

St. Thomas Catholic Grade School
Athletic Handbook
2007-2008
Catholic Diocese of Peoria

- Mission Statement:** The athletic program at St. Thomas Catholic Grade School seeks to train each student athlete with skills needed to perform the respective sport, as well as teach concepts of fair sportsmanship, teamwork, and individual discipline. Expectations for performance will take into consideration the talents, experience, attitude, work habits, and age of the athlete. Mindful that sports is not an end in itself, the student athlete will be encouraged to maintain a high academic standard and develop an inner confidence necessary to succeed in all facets of his/her daily life. The athlete will be encouraged to put forth his/her best effort, striving to meet individual and team goals.
- Pastor:** Father Keith Walder
- Principal:** Anita Crain
- Athletic Director:** Lois Happ
athleticdirector@stthomasphilo.org
- Athletic Committee:** Diane Deters, Rick Gallivan, Julie Gay, Dennis Happ, and John Schumacher
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I. General Information

Athletic Offerings

All St. Thomas School fifth through eighth graders are invited to participate in cross country, basketball, volleyball, and track and field. St. Thomas School will field seventh- and eighth-grade teams. Depending upon the number of available athletes in the particular sport, beginning with fifth grade, athletes may be asked to move up to play with higher grades. Example: fifth and sixth graders could play on a seventh-grade team; sixth and seventh graders could play on an eighth-grade team. Cheerleading is open to fifth through eighth graders. All athletic offerings will depend on sufficient volunteerism in coaching and student participation.

Affiliations

St Thomas is a member of the Middlefork Conference and abides by its regulations and by-laws. St Thomas is a member of the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) and abides by its regulations.

All individuals who desire to be on a team and fulfill the requirements may be on the team. Students who meet all requirements will not be cut from a team, except to comply with IESA tournament team limits (15) at the end of the season.

Facilities

All boys' and girls' seventh- and eighth-grade home basketball and volleyball games will be played at the Thelma Melohn Gym in Philo. In case of scheduling conflicts with the gym, it will be noted on the schedule, and those games will be played at St. Thomas Gym.

Fees

There will be a \$25.00 athletic fee assessed at the parents' meeting for all participating students annually. This fee can also be paid at the annual fee day. If a student is in basketball and volleyball, for example, the fee is only \$25.00: it is not a fee *per sport*. This money will offset the cost for the expenses associated with the athletic program.

The fee for the family pass is \$50.00 (for immediate family only) and \$40.00 for the grandparents' pass. The family pass will cover admittance to all home girls' and boys' basketball games and girls' volleyball games played at St. Thomas Gym as well as home games at the Thelma Melohn Gym in Philo. The exception to that is regional and sectional games: the family pass and grandparents' pass will not apply.

The admittance price to the home games, if someone are not a season pass holder, is adults \$3, senior citizens \$2, and grade school students \$1. The bus driver of the opposing team, coaches, players, and teachers of St. Thomas School are not charged admittance.

Finances

The athletic department operates as a non-budget function of St. Thomas School. Income to meet expenses is accrued from concessions and gate receipts at home sporting events, tournament sponsorships, student fees, and generous donations.

Transportation

Traveling to away games will be attempted through car pooling. If we need to take a bus to an event, the decision will be made by Administration and the Athletic Director. Communication of this decision to the parents and athletes will be made one week prior to the event.

II. Policies and Procedures

Eligibility

The St. Thomas School sports program is run by volunteers who work many hours with our children. Team members are required to keep up with their schoolwork.

1. Sport's Physical Forms are required each year for each athlete and must be on file before the first day of practice.
2. A candidate for an athletic team must be covered by family insurance. Proof of insurance must be kept in the student's file in the school's office.
3. An athlete will not be allowed to practice or compete in an event if he/she was absent **half** of the school day, which is three (3) hours or more, due to **illness**.
4. Eligibility requirements will begin for the athlete upon the start of the season, based on IESA regulations for the sport in which they are participating.
5. An athlete must maintain a passing grade in every subject area. A student becomes ineligible when:
 - a. He/she has an "F" average in any subject;
 - b. He/she has a "D" average in two (2) or more subjects;
 - c. He/she receives an "I" in any subject area; eligibility will be based on the decision of the parents, teacher, and principal following a conference.

When a student is ineligible, he/she may not practice or suit up for any sporting event during the time of ineligibility. Eligibility checks are made every week on a Thursday. Ineligibility starts on the following Saturday, and he/she is not eligible to play or practice for seven (7) days from the ineligible Saturday. A student will be dropped from the team if he/she becomes ineligible five (5) times during one (1) sport for the remainder of that season.

6. The principal will give the names of ineligible players to the athletic director on Thursday evening. Coaches will be notified on the following day (Friday) by the athletic director of any player currently ineligible. At the same time (Friday), teachers will have a standard form to send home with the athlete for parent notification. The ineligible athlete will be unable to practice, dress in uniform, and play starting on that upcoming Saturday, and the ineligibility will remain in effect for seven (7) days. Detentions are to be served regardless of the sport schedule.

