

Saint Agnes School

Athletic Philosophy and Handbook

2016-2017



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Saint Agnes provides athletic opportunities for students in grades 9-12 through the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) and for students in grades 5-8 through the Catholic Athletic Association (CAA).

At the high school level it is our goal to provide varsity, junior varsity and 9th grade teams for each sport based on preseason registrations.

For grade school and junior high, every attempt is made to provide teams at each grade level; this cannot always be accomplished due to registration numbers. Occasionally grades may have to be combined to form teams.

The objective of our athletic program is to ensure that every student who is in good academic and behavioral standing receive the opportunity to participate. Coaches are responsible to ensure that each student has an opportunity and will make every effort to play all athletes who meet their responsibilities as member of the team according to the explanations below.

Participation and Playing Time: The amount of playing time per participant in athletic programs is always a concern for players, parents, coaches, the Athletic Director, and the school administration. The athletic guidelines are as follows:

Grade School and Junior High: No cutting. The emphasis of grade school and junior high athletics is learning and exposure to the game. All participants will play in each contest if possible, but not necessarily on an equal basis with all other players. Winning will increasingly be a goal as the student/athlete gets older, but it will be balanced with the development of athletes and program development.

9th Grade Teams/C-Squad: No cutting. Athletic teams are competitive, not primarily recreational as in the grade school and junior high. The purpose of 9th grade/C-squad athletics is to continue to develop players for varsity play. There are no guarantees of playing time at the 9th grade/C-Squad level in any contest. Players have different skill levels, attitudes, and levels of commitment, and these factors will be considered in earning playing time.

Junior Varsity Teams: No cutting - same philosophy as 9th grade/C-squad.

Varsity Teams: A program for our most competitive teams. Cutting is permissible. Playing time is given to those with the most athletic skills, the most determined attitude toward athletic endeavor, and the most consistent and demonstrable commitment to the sport.

Communication

- Communication is very important and starts with the athlete. Athletes should talk to their coach first before a parent gets involved
- No player or parent should approach coaches before, during, or after a game to discuss an issue.
- Parents should discuss any issue with their child before contacting a coach or the Athletic Director.
- Parents may request to talk to a coach the following day.
- If the issues have not been resolved, then the Athletic Director will become involved.
- If the issues are still not resolved, then the Headmaster will be consulted.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches:

- The treatment of your child, mentally and or physically.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches:

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

Junior High Participation in High School Athletics

- Use of a 7th or 8th grade athlete on a high school team is discouraged whenever possible. However, if a coach at the high school level believes that there is an athlete in the 7th or 8th grade program who could participate on his/her team, they may appeal to the Athletic Director for the student to participate. Each case shall be handled individually.

Requirements for Participation

- **Complete Registration Online**
- **Fully support the mission of Saint Agnes as outlined by the school in its Philosophy of Education.**
- **Payment of Participation Fee** (or payment plan)
- **Physical Examination:** A physical exam is required the 1st year of participation and every three years thereafter. The physical form must be completed by a physician and submitted to the athletic office prior to participation. The form will be kept on file in the athletic office. Physical exams are required for all high school athletes in all sports and for junior high students playing football.
- **MSHSL eligibility form and MSHSL health form:** These signed documents will be filed in the Athletic Director's office. This document is only required for students participating in a high school sport and must be completed once per school year.
- **Insurance:** The school does not carry insurance to cover student athletic injuries; participants must maintain their own insurance policy.
- **Scholastic eligibility:** In order to participate on an athletic team, each athlete must have satisfied all of the scholastic eligibility requirements prior to participation. If a student is currently at an "F" grade (59.9% or below) in 1 or more classes, he/she will be deemed ineligible to participate in any activity until the grade is rectified to a passing grade
- **Financial obligations:** Fees must be paid before athletes will be allowed to participate.
- **Refund of Athletic Fees:** Athletic fees will be refunded in full to students who drop the activity before the first official contest in that sport. One-half of the fee will be refunded if the student drops before the 3rd official contest. No refund will be given following the 3rd official contest. Students who drop the activity for medical reasons will be handled on an individual basis. Refunds will not be given until an equipment clearance is issued by the coach in charge of the sport. Refund checks will always be issued to the parent/guardian of the athlete.
- **Equipment:** All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. School furnished equipment is to be worn only for contests and practice. All equipment not returned in good condition at the end of the season will be subject to a financial penalty.

