

Decatur Catholic
Athletic Handbook



2024 - 2025



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The following sports will be offered at all school in a cooperative manner through the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) and our Decatur Catholic Schools:

- Baseball
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Girls' Basketball
- Boys' Basketball
- Girls' Volleyball
- Track and Field
- Scholastic Bowl
- Soccer – Kindergarten -8th Grade
- Softball

The rationale for this decision was based on the fact that this will enable us to enhance the athletic opportunities for students and families as well as create a stronger Catholic community.

Athletic Association Board and Directors

Board:

The Decatur Catholic Athletic Board consists of twelve members. Two members from each school are appointed by the Decatur Pastors and Principals for a total of six appointed members. The Decatur Pastors and Principals serve ex officio. The Athletic Director serves on the board as a non-voting member. The purpose of the Board is to advise the Decatur Pastors in development, formation, and adoption for the Decatur Catholic Athletics. Additionally, the Board advises and assists in the assessment of the overall needs of Decatur Catholic Athletics.

The Board meets once a month throughout the academic year, with additional meetings occurring throughout the summer as needed. For questions, concerns, or comments, individuals should contact their school representatives through their school's communication platform or the Athletic Director.

Athletic Director:

One Athletic Director is appointed by the Pastors, who will take recommendations from the Athletic Board. The Athletic Director will have a one (1) year renewable term contract and will be paid a yearly stipend by the Athletic Association. Responsibilities include: scheduling of games, maintaining files with copies of all contracts for games, organizing and chairing annual parent meetings, selecting/guiding coaches, communicating rosters and schedules for all sports to the school administration, monitoring compliance with diocesan rules, maintaining proper use and cleaning of the school building during and after athletic events, enforcing the athletic eligibility policy, and organizing the operation of concession and ticket sales.

The Athletic Director or designee is responsible for the security of the school building during and following athletic events. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to, dealing with disorderly fans, coaches, and players, seeing that all areas of the building used (restrooms, lobby, changing areas, gym, and kitchen) are clean and in working order for the next school day, turning off all interior lights,

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fans, air-conditioning or heating, and securing all doors. Securing doors include checking to see that no doors are propped open and that all are locked and properly latched.

Building Use Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to all organizations or groups which use the school building, including athletics. These rules must be enforced by the athletic directors and coaches and apply to both practice and games:

We are very proud of our schools and request the respect and cooperation of everyone who uses the facilities. Therefore, the following rules are in effect **AT ALL TIMES** for everyone who uses the buildings:

1. No running in the building.
2. Locker rooms must be picked up and left in an orderly fashion after games.
3. No climbing on furniture, bleachers, counters, or stair railings.
4. No skates, skateboards, or bikes allowed in the building.
5. No loitering in lobby and/or restrooms.
6. No littering, please throw wrappers, etc. in wastebaskets provided and clean up any messes.
7. No damaging or removal of school property.
8. NO DISRESPECT to adults who ask for compliance with these rules.
9. PLAYERS ONLY on the Court on Game Days.
10. Players participating in the following game will be allowed to shoot with their coach's supervision.

All facilities are smoke free environments. Anyone who cannot comply with the aforementioned rules will be required to leave the school building and grounds.

Cancellation of Games

In the event of a cancellation of games or practices, the coach will contact his or her players as soon as possible. However, if there is a school cancellation due to inclement weather, such as a snow day, it should be presumed that all school sponsored events and extracurricular activities (such as home and away games) will be canceled for the day. The Athletic Director or Principal are the only people who can cancel a game.

Coaches

Coaching guidelines are listed below. Additional guidance and expectations for coaches can be found in the Decatur Catholic Coaching Handbook, which is accessed at decaturchatholicathletics.com.

- A list of ineligible students participating on current athletic teams will be given to the appropriate coach/athletic director by the principal on the Monday beginning their ineligible week.
- Coaches will have the authority to make decisions affecting players. For example, a

