

SECRETARIAT FOR EDUCATION



DEPARTMENT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

GUIDELINES FOR CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

SPORTS PROGRAMS



THE DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH
JULY 2011

September 2010

Dear Pastors, Principals, Athletic Directors:

In our continuing efforts to enhance the quality of our Catholic school sports programs, in particular their Christian perspective, these revised guidelines are now promulgated by the Diocese of Pittsburgh. These guidelines are very important and you are asked to follow them carefully. Dr. Ronald Bowes, Assistant Superintendent for Public Policy and Development and Athletic Director, is given the task of ensuring that these guidelines are properly implemented.

For over a decade we have used a well done video for accrediting all our elementary school coaches. Recently, we have decided to partner with the University of Notre Dame and initiated their Sports as Ministry Program entitled "Play Like A Champion Today" (PLC).

This research based, child centered educational series is designed to:

- help coaches more fully recognize the spiritual nature of sports
- train youth sport coaches to be effective ministers; and
- promote the moral and character development of our youth.

Our goal is to have every head coach accredited within a year or two, and then have the head coaches pass on the goals of PLC to their assistant coaches.

I want to thank you in advance for your cooperation in instituting this positive, quality accreditation program. Together we can insure that Catholic school sports programs are of the highest quality and dedicated to the spiritual, physical and social growth of the children in our care.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Paserba
Superintendent

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DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH
Secretariat for Education Department for Catholic Schools

ANNUAL COACH'S PLEDGE AND REVIEW

A Good Catholic School Coach...	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
*Begins each game with the Diocesan Prayer. _____	_____	_____
*Has reviewed the Coach's Accreditation Video.	_____	_____
*Has State clearances.	_____	_____
*Has attended Protecting God's Children	_____	_____
*Has signed the Code of Pastoral Conduct	_____	_____
*Knows the rules and sees that the players do also	_____	_____
*Has completed the Play Like A Champion Today 3 hour program	_____	_____
*Controls his/her emotions. _____	_____	_____
*Knows when and who to substitute. _____	_____	_____
*Speaks in a mannerly tone.	_____	_____
*Does not criticize or praise too much.	_____	_____
*Realizes that players never purposely make mistakes, and never ridicules.	_____	_____
*Concentrates on coaching and lets the officials call the game.	_____	_____

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*Is fair and does not show favoritism.

*Never permits an ill player to practice or play.

*Never deliberately humiliates an opponent by pushing up the score.

*Insists that players accept victory with modesty, and defeat without alibi.

*Does not rehash a game right after the final whistle when emotions are high,
but saves detailed comments for the next practice.

*Realizes a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability,
but also on its sportsmanship, courtesy, and manner.

As a coach, it is my responsibility to provide my players with a safe and healthy environment. As a coach of a team representing my parish, school, and my diocese, I have the additional responsibility of providing the appropriate Christian leadership to my players and to make sure our fans know and respect our goals.

I have read the above pledge and agree to these directives.

Head Coach signature _____ Date _____
(or Assistant Coach)

Principal Signature _____ Date _____

End of season review

Head Coach Signature _____ Date _____
(or Assistant Coach)

EXPECTATIONS FOR A CATHOLIC SCHOOL COACH

- Accepts his or her ministerial role as a Christian role model on and off the field of play.
- Understands the rules and instructions his/her players regarding same.
- Controls his/her emotions.
- Knows when and who to substitute.
- Speaks in a manner and tone appropriate for his or her position. Realizes players never purposely make mistakes and never ridicules.
- Concentrates on coaching and lets the officials call the game.
- Is fair and does not show favoritism.
- Sets realistic practice and game schedules.
- Never permits an ill or injured player to practice or play.
- Insists that a team practice with the same enthusiasm and skill as demonstrated during a scheduled game.
- Uses **ALL** players in practice and in games.
- Never deliberately humiliates an opponent by pushing up the score.
- Insists that players accept victory with modesty and defeat without alibi.
- Does not review a game immediately after the final whistle when emotions are high but saves detailed comments for the next practice.
- Realizes a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability, but also on its sportsmanship, courtesy and manner.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Coaches, Fans or Players

1. Offensive Actions

No coach, fan or player is to:

- (a) Refuse to abide by official's decision or use profane language or gestures.
- (b) Exhibit objectionable behavior, e.g. throwing equipment or any other forceful action.
- (c) Verbally abuse an official for any real or imagined unjust decision or judgment, or verbally abuse a player, opposing coach, diocesan representative or spectator.
- (d) Use any tobacco products such as cigarettes or cigars
- (e) Physically attack any person or threatening to harm anyone.
- (f) Use alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or tobacco.

