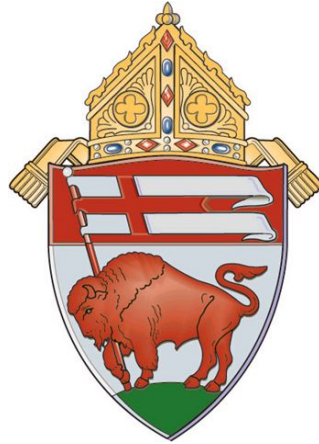


DIOCESE OF BUFFALO



Catholic Elementary School Athletic Handbook

August 2021

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Rationale

This Elementary School Athletic Handbook is only the first step in organizing athletic programs in a school. This document is provided in order to direct schools in policy and practices that are both legally sound and backed by the Diocesan insurance carrier. Secondly, it will offer consistency in the expectations and responsibilities of leagues, teams, coaches, administrators, and spectators. It is important that individual schools develop athletic handbooks using this document to address specific situations at the local level.

The contents of this Handbook are subject to change based on decisions made by the Department of Catholic Education and the Director of Elementary Athletics. Consider this Handbook a living document primarily nurturing children's physical, social, emotional, and academic growth and modeling Catholic values.

Revisions

Brian Kiszewski, Director of Elementary Athletics, Diocese of Buffalo

Nancy DiBerardino, Coordinator of Elementary Athletics, Diocese of Buffalo

May 2006, May 2007, July 2008, July 2009, July 2010, July 2011, July 2012, July 2013, July 2014,
July 2015, July 2016, June 2017, July 2018, August 2019, August 2020, August 2021.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Diocese of Buffalo Elementary School Athletic Programs is to foster the development of the whole child through academic and recreational athletic experiences within an atmosphere of Catholic values. Successful programs develop individual and team potential by promoting high standards of competence, character, civility, and citizenship.

Educational Goals

COMPETENCE

A student athlete in a Diocese of Buffalo Elementary School Athletic League is competent in terms of:

- Skill Development
- Knowledge of the game and strategies
- Fitness, Conditioning, Healthy behavior

CHARACTER

A student athlete in a Diocese of Buffalo Elementary School Athletic League demonstrates:

- Responsibility
- Perseverance
- Pride
- Trustworthiness
- Fair play
- Self-control

CIVILITY

A student athlete in a Diocese of Buffalo Elementary School Athletic League demonstrates civility toward others in word and actions, showing:

- Respect
- Fairness
- Caring

CITIZENSHIP

A student athlete in Diocese of Buffalo Elementary School Athletic League, through actions, shows evidence of:

- Loyalty and commitment
- Teamwork
- Integrity

Child Development: Mind & Body

As a Catholic school, our responsibility is to develop the whole child—socially, emotionally, academically, and spiritually. As we look at children in elementary school, their growth is a continuum preparing them for the next stage of their development. This is true especially in the area of physical development and participation in organized sports programs. It is imperative that we have a full understanding of this when planning sports programs for elementary-age students.

As stated in Understanding Children by Judith A. Schickendanz, Karen Hansen, and Peggy D. Forsyth...

“A healthy body contributes to healthy growth in every other area of development. Good motor coordination and appropriate body strength can support cognitive growth and provide children with positive feelings about themselves. Participation in games and sports can help children learn individual and group social skills. “Overall, physical activity can give children a sense of health and general well-being.”

In 1995, the NASPE (National Association for Sports and Physical Education) established standards and benchmarks that help establish a way to monitor a child’s progress towards physical preparation. Those standards are as follows:

- The child demonstrates competency in many movement forms and proficiency in a few movement forms.
- The child applies movement concepts and principles to the learning and development of motor skills.
- The child exhibits a physically active lifestyle.
- The child achieves and maintains a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.
- The child demonstrates responsible personal and social behavior in physical activity settings.
- The child demonstrates understanding and respect for differences among people in physical activity settings.
- The child understands that physical activity provides the opportunity for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.

These standards are used as guides for preparing activities and experiences to support the child’s physical development from three through eight years of age. After eight years of age, the child’s coordination, interpersonal skills, and her ability to understand rules makes them logical candidates for sporting activities. Participation in sports provides an opportunity to refine and practice the skills that have been developed using the seven standards listed above.