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- player who is not present 10 minutes before a game, or a player who has not attended a sufficient number of practices prior to the game will not be allowed to play.
- In grades 5 and 6, every student who qualifies in terms of eligibility and who cooperates with the coach through effort and practice will be allowed to play in EVERY GAME in which he or she is present.
 - Players must notify the coach if they are unable to attend a game or practice.
 - Coaches MUST BE IN THE GYM before students are allowed in the gym. A coach MUST STAY WITH THE PLAYERS until all have left the school area.
 - Coaches are responsible for turning lights on and off and locking the gym after practice sessions.
 - Swearing, name calling, or any other derogatory remarks directed towards players, coaches, officials or spectators WILL NOT BE TOLERATED from students, coaches, or others representing Decatur Catholic Athletics whether at home or away. Those who engage in this behavior will be issued consequences ranging from a verbal warning to dismissal. Refer to the Code of Conduct section of this handbook.
 - Adult supervision of events includes the enforcement of these rules. In addition, the following requirements are made of adults who supervise activities:
 - o When moving school furniture, please note the original set-up of the room and return everything to its original place.
 - o Items on top of or inside of teachers' or students' desks are **off limits** to visitors. Please do not use or remove these items.
 - Security is a serious concern. Please be certain that all doors and windows are closed and locked before leaving the building.
 - Coaches and adult supervisors of events must be present when children enter the building and must wait until all children are picked up before leaving.
 - Never lend a school key to another person or let an unauthorized person or group into the school building.
 - Check restrooms for cleanliness and security (close and lock windows and doors) before leaving the building.

Selection of Coaches:

The selection of coaches will be completed during the summer prior to the school year. Coaches must submit an application to be considered for a grade level coaching assignment.

Coaches Training:

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Decatur Catholic Athletics abides by the IESA regulation requiring all coaches either to be certified teachers or to have completed an approved coaching education program. This will apply to all coaches in the Decatur Catholic Athletics program. Required details are noted in the next section:

Coaching Educational Requirements:

- Background check/fingerprinting
- Protecting God's Children class
- IESA Coaching Course Essentials
- NIOSHA Concussion Training (every 2 years)

Approved Coaching Education Courses:

The IESA Board of Directors has approved the following courses for IESA middle school coaches:

- IHSA/Human Kinetics Coaching Essentials Course
 - o Cost: \$ 19.95 (prices may be different)
 - o Completed online (avg. 3 hours)
- IHSA/NFHS Coaching Principles Course
 - o Cost: Various
 - o Completed online

Please visit www.iesa.org and access the "Coaching Education Requirements" link and the "Human Kinetics Coaching Education Course" link for further details.

Concussion Policy

General Statement (per Diocesan Policy)

Student athletes must comply with Illinois' Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act and all protocols, policies, and bylaws of the Illinois High School Association or Illinois Elementary School Association before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity, including practice or competition.

A student who was removed from practice or competition because of a suspected concussion shall be allowed to return only after all statutory prerequisites are completed, including without limitation, the school's return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols. The school has a principal-appointed or approved concussion oversight team composed of at least one person who is not a coach. At Decatur Catholic Athletic events, the Athletic Director and/or appointed school official are responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-learn and return-to-play protocols. Guidance on implementing concussion protocols can be found at www.iesa.org (within the Concussion Education link) or www.decaturcatholicathletics.com (within the Sports Medicine link).

Concussion Information

The Concussion Information Sheet issued by the IESA is accessible at www.decaturcatholicathletics.com (within the Sports Medicine link). It can also be accessed directly on the IESA website at www.iesa.org. The signs and symptoms of a concussion as well as the recovery time from a concussion will vary from person to

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person. Signs and symptoms of a concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. It is important to be familiar with the signs and symptoms associated with concussions, as well as with a recovery plan.

Return-To-Learn (per the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)

The return-to-learn policy can be accessed at www.cdc.gov or www.decaturcatholicathletics.com (within the Sports Medicine link). In summary, the progressive process of returning to learn involves:

1. Rest
2. Light activity-sign/symptom free
3. Moderate activity-sign/symptom free
4. Back to regular activity-sign/symptom free
5. Awareness of recovery delays
6. Awareness of Post-Concussive Syndrome

Return-To-Play (per the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)

The return-to-play policy can be accessed at www.cdc.gov or www.decaturcatholicathletics.com (within the Sports Medicine link). In summary, the progressive process of returning to play involves:

1. Back to regular non-sport activity-sign/symptom free
2. Light aerobic activity- sign/symptom free
3. Moderate activity- sign/symptom free
4. Heavy, non-contact activity- sign/symptom free
5. Practice & full contact- sign/symptom free
6. Competition- sign/symptom free

The return-to-play policy of the IESA and IHSA states that, “athletes must provide their school with written clearance from either a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches prior to returning to play or practice following a concussion or after being removed from an interscholastic contest due to a possible head injury or concussion and not cleared to return to that same contest.”

