

HOLY CROSS ACADEMY
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Effective: November, 2015

Holy Cross Academy

Athletic Handbook

I. Mission Statement:

- Teach fundamental skills necessary for athletic growth and improvement.
- Provide opportunities for character development.
- Use competition to confront challenges and develop discipline, structure, commitment and good work habits.
- Our Athletics follows the rules and guidelines of the Ohio High School Athletic Association. Any question or issue regarding OHSAA shall be brought to the attention of the Holy Cross Academy Athletic Coordinator. The HCA AC shall discuss issues first with the HCA President and then with the Youngstown Diocese Athletic Representative. The Diocese Athletic Representative has final say on OHSAA rules and interpretation.

II. Goal:

Our Goal is to teach Catholic Values along with the ideals of teamwork and good sportsmanship.

III. Beliefs

Athletic competition is beneficial to students. Participation provides opportunities for good behavior and character development. Games provide opportunities for community and family involvement in the school. Learning teamwork provides important lifelong skills of working together with others. Competition allows students to learn to react to both positive and negative situations involving both victory and defeat in a Christian sportsmanlike manner.

IV. Guidelines for Coaches:

A. Coaching Philosophy

1. Develop talent and skills such as leadership, teamwork, and discipline.
2. Help players to set goals, take advantage of opportunities and finish what they start.
3. Provide positive feedback.
4. Develop teamwork.
5. Athletics fosters team and school spirit, and a sense of community.
6. The students shall be taught the fundamental skills necessary for further growth and improvement.
7. Be a positive example.

B. Responsibility to school

1. Coaches must demonstrate a commitment to the philosophy and mission of Catholic school education, including actively supporting and promoting the local Catholic high schools.

2. Any student from the school or parish that wishes to participate in sports may be part of the team. We do not cut students from teams at any level.
3. Coaches are representatives of the school and are to exhibit Christian values at all times.
4. The coach is responsible to the principal and the athletic director and is to keep communication with them.
5. Coaches are to abide by all school, league and state rules and policies, ie. OHSAA, CYO, Tri-County, etc.

C. Requirements

1. Coaches are to comply with the following requirements for coaching:
 - a. Treasured Gifts from God Class for all levels
 - b. BCI/FBI Fingerprinting for all levels
 - c. CPR/AED Class once every 2 years for 7th and 8th grade
 - d. Sports Medicine Class once every 3 years 7th and 8th grade
 - e. NFHS Certification 7th and 8th grade
 - f. OHSAA Concussion Class 7th and 8th grade
2. Ultimately, the costs of these requirements are to be paid for by the coaches. The school may reimburse coaches as they see fit.
3. Some of our sports and leagues have other requirements, ie, Cleveland/Akron CYO. It is the responsibility of the coach to make sure all requirements are met in order to coach the team. All middle school coaches are required to have a Pupil Activity Permit.
4. A certified coach must be at each practice and games.
5. Copies of current certificates must be on file in the school office.
6. No coach may be added to the staff without approval of the school's athletic director/representative or principal.
7. At least 2 adults must be present at all practices and games; for girls' teams, an adult female must be present. For boys' teams, an adult male must be present.
8. Coaches are responsible to provide adequate supervision of players at all times prior to, during and after all sports organized events including practices and games until custody of the player is back with the parent or guardian.
9. Contact with athletes during these times must be tobacco and alcohol free.
10. No coach, at any time, will push, shove, strike, or threaten a player, official, opposing coach, or spectator. Improper behavior or language will not be tolerated.

D. Responsibility to players

The health, safety, and the development of character of the players, are of the utmost importance.

1. Returning from an Injury- Any student-athlete held out of a practice or game by a parent or guardian due to injury or illness must speak with the head coach prior to being allowed to return to play. Any student athlete held out of a practice or game by a

doctor or medical provider must present a note from a doctor or medical provider to the head coach prior to being allowed to return to play.

2. Coaches are to be held to a high standard of conduct and be a good role model to the players which cannot be compromised in order to win. The tradition of good sportsmanship must be the prime objective of everyone.
3. Coaches are to improve the talents of the players on the team; help players to grow as good Christians; teach them how to play as a team.
4. Winning will never take precedence over the responsibility to the school or the players.

E. Responsibility to parents

The primary concern of the coaches is the safety and protection of the children. Coaches are to be vitally interested in the player's development as an individual and as a member of the team. The coach must ensure parents know they cannot interfere with coaching during practices or games.