****This document is expected to be followed by all schools participating in a Diocese of Buffalo Athletic League.**

Roles & Responsibilities

I. Department of Catholic Education

- Maintain Athletic Handbook with required/needed updates.
- Offer one coaching seminar each school year.
- Provide one member of the Oversight Committee.
- Publish an annual list of leagues and coordinators.
- Organize Playoff sites for Basketball and Softball.
- Help the school administrator choose the most appropriate league for participation.
- Organize and run the Diocesan Track Meet.
- Collect rosters for tracking student participation.
- Facilitate the issuing certificates of insurance through the Department of Insurance Services.
- Collect all tournament information and schedules.
- Organizes First Aid & CPR Training 3 times a year for coaches.
- No event sanctioned by the diocese will be scheduled on Sundays before noon.
- Determine that students are bona fide within the school. (Diocesan students only)

II. Administrators

- Make sure ALL coaches and volunteers have had a background check, are Virtus trained and up to date on all monthly bulletins.
- Require the sports physical and doctor release, parent permission, signed Sports Code of Ethics before the student is allowed to join in any team events.
- Establish school eligibility (academic and behavior) procedures, publish them and enforce them.
- Select/Appoint coaches who will model the mission statement and goals of the Athletic Handbook and are at least 21 years of age.
- Supervise and evaluate athletic personnel including volunteers.
- Become a member of the selected Diocesan Leagues.
- Address suggestions for Athletic Handbook updates with the Director of Elementary Athletics.
- Administrators hosting diocesan sports events have the right to deny the use of their facilities to schools/groups that have violated or abused that school's policies and procedures in the past. Written documentation should be sent to the Director of Elementary Athletics 30 days prior to the season being denied use.
- Any verbal or physical threat made against a player, coach, official, or representative of the host school will be taken seriously and 911 will be called handle the threat.
- An Athletic Director, under the employ or supervision of the principal, can be delegated the responsibilities of the sports program.
- The administrator must prohibit any student not enrolled in the school from playing on the school team. This includes home-schooled children.

- Adhere to ALL policies set forth by the Department of Elementary Athletics (failure will result in penalties/sanctions against schools in violation)
- Use caution when including or adding 4th & 5th grade children to 6th, 7th & 8th grade (Jr. High) rosters due to different levels of physical development.
- No elementary students are allowed to practice or compete with or against high school teams.
- Will report the recruiting of any student based solely on athletic ability to the Director of Elementary Athletics.
- **Make sure all coaches have had a background check, are Vitus trained, up-to-date with training bulletins and been trained in First Aid, CPR & AED .**
- No event sanctioned by the diocese will be scheduled on Sundays before noon.
- An official roster is required to be submitted prior to the first contest. Failure to do so will result in your team forfeiting each contest until the official roster has been received.
- Administrators will be notified annually of diocesan sanctioned sports.
- **Non-Diocesan sanctioned sports or contests are not condoned or sanctioned by the Diocese. The school will assume responsibility for these contests and risks will be that of the school.**
- **Catholic schools are NOT covered under Title IX therefore neither the school nor the Diocese are obligated to allow a student of one gender to participate in an opposing gender sport.**

III. Officials (Referees/Umpires)

- Act in a professional and businesslike manner at all times.
- Know all playing rules their interpretations and their proper application.
- Make calls with confidence, never arrogance.
- Be fair and impartial at all times.
- Use honesty and integrity when answering questions, admit own mistakes and constantly try to improve knowledge.
- Treat all league members with respect and keep emotions under control.
- File an incident report on every incident where a player does not walk off the field/court on his/her own power.
- Observe and report in event of injury (time of day, condition of facilities or playing area).
- Inspect facility for safety. If coaches make an official aware of a problem, the competition does not proceed until problem is rectified.
- Remind coaches of sportsmanship with spectators and players. The official reserves the right to leave the game if antagonistic behavior or flagrant recurring behavior occurs.
- Timekeepers are an arm of the officials.
- Arrive a minimum of 10 minutes prior the scheduled start of the competition. Use the time to check that consistent rules will be followed and a safety inspection.

IV. League Coordinators

- Every league must hold a meeting prior to the start of the season to verify the rosters, procedures, fees, coach's contact information, and rules for the sport. Set the calendar of competitions with school calendars in mind.
- All teams must follow the same rules.
- Coordinate and oversee the league operation: schedules, sportsmanship, coaches' record keeping, and standings.
- Document, acknowledge, and respond to incidents, concerns, and violations. Send a report to the Oversight Committee, care of the Department of Catholic Education.
- Maintain direct communication with the coaches.
- **No event sanctioned by the diocese will be scheduled on Sundays before noon. This would pertain to individual school practices and games.**

V. Coaches

Legal Duties of Coaches: (Priority given to Catholic school teachers)

1. Duty to Instruct

Use the latest methods of proper instruction, using sound progress in learning motor skills. If an injury occurs while using an improper instructional method, negligence may well be proven.

2. Duty to Warn

Inform all athletes and their parents the inherent risks involved in participation in the particular sport.

3. Duty to Supervise

Document daily how the general supervision of the support is supervised as well as specific drills and practice.