Diocesan Athletic Policy

The Handbook of Catholic Education Policies

This Extracurricular and Athletic Activities Code of Conduct applies, where applicable, to all school-sponsored athletic and extracurricular activities that are not part of an academic class nor otherwise carry credit for a grade.

Athletic Programs

Any school-sponsored athletic programs shall be part of the school curriculum and shall be subject to policies of the pastor and local school board as well as to the general administrative responsibilities of the principal of the school. Further, school-sponsored athletic programs shall be guided by the general curriculum goals of the school and should in no way detract from the academic and religious goals of the school.

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Requirements for Participation in Athletic Activities

A student must meet all academic eligibility requirements, have appropriate equipment including properly fitting protective gear, and have the following fully executed documents on file in the school office before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity:

1. A current certificate of physical fitness issued by a licensed physician, an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant dated within one year of participation. The preferred certificate of physical fitness is the IHSA's or IESA's "Pre-Participation Physical Examination Form."
2. A permission slip to participate in the specific athletic activity signed by the student's parent or guardian.
3. Proof the student is covered by medical insurance.
4. Signed documentation agreeing to comply with the school's policies and procedures on student athletic concussions and head injuries.

Academic Eligibility

Eligibility for most athletics is also governed by the rules of the Illinois High School Association or Illinois Elementary School Association and, if applicable, these rules will apply in addition to this Extracurricular and Athletic Activities Code of Conduct. In the case of a conflict between IHSA or IESA and this Code, the most stringent rule will be enforced.

Selection of members or participants in extracurricular and athletic activities is at the discretion of the designated teachers, sponsors, and coaches. To be eligible to participate in extracurricular and athletic activities, a student must have all passing grades of a D or higher. Any student failing to meet academic requirements will be suspended from the sport or activity for one week or until all academic requirements are met, whichever is longer.

Absence from School on Day of Extracurricular or Athletic Activity

A student who is absent from school after noon is ineligible for any extracurricular or athletic activity on that day unless the absence has been approved in writing by the principal. Exceptions may be made by the designated teacher, sponsor, or coach for justifiable reasons, including: 1) a pre-arranged medical absence; 2) a death in the student's family; or 3) a religious ceremony or event.

A student who has been suspended from school is also suspended from participation in all extracurricular and athletic activities for the duration of the suspension. A student who is absent from school on a Friday before a Saturday event may be withheld from Saturday extracurricular or athletic activities at the sole discretion of the designated teacher, sponsor, or coach.

Code of Conduct (per Diocesan policy)

This Code of Conduct applies to all extracurricular and athletic activities and is enforced 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. This Code does not contain a complete list of inappropriate behaviors. Violations will be treated cumulatively, with disciplinary

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penalties increasing with subsequent violations. A student may be excluded from extracurricular or athletic activities while the school is investigating the student's conduct.

The student shall not:

1. Violate the school rules and policies on student discipline including policies and procedures on student behavior;
2. Ingest or otherwise use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute a beverage containing alcohol (except for religious purposes);
3. Ingest or otherwise use possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute tobacco or nicotine in any form;
4. Ingest or otherwise use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute any product composed purely of caffeine in a loose powdered form or any illegal substance (including mood-altering and performance enhancing drugs or chemicals) or paraphernalia;
5. Use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute any object that is or could be considered a weapon or any item that is a look-alike weapon. This prohibition does not prohibit legal use of weapons in cooking and in athletics, such as archery, martial arts practice, target shooting, hunting, and skeet;
6. Attend a party or other gathering and/or ride in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed by minors;
7. Act in an unsportsmanlike manner;
8. Violate any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism and reckless driving;
9. Haze or bully other students;
10. Violate the written rules for the extracurricular or athletic activity;
11. Behave in a manner that disrupts or adversely affects the group or school;
12. Be insubordinate or disrespectful toward the activity's sponsors or team's coaching staff; or
13. Falsify any information contained on any permit or permission form required by the extracurricular or athletic activity.

