

St. Joseph's Basketball Program

Mission Statement

The St. Joseph's Parish Basketball Program (the "***Program***") is open to boys and girls from Kindergarten through 8th grade, with interscholastic competition offered to children in 3rd grade and older. Generally speaking, all children who attend either St. Joseph's School or St. Joseph's CCD Program, or are otherwise children of registered parishioners, are eligible to participate.

The purpose of the Program is to provide the children of the parish with a positive, character-building sports experience. In an effort to do so, the Program strives for a balance between (i) establishing a fun learning environment for all participants, (ii) teaching and developing the individual skills of its players, (iii) sponsoring the tenets of good sportsmanship, fair play and self-discipline, and (iv) promoting healthy competition and an appreciation for the game of basketball. To that end, as each child progresses in our program from year to year, it is our objective to not only provide an atmosphere that aids in the development of a child's basketball skills, but also to maintain an environment that fosters each child's growth as a human being.

In an effort to realize our purpose, the Program is based on the following concepts:

(1) To accommodate each eligible child who (a) wants to play basketball and (b) is committed to consistent participation.

The Program will attempt to establish as many teams as necessary to accommodate every child who wishes to play, at all times taking into consideration the constraints of available facility and volunteer time. For any given year, the number of teams will be dependent upon (a) registered children, (b) registered children within a particular grade and gender, and (c) the availability of parents /volunteers willing to coach. Each child will be placed on a team if there is a sufficient number of coaches and a manageable number of players for a specific team.

Every child is asked to make a serious commitment to their team and coaches, *regardless* of their talent level. From a Program-wide perspective, expected playing time will be a function of whether a team is "***participatory***" or "***competitive***" (as discussed below). However, from an individual standpoint, playing time will typically be based upon practice attendance, as well as effort and behavior, among other criteria enumerated by the coach. To ensure success of the Program, the coach's rules and regulations must be followed and reinforced by parents.

(2) To consistently emphasize the Program's core intangibles.

The Program is not merely the training of young athletes; long after our time with the children is done, and long after their competitive sports careers are over, the life lessons learned at this level will persist.

Ultimately, the Program's emphasis is based not solely on wins and losses, but more importantly on the participants' attitudes in victory or defeat. That is, learning how to lose is just as important as learning how to win, and learning how to win graciously is even more important than winning itself. Further, principles of fair play and sportsmanship must govern every game, and all participants should have the respect of others on their own team and the opposing team. It is important that the Program fosters a spirit of loyalty to the team, and each participant should learn patience with, and tolerance of, those with less ability. Participants should understand that "how the team played" is immensely more important than who won the game or who excelled on an individual basis, and this should promote encouragement of their teammates, peers, friends and competitors.

(3) To enable children to play basketball on a participatory basis at younger levels, while providing the opportunity to be part of more competitive teams in the future.

The Program supports teams that are either "***participatory***" or "***competitive***". Regardless of their distinctions, both types of teams are centrally focused on the development of fundamental basketball skills and promotion of a love of the game. At its core, the structure of the Program is intended to enable the gifted to excel, and the less gifted to participate and improve.

Absent extenuating circumstances, such as an inequitable numbers of registered children within a given year or the lack of viable coaching candidates, the Program has established the Junior Varsity and Varsity Basketball Teams (Boys and Girls) as “competitive,” with the remainder of the teams being deemed “participatory.”

In all cases, the grade-level, number and composition of Competitive and Participatory Teams is subject to annual amendment dependent on turnout/interest.

Participatory Teams

Participatory teams are designed to allow players the opportunity to improve themselves through practice and consistent game exposure. Playing time in games is generally equal, within the reasonable ability of the coaches to do so after taking into account the need to have an appropriate balance of players on the court at any given point in time.

Coaches to a participatory team are free from the pressures of generating a consistently competitive product and, therefore, have the means to assess all players equally and focus on their individual developmental needs. This individual attention is especially important for younger children, where it is often difficult to determine potential talent level without more extensive individual attention.

It is important to recognize that designation of a team as “participatory” does not preclude the concept of competition; rather, it is the hope of the Program that every team enjoys success within the parameters of its mandate. Such competition should not be based solely on winning or losing, but should also be understood in terms of participation, improvement, enjoyment and self-confidence. Therefore, for participatory teams, the desire to win cannot outweigh the emphasis on pursuing equal playing time and measurable development for each child.