Organizational Chart



III. Expectations

Athletic Director

The Athletic Director reports directly to the Principal and the Pastor of St. Thomas School. The responsibilities or duties of the Athletic Director include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Schedule all athletic events for St. Thomas School.
2. Recruit coaches and submit selections to the Administration for annual approval.
3. Administrate the finances in consultation with the Administration.
4. Secure referees and officials for home games.
5. Monitor the condition of athletic equipment and make purchases when necessary.
6. Communicate with the Administration and coaches on matters involving player discipline and academics in a timely manner.
7. Communicate with the Administration and the custodians on matters involving scheduling and building use for games and practices.
8. Communicate with coaches annually on expectations for the athletic program and athletes.
9. Communicate with opposing schools to confirm scheduled games and tournaments.
10. Arrange with each team to have necessary first aid and appropriate safety items for each scheduled event.
11. Communicate with the Administration regarding any coach who defies the policies and expectations of the athletic program and those of St. Thomas School, which could lead to suspension or dismissal of a coach.
12. Coordinate on-site supervision of school administration and/or staff for all St. Thomas home events.
13. Attend coaches/parent meetings before the first practice of that sport.
14. Supply a monthly athletic report to Administration and Education Commission.
15. Must not plan any overnight games or tournaments without prior consent by the Administration and the Catholic Diocese of Peoria.
16. Must sign and agree to the guidelines set forth in this document. A signature form will be provided to the Athletic Director by the principal.

Coaches

Coaches must be an active parishioner of St. Thomas parish in Philo, Illinois, or any of St. Thomas School's affiliated parishes, and in good standing. Coaches are recruited by the Athletic Director and approved by the Administration on an annual basis. Those wishing to be an assistant to a coach or to help in another way with the sport's department are to be recruited by the coach and approved by the Athletic Director and Administration. The responsibilities or duties of the coach include, but not limited to, the following items:

1. Represent St. Thomas School in sportsmanship, behavior, Christian conduct, and appearance at all times.
2. Coaches and assistant coaches must have completed "Protecting God's Children" program prior to the season.
3. All coaches will have another adult, who has completed "Protecting God's Children", present when addressing the athletes in the locker room at all times before, during, or after a game. (This may be the combination of a coach, his/her assistant coach, or parent.)
4. Set the practice schedule in consultation with the Athletic Director.
5. Communicate with the Athletic Director any information involving equipment needs, traveling details, upcoming games, and disciplinary needs and concerns.

6. Supervise all practice sessions and remain at the practice site until all participants have been secured.
7. Supervise or ensure a scorebook is kept at each game.
8. Determine award winners, and present the awards at the sports banquet at year's end.
9. Coaches are required to have a parent meeting prior to the start of the season. At least one (1) parent of the athlete must attend this meeting. This meeting date is to be communicated to the Athletic Director before the meeting takes place.
10. Communicate to parents and players a list of expectations and current information as the need arises.
11. Communicate all practices and game schedules to players, parents, and the web site administrator (Dennis Happ, dhapp@parkland.edu).
12. Collect, distribute, and clean all uniforms before and after each event.
13. Ensure the set-up and clean-up of all athletic events--i.e., public address system, clock, chairs and benches.
14. The coach or assistant coaches will be required to ride the bus (if the bus is used) with the team to and from all away athletic events.
15. Seventh- and eighth-grade coaches should inform athletes and parents of their interpretation of "equal" playing time. The school realizes that the seventh- and eighth-grade teams are involved in a more competitive environment, especially in tournament play. An attempt to win *and* play everyone equally may not be possible in certain circumstances. To play all players in each game is a goal of the St. Thomas School's athletic program. Underclassmen will be allowed to "play up" in tournament play.
16. Observations and circumstances during practice sessions and games might cause a coach to deviate from this goal. (Missing practices or displaying a negative attitude during practices or in games would be two examples where a coach might withhold playing time from an individual.) Once the coach is made aware of this behavior, the coach should confer with the athlete as soon as this occurs.
17. Coaches must sign and agree to the guidelines set forth in this document. A signature form will be provided at the coaches' meeting by the Athletic Director.

Athletes

St. Thomas school offers an athletic program to all students as a privilege and not a right and can be revoked at any time.

1. Be genuinely interested in learning the rules and skills required for the sport.
2. Be willing and able to devote the necessary time to each activity.
3. Be respectful of coaches, officials, fellow team members, and opposing team members.
4. Respect all school property, both at St. Thomas School and hosting schools.
5. Represent St. Thomas School in sportsmanship, behavior, Christian conduct, and appearance at all times.
6. Attend practices regularly and punctually, and notify the coach of any conflicts.
7. Abide by all team guidelines and regulations established by the coach.
8. Must sign and agree to the guidelines set forth in this document. A signature form will be provided at the parents' meeting by the coach.

Parents

St. Thomas offers an athletic program to all students for parents as a privilege, not a right, and can be revoked at any time.

1. **24 Hour Rule** - If there is a problem during a game or practice that a parent would like to discuss with one of the coaches, that parent must wait 24 hours after the problem arises, and then he or she may make an appointment to speak to the coach.
2. Parents will assist coaches with timekeeping, scorekeeping, and monitoring of all athletes.
3. All parents of athletes are expected to help work the concession stand at home games, as well as chaperone at away games. Sign-ups for these volunteer opportunities will take place prior to the sport's season starting. The athletes' parents will be expected to volunteer in the concession stand/gate admissions a minimum of four (4) times per the number of sports your child is participating in.
4. Parents will not compete with the coach; parents will be honest about their child's athletic ability, attitude, sportsmanship, and skill level.
5. Parents will not compare his/her child's ability, attitude, sportsmanship, and skill level with those of other members of the team.
6. Parents will make arrangements to pick-up athletes promptly after practices and games. No coach shall be expected to remain more than ten (10) minutes after a practice or game.
7. Parents should exhibit good sportsmanship and Christian conduct at all athletic events.
8. Parent misconduct will result in disciplinary action by Administration.
9. Parents must sign and agree to the guidelines set forth in this document. A signature form will be provided at the parents' meeting by the coach.