4. Duty to Provide a Safe Environment

- Check any facility used for protective equipment, well-marked fire alarm and exits, debris/litter/obstacles in the play area, whereabouts of an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) and its directions for use.
- **Bring all emergency contacts numbers and a complete first aid kit.**
- **Coaches shall be professionally trained and certified in First Aid, CPR and the use of an AED.**
- **A copy of certification shall be submitted with the roster of the team they coach.**
- **All coaches and volunteers will be required to have a background check and be current with the Diocesan Safe Environment program (Virtus training).**
- **All coaches must be 21 years of age.**

5. Duty to Keep Records

- **Document each and every incident or injury by completion of BOTH an Incident Report (Appendix C-2) and a Student Accident Claim Form requested from Diocesan Insurance Services.**
- Submit both reports immediately to the principal, or call, regarding any injury requiring medical attention.
- Keep attendance at every practice, competition, or team event.

- Make sure that any athlete has met the eligibility requirements before he/she attends the first practice.
6. **Duty to Evaluate**
 - Evaluate and maintain records of physical fitness, medical condition, and the skill level of each athlete. (It would be cause for negligence should an injury occur due to fatigue or lack of skill.)
 - Disallow unequal or unsafe participation based on skill level, age, maturity, sex, size, and experience.
 7. **Duty to Follow Due Process**
Protect student athletes from discrimination due to sex, race, color, creed, or unfair practices.
 8. **Duty to Safely Transport Athletes**
Ensure that all athletes have safe transportation to and from practices or competitions. Supervise each athlete until his/her transportation arrives. (see Transportation Policy, page 14)
 9. **Duty to Foresee**
A prudent coach should be able to foresee the potential danger that may occur if activity is continued in that facility, or with that equipment, or with that behavior, or in that situation, and should take action to prevent the activity from continuing without correcting the problem.
 10. **Duty to Report Alleged Sexual Misconduct**
ANY allegation involving sexual abuse/misconduct must be immediately reported to the principal and also to the Superintendent of Schools.
 11. **Duty to Use Caution**
When including or adding 4th & 5th grade children to 6th, 7th & 8th grade (Jr. High) rosters due to different levels of physical development
 12. **Duty to Participate Safely**
No elementary students are allowed to practice or compete with high school teams.
 13. **All injuries that require medical attention must be reported within 24 hours. An incident report must be sent to the Director of Athletics and Diocesan Insurance Department.**
 14. **An official roster is required to be submitted prior to the first contest. Failure to do so will result in your team forfeiting each contest until the official roster has been received.**

VI. Student Athletes

- **Participation in athletics is a privilege and not right and subject to school handbook policies.**
- Act in a Christian way exhibiting good sportsmanship both on and off the court/field. Respect opponents, officials, coaches, teammates, and spectators at all times.
- Remember sport team participation is a privilege, not a right. Remember it is an opportunity to learn and have fun, not just to please parents or coaches.
- Start each competition with a team prayer. Welcome your opponents when they arrive and congratulate them sincerely at the end of a competition.

- Accept both victory and defeat with pride and honor—never be boastful or bitter.
- Maintain grades (classwork, homework, projects, and tests) and effort in schoolwork. Always work to your potential.
- Maintain good behavior in school and at school events. Choose to make yourself proud. Remember you represent your school in all you do.
- Use self-control.
- Listen and learn from the coach. Work hard to improve skills and help the team.
- Follow all the rules and regulations set by the school, coach and sport.
- Respect the judgment of the officials. Never argue or show disrespect to the officials. Only the captain should communicate with the officials regarding clarification of a rule.
- Attend all practices and competitions. If unable to attend, notify the coach in advance.
- Attend the full school day of a practice or competition.
- Accept the responsibility of representing the school and community.
- Return all school property, including uniforms, to the coach in a timely manner. If the uniform is not returned, the student’s report card can be withheld. If the uniform is lost, the school may assess a fee to replace it and the report card can be withheld until the fee is paid.

VII. Parents

- Encourage good sportsmanship, effort, and teamwork from student athletes, coaches, and spectators.
- **Model Christian behavior for all students, spectators, and coaches. Remember parents represent the school and the child in the community.**
- Respect the judgments of the officials and efforts and strategies of the coaches.
- Remember the athletic experiences are learning opportunities for the players. It is supposed to be fun for the student. Encourage, but don’t pressure participation in sports. **Parents should keep a balanced perspective on children sports.**
- Keep winning in perspective; help the child do the same.
- Help the child meet the responsibilities to the team and coach.
- Place academics as first priority...schoolwork is still the primary task of elementary students.
- Let the coach guide and instruct the child during competitions and practices.
- Cheer for the team. Acknowledge the efforts and successes of the opponents.

Elementary School Athletic Program Policies

These policies embody the minimum requirements that must be observed by any elementary school participating in the Diocesan Elementary Athletic Leagues. More stringent policies may be imposed on academic eligibility at the local level by the administration. Each school should have these regulations written in its School Athletic Handbook.

