

Saint Mary of the Assumption



Co-Curricular Handbook **2025-26**

*God, let me play well but fairly.
Help me to learn something that matters
once the game is over.
Let competition make me strong but never hostile.
Always let me help my opponent up.
Never catch me rejoicing in the adversity of others.
If I know victory, allow me to be happy;
if I am denied, keep me from envy.
Remind me that sports are just games.
If through athletics I set an example,
let it be a good one.*

Goals

The interscholastic athletic program is an integral part of our educational curriculum. It provides opportunities for learning experiences that are difficult to duplicate in other school activities.

Interscholastic athletics have the following major objectives:

- To provide opportunities for interscholastic competition.
- To provide activities that lead to greater school unity.
- To provide students with an opportunity to learn good health habits.
- To provide opportunities to learn and observe good sportsmanship.
- To provide activities for learning self-discipline, loyalty, team play, personal pride in the school and respect for the rights of others
- To provide opportunities for participation in interscholastic athletics as a privilege with accompanying responsibilities.
- To provide an opportunity for the athlete to place team, squad, class and school above his/her personal wants.
- To provide an opportunity for new friendships with teammates and with opponents.

Co-Curricular Code for Parents and Spectators

Parents are reminded that:

- Children have a greater need for a good example than for criticism.
- Most children are easily affected by outside influences.
- They should attempt to relieve the pressure of competition, not increase it.
- They should be considerate of coaches and officials. These individuals have put in a lot of time and effort working with and for your child.
- Opponents are a necessary part of competition. Without the opponent, there would be no competition.
- Applause is important for good plays by your team and by members of the opposing team.
- They should not question an official's judgment and honesty. Officials are symbols of fair play, integrity and sportsmanship.
- They should accept the results of each game. Encourage your child to be gracious in victory and to turn defeat into victory by working toward improvement.

Cougars' Creed

I realize that my participation in athletics places me in a unique position among other students. My behavior, conduct and attitudes reflect upon my teammates, my school, my community and my family. I agree therefore, that as a St. Mary's School athlete I will...

- Follow the training rules prescribed by the coach.
- Show good behavior including respect for the rights, property and opinions of others.

- Cooperate with those in authority.
- Refrain from using supplies and equipment improperly.
- Realize that I am attending school to learn to become an effective citizen of my community and a good Catholic Christian. Important as my athletic activities may be to me, I acknowledge that first and foremost I must keep up in my studies and my work toward stronger faith in God.
- Play according to the rules of the game.
- Observe good sportsmanship at all times.
- Place my team, class and school above my personal interests.

***The Cougars' Creed also applies to coaches, staff members, spectators, parents, and referees.** We are all representing St. Mary's School, and we must be first in setting the example to our athletes as to proper, Christian conduct at sporting events.

Behavior Code

Failure to follow the rules and responsibilities stated in this Handbook will result in disciplinary action, which could include the athlete's removal from the team. If behavioral incidents are occurring at practice, the coach will be in contact with parents and then administration to determine a plan or further action.

Academic

- A student athlete must maintain at least a letter grade of "C-" throughout the season to be eligible to participate in athletic contests. Eligibility checks will be made every 4 ½ weeks.
- First offense: The athlete is ineligible for a minimum of 1 week. The athlete may practice, but will not participate in games. The student will become eligible after one week if all grades are up. **The student will remain a part of the team and must attend all practices and games unless there is another agreed upon arrangement between administration and parents.** If the student is not eligible after one week, the consequence for a second offense will begin.
- Second offense: The student will be ineligible for games for a minimum of two weeks. After two weeks, the student will become eligible as soon as all grades are at a C- or higher.
- Third offense in the season: The student will be finished for the season. S/he will be eligible for the next sport season if grades meet the requirement above.
- If a student becomes ineligible at any time during the season, the principal reserves the right to enforce the penalties listed above.

Self Discipline

An athlete who disrupts practice will be left to the discretion of the coach as to whether action should be taken. If it is determined that action should be taken the coach or the teacher will notify the principal who will then notify the athlete and his/her parents/guardians that the athlete will not play in games until the behavior is corrected. The athlete will continue to practice at the coach's discretion while under disciplinary suspension.

Attendance in School

A student must be in attendance at least one half day in order to participate in that day's practice or game. If a student misses any part of a school day on the day of a practice or game due to disciplinary measures, s/he will not be allowed to practice or play on that day. Attendance can be waived at the discretion of the principal in extraordinary circumstances.

Disciplinary action for unexcused absences from practice or games will be left to the discretion of the coach. The coach will report his/her decision to the principal who will notify the athlete and the parents/guardians.

Dress

Appropriate dress when traveling to away games/events is required of student athletes. The school dress code is to be adhered to. For home games student athletes may wear their game jerseys to school on game day.

Each student is assigned a uniform and a number at the beginning of the season. Uniforms consist of a game jersey and shorts. Students are responsible for reasonable care of that uniform throughout the sports season and the return of that uniform at the end of the season. Uniforms must be washed before they are returned. Coaches are to record all jersey numbers and the name of the student in the coach's book.