F. Responsibility to Opponents:

The coach should endeavor to establish the best of relationships with the other teams and their coaches. The coach must insist that he/she and the team behave with courtesy at all times; and ensure they are the example of good sportsmanship in victory and defeat when communicating with opposing coaches and teams. Coaches are to use self-control and maintain emotional stability. No coach shall permit a player to use unsportsmanlike tactics or participate in events in an unsportsmanlike manner.

G. Responsibilities to Officials:

In dealing with officials, the coach must be business-like at all times. Coaches are to use self-control and maintain emotional stability. Coaches are to abide by the decision of the officials. If there is a dispute, the coach is to follow the leagues procedures for filing complaints or appeal.

V. Player Guidelines:

A. Goals

1. Teamwork- Student-athletes will develop self-discipline, respect for authority and a great work ethic. Each student will learn to place team objectives above individual achievements.
2. Strive for Success- Student-athletes will learn that success doesn't come easy. They will learn to accept defeat by striving to win with intense dedication. They will develop a desire to excel to their best ability.
3. Display Good Sportsmanship- Student-athletes will learn to treat teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents as they would like to be treated. They will develop their capacity to control their emotions, be honest, and to cooperate with others. **Sportsmanship** is defined as ethical, appropriate, polite and fair behavior while participating in a practice, game or athletic event.

B. Expectation of Players

1. Participate in a Christian sportsmanlike manor.
2. Players are to have fun, and do their best.
3. Set goals, take advantage of opportunities and finish what you start.
4. Be disciplined and respectful.
5. Learn the plays. Support your teammates.
6. Be on time. School work comes first.
7. Play with intensity.
8. Don't be average, be the Best.
9. Know you are a part of something Special.
10. Uniforms and Equipment- Students have an obligation and responsibility for all equipment issued to them. Each student is responsible for the proper care and retention of their equipment from the date of issue to the date of return.

C. Eligibility Guide

1. Before you play you must be eligible. The checklist for 7th and 8th grade is at ohsaa.org/eligibility.
2. All school students or parishioners active in religious classes are eligible to play on our parish teams.
3. The school through their principal may impose stricter guidelines for eligibility for all grades Kindergarten to 8.

VII. Parent Guidelines

A. Expectation of parents

1. Be a positive spectator in a Christian like manner.
2. Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and opponents.
3. Safety is a primary concern. If there is an issue with safety, please notify a coach immediately.
4. Athletes are to be at practice and games on time and picked up on time. Players may not be left unattended.
5. Improper behavior or language will not be tolerated.

B. Communication Procedures

1. Effective communication is the key to success for any athletic department. Holy Cross Academy strives to keep open and professional lines of communication between our coaching staff, student-athletes and parents. The coaching staff will make every effort to communicate all important information to their respective student-athletes and parents on a regular basis.
2. 24 Hour Rule- Athletics are naturally emotional. Game days are an emotional time for coaches, athletes and parents. Holy Cross Academy requires parents, athletes and coaches to wait about 24 hours until addressing conflicts that occur during games or practices. The time allows for emotions to be taken out of the conflict and a more

constructive resolution to be reached. The only exception to this rule is if a child's safety is at stake, then immediate action should be taken.

3. Conflict Resolution- A very important life lesson learned through athletics is self-advocacy. At Holy Cross Academy we allow our students to practice this very important skill by having them speak directly to their coach if there is a conflict or misunderstanding. If no resolution can be reached then we ask the parent to contact the coach and schedule a meeting to discuss the issue. If the problem is still unresolved, then the parent should contact the Athletic Director. The final step is for the parent to contact the principal. The steps are summarized below:

1. Athlete speaks to Coach 2. Parent speaks to coach 3. Parent speaks to AD 4. Parent speaks to principal.

VIII. Banquets:

Formal, costly athletic award banquets are not to be held at the K-8th grade level. Participation certificates, special awards, and trophies may be presented at the end of the season. OHSAA level sports may participate in an end of year recognition event. Events should be modest and reflective of our Catholic Values. Events are to be planned in coordination with the principal and AD. No overnight functions may be planned in the name of the school or team by the coach or other adult without the explicit permission of the principal.