1. Each school will be responsible for establishing, implementing, and enforcing an eligibility code uniform for all sports.
2. The roles and responsibilities for the Department of Catholic Education, Administrators, Officials, League Coordinators, Coaches, Student Athletes, and parents are clearly indicated on pages 7-10. It is expected that all parties adhere to these responsibilities for the safety and benefit of the students in the Diocesan Athletic Program.
3. All student eligibility policies are found on pages 15. Considerations for eligibility include: registration status, academic/behavior/effort, age, grade level, submission of required forms, roster inclusion, sportsmanship, and removal of jewelry. Medical jewelry must be taped or covered.
4. All leagues in which a school participates must be registered with the Department of Catholic Education. This is essential for insurance and liability reasons.
5. All leagues must furnish a list of participating schools an explanation and accountability of fees prior to league play.
6. All leagues must follow the mission, goals, and policies of the Diocesan Elementary School Athletic Handbook.
7. No cheerleading pyramids are permitted in your facility by any cheerleading team. Cheerleaders are to remain on the floor during all cheering activities. The cheerleaders must be supervised by an adult at all times, one that is not involved with coaching the game in progress. Selection of music, moves, and chants must support Catholic values. Using a student mascot is discouraged.
8. All equipment mandated by the specific sport rulebook must be provided for the athletes.
9. **If a school is closed due to inclement weather or sickness, no students from that school are allowed to participate in practice or competition of any nature (tournaments, games, scrimmages) on that day without the principals' approval. The school administration makes this decision and communicates to all affected schools or coaches.**

10. A team roster and coaches required documentation (First Aid/CPR & Virtus training) must be submitted to the Department of Athletics prior to their first contest. League fees are due 30days from date of invoice from the Department of Athletics. Each team roster must be signed by the principal (athletic director, if applicable) and the coach prior to the start of league competition. Failure to abide will result in forfeited contests until all paperwork is submitted.
11. Notification of tryouts for a team, whether JV or Varsity, must be made public to all eligible students.
12. Team practices and competitions limits must be adhered to. (see page 18)
13. **No elementary students are allowed to practice or compete with High School teams.**
14. **Any violation a letter of warning will be sent to the principal and pastor notify them of the incident and that serious charges can evolve.**
15. **Catholic schools are NOT covered under Title IX therefore neither the school nor the Diocese are obligated to allow a student of one gender to participate in an opposing gender sport.**

Elementary School Transportation Policy

Elementary School student athletes are responsible for their own transportation to and from athletic practices and competitions/games unless the school has contracted bus transportation with a driver. Use of 15 passenger vans is strictly prohibited. Consent and waiver form must be completed and on file for every student transported through a contracted transportation service.

The School does not condone, arrange, or indemnify transportation of children by parents. If a parent/volunteer drives athletes in their own vehicle, they do so at their own risk and assume all liability.

All drivers are required to have a transportation information sheet on file at your school. Please see page 25 for this document.

Elementary Student Athlete Eligibility

1. The student athlete must be registered in and attending the school that he or she represents. The school must be a member of the Elementary Diocesan League.
2. The student athlete must be in good academic standing (earning a passing grade in each class or working to potential as determined by the individual school) in order to start on the team and /or continue on the team. Failing grades, lack of effort or inappropriate behavior will result in temporary suspension of eligibility. At that time, the student may not attend or participate in any team practice, competition, or event. The decision to allow the return of the student athlete is made by teachers and administrator. The parent may request permanent release from the team for academic priorities.
3. **A student may not be 15 years old by Labor Day of the approaching school year to participate on any athletic team.**
4. **Students who have completed 8th grade and enroll in another school as an 8th grade student are NOT eligible to participate in athletics if they participated in 6th, 7th, 8th grade of the school previously attended.**
5. "Redshirting," retaining a student for the sake of increased sports participation, is neither ethical nor permitted.
6. The student must have on file in the school office: current year physician's release to participate, a sports physical within the last 12 months of the sports season, written parent permission, signed Sports Code of Ethics, emergency contact numbers. The student must have all these on file before participating in any team activity (practice or competition).
7. A student must be on the roster submitted at the time of team registration with the league and Department of Catholic Education.
8. A student athlete who was excluded by an official from a competition for unsportsmanlike conduct is ineligible to play in that sport until after the next previously scheduled contest in that sport on that level.
9. Just as in gym class, jewelry must not be worn during practices or competitions. This includes taped earrings, any type of bracelet, rings, earrings, and necklaces or chains. If a religious medal or medical identification tag is worn, it must be off the chain and taped or sewn under the uniform.
10. **USE CAUTION WHEN INCLUDING OR ADDING 4th & 5th GRADE CHILDREN TO 6th-7th & 8th GRADE (JR. HIGH) ROSTERS DUE TO DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT.**
11. **NO ELEMENTARY STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED TO PRACTICE OR COMPETE WITH HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS.**
12. **ATHLETES MAY ONLY APPEAR ON 1 DIOCESAN TEAM ROSTER PER SEASON. VIOLATIONS WILL RESULT IN FORFITURE AND OR ELIMINATION FROM DIOCESEAN TOURNAMENT PLAY.**