Lost uniforms will have to be paid for at replacement cost by the child/child's family.

In the event a student forgets to bring a uniform on game day, every effort must be made to get the uniform to the child before game time. Only a coach or the principal of the school can issue a student a temporary replacement uniform and only if the number of that uniform is recorded by the coach or the principal. Temporary replacement uniforms will need to be washed and returned to the person who issued the temporary uniform to the child. No child is permitted to take a temporary uniform from the storage area without permission of a coach or the school principal.

Conduct away from School

Athletes/participants will be considered "GOODWILL AMBASSADORS" of St. Mary of the Assumption School and are expected to conduct themselves accordingly both on and off the court. Remember that you represent yourself and your team, your class, your school, your community and your family. Character is a difficult possession to regain once it has been lost.

Coaching Policy

Coaches (DSP 4225)

Athletics are an important part of the Diocese of La Crosse Catholic Schools extracurricular activities. They help fulfill a St. Mary of the Assumption's mission of developing the mind, soul and body of each child. Not only do they help develop and challenge the physical abilities of students, they can be instrumental in teaching sportsmanship, fair play and Catholic values in a non-classroom setting. The coaches, like teachers in a Catholic school, are also ministers of faith and can have a significant effect on a student's value system.

Therefore, coaches are to support and exemplify in conduct both Catholic doctrine and morality. He/she must be consistent, in expression and example, with the teaching and practice of the Catholic faith and shall not teach, advocate, encourage or counsel beliefs or practices contrary to the Catholic faith.

In order to help coaches fulfill their duties and responsibilities in a satisfactory manner, schools should provide written job descriptions, containing a description of duties, responsibilities and expectations for all of their coaches in charge of teams, and give them annual evaluations.

Because of the physical activity involved in athletics, it is necessary that coaches take all reasonable precaution that injury to participants be avoided. Each coach is to be confident in his/her abilities to be aware of safety concerns and his/her knowledge as to the appropriate immediate response to an injury. The school administrator is to have reasonable assurance of the coach's ability to coach and be aware of safety and injury concerns.

At the high school level, all coaches in charge of a team must have ASEP, PACE or other Diocesan approved certification program training before beginning a second year of coaching. Current coaches have two years from the date of this policy (01/14/1997) to receive this certification. Coaches having received this certification within the past two years of their current coaching assignment will be considered to have met this standard. Once receiving certification, it must be renewed with at least a documented refresher and/or updating course every five years. It is recommended that schools at other than the high school level adopt the same or similar certification requirements whenever and wherever possible.

Because of the influence of alcohol and tobacco on students in today's world and because of the continued concern for the health and safety of students, coaches (both head and assistants) are to refrain from alcoholic beverages and tobacco before or during any athletic activity in which they are supervising, including travel to and from games.

Coach's Job Description

Coaches will encourage all students to participate regardless of athletic ability or talents.

- A. To enable students to enjoy and appreciate the various sports activities both as participants and spectators.
- B. To fulfill all the requirements of the Safe Environment Program including but not limited to: submitting to a thorough background check every three years, completing a confidential questionnaire annually, and submitting a drivers form if they will be transporting children other than their own child.
- C. To help students recognize their physical and athletic capabilities and talents.

- D. To teach students new athletic skills and to offer opportunities for improving those skills previously acquired.
- E. To help students become knowledgeable of the rules and regulations governing each sport.
- F. To incorporate the inter school athletic program as part of the ongoing process of education in a special skills area.
- G. To provide students opportunities to exemplify and observe good sportsmanship.
- H. To teach students sound habits of health, hygiene and safety as feasible.
- I. To meet each student's need and desire for competition during practice and games as equitably as possible.
- J. To cooperate with school administration and on issues concerning progress, needs and problems.
- K. To support the philosophy statement of the Catholic school.
- L. To demonstrate sound judgment and a good example to the young athletes and the people who follow the program.
- M. To be on time and responsible for supervising students during practices and games.
- N. To refrain from using alcohol or tobacco before or during any athletic activity in which the coach is supervising, including travel to and from athletic events.
- O. To carefully control the keys entrusted to your care.
- P. To assign and check-in student uniforms.
- Q. To report all injuries requiring medical treatment using the Accident Report form.
This should occur on the day of the incident.
- R. To judiciously use the telephone in case of emergency.
- S. To be familiar with the first aid and bloodborne pathogen kits.
- T. To take the first aid and bloodborne pathogen kits along to away games.
- U. To follow the decisions of the principal regarding eligibility of team members.
- V. To assist in arranging practice and game schedules and referees as necessary.
- W. To set up gym (chairs, score table, etc.) before a game and to takedown and clean up after a game.
- X. To ensure the school building is shutdown and secure before leaving after a game or practice.
- Y. To abide by the policies/procedures as stated in this Athletic Handbook.

Safe Environment

All coaches/advisors are expected to adhere to the policies of the Diocese of La Crosse concerning safe environment. New coaches and assistant coaches must submit to a complete background check including being fingerprinted, complete the confidential questionnaire, and annually review all the diocesan policies on safe environment. All forms are available from the school principal. Returning coaches are required to annually review all diocesan policies, annually date and sign their confidential questionnaire and submit a complete background check including fingerprints every three years.