2. Penalty

- (a) Violation of "a-d" – one to five game suspension for first offense. Second offense – five to ten game suspension. Third offense – suspension for one year.
- (b) Violation of "e" – immediate suspension until determination by Diocesan Athletic Director.
- (c) Violation of "f" – immediate termination of all activities related to sports.
- (d) Any program that has repeated penalties or offenses is subject to probation or suspension by the Diocesan Athletic Director.

Ejection

Anyone ejected from the game must leave the premises.

For any of the above offensive actions a written report will be submitted to the Diocesan Coordinator by the game officials, athletic director or coach. The

school principal will then be informed of the penalty by the DC after consulting with the Diocesan Athletic Director.

Please remember that the home team is responsible for security and crowd behavior. There is to be a building or field official appointed by the home team's athletic director who is responsible for the above.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Any parent or other persons having a concern or complaint regarding the sports program of a particular school must first discuss the issue with the local school's administration. The policy in place at the local school for resolution of all issues must be followed. This might be with the school principal or athletic association or whatever local school policy is in effect.

All complaints regarding sports participation, suspected rules violations, etc should be resolved at the local school level. In the event after all attempts at the local school level, an amicable resolution to the particular issue cannot be attained, the issue may be brought to the attention of the Diocesan Sports Coordinator for the particular sport for resolution.

If the complainant believes that the issue must be addressed with the Diocesan Sports Coordinator, it is mandatory that the attached, Form C, be fully completed and submitted. To ensure a fair resolution and outcome, and to ensure accuracy of the particular issue, no complaints will be addressed without a submission of form C. Complainant's making phone calls, sending emails or other communications directly to the Diocesan offices prior to attempting to secure a resolution of the issue at the local school, will be instructed to complete Form C and submit it to the Diocesan Sports Coordinator.

The Diocesan Sports Coordinator, after consultation with all necessary parties, including the Diocesan Athletic Director, will determine the final outcome of all matters.

Complaint Resolution Form (CRF)
Diocese of Pittsburgh

NAME _____ **DATE** _____

SCHOOL _____ **SPORT** _____

NATURE OF PROBLEM _____

INITIATOR (Person with complaint)
(Brief description of circumstances)*

RESPONDENT (Person the complaint is with)
(Brief response)*

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S RESPONSE

DIOCESAN SPORTS COORDINATOR REVIEW

DIOCESAN ATHLETIC DIRECTOR DECISION (if necessary)

SPECIAL RULES

SUNDAY (THE LORD'S DAY) RULE

No athletic activity is to begin before 1:00 PM on Sunday. In case of special circumstances, the Athletic Director of the school, with the pastor's permission, is to contact the Diocesan Athletic Director for an exception.

THE TRIDUUM AND HOLY DAY'S RULE

No games or practices are to be held on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, or holy days, even if school is in session. The Holy Days in the United States include:

1. The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God
2. The Ascension
3. The Assumption
4. All Saints Day
5. The Immaculate Conception
6. Christmas

CROWD CONTROL

The home team is responsible for providing a building or field official to keep the fans under control. This designated person is to report to the game officials prior to the start of any competition. After one warning, a person may be asked to leave the premises by the building or field official. If the individual refuses to leave, appropriate action may be taken, such as calling public safety officials for assistance.

If there is a problem that develops at the game and the home school does not have a person responsible to control the situation, sanctions may be applied.

GAME TIME

Games cannot be started after 8:30 PM on a school night.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

All schools are to insure that their sports facilities are safe and in playable condition. Common sense should be used in adverse weather conditions.

EXTREME WEATHER

- The officials and coaches will halt any athletic event when lightening is in the area.

- If the outside temperature is in the 90's and the humidity is 50% or above, the athletic activity should be cancelled. If it is very hot, but below the above level, the coaches and officials should take appropriate measures to insure student athletes get enough fluids and rest. In all cases the coaches of the home team has overall responsibility for taking common sense precautions.

CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPORTS PARTICIPATION POLICY

The overall objective of Catholic elementary school sports is to provide each student with a positive Christian athletic experience through instruction, development, practice and game participation. Although a reasonable competitive approach is encouraged, a win-at-any-cost philosophy is not.

It is extremely important that each school provide some way for every interested student to be able to participate. This can be done, by having an additional team to serve students unable to make the more competitive team. This would eliminate any necessity to “cut” students out of a sports program.

The following guide is provided:

3rd and 4th Grade – Introductory Level Teams

At this level, any sports program offered is strictly introductory and developmental. Basic skills and fundamentals should be taught. There is no score keeping in any games until end of the year tournaments.

Playing time should be equal as possible.

5th and 6th – Junior Varsity Level Teams

Every student should have a place to play and playing time should be as equal as possible. There must be a team available for all students even if you have to provide a second team.