****Any changes made to a roster during the season require a new roster to be submitted to the Director of Athletics prior to the student(s) participation on the team. Failure to do so will result in forfeitures of each game the new player(s) participate in.**

New Elementary School Sports Seasons

FALL (7 Weeks)

- Begins on October 1
- Completed by November 19
- Cross Country
- Girls' Varsity and JV Volleyball

WINTER (12 Weeks)

- Begins on January 4
- Season completed by March 30; league play/Diocesan Tournament
- Boys' Varsity and JV basketball
- Girls' Varsity and JV basketball

SPRING (7 Weeks)

- Begins on April 20
- Season completed by June 10; league play/Diocesan Tournament
- Girls' Varsity and JV softball
- Boys' volleyball
- Track and Field (co-ed) Diocesan Track Meet

OTHER: These sports are not Diocesan sponsored, leagues are still obligated to follow all Diocesan rules.

- Boys' Varsity and JV baseball
- Soccer (co-ed)
- Swimming (co-ed)

There may be no co-ed practices or competition events unless the sport is indicated as co-ed above. Diocesan sponsored sports supersede non-diocesan sponsored events.

**ATHLETES MAY ONLY
APPEAR ON 1 DIOCESAN
SCHOOL TEAM ROSTER PER
SPORT PER SEASON**

- **NO COMBINING OF SCHOOL TEAMS TO FORM "TOURNAMENT TEAMS"**

Practices may be held at the discretion of the school in order to complete the recommended number of practices prior to participation

Elementary Grade Level Participation

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Permitted Grade Levels</u>
Cross Country	5-6-7-8
Girls' Varsity volleyball	(6)-7-8
Girls' JV volleyball	(4)-5-6
Varsity basketball	(6)-7-8
JV basketball	(4)-5-6
Varsity softball	(6)-7-8
JV softball	(4)-5-6
Boys' volleyball	(6)-7-8
Diocesan Track & Field	3-4-5-6-7-8

**USE CAUTION WHEN INCLUDING OR ADDING 4th & 5th
GRADE CHILDREN TO 6th-7th & 8th GRADE (JR. HIGH) ROSTERS DUE TO
DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT.**

(4),(6) indicates prior permission to participate must be made by **written request** of the principal, **the parent or legal guardians signed approval**, and **the appropriate insurance forms (if needed)** on file with the Dept. of Athletics.

Smaller schools may invite participation of a neighboring Catholic school for the sole purpose of fielding a team. Special consideration may be granted by the Dept. of Athletics to 5th & 6th graders in order for a school to field a team. Refer to page 18 for combing protocol.

- 1. If a sixth grader(s) is added to a Varsity roster, a letter from the principal must be submitted to the Department of Athletics, requesting permission from the Diocese of Buffalo to allow the student(s) to play at this level. This student is not allowed to participate until the letter is received. The school will receive acknowledgement from the Department of Athletics.**

New Protocol for Combining School Teams

2021-22 School Year

1. Principals of both schools must agree to combine.
2. Athletic Directors from both schools must agree to combine.
3. Primary school will be determined by the principals of both schools.
 - a. Primary school will be responsible for all sport protocols.
 - b. Primary school will be responsible to make sure coaches are in compliance of Diocesan regulations.
 - c. Primary school will be responsible for all fees.
 - d. Primary school will be responsible for the team uniforms.
4. Any combines school teams will be subject to the following additional safety protocols.
 - a. All coaches, managers, team personnel and players that are not in the contest will be required to WEAR A MASK.
 - b. Athletic Director of primary school will be responsible to make sure all safety protocols are followed.
 - c. Primary school will be responsible to make sure the “team” follows all CDC, NYS, ECDOH and updated Diocesan guidelines.
 - d. Failure to field a team for scheduled contest will be counted as a FORFEIT with NO MAKE-UP DATE.

Elementary School Recommended Team Practice & Competition Limits

Sport	Min. # of practices prior to 1 st Contest	Max. # of practices prior to 1 st Contest	Max. # of practices per Week	Max. # of Contests	Min. Time Between Contests	Other
Cross Country	5	15	4	10	1 Night	
Girls' V. Volleyball	5	15	4	20	1 Night	
Girls' JV. Volleyball	5	15	4	14	1 Night	
V. Basketball	5	15	4	30	1 Night	
JV. Basketball	5	10	4	20	1 Night	
V. Softball	5	15	4	20	1 Night	
JV. Softball	5	15	4	14	1 Night	
Boys' Volleyball	5	15	4	20	1 Night	
Track & Field	5	15	4	10	1 Night	

Elementary School Team Practice Limits

- Only 1 practice per day is permitted.
- Minimum of 1 hour in length,
- Practices do not exceed 2 hours.
- **Elementary students are not permitted to practice with high school teams.**

Elementary School Team Contest Limits

- The number of contests includes tournament games.
- Count only the number of tournament games you are guaranteed.
- **The school's team uniform may only be worn at School-sponsored events**
- Only one (1) Diocesan sport competition per day is permitted, with the exception of the Diocesan Track Meet.
- **Elementary students are not permitted to compete with high school teams.**

Rationale for Practices & Competitions

- Academic study and schedules are top priority.
- Team schedules should not burden family life or religious practice.
- Instruction and conditioning is important prior to competition.