Further, please note that, although a team may be designated as “participatory,” the expectations for all participants in the Program grow as the child moves through the system. That is, specifically with respect to “participatory” teams at the higher levels (i.e., 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th), although there remains a minimum amount of game time allotted to each participant that satisfies the minimum requirements (e.g., attendance at practice, behavior, etc.), additional playing time may be allotted in certain circumstances to those participants who have exhibited extraordinary commitment, “coachability” and a strong desire to improve.

Competitive Teams

Competitive teams play to win games. If a child is placed on a competitive team, it is assumed that the child has the requisite skills for that level and will be able to achieve and succeed with playing time during games. It is the intent of the Program that competitive teams foster improved individual skills and enhanced team performance through a more rigorous practice schedule and enhanced intra-team competition, rather than through guaranteed game time exposure. Equal playing time is not a priority and is rarely, if ever, achieved throughout the lineup. Playing time is determined by the coach based on the prevailing circumstances within a particular game.

(4) To hold independent evaluations to place children at an appropriate level; promoting confidence and enjoyment while offering the best opportunity for improvement and realization of true potential.

The Parish encourages all eligible children to participate in our basketball program. However, we realize that athletic ability and physical talent vary for children of the same age, as well as from year to year. In addition, we recognize that children develop at different stages at different times of their lives. For this reason, each season it is important to re-evaluate and place each child where they will (a) be comfortable with the competition, (b) optimize their playing time, and (c) be best positioned to improve their skills.

Consistent with the participatory philosophy, evaluations at the 3rd and 4th grade levels are used to establish competitive balance within teams and place teams in leagues commensurate with their talent level. At the Junior Varsity and Varsity levels, try outs are used to create the most competitive team possible. Following selection of

the JV and Varsity teams, additional evaluations may be necessary to create comparable teams within the remaining players for the applicable age group(s). The purpose of evaluations for all other grades varies based on the talent level that exists in a given year.

Specifically with respect to the Junior Varsity and Varsity teams, try outs will be conducted by the independent coach(es) or the SJMC Sports Council, as applicable, with the ultimate goal of arriving at a team which not only embodies the requisite skill level from a basketball standpoint, but also takes into consideration the other aspects of successful team sports (e.g., hustle, hard work, team-oriented play, good attitude, positional needs, etc.).

With respect to all evaluations, it is important to emphasize that the Program does not "cut" players. Each child will ultimately be placed on a team.

(5) To select dedicated coaches who will teach fundamental basketball skills by focusing on the importance of practice.

Although our coaching base can vary from year to year, the Program strives to minimize coaching turnover in order to offer a consistent approach to practice and games that will be reinforced as children progress through the program. In order to further such consistency, and help maintain an overlapping theory of basketball fundamentals, the St. Joseph's Basketball Manual (the "***Manual***") has been created and will be distributed to each new coach at the beginning of the year. The Manual will contain core offensive and defensive frameworks which will be developed over the course of one's participation in the Program, with the goal being to increase each player's and coach's familiarity with the suggested philosophies. Furthermore, the Manual contains helpful drills and teaching tools which will allow coaches to best prepare their team and reinforce the Program's fundamentals.

(6) To encourage interaction, not only with current classmates, but with all children who are members of the Parish.

Our Program is a Parish program, as opposed to school-based. Where possible in the context of the overall mission, we see clear benefit in the integration of St. Joseph's and CCD students at the earliest, and all, possible stages.

Appendix A

FORM OF COACH'S CONTRACT

I understand that my responsibilities as a volunteer coach in the St. Joseph's Parish Basketball Program are of great importance and that my actions have the potential to significantly influence the young athletes that I coach.

I acknowledge that my primary role, as coach, is to ensure that the child's experience in basketball is both positive and enjoyable. In order to best satisfy that role, I will do my best to:

- 1. Be a quality role model for children.**
- 2. Teach and demonstrate good sportsmanship.**
- 3. Teach and demonstrate self-discipline.**
- 4. Teach and demonstrate good teamwork.**
- 5. Teach and encourage the development of basketball skills.**

Specifically, I promise to conduct myself in accordance with the following code during games, practices and any other team function:

- I will attend or, if necessary, coordinate with an assistant coach to attend, each scheduled practice and game, arriving in advance as necessary to monitor my team as they arrive and prepare for the practice/game.**
- I will treat each athlete, opposing coach, official, parent and program coordinator with respect and dignity, and will not use foul language in any such relationship.**
- I will refrain from directing verbal or physical abuse to any referee at any time.**
- I will be a role model for the players by displaying good sportsmanship, appropriate conflict resolution, and effective communication, and will not run the score up if the opportunity presents itself.**
- I will encourage team play.**
- I will hold myself and my players responsible for cleaning up after ourselves.**
- I will do my best to learn the fundamental skills, teaching, evaluation techniques, and strategies of my sport.**
- I will communicate with team parents, and help them set a good example.**
- If not so already, I will become thoroughly familiar with the rules of my sport.**