Basic Athletic Department Policies

Participation: An athlete may participate in only one sport per season. Any exception requires the agreement of coaches, the athletic director and parent.

Dropping or transferring sports:

1. Consult with your immediate coach and then the head coach.
2. Report your situation to the Athletic Director.
3. Check in all equipment issued to you.

Transfer: All transfer students should discuss their eligibility with the Athletic Director to make sure they meet all guidelines/rules of Saint Agnes and Minnesota State High School League.

Equipment: School equipment checked out by the student/athlete is his/her responsibility. He/She is expected to keep it clean and in good condition. Loss of any equipment is the athlete's financial obligation.

Missing Practice: An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice. An unexcused absence from a practice or a game will be dealt with in accordance with team policy.

Transportation: There are times when the school cannot provide transportation to athletic contests and/or practices. Each athlete should check with his or her coach at the beginning of the season for the scheduled events when transportation will not be provided so that individual plans can be made. Students are expected to ride the bus when provided and school rules apply when on a bus. Under special circumstances, a coach may release a student directly to his/her parent(s)

Attendance: Students must be in school for at least some portion of every period of the academic day in order to participate in after school activities. Exceptions to this policy may be:

1. Administratively approved absence.
2. Previous school permission to miss school, due to a school sponsored event (e.g. fieldtrip)
3. Any absence due to a medical (doctor, dental, eye) must have a note from the doctor's office to participate for that day.

Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the Athletic Director and Dean of Students. Students absent from school on Friday with a contest the following day (Saturday) will be eligible to participate provided the absence is approved by the Athletic Director or Dean of Students.

Release from class: It is the responsibility of athletes to see their teacher the day before they will miss a class because of an athletic contest. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher.

Vacations policy: Vacations by varsity athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged. Parents/athletes wishing to do so ought to reevaluate their commitment to team as an athlete. In the event an absence due to a vacation is unavoidable, an athlete must:

1. Contact the head coach prior to the vacation.
2. Be willing to assume the consequences related to his/her status on that squad.

Squad selection: In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in athletic programs, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without compromising the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, and other factors will limit what is a reasonable squad size for any particular sport.

Cutting policy for varsity only: Choosing the members of varsity teams is the sole responsibility of the coaches. Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

1. Time frame for try-out period
2. Criteria used to select the team
3. Practice commitment if they make the team
4. Game commitments

When a squad cut becomes a necessity, the process will include two important elements. Each candidate shall have:

1. Competed in a minimum of 3 practice sessions.
2. Been informed of the cut by the coach in person, including the reason. Coaches will discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport, or other areas in the activities program.

Reporting of injury: All injuries which occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, an injury report form must be completed. Once athletes are treated by a physician, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to the activity.

Expectations

Athletes:

1. Committed, dedicated and determined
2. Honest and cooperative
3. Enthusiastic / motivated
4. Academic commitment
5. Communicate appropriately with teammates, coaches, officials, parents, fans, and opponents
6. Respect peers, coaches and equipment
7. Willingness to learn and develop skills necessary for the sport
8. Positive attitude
9. Healthy and chemically free
10. Demonstrate good sportsmanship
11. "Team player"
12. Set team and personal goals

Parents/Guardians:

1. Supports athletes through:
 - a. attending events and informational meetings
 - b. helping set priorities
 - c. encouraging and modeling a positive attitude
 - d. facilitate the athlete's commitment to that sport
 - e. willingness to listen to athlete's comments and concerns
2. Realistic and reasonable expectation for athletes, coaches and programs
3. Support the program by taking tickets, running the concession stand, etc.
4. Communicate personal concerns appropriately
5. Model good sportsmanship and respect for rules, procedures, participants and officials
6. Become familiar with athletic requirements and support rules and expectations for athletes and parents
7. Keep sports in perspective
8. Encourage and monitor academic performance

Spectators and Fans: The following applies to any person physically present at an athletic event, or through the use of electronic mediums (e.g. social media, email, internet, etc.)