RECRUITING OF STUDENTS BASED SOLELY ON ATHLETIC ABILITY IS A DIRECT VIOLATION OF THE MONSIGNOR MARTIN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE:

Members: Brian Kiszewski, Nancy DiBerardino, Scott Kapperman, Tristan D'Angelo (alternate), plus 2 athletic directors (TBA).

Purpose

The Athletic Oversight Committee which includes the director of elementary athletics will establish and enforce the policies (see pages 13-15) in the Diocese of Buffalo Elementary School Athletic Handbook. The Committee will review and determine facts regarding any incident in violation of a Diocesan policy then rule on the severity, intent, circumstance, and causes of the rule/policy violation. It will determine the consequences of the actions and any sanctions to be made. The decision of this committee is binding.

The Diocesan-recognized sports leagues will be monitored by the Oversight Committee and will influence their course of action.

The Elementary School Athletic Handbook will be reviewed annually and updated when needed based on recommendations of the Oversight Committee and Principals' Council.

Procedure

1. The proper channels to address a concern must be followed. For example, the principal of the school should be approached first. Often, an incident can be cleared up quickly when the principal is made aware of a problem. At this level, consequences may be determined based on the school's Athletic Handbook. It may be necessary to refer the concern to the Oversight Committee.
2. A concern of policy/rule violation must be presented to the Director of Elementary Athletics in written form within 3 days of the incident or violation. The concern can originate from a student, parent, administrator, coach, official, league coordinator or sports event organizer. **No anonymous concerns will be addressed.**
3. Members of the Oversight Committee will be in communication with those involved in the incident to determine facts.
4. The facts will be presented to the Committee and the severity, frequency, intent, and causes of the violation will be reviewed.
5. The Oversight Committee will determine the level of intervention or consequences of the violation. Discipline will be progressive unless the violation was determined to be criminal or cause undue risk of liability or exhibits extreme resistance to Catholic values and the goals of the Athletic Program. In which case, it may be severe enough to warrant a ban, expulsion, or criminal charge.
6. The determination will be made by consensus, impartially, and binding. There is no recourse for a hearing.

Failure to abide by the rules set forth by the Department of Catholic Schools and the Directors of Elementary Athletics will jeopardize any post season play by the school team (s) in violation.

APPENDICES

*To be completed annually.
Distribute to students in June for next school year.
Keep on file in school for each athlete.*

A-1 Medical Release for Sports Participations

As of September 2018, the New York State Education Department is mandating that all students participating in interscholastic sports will be required to annually have a physical.

A new health form has been created by the New York State Education Department that will need to be completed entirely by the student's private health care provider or school medical director.

*Place on school letterhead.
To be completed annually for each sport.
Distribute to students in June for next school year.
Keep 1 copy in school file and
1 copy with coach at all times.*

A-2 Parent Permission for Sports Participation

Student Name _____ Date _____

Name of Parent/Guardian(s) _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

<p>_____ has my permission to participate in _____ during the school year _____. He/she will be expected to attend all scheduled practices and games. If needed, I understand that my son/daughter is responsible for all equipment/uniforms issued, and if any of the equipment/uniforms issued are not returned in proper condition, I am liable for their replacement value.</p>

In case of an emergency and I cannot be reached, call:

Name _____ Phone _____

Relationship to student _____

Or

Name _____ Phone _____

Relationship to student _____

If I cannot be reached, I give my permission for the coach or a responsible school representative to have my child treated by a physician.

My child has received a medical release to participate in _____ and _____ (Sport)

He/she has been in good health since, having no accidents or major illnesses.

Please indicate any allergies or health conditions that we should be aware of: _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Insert school name

A-3 Sports Code of Ethics

PARENTS

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for all children participating in youth sports by following this Parents' Code of Ethics.

I will remember my behavior, and that of my child, represents my school and reflect its philosophy.

I will practice and encourage good sportsmanship, effort, and teamwork from players, coaches, officials, and other parents at every game and practice.

I will not place a burden on my child to win games. The purpose of youth sports is to develop physical, mental, and social skills.

I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.

I will never argue with or complain about a referee's call or decision.

I will support efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports activities.

I will refrain from being a sideline coach or referee. I will attend games to provide positive support for all players on all teams.