Fees

There is a \$40 sports fee required per sport. This fee goes toward the costs of running the athletic program, including referee fees and equipment.

Forms on File

Before any student will be allowed to report for practice he/she must have the following forms on file in the office:

- A consent form that has been read and signed by the parent/guardian.
- A sports/athletic physical from a medical doctor obtained at the family's expense. (required every two years). An alternate card signed by the parent is required in the years the physical is not done.
- WIAA/DPI Parent and Player Concussion/Head Injury & Cardiac Arrest Forms

Forms are located in the school office.

Injury

In the event that a student sustains an injury either at practice or during competition:

- The injury is to be reported to the coach/advisor immediately. Parents may be notified depending on the severity of the injury.
- Reporting an accident is the student's responsibility.
- Failure to report an accident can have a negative impact on your personal insurance claim.
- Coaches/advisors are required to fill out the school's accident form. Forms must be turned into the school principal within the next school day.
- When an athlete is injured he/she is not to reenter practice or competition until permission is given by the parent or by a physician if the situation warrants.
- Parents, Players, and Coaches must all read and sign the WIAA/DPI Concussion/Head Injury & Cardiac Arrest Forms

Practice Guidelines

Co curricular activities are an extension of the classroom. Therefore, the same guidelines are used in practice as are used in the classroom. No students or children, other than the team, are allowed in the gymnasium during practice and the coaches are given the discretion to ask individuals that are not on the team to leave the gymnasium. Athletes are expected to show the same respect to teammates and coaches as would be given in the classroom.

Procedure to Drop From a Squad/Team

Students are encouraged to remain with a sport/activity for the duration of the season out of respect for the needs of a team. However, we realize that sometimes it becomes necessary to drop an activity for a variety of reasons. **If a student finds it necessary to drop from a sport they should bring a note from a parent/guardian requesting that he/she be dropped from the activity.** This note should be given to the principal who will notify the coaching staff. This should be done at the very earliest convenience, preferably the next day.

Schedule

The Athletic Director determines the schedule for athletic events with the assistance of the principal. There will be a maximum of eighteen games per team per year plus tournaments. When possible, the AD will only schedule a maximum of two games per week and not on back to back nights. Situations may arise when this is needed.

Cancellations and rescheduling

Cancellations and rescheduling games are at the discretion of the Athletic Director and/or principal. If school is cancelled or there is an early dismissal due to weather conditions, after school sports events are also canceled. Cancellations will be announced through the local radio station. Emails will be sent out from the school office whenever possible.

Tobacco, Illegal Drugs, and Alcohol

Student athletes/participants are subject to the same policy found in the Student/Parent Handbook for tobacco, alcohol and drugs. The policy in the Family Handbook covers students at all events and during travel to and from events.

The sanctions for violation of this policy are the same as those found in the Family Handbook with the addition of being immediately removed from the team.

Travel

Travel is limited to an eighty-mile radius and no overnight trips are allowed. *Coaches and parent drivers must have completed the Driver Information Form as well as the Vehicle Inspection Form in order to transport students other than their own children. Proof of insurance is also required. These forms can be found on Sycamore.*

June 12, 2025

Dear Families,

Your child is eligible to participate in girls' volleyball grades five through eight and/or basketball for boys or girls grades five through eight here at St. Mary School. Volleyball and basketball practice take place in the school gym after school hours. Games and tournaments may take place in our gym or may be at a location no more than eighty miles from Richland Center. **Volunteer drivers may provide transportation to out-of-town games. For the safety of our children, volunteer drivers will be required to complete the Confidential Questionnaire and pass a background check (forms are found on the Sycamore website).**

This program is under the supervision of volunteer coaches who are responsible for following the policies of the Diocese of La Crosse and St. Mary of the Assumption Parish and School. Coaches are also required to complete a background check.

Students in grades 7-8 are eligible to participate in the football and track programs at the Richland Center High School. Students in 6-8 are eligible to participate in cross-country. The same rules in the co-curricular handbook apply to these students as well. This includes academic eligibility, as well as code of conduct expectations.

Participation in the after school athletic program is strictly optional. Participation in school athletics does involve a certain amount of risk due to the physical nature of the program. Parents, coaches and students will be in compliance with this athletic handbook to help ensure the safety and welfare of our students. Parents and any of their children who are interested in going out for a sport must sign this consent/compliance letter and return it to school.

Athletes also require a physical every two years for participation in sports. If your child has had a physical within the last twelve months, families need only complete the physical alternate form. This form is available in the school office. Parents and students must also sign the WIAA/DPI Concussion/Head Injury and Cardiac Arrest agreement forms which are provided by the office. No child may begin practice until the consent forms and the physical form are on file in the school office.

Please allow my child(ren)

_____ **to participate in the Athletic Program at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish School. I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the Athletic Handbook and give my consent for my child to participate.**

I know there is a \$40 sports fee that needs to be paid per sport. Fees will be billed through Smart Tuition.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date** _____

Child(ren)'s signature for compliance