Finally, I also promise, to the best of my ability, to fulfill the additional requirements demanded of a coach in the St. Joseph's Parish Basketball Program, including but not limited to:

- Attendance at program events (e.g., Turkey Bowl, photo day, Sports Awards, etc.).**
- Attendance at scheduled coaches' meetings.**
- Satisfaction of game-day responsibilities, such as opening the gym, snack bar and gate set-up, and closing the gym.**

I understand that, to the extent I do not abide by the foregoing, I have fallen short in my responsibilities as a volunteer coach in the St. Joseph's Parish Basketball Program and may be subject to censure and/or removal.

Signature of coach

_____/_____/_____
Date

Appendix B

FORM OF PARENT / PLAYER CONTRACT

PARENT CONTRACT

The St. Joseph's Parish Basketball Program (the "**Program**") continually strives to provide our children with a healthy and enjoyable sports' environment, which demands a positive sportsmanship attitude be demonstrated by all participants, child and adult alike. Our program is bigger than any one player, coach or spectator.

In light of the foregoing, I understand that, as a parent and/or spectator, I have certain responsibilities to the Program, and promise to support the following "**Parental Guidelines**" to the best of my ability while I or my child are involved in the Program:

- 1) Encourage members of both teams.
- 2) Keep all comments positive.
- 3) Only players and coaches allowed on field, no exceptions.
- 4) Leave the coaching to the coaches.
- 5) Criticism of the officials, coaches, St. Joseph's players or opponents will not be tolerated. The same goes for abusive language or cursing. Please remember, this is **youth** sports.
- 6) You are responsible for all family members and friends attending the games to watch your child.
- 7) Help make this a positive and fun experience for all.
- 8) Report any problems or potential issues to the coach or a SJMC Board Member.
- 9) Playing time is not to be discussed with any coach unless the player plays less than the minimum and then **only** by phone at least 2 hours after the game has concluded.

Enforcement:

- 1) Individuals will be given one warning for inappropriate activity.
- 2) Individuals that continue to behave in violation of these tenets will be asked to leave the gymnasium and the player will be removed from the game until the spectator has left.
- 3) Other sanctions as deemed necessary by the SJMC Board may be enforced, including permanent ban.

I acknowledge that the primary role of any parent in the Program is to enjoy watching their child play and to encourage and support his or her coach in insuring that each child's experience in basketball is both positive and enjoyable.

[PLAYER CONTRACT ON FOLLOWING PAGE]

PLAYER CONTRACT

The St. Joseph's Parish Basketball Program (the "Program") continually strives to provide children with a healthy and enjoyable sports' environment, which demands a positive sportsmanship attitude be demonstrated by all participants. Our program is bigger than any one player.

Based on that, I understand that, as a player, I wear the uniform of **St. Joseph's** and have certain responsibilities to the Program and the Parish, and promise to support the following guidelines to the best of my ability while I am involved in the Program:

- 1) I will be courteous to opposing teams and treat all players (both teammates and opponents) and coaches (both my coach and the opposing team's coach) with respect.
- 2) I will be modest when successful and gracious in defeat, and will not showboat, "trash-talk," or engage in any other unsportsmanlike activities.
- 4) I will respect the privilege of the use of public facilities and will clean up after myself after practice or games, both home and away.
- 5) I will refrain from using abusive language at any times.
- 6) I will demonstrate good sportsmanship before, during and after games (for example, shaking hands before tip-off, helping a fallen opponent off the floor, the customary post-game handshake, etc.).
- 7) I will respect the game, play fairly and follow its rules and regulations.
- 8) I will show respect for authority to the officials of the game and of the league.

Enforcement:

I understand that playing for St. Joseph's is a privilege, and not an entitlement, and that if I do not abide by these guidelines, there will be penalties imposed:

- 1) Players will be given one warning for inappropriate activity.
- 2) Players that continue to violate these guidelines, or act in a materially inappropriate fashion in doing so, may be forced to sit out one or more games, or be suspended from their team, or face dismissal from the Program, at the discretion of the coach, the St. Joseph's Men's Club and/or St. Joseph's Parish.

THIS PARENT'S / PLAYER'S CONTRACT MUST BE SIGNED BY BOTH PARENT AND CHILD AS A CONDITION OF YOUR CHILD'S PARTICIPATION.

Agreed by:

Player's Signature.....**Date**.....

Player's Printed Name(s):

Parent's Signature.....**Date**.....