I will support efforts to provide an environment for my child that is free from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. I will personally refrain from their use at all youth sports events.

I will remember the game is for the players and not for the parents.

I will ask my child to treat ALL players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, gender, creed, or ability.

PLAYERS

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for all children participating in youth sports by following this Players' Code of Ethics.

I will remember to start each game with a prayer and model Christian values throughout any game or practice.

I will remember my behavior, and that of my players, represent my school and reflect its philosophy.

I will practice and encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials, and parents at every game and practice.

I will remember that sports participation is an opportunity to learn and have FUN, not just to please my parents or coach.

I will be on time for every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach in advance if I cannot.

I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.

I will try to do my best at every practice and game, working hard to improve my skills and self-discipline, and to help my team.

I will never argue with or complain about a referee's call or decision.

I will control my temper and resist the temptation to retaliate if I feel I've been wronged.

I will treat my coaches, other players, officials, and fans with respect regardless of race, gender, creed, or abilities, and I will expect to be treated accordingly.

I will do my very best in school.

I will play using the Laws of the Game.

I have read and will follow the **Sports Code of Ethics**.

Player _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Place on school letterhead.
To be completed annually.

A-4 School Safety Driver Information Sheet

Driver

Name _____ Date of Birth _____
Address _____ Social Security # _____
_____ Phone # _____
Driver's License # _____ Date of Expiration _____

Vehicle That Will Be Used

Name of Owner _____ Model of Vehicle _____
Address of Owner _____ Make of Vehicle _____
_____ Year of Vehicle _____
License Plate # _____ Date of Expiration _____
Registration Expiration Date _____

If more than one vehicle is to be used, the aforementioned information must be provided for each Vehicle.

Insurance Information

When using a privately-owned vehicle, the insurance coverage is the limit of the insurance policy covering that specific vehicle.

Insurance Company _____
Policy # _____ Date of Policy Expiration _____
Liability Limits of Policy* _____

**Please note: the minimal, acceptable liability limit for privately-owned vehicles is \$100,000/\$300,000.*

Place on school letterhead.
Copy as needed.

Certification

I certify that the information given on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that as a volunteer driver, I must be 21 years of age or older, possess a valid driver's License, have the proper and current license and vehicle registration, and have the required insurance coverage in effect on any vehicle used to transport students.

Place on school letterhead.
To be completed annually

C-1 Coach's Agreement and Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for all children participating in youth sports by following this Coach's Code of Ethics.

I will remember to start each game with a prayer and model Christian values throughout any game or practice.

I will remember my behavior, and that of my players, represent my school and reflect its philosophy.

I will practice and encourage good sportsmanship from players, fellow coaches, officials, and parents at every game and practice.

I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my players ahead of the desire to win.

I will keep myself informed of sound principles of coaching and child development.

I will never argue with or complain about a referee's call or decision.

I will do my best to provide a safe, supervised playing situation for my players. I will check players' equipment and fields.

I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development within the same age group.

I will do my best to organize practices that are FUN and challenging for all my players.

I will teach my players the Laws of the Game.

I will remember that I am a youth sports coach and that the game is for the players.

I will maintain an open line of communication with the school principal and the players' parents.

I, _____ understand the policies in this handbook that apply to athletic competition in our school and the Diocese of Buffalo. I will follow these guidelines and uphold them in all circumstances. I have read and will follow the Coach's Code of Ethics.

SPORT _____

Coach's signature _____ Date _____

CPR/AED certification
Date expires _____

Protecting God's Children
Training date _____

First Aid certification
Date expires _____

Background Date & By _____

***A Copy of this form along with your First Aid / CPR/ AED Certification must accompany the team roster you are coaching 10 days prior to your first contest.**

Principal's signature _____ Date _____

Copy must be sent to the Director of Athletics, 795 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14203

Place on school letterhead.

C-2 Incident Report

Date _____

Parish/Institution Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Claimant Name _____

Address _____

Phone # (home) _____ (work) _____

If minor, names of parents _____

Activity taking place/Reason on premises: _____

Date of Incident _____ Time of Incident _____

Where did incident occur? _____

Type of injury _____

Treatment (if any) rendered at scene _____

Destination _____

Describe incident _____

Witness Name _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

Name of person reporting incident _____

Department of Insurance Services

795 Main St. Buffalo, NY 14203

Ph.: 716-847-8396 Fax: 716-847-5538

<http://www.buffalodiocese.org/insurance/forms.html>

C-3 Accident Claim Form

Please contact the Diocesan Insurance Department at hlauer@buffalodiocese.org to request a copy of this form.

The Accident Claim Form should be completed by the Principal and email to the address provide above.

