

Parent/Athlete Handbook 2008/2009



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MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Mission Statement

Saint Patrick School is the primary educational ministry of Saint Rose Parish, drawing K-8 students from the South Sacramento area and beyond. The Saint Patrick/Saint Rose community is economically and culturally diverse, providing a comprehensive Christ-centered educational experience in a safe, caring, welcoming environment. The teachings of our Catholic faith and the living-out of Gospel values are an integral part of all aspects of the educational program, providing our students with a firmly grounded spiritual base and empowering our students to be life-long learners and compassionate, productive citizens.

Philosophy of Athletics

St. Patrick School views athletics as an important component in the spiritual, emotional, and physical development of our students. Athletic participation provides the student athlete with the opportunity to develop an appreciation of the importance of teamwork, sportsmanship, and self-discipline. Coaches, parents, guardians and staff should create an athletic environment which promotes religious, educational, and athletic values.

PAROCHIAL ATHLETIC LEAGUE

St. Patrick School participates in the Diocese of Sacramento's Parochial Athletic League (PAL). This league is comprised of area Catholic and non-catholic private schools. It is essential that all coaches, players, parents & guardians abide by the rules of the PAL. Coaches are responsible to familiarize themselves with the PAL guidelines, participate in the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) certification process, and attend all meetings required by the league and the directors.

League Mission

The Parochial Athletic League (PAL) is an integral part of the educational mission of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Sacramento. PAL is dedicated to fostering Christian and Human development, encouraging a positive vision in our young men and women through exercise, example and athletic competition and fully recognizing the dignity of each student in Christ's image.

With this Mission in mind, the following goals have been determined:

- a. to build a community which strives to image Christ;*
- b. to develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit and personal acceptance;*
- c. to instill Christian sportsmanship in the life-styles of the participants;*
- d. to teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing and competing with dignity;*
- e. to develop acceptance and appreciation of others;*
- f. to train, instruct and follow athletic/sport rules;*
- g. to develop the students' physical abilities and coordination;*
- h. to help form well-rounded students by fostering good health habits;*
- i. to provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy;*
- j. to teach the positive value of athletic participation*
- k. to show the necessity of practice, hard work and time management.*

These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God. - From the Parochial Athletic League Guidelines and Policies, p. 3:

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Each Principal is required to designate an Athletic Director(s) to represent their school.

- 1) *The AD must attend the mandatory AD’s meeting scheduled for mid to late August each year.*
- 2) *The AD will be the contact person for the PAL Directors and will provide communication between the School Principal, coaches and parents regarding PAL guidelines, schedules, meetings, permission forms, Physicals, Blood Pathogen Certification, etc. **Email address is required!***
- 3) *The AD maintains the active roster for all PAL sports their school participates in. This includes the standardized PAL Emergency Card and medical permission forms signed by a parent and a physician.*
- 4) ***The AD is required to host a parent information meeting prior to each PAL sport to inform all parents and interested parties as to the schedule (if available), league guidelines, school guidelines, etc. for participating in PAL sports.** This meeting is especially important to inform parents about the standards for participation, academic eligibility, and especially **GOOD CONDUCT** at all PAL events. Special emphasis should be placed on good sportsmanship, lending support to school coaches, respecting your opponent (Honoring the Game - Positive Coaching Alliance), and respecting the work of the officials in assisting with the administration of various athletic contests. As the direct representative of the PAL and their school, the athletic director will report (and in extreme cases - suspend a game or match) if they witness any un-sportsman like or detrimental behavior. These actions cannot be taken lightly and should be tempered by the good judgment of the person/persons involved.” – Parochial Athletic League Guidelines and Policies, p. 6.*

The athletic director will be responsible for the oversight of all athletic programs (see below) at St. Patrick School.

“The athletic director is the key person in developing an athletic program which meets the school’s mission and provides opportunities for participation and excellence in the area of competition... The A.D. must keep in mind that the top priorities of the school – the school’s religious mission and its academic program – always take precedence over athletics.” – Fr. Richard McGrath, OSA, Ph.D.