7th and 8th – Varsity Level Teams

Varsity teams may be formed on the basis of player proficiency, allowing players to compete at a level appropriate to their development.

There is no guarantee of equal playing time, but every school is asked to provide a second team so that no student is excluded from playing. Every effort should be made so that every player has some playing time in every game.

Player Movement

A player may be permitted to play up to a higher level, but never played down to a lower level.

Responsibility of Student Participants

Players must realize: attendance, behavior, effort and attitude are factors that may affect their playing time.

If a Catholic school does not have a team in a particular sport, it may get permission for their students to join a neighboring Catholic school's team in that sport.

Boys should play on boy's teams and girls on girl's teams when available. A co-ed sport, such as, soccer is designated by the Diocesan Athletic Director. When there is no access to a sport by one gender, at the junior varsity level only, the individual student may participate in the other gender's program with the pastor and principal's consent.

Player Transfer

When a player transfers to another Catholic school, eligibility will be determined by the Diocesan Athletic Director.

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INDIVIDUAL SPORTS PROGRAMS

BASKETBALL

Diocese of Pittsburgh
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CATHOLIC GRADE SCHOOL BASKETBALL LEAGUE

CODE

1. BEFORE PLAY BEGINS:

A complete player's roster must be signed by the pastor or principal and mailed to the diocesan Basketball Coordinator (DBC).

2. ELIGIBILITY:

- (a) Eighth grade students and under.
- (b) No player can be 15 years of age before October 1. (Exceptions can be requested through appeal to the DSC.)
- (c) Each player must be enrolled in the sponsoring school or diocesan approved sports mergers.
- (d) Players cannot play on high school freshman junior varsity or varsity teams.
- (e) A player can participate four years in grades 5 through 8 Special cases are referred to the DBC and the review board.

3. EQUIPMENT:

Players must have numbered jerseys of the same color. (There shall be no penalty for illegal numbers.) The home coach must provide the time clock, and should have a back-up clock available. An adult shall be considered a high school sophomore or above. After the start of the game, no protest will be honored regarding the qualifications of the clock operator. The home team shall keep the official clock and official book. The home team shall make space available for the opponents next to the official clock. Clocks are to be operated by adults where possible.

4. NEW PLAYERS:

Eligible players may be added to the roster by notifying the DBC prior to participation in any game.

5. **GAMES:**

Weekday games must be played in the evening beginning at 6:00 PM, but no later than 8:30 PM. Sunday games will be played after 1:00 PM. In case of multiple games (J.V. & Varsity) games are to be scheduled at one hour and 15 minute intervals. If a team refused to play a league game, that team will be barred immediately from the league for that season.

6. **RULES:**

Official High School Basketball Rules shall apply, with the following exceptions:

- (a) Six-minute quarters
- (b) Catholic school floors will have three-point arc.
- (c) An official ball will be used in all league games.
- (d) Two officials are assigned to each game. However, the game may be played as a league game with only one official if both coaches agree before the game starts. A game will be forfeited if the attending official(s) is not certified.

The following rules will apply to elementary school basketball programs:

- (e) Practice shall not begin before October 15 for boys or girls.
- (f) A team shall play no more than 26 games, plus tournament games and diocesan playoffs. Four scrimmages are allowed. A scrimmage is defined as any competition with another team.
- (g) A team is permitted to play only one game each day except in tournament play.
- (h) A player is allowed only six quarters of organized basketball in one day, overtimes excluded. This rule is waived if a varsity team has 9 or less players.
- (i) A student transferring from one Catholic school to another is not eligible to play with the permission of the Athletic Director.
- (j) Schools with large numbers of students may field two teams with one participating in a different section of the same classification. If you choose a lower classification, you are not eligible for the diocesan playoffs.
- (k) Proven violation of the above rules will result in the immediate

- termination of the coach for that basketball season.
- (l) Teams are not permitted in the locker rooms without an adult chaperon of the same gender.
 - (m) Good sportsmanship is to be practiced at all times.

These rules apply to all basketball teams—boys, girls, varsity, junior varsity, etc.

All other league rules remain in effect.

7. OFFICIALS:

Fees will be determined each year.

Beaver Valley – Ohio Valley – and Serra sections will assign their own officials. Other sections call Mr. Ray Schaming, the DBC, for officials. Phone: 412-881-0309.

8. CANCELLATIONS:

- (a) Games may be canceled because of inclement weather only with the mutual consent of both coaches and moderators. If they cannot agree, the DBC will make the decision. Proposal for cancellation must be made four hours before game time the day of the game.
- (b) No scheduled games may be canceled on the basis of sickness unless the entire school is closed because of widespread illness.
- (c) The home team will call the Official's Representative to cancel referee. The officials will receive their fee if they are not notified in sufficient time.