**Only for schools hosting or
organizing a tournament**

DIOCESE OF BUFFALO
DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

D-1 Tournament Registration

Date of Event: _____

Name of School Hosting Event: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____

Contact Person _____

Phone Number of Contact Person _____

Type of Tournament _____

Date(s) and Time(s) _____

Participant Schools: **(Please spell out complete name and location)**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Was an Insurance Certificate requested? Yes ___ No ___

Signature of Hosting School's Principal _____

Please submit all tournament information to the Coordinator of Athletics 30 days prior to the tournament date. No insurance certificate will be issued unless the tournament has been register with Department of Catholic Schools.

Place on school letterhead.

E-1 Assessment of Goals

This instrument is designed to be used by administrators, athletic coordinators, or coaches to assess the performance of a specific sports team. It can also be used in a peer or self-assessment context. It can be modified to assess a student athlete's athletic performance.

Directions: A separate score is tallied for each of the four goals---COMPETENCE, CHARACTER, CIVILITY, and CITIZENSHIP. The overall score is the average of the scores on the four goals. For all items, ratings should be based on observed behavior.

School _____

Team _____

Coach _____

Date _____

Observer _____

COMPETENCE

(skill development, knowledge of the game and strategies, fitness/conditioning/healthy behavior)

Has this team developed the skills necessary to participate competently in the game?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Has this team demonstrated knowledge and strategies of the game?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Has this team demonstrated a level of physical conditioning and fitness sufficient to participate competently?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Has this team demonstrated knowledge of healthy behaviors, including nutritional issues?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

COMPETENCE SCORE _____

E-1 (cont.)

CHARACTER (responsibility, perseverance, pride, trustworthiness, fair play, self-control)
--

Was this team dependable in fulfilling obligations and commitments?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Did this team accept responsibility for consequences of actions, didn't make excuses or blame others?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Did this team give 100% effort, didn't give up in the face of setbacks?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Did this team play by the rules of the game?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Did this team control anger and frustration, refrain from inappropriate language or displays of temper?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Did this team accept winning and losing gracefully (congratulated opponents, didn't sulk or brag)?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

Did this team take pride in doing their best?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

CHARACTER SCORE _____

CIVILITY (respect, fairness, caring)

Did this team treat all persons respectfully, refrain from put downs of opponents or teammates regardless of individual differences or skills?

1	2	3	4
Not evident		strongly evident	

F-1 Prayer

Sportsmanship Pledge

Pledge of Allegiance

The Officials, Coaches, and Players should line up at center court/field facing the spectators. (Officials in the center, coaches on either side, players next to coaches) The coach of the home team, or a player from the home team, should read the Prayer and Sportsmanship Pledge stopping at the designated spots so that all others (and spectators) can repeat the words.

PRAYER

In the name of the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

God of play,
we ask for your blessings
on both teams and their coaches.
We ask You to help us
play fair and with good sportsmanship.
Give us the joy of Your Spirit.
Amen.

In the name of the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

SPORTSMANSHIP PLEDGE

We pledge
to model sportsmanship,
support and encouragement
for all attending this sporting event today.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America,
and to the Republic, for which it stands,
one nation under God, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all.

Place on school letterhead.

F-2 Coach / Volunteer Checklist

FOR EACH SPORTS SEASON
MUST BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO FIRST LEAGUE CONTEST
(or teams will not be permitted to play and to compete)

To ensure the safety of all our youth, each coach/volunteer and principal must indicate compliance with all nine points listed below and meet the required time line.

- 1) Read and agree to abide by the current Diocesan Elementary Athletic Handbook Guidelines.
- 2) Read and sign the Coaches Code of Ethics form (**Page 26** of the Athletic Handbook).
- 3) Complete Virtus training in accordance with the Diocese of Buffalo.
- 4) Agree to keep updated with the Virtus training bulletins (monthly).
- 5) Complete a background check in conjunction with the school I am coaching and/or affiliated with.
- 6) Will contact the Director of Elementary Athletics to report (in writing) any improprieties within my league.
- 7) Make sure all student athletes are in compliance with up to date sports physicals. **Check with school officials.**
- 8) Are required to carry a First Aid kit to all contests.
- 9) Updated First Aid and CPR course certificates on file in school office.
- 10) Coaches/Volunteers must be 21 years of age.
- 11) Submit an official roster.
- 12) Report injuries requiring medical attention within 24 hours of its occurrence.

Sport: _____

Coach's Signature _____ Date _____

Principal's Signature _____ Date _____

Form must be completed and returned by emailed to ndiberardino@buffalodiocese.org or Fax: 847-5593.

Effective as of Spring 2010: With the new process as stated above and outlined in the **2021-2022 Elementary School Athletic Handbook**. Please do not put your school in jeopardy of forfeiture of the season schedule by not complying with the process and non-compliance with the completion of the checklist, signatures, and meeting the due date. Please do not permit your students to lose the opportunity to participate in the sport season. All League Directors will be notified of this required process. Thank you for your support as we work together to ensure the safety of our youth—our greatest treasures.