TEAMS AND PROGRAMS

Teams Offered

Individual sports are dependent upon player interest and league availability.

Fall

Sport	Teams
Girls Volleyball	Varsity (Grades 7-8) Junior Varsity (Grades 5-6)
Boys Football	Grades 6-8 only
Cheerleading	Grades 6-8 only

Winter

Sport	Teams
Girls Basketball	Varsity (Grades 7-8) Junior Varsity (Grades 5-6)
Boys Basketball	Varsity (Grades 7-8) Junior Varsity (Grades 5-6)

Spring

Sport	Teams
Boys Volleyball	Grades 6-8 only
Track & Field (Co-ed)	Varsity (Grades 7-8) Junior Varsity (Grades 5-6)
Girls Softball	Varsity (Grades 7-8) Junior Varsity (Grades 5-6)
Golf (Co-ed)	Grades 5-8 only
Mighty Midgets Basketball	Grades 1-4

Participation on Teams

Varsity teams are comprised primarily of 7th and 8th grade students; Junior Varsity of 5th and 6th grade students. If no Junior Varsity team is available in the league, 6th graders may participate on Varsity teams (Please see eligibility guidelines in the Athletes section).

Athletic Fees

There is a \$30.00 athletic fee **for each sport**. This fee offsets a portion of the school's athletic expenses. The athletic fee must be paid prior to participation.

Although the athletic fee is essential to the school's ability to provide an athletic program, no student will be refused team participation for financial reasons alone. Families on tuition assistance are eligible to apply for a fee waiver. Any waiver or exception to the athletic fee must be authorized by the athletic director and principal.

Donations

All donations to the athletic program must be presented to the principal. Donations must be made payable to St. Patrick School and are tax deductible.

Fundraising

Fundraising will be done with help from the St. Patrick School Parent-Teacher Booster Club. Fundraising for individual teams may be done only with the permission of the athletic director and principal. **All funds raised by any team must be accounted for through the school bookkeeper's office. Coaches, parents, guardians and staff may not store school-related monies overnight.** Purchases made for teams with funds raised must be approved by the athletic director and principal.

Pre- Season Meetings

Prior to the beginning of each season, coaches will hold a **mandatory** meeting for parents, guardians, and athletes who are participating on a given team. Coaches will discuss policies, expectations, and guidelines for practices and games. The Athletic Director will be available for questions.

Season	Pre-Season Meeting	League Begins
Fall	Wednesday, September 3, 2008	August 15, 2008
Winter	Wednesday, November 5, 2008	November 10, 2008
Spring	Wednesday, November 19, 2008	March 2, 2008

Player Cuts Policy

The PAL leaves the decision to allow team cuts to individual schools. If necessary, varsity teams may be cut if there are too many students wishing to participate. This decision is at the discretion of the individual coach with advice of the athletic director and principal. If possible an additional team may be added to the league to enable all players to participate. While it is preferable that all students be given the opportunity to participate, it is often impractical to field a team too large to properly coach and play.

Uniforms

The school will provide the necessary uniforms for each varsity sport. Coaches will sign out team uniforms at the beginning of each season and sign in each uniform after the season's completion. Players are to care for their uniforms and return them in good condition. All uniforms should be washed (in-side-out) prior to return. Uniforms should be flat dried, please do not use dryers. Normal wear-and-tear is expected. However, if a player damages a uniform he/she will be expected to pay for the cost of its replacement. Players may not begin practice for another sport until a previous season's uniform has been accounted for.

Equipment

Players are responsible for all athletic equipment. Players will be required to replace equipment which is damaged or destroyed.

Transportation

Most league games will be played "away" at another school or facility. Parents may drive their own children. However, any parent driving children other than their own to a sporting event **must** submit a completed insurance verification form to the school office. Students may **not** ride in the back of pickups, **all students must have a seatbelt**. If a team does not have enough verified drivers to transport all players to a game, the team will forfeit that game. Students must arrange for rides prior to their departure. The office phone may not be used for securing rides except in the case of an emergency.