DO:

1. Understand that your attendance provides you with the opportunity and privilege to observe an athletic event, not to berate players, coaches, game workers, or officials.
2. Remember that interscholastic athletics is a part of the educational process. It is for the students, not adults.
3. Cheer for your team.
4. Be a positive role model and encourage sportsmanship by giving support to and showing respect for all players, coaches, officials, and spectators.

5. Promote behavior that treats players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, religion, color, gender, or ability.
6. Support the decisions of coaches and officials.
7. Teach our youth that doing their best is of the utmost importance.
8. Emphasize that a healthy work ethic, a high level of effort, and cooperation with coaches are imperative for doing one's best.
9. Learn and understand the rules of the game.
10. Appreciate the efforts of the players, coaches, and officials.
11. Be generous when we win, gracious when we lose.

DO NOT:

1. Ridicule or berate players, coaches, officials, or other spectators.
2. Engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with an official, coach, player or parent, such as booing, taunting, using profane language or gestures, etc.
3. Encourage or condone any behavior or practice which would endanger the health or well-being of any participant.
4. Ridicule any participant for making a mistake.
5. Coach from the sidelines or bleachers.
6. Confront coaches in an inappropriate / antagonistic manner before, during, or after games / practices. Instead, make arrangements to speak with coaches at an appropriate time and place.
7. Cheer against the other team (e.g., calling out athletes, "air ball," etc).

PARENTS:

1. Be a "team fan," not a "my child" fan.
2. Encourage your child to discuss any problems with the coach, while emphasizing how to improve their status on the team.
3. Encourage the attainment of team goals, rather than individual goals.
4. Understand that criticism and disrespect not only undermine the purpose of interscholastic sports, but also undermine the very behavior which we are trying to teach your child.

Behavior that demeans a player, coach, referee, school official, another parent, or fan is subject to sanction by school personnel.

Anyone who engages in misconduct as described above, or who is removed from an interscholastic contest at the request of a game official or school administrator will be subject to the following:

1st Offense: Offender(s) will be prohibited from attending the team's next home contest.

2nd Offense: Offender(s) will be prohibited from attending ANY home athletic events for the remainder of the season in question, or for a period of three months (whichever is longer) commencing from the date of the second offense.

3rd Offense: Offender(s) will be prohibited from attending ANY home and away athletic events for one full calendar year, commencing from the date of the third offense.

REMEMBER, WE ARE ALL ON THE SAME TEAM. WE ALL REPRESENT OUR SCHOOL OUR CHURCH, AND OUR FAMILIES.

Addition or Deletion of Programs

The school recognizes that student interest in athletic programs changes over time. Student interest in some programs wanes, while interests in other programs grow as athletics evolve. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist the school in responding to meet changes in student interest with appropriate athletic programs that allow for the greatest participation by our students. This will be done by setting parameters for adding or discontinuing athletic programs.

Faculty, staff or students may initiate potential changes by presenting a proposal to the Athletic Director. The following criteria will be considered in making decisions about additions of athletic programs.

1. Process for adding an athletic program
 - a. Read through and make sure there is compliance with criteria for adding an athletic program.
 - b. Submit a formal, typed proposal to the Athletic Director no less than six months before the program is proposed to start. One year if preferred. This proposal should include the following: vision and mission for the program, total expected expenses, expected revenue (If applicable), expected expense per participant, and practice space plan. Some factors to be considered are, impact on current in- season sports, are there enough conference schools that offer the sport to create a competitive schedule, and finding a qualified and capable coach.
 - c. The proposal will be presented to the school administration team to be discussed. The purpose of this is to discuss issues and provide multiple viewpoints to the Athletic Director.
 - d. The school administrative team will decide whether or not to move forward with the proposal. If the program is approved, application for sponsorship will be made to the Minnesota State High School League.