9. FORFEIT:

Game is subject to forfeiture if team has not taken the floor within one-half hour after scheduled time.

10. PROTESTS:

- (a) All protests are to be submitted in writing by the coach to the DBC.
- (b) All protests accompanied by a \$15.00 fee will be returned if upheld.
- (c) Protesting coach must notify official and opposing coach at the point of

discussion of his intention to protest.

- (d) No protest on "Judgment Plays" by officials.
- (e) Time allowed for protests:
 - 1. On player eligibility—until end of season.
 - 2. On game itself—within three days.

11. **PROTEST BOARD:**

- (a) The DBC will appoint a Protest Board.
- (b) Coach, priest and/or principal from the teams involved will be allowed to present their protest verbally at that time. (Protest must still have been submitted previously in writing.)
- (c) The protest Board has the power to forfeit a game.
- (d) The Protest Board has the power to invite witnesses.

12. **TROPHIES:**

Trophies will be awarded to Class A and class B as follows:

- (a) To each section winner
- (b) To the first and second place teams in the post-season play-offs.
- (c) To five all stars and most valuable player in the post-season play-offs.
- (d) Fifteen individual trophies to the first and second place teams in the post-season play-offs.

13. **CHAMPIONS:**

There will be one Diocesan Champion team. Details of the tournament to be worked out by the DBC.

14. **TIES:**

In the event of a tie for first or second place for a Diocesan Tournament berths; a play0off game(s) will be played. One game will be played in the event of a two-team tie. For a three-way tie; a draw will be held to give one of the three teams a bye. The winner of the playoff game will play the bye team. A draw will be held for Diocesan Tournament berths in the event time does not permit playoff games to determine playoff

berths. After official's fee has been deducted from the gate, the two participating teams and the neutral floor host will split the receipts three-ways. The host school will realize all the profits from the refreshments. In the case of sectional ties it will be the responsibility of the Section Representative to secure a neutral floor. A team refusing to play on the selected floor will forfeit the game. A neutral floor is one that is not the home floor of either participating team.

15. PLAY-OFF ADMISSIONS:

The price of admission for the post-season Diocesan Play-Off games will be set annually.

16. LEAGUE FEES:

League fees are assessed and collected each year by the DBC.

A SCHOOL THAT WITHDRAWS FROM THE LEAGUE DOES SO UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- (a) The withdrawing school may not apply for re-admission until three years have elapsed. Eligibility will not take place in less than four years after withdrawal. Special cases may be acted upon by the DBC.

GIRLS ELEMENTARY BASKETBALL

The following constitute rules applicable to the girls' basketball program. All other rules in the general basketball code apply to boys and girls programs:

1. The circumference of the ball used in girls' games should be within a minimum of 28- ½" to a maximum of 29 inches. The weight of the ball should be within a minimum of 18 ounces to 20 ounces.

2. A female chaperon must be present with a team at all games and in locker rooms. Teams are not permitted in locker rooms without a female chaperon.

3. Other variances from the general basketball code will be detailed at a girls' basketball meeting or distributed in a memo by the Girls Basketball Coordinator.

PARENT PROGRAM EVALUATION FORM

School Year _____

A. This evaluation form is submitted with respect to the following team or activity:

BASKETBALL

Varsity _____ Boys _____

Developmental _____

JV _____

Girls _____

Instructional _____

Coaches Name _____

Coaches Name _____

SOCCER

Varsity _____ Fall _____

Developmental _____

JV _____ Spring _____

Instructional _____

Coaches Name _____

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Varsity _____

JV _____

Coaches Name _____

CHEERLEADING

Varsity _____

JV _____

Moderators Name _____

B. Please use this scale to answer the following questions by assigning a number to each.

Agree Strongly 5	Agree 4	Neither Agree Nor Disagree 3	Disagree 2	Disagree Strongly
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1. The Coach was accredited:_____
 2. The coach said the diocesan prayer before the game_____
 3. Participation in this activity was a positive experience for my child_____
 4. Good sportsmanship and personal development were appropriately balanced with winning and competitiveness. _____
 5. Issues of playing time/participation were appropriately handled._____
 6. Team activities were well organized and prepared._____
 7. Communications concerning team schedules, activities,_____
 8. Goals and objectives were effective and appropriate._____
 9. The coach(es) treated my child appropriately and with respect at all times._____
 10. The conduct of the coach(es) and players reflected positively on parish and the school._____
 11. The coach(es) was (were) knowledgeable with respect to the applicable rules and skills in the relevant sport or activity and devoted appropriate amounts of time to training in these areas.

 12. The coach was a good Christian role model. _____
- C. Please use this space to provide any additional comments you care to offer.

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D. Name: _____

(Optional)