All drivers must have Insurance Verification Forms on file with the school office. Coaches are responsible for all paperwork prior to allowing parents to drive.

Awards

At the end of each school year, the school will present Athletic Awards. Players will receive awards in each sport for Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, and Most Spirited Player. Additionally, the school will issue an Outstanding Athlete award to a boy and girl who excelled in their sport.

Teams may present trophies to participants with the approval of the Athletic Director. They may not issue awards for specific achievements without the express permission of the Athletic Director and the Principal.

Frank Mooney Award

Students who participate in sports will be eligible for the Frank Mooney Award for Outstanding Student-Athlete. Each year this award is presented at Graduation to one boy and one girl in 8th grade. Recipients must have played in at least two sports, exhibit Christian values, and respect their peers and teachers.

PRACTICES AND GAMES

Game/Practice Attendance

It is the responsibility of players and parents/guardians to notify coaches if a player is going to be late or unable to attend a game or practice. Teams are comprised of individuals and, as such, the team depends on each individual's punctual attendance to each practice and game.

Player Pick-up

While parents and guardians are encouraged to attend games to support their players and St. Patrick School, it is understood that it is not always possible for parents to attend. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange transportation after each game. Players may not be left unattended following practices and games. If arrangements have been made for a player to go home with another family, written permission must be provided to the coach. Coaching staff generally volunteer and it is important that parents or guardians be respectful of their time and be as prompt as possible when picking-up their child(ren).

Length of Practice

Practice times should not be over 1.5-2 hours in length. In general, student-athletes should not participate in sports more than 12 hours a week (games and practices, excluding tournaments).

‘Every day in practice, the coach gathers the team and has something to say about that day’s goals. In these moments, the coach has the full attention of the athletes and has the opportunity to inject language about values and attitudes.’ –Fr. Richard McGrath, OSA, Ph.D.

Open/Closed Practices

Coaches will decide whether practices are “open” or “closed.” If a coach decides to hold a “closed” practice, parents or guardians are asked to either drop-off their child and return by the close of practice or to remain outside of the gym/practice area until the completion of practice. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that parents/guardians are not a distraction to staff or players during practices.

ATHLETES

Player Eligibility

For many students, participation in athletic teams can be a significant motivator. In many cases, students who struggle academically can benefit greatly from the opportunity to participate in team sports. Participation and support from teammates and coaches can improve behavior, academic achievement, and self esteem.

It is important to keep in mind that students are at St. Patrick School to receive a quality faith-based education. While important to the development of the student athlete, academics must, in all cases, precede athletics.

“They are in school to be students first and athletes second. Student-athletes realize that they are committed Christians who function everyday in the school community. They realize that they are committed Christians who function everyday in the school community. They realize that religion needs to be alive in them inside and outside of athletic competition.” – Fr. Richard McGrath, OSA, Ph.D.

In order to participate in sports, each student athlete must maintain a 2.0 academic GPA and a B in conduct (Parent-Student Handbook). Eligibility will be regularly checked by the Athletic Director (see schedule below). Ineligible players will be announced to the individual, the principal, the coach, and the player. The player is ineligible to play minimum of a week or until grade improve. Teachers will be asked to provide the Athletic Director with constant feedback on student achievement. If a student’s eligibility is in danger, the Athletic Director will issue a warning to player, coach, and parents.

Season	Academic Checkpoints
Fall 2008	Sept. 11, Oct. 2, Oct. 23
Winter 2008/2009	Nov. 12, Dec. 10, Jan. 15, Feb. 7
Spring 2009	Feb 7, Mar. 5, Mar. 26, April 16

The academic success of our student-athletes is dependent upon the teachers, coaches, parents, guardians supporting eligibility requirements. Athletes need to know that not only do their adult-roll models and parents support these policies, but that they will provide assistance when needed to ensure student success.