IX. Practices and Games:

- A. Practices and games may not be scheduled on Sundays before noon. Games and practices should not be scheduled on important feast and holy days of obligation. If the school is closed for a calamity day, ie. Bad weather, school scheduled extracurricular activities including sports practices are also canceled.
- B. Practice Attendance- It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student is not going to be present at a practice or a game. Practice is where plans for upcoming contests are devised and perfected. The coaches in our program expect their athletes to be present at all team related activities.
- C. Students are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic, family emergencies, or religious reasons. Prior notification is strongly recommended and expected.

X. Prayer:

- A. Coaches are to incorporate prayer into each practice and games.

XI. Number of Players on a Team:

- A. The number of players on a team will first comply with the maximum and minimum numbers as set out by the league. Teams will always strive to be made up of numbers that will promote the greatest amount of participation for all players; however, you

must consider league rules and not be forced into forfeits due to not having enough players.

- B. When a school has enough players to make up 2 or more teams in one league, the talent shall be split as equally as possible between the teams. The schools are expected to create parity amongst their teams so that the teams have roughly equivalent levels of talent. Schools may separate their talent differently so long as the teams are able to be placed in separate leagues to be competitive. No school shall create a “super team” and have a less talented team in the same league, playing the same teams.
- C. When a school does not have enough to make up a team, the school will bring this issue to the attention of Holy Cross Academy Athletic Coordinator who will attempt to find a solution with the assistance of the Athletic Committee. The combining of schools is common and will be promoted to the benefit of our students.

XII. Fundraising:

Coaches may not request any type of funding from players, parents, sponsors, etc., without the explicit permission of the of the school principal. No fundraisers, including but not limited to car washes, candy sales, restaurant nights, may be run without the permission of the principal.

XIII. Player Participation in Multiple Sports:

Participation is a guiding principle for all sports. If a student is on multiple teams, participation in sporting competition on one team may override participation in a practice on another team.

XIV. Levels of Participation/Playing Time

- A. Coaches are to determine playing time based on, but not limited to the following: athletic ability, league rules, practice attendance and participation, knowledge of the game, knowledge of team plays, and player’s attitude.
 - 1. 7th/8th student-athletes will have the opportunity to compete against athletes from opposing schools. Playing time is at the discretion of the Head Coach. Coaches are to play all team members for some portion of each game, with the exception of tournament or playoff games.
 - 2. 5th/6th student-athletes are those that are still learning the skills necessary for competition. Players will be given the opportunity to participate in competitive situations against opposing schools. These situations will allow student athletes the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge, skill and experience needed for competition. All team members are to participate for some portion of each game. Playing time is to be earned but HCA encourages playing time to be as equal as possible. Coaches are to also know and follow all league rules regarding playing time.
 - 3. K-4th student-athletes are those that are not yet ready for the competition level. All students must have the opportunity to play at this level. This level is designed to

allow student-athletes to gain experience, skill and knowledge of the sport. Players' playing time is to be as equal as possible regardless of league rules.

XVI. Handbook interpretation:

- A. The HCA President and/or Athletic Coordinator will answer any questions and provide any necessary interpretation of the HCA Handbook. The HCA President and Athletic Coordinator may amend the handbook as necessary with guidance from the schools' principals and ADs.
- B. If any issue arises regarding the actions of a:
 - a. Player, the player's coach will be notified and the coach and school's AD will handle the matter with the input and oversight of the school's principal.
 - b. Coach, the school's AD will handle the matter with the input and oversight of the school's principal.
 - c. Parent, the coach may discuss the matter with the parent depending on the significance of the issue. The coach is to relay all parent issues to the AD who will take necessary steps to rectify the situation with the input and oversight of the school's principal.
 - d. In all matters the schools' principals have the final say on how to administer their athletic programs with the input and oversight from the Holy Cross Academy President.
 - e. The Holy Cross Athletic Committee is an advisory group for the principals and the HCA President. If an issue arises between 2 or more schools that needs review, the Athletic Coordinator will select 2 ADs from schools not involved in the controversy and make a recommendation to the principals and HCA President. If the AC's school is involved, then 3 separate ADs will be selected to review and make recommendations to the principals and HCA President. The principals and ultimately the HCA President have final say on all issues.
 - f. It is highly encouraged that issues of concern go through the schools' coaches, then ADs and principal before bringing them to the HCA Athletic Coordinator or President. Most issues can be addressed and satisfied at the level most involved with the player and parent.

XVII. Word of Wisdom

Philippians 4:13, I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Matt 19:14, But Jesus said, "Let the children alone and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. ---*Aristotle*