successfully complete a background clearance prior to engaging in volunteer services.

5. Parents shall see that their children arrive at practices and games at the specified times and that they are picked up promptly when practices and games are over. Children who are not picked up promptly after practices or games are subject to being dropped from the team after the second such occurrence.
6. It is the parents’ responsibility to see that students left at school waiting to participate in a game or practice are properly supervised. Students shall not be permitted to roam unsupervised around the school or to leave the school grounds. Parents should arrange among themselves to have at least one parent present to provide such supervision. An open classroom will be provided if requested. Siblings shall not be left unsupervised with students awaiting a practice or game.
7. Parents should cheer the players on but should refrain from coaching from the sidelines. This causes confusion for the players and difficulties for the coach. If a parent has a specific concern, it should first be discussed with the coach in private.
8. Parents should volunteer, without being asked, to help with all of the tasks that are required to make the various athletic programs fun and successful. This may include a variety of things, such as helping set up the fields, working the concession stand, working the scoreboard, etc.

VI. Booster Club

The Booster Club is established for the benefit of the school and operates in accordance with bylaws approved by the School Board. The Booster Club assists the school by promoting parent involvement with and concern for athletic competition, which teaches students the dual nature of physical activity and moral growth. All parents are automatically members of the Booster Club, and are encouraged to actively support Booster Club activities and to consider participation as a member of the Booster Club board.

VII. Awards

An Athletics' Award Ceremony, sponsored by the Booster Club, is held at the end of each school year. The purpose of this ceremony is to recognize all of the athletes who have participated in the various sports programs throughout the year and to give special awards. For each team in each sport, for both the boys and the girls programs, awards will be given for Best Sportsmanship, Most Improved Player and Most Valuable Player. The recipients of these awards are selected by the team coaches immediately after each sport ends, and the names are kept by the Principal until the award is made at the Athletics' Award Ceremony. In order to be eligible for an award, the student must be in good standing with the school during the particular sporting season. Additionally, the Scholar Athlete Award is presented at this ceremony. The Scholar Athlete Award is for the eighth grade student who has excelled in athletics while at the same time excelling in academics and who has demonstrated a superior level of good sportsmanship at all times. Specific requirements include participating in a minimum of two sports and maintaining an A average during the season. The recipients of this award, one girl and one boy, are selected by the Principal and the coaches. Other awards, such as team awards, may also be made at this time.

VIII. SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ATHLETIC COORDINATOR, COACH, AND TEAM PARENT

Athletic Coordinator

General

- Represent or ensure that school is represented at all GHCAA meetings.

At Start of Season

- Turn in team roster to Principal.
- Check to ensure that the files contain a signed Parent/Guardian Consent Form (one per player for entire year), signed Medical History Form (one per player per year), and signed Physical Examination Form (one per player per year) for each player.
- Collect all playing fees on first day of practice.
- Verify that team uniforms are available.
- Attend all parent meetings.
- Confirm master schedule, communicate to parents, including maps/directions for all away games.

For Each Game

- Call opponent and verify that time and location shown on schedule is correct.
- Verify with GHCAA that referees have been assigned.

At End of Season

- Assist coach in collecting uniforms that belong to the school.

COACH

At Start of Season

- Review proposed plans for tryouts and team formation with Principal.
- Discuss practice and game times, tryout procedures with prospective players.
- Conduct fair and equitable tryouts.
- Verify that each player has been certified by the Assistant Principal to play.
- Personally notify players who do not make the team.
- Conduct parent meeting.
- Pass out and collect from all players signed Parent/Guardian Consent Form, Medical History Form, and Physical Examination Form. Only one of each of these forms is needed per year so this does not apply to players who have participated in another sport previously this same year.
- Pass out game schedules and any other pertinent information.
- Check that parents who transport children, other than their own, to the children's homes after athletic events are on the "approved pool of drivers" list in the school office.

For Each Game

- Verify with Athletic Coordinator that game time and location shown on schedule is correct.
- Verify with Athletic Coordinator that referees have been assigned.
- Verify with Team Parent that arrangements have been made for field set-up and take-down, if applicable.
- Bring First Aid supplies and copies of players' Parent/Guardian Consent forms.
- Wait for all players to be picked up after game.

At End of Season

- Collect all uniforms that belong to the school.
- Select winners of awards for Most Improved Player, Best Sportsmanship and Most Valuable Player and submit to Principal in a sealed envelope.

Team Parent

At Start of Season

- Assist the Coach with distribution and collection of forms, schedules, etc.

For Each Game

- Make arrangements with volunteer parents for field set-up and take-down.
- Make arrangements with volunteer parents for concession stand help.

At End of Season

- Organize optional team party