Eligibility for Fall sports will be based on the previous year’s cumulative GPA. Players who do not meet eligibility requirements will be placed on probation.

The athletic director, in consultation with the principal and faculty, makes eligibility determinations. If, after an initial warning, a player is deemed ineligible, the athletic director will notify their parents, teachers, and coaches. It is the responsibility of the athlete and their parents or guardians to contact the teacher(s) to determine what action needs to be taken to become eligible. Players will remain ineligible until cumulative grades meet eligibility requirements.

Player Conduct

Athletes are representatives of St. Patrick School and are expected to behave appropriately at all times. It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure players are aware of behavioral expectations exemplifying Christian values. If an athlete is behaving inappropriately, at practices, games, or athletic events, it is the responsibility of the coaching staff to intervene. If the coaching staff does not take appropriate action, the athletic director, principal, or any present member of school staff to intervene. Players exhibiting inappropriate conduct will face school disciplinary action.

Participation Following an Absence

Players may not participate in games or practice on a day they have been absent from school.

Emergency Cards

All athletes must have an emergency card completed and turned-in to the coach before the first practice. **NO ATHLETE MAY PARTICIPATE WITHOUT A COMPLETED EMERGENCY CARD.**

Medical Release (Physical)

All athletes must have a Medical Release Form on file in the office before the first practice. This form must be signed by the athlete's doctor. Forms will be included in the registration packet.

Reporting of Injuries and Special Limitations

Players must report all injuries to coaches as soon as possible. Parents must also discuss any limitations or health concerns with the coach. It is essential to the health of the athlete that any health concerns be communicated to the coaching staff.

PARENTS and GUARDIANS AS SPECTATORS

Parent, Guardian, Spectator Conduct

Athletes must be encouraged to pay attention to their coaches and must not be distracted by parent "coaching" from the sidelines. Parents or Guardians who "coach" their own children from the sidelines in practices and games will put the athlete in a very difficult position, forcing them to lose focus.

While parent/guardian support and enthusiasm is encouraged, we ask that they remain as respectful spectators during games. Please refrain from offering suggestions or opinions until after the game. Coaches are responsible for all players in their care and cannot faithfully execute this responsibility if their attention is diverted by well-meaning parents.

It is the responsibility of the coaching staff to correct inappropriate behavior from any St. Patrick School parent or spectator. The athletic director, site director, principal, or any St. Patrick staff member will assist the coaching staff by correcting such behavior. Any St. Patrick spectator causing a disturbance may be asked to leave the site. This type of behavior must be reported to the athletic director. **Continual disruption by parents and family members during athletic events may result in disciplinary action or forced withdrawal of the student from St. Patrick School.**

From the Diocesan Administrative Handbook:

“Parents, grandparents, guardians, etc. whose school-related conduct, in the eyes of the principal, does not support the development of ‘an environment permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom’ may be asked to withdraw their children from the Catholic School.” (DSB 5700)

“If parent(s) refuse to accept the recommended [withdrawal], the procedures... shall be followed as in cases for disciplinary expulsion...” (DSB 5152)

From the Parochial Athletic Lead Guidelines:

*“The PAL exists to provide the students in our member schools with the opportunity to participate in athletics as part of the whole educational experience within the school curriculum. As such, we **expect** the parents to be positive role models of support while they are involved in PAL athletics. As members of the **Positive Coaching Alliance**, we ask that parents “Honor the Game” by getting to the **ROOTS** of positive play. As Parents, we expect you to model respect for:*

***R**ules
Opponents
Officials
Teammates
Self*

Parents are encouraged (if not required by their school) to attend a PCA Parents presentation on the role of parents in Honoring the Game.”

COACHES

Coaching Staff

“Coaches should ask themselves whether or not anyone would identify them with Jesus Christ because of the way he coaches.” – Fr. Richard McGrath, OSA, Ph.D.

The athletic director will interview each coach and, based on the interview, recommendations, and previous experience, recommend that coach for selection by the principal. Coaching positions are determined prior to each season. Changes or additions to the coaching staff will only be made if the selected coach is unable to assume his/her duties.

Dispute Resolution

If a player, parent or guardian has a misunderstanding or conflict with a coach, it is essential that they communicate the problem directly to the coach promptly before any other action is taken. In order to maintain a Christian atmosphere, parents, players, and coaches must communicate problems with one another in a respectful way. If no resolution can be reached with the coach directly, the player and/or parent may then contact the athletic director. A meeting will be set up to resolve the matter as quickly as possible. Please see the dispute resolution procedures in the Parent-Student Handbook for more details. According to PAL policy, all such disputes **must** be handled at the school-level. **Do not** contact the league directly as you will simply be told to direct your problem to the athletic director or principal.

Fingerprinting and TB Test

From the Diocesan Handbook:

“3. Volunteers who have substantial or regular contact with children must provide evidence of freedom from active tuberculosis... 4. Volunteers who have substantial contact with children, or who work with children without direct and immediate supervision of a paid staff member, must receive a criminal background check (be fingerprinted) before beginning their volunteer duties.” (DSB 4410)

Additionally, fingerprinting is required by State Law for all school staff and volunteers.

Blood borne Pathogens Training

The blood borne pathogens inservice is “[r]equired for all coaches (including assistant coaches).” The school will provide a pre-season inservice.

SPORT SPECIFIC RULES

Football

See PAL Guidelines

Volleyball

See PAL Guidelines/NHFS Rules

Track and Field

See PAL Guidelines/ NHFS Rules

Basketball

See PAL Guidelines/NHFS Rules

Softball

See PAL Guidelines/ASA Rules

Golf

See PAL Guidelines/NHFS Rules

Cheerleading

- 1) Cheerleaders must meet all student-athlete eligibility guidelines.
- 2) When determining songs and routines, cheerleaders must remember that they are representing a Catholic school. Songs and routines involving songs or movements of a suggestive or vulgar nature are inappropriate.
- 3) Coaches must exercise good judgment when choosing songs and routines.
- 4) Cheerleaders, like all student-athletes, represent St. Patrick School at all times. Uniforms must be appropriate (see dress code in the Parent-Student Handbook).

PLAYER CONTRACT

I *understand* that, as a participant in the athletic programs at St. Patrick School, I will be expected to make ACADEMICS *and* ATHLETICS priorities in my life.

I *will* not be satisfied with less than my best effort on the court and in the classroom.

I *will* strive to earn A's and B's in all my classes.

I *understand* that if I do not maintain a GPA of 2.0, I am academically ineligible to play sports at St. Patrick School.

I *will* attend every class, I *will* arrive on time for my classes and I *will* turn in every assignment when due.

I *will* attend all practices, games, fund-raisers, and other team events. In the event that I am unable to attend due to personal emergency or family obligation, I *will* notify a coach immediately.

I *understand* that if I miss a function, or arrive late, I may not be able to start in the next game, and I will be expected to make up for it at practice.

I *will* be on time to every event. I *understand* that it is inconsiderate to my teammates and coaches to be late.

I *will* treat my teachers, coaches, and team mates with courtesy and respect at all times.

I *will* give 100 % effort in every practice and game, as it is my intention to become the best player I can be.

I *understand* that for my personal success, and the success of the team, I must follow these guidelines and encourage my teammates to do so as well.

I *have read and agree* to the above guidelines. I understand that failure to meet these guidelines may result in being cut from the team.

Name: _____

Signed and Dated: _____

Parent Signature and Date: _____

Please sign and return this form.

**ACCEPTANCE FORM
2008/2009**

Parent-Athlete Handbook

I/We understand that St. Patrick School is a Catholic school whose philosophy I/we support and by whose policies I/we will abide.

Family Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

*Please sign and return this form to the school office.
Only one form per family is necessary.*