Hazing is any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student to belong to a team or group, regardless of his or her willingness to participate. *Bullying* includes cyber-bullying (bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication) and means any physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;

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3. Interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Violating the Code of Conduct (per Diocesan policy)

If the administrator finds, after reviewing the evidence, that the violation occurred, he or she will impose sanctions on the student, as follows:

- a. Sanctions for violations other than those related to drugs and alcohol will be based on the nature of the offense and the number of offenses, and may include suspension from all extracurricular or athletic activities for one of the time periods described below:
 - A specified period of time or percentage of performances, activities or competitions;
 - The remainder of the season or for the next season; or
 - The remainder of the student's school career.
- b. Sanctions for alcohol and other drug violations, including tobacco, nicotine in any form, mood-altering or performance enhancing drugs, products composed purely of caffeine in a loose powdered form, paraphernalia, or any other illegal substance, will be based on the following:

First Violation

- Use, ingestion, possession, buying, selling, offering to sell, bartering, or distributing: A suspension of one third of the total number of performances, activities, or competitions or the remainder of the season, whichever is shorter. This penalty will be reduced if the student is enrolled in a school-approved alcohol or drug counseling program.
- Attendance at a party or riding in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed by minors: A suspension of one sixth of the total number of performances, activities or competitions, or the remainder of the season, whichever is shorter.
- The student will be required to practice with the group, regardless of the violation (unless suspended or expelled from school).

Second Violation

- Use, ingestion, possession, buying, selling, offering to sell, bartering, or distributing: A suspension of 12 weeks or 1 season, including suspension from all performances, activities, or competitions during this period. To participate again in any extracurricular or athletic activity, the student must successfully participate in and complete a school-approved alcohol or drug

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counseling program and follow all recommendations from that program.

- Attendance at a party or riding in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed by minors: A suspension of one third of the season and all extracurricular group performances, activities, or competitions during this period.
- The student may be required to practice with the group (unless suspended or expelled from school).

Third Violation

- Use, ingestion, possession, buying, selling, offering to sell, bartering, or distributing: A suspension from extracurricular or athletic activities for the remainder of the student's school career.
- Attendance at a party or riding in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed by minors: A suspension of one calendar year from the date of the suspension, including all extracurricular and athletic activities during this period.

The appropriate administrator will make a written report of his or her decision and rationale. The student may appeal the decision to the Principal or Principal's designee. All students remain subject to all the school's policies and the school's Student and Parent Handbook.

Code of Conduct (per the IESA)

For the Student-Athlete

Decatur Catholic Athletics believes that sportsmanship is a core value and its promotion and practice are essential. Student-athletes have a duty to ensure that their team promotes the development of good character. This code of conduct applies to all student participants involved in interscholastic activities. Student-athletes are expected to adhere to the IESA expectations, as well as the expectations established in the Decatur Catholic Athletic Handbook

1. Student participants will support the value of academics and the educational process.
2. Student participants will advocate, model and promote the development of good sportsmanship and character to include: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.
3. Student participants will respect peers, officials, opponents, parents and all others associated with the event.
4. Student participants will promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
5. Student participants will model appropriate behavior at all times.

For Coaches

Decatur Catholic Athletics believes that sportsmanship is a core value and its promotion and practice are essential. Coaches have a duty to assure that their team promotes the

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development of good character. This code of conduct applies to all coaches involved in interscholastic activities.

1. The coach will promote academics and the educational process.
2. The coach will teach, enforce, advocate, model and promote the development of good sportsmanship and character to include: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.
3. The coach will respect participants, officials, opponents, parents and all others involved.
4. The coach will promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
5. The coach will model appropriate behavior at all times.

For Parents/Spectators

Decatur Catholic Athletics believes that sportsmanship is a core value and its promotion and practice are essential. This code of conduct applies to all parents/spectators involved in interscholastic activities.

1. Parents/Spectators will promote academics, and the emotional, physical and moral well-being of the student participants above the desires and pressures to win.
2. Parents/Spectators will teach, enforce, advocate, model and promote the development of good sportsmanship and character to include: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.
3. Parents/Spectators will respect participants, officials, opponents and all others associated with the event.
4. Parents/Spectators will promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
5. Parents/Spectators will model appropriate behavior at all times.

For Officials

The IESA and the IHSA believe that sportsmanship is a core value and its promotion and practice are essential. This code of conduct applies to all officials involved in interscholastic activities.

1. Officials will demonstrate respect towards players, coaches, spectators and all involved.
2. Officials will be knowledgeable.
3. Officials will perform at their best regardless of the level of participants.
4. Officials will promote fair play.
5. Officials will model appropriate behavior.
6. Officials will take control in an unassuming manner.

Consequences for Unruly Behavior

It is expected that all student-athletes will conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on themselves, their school, and community. Individuals who fail to adhere to the provisions listed above will be disciplined appropriately. For student athletes, actions/behaviors found in violation will be subjected to the disciplinary processes noted within the diocesan policy. Unruly behavior from coaches, parents/spectators, or officials

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will be reviewed by the Decatur Athletic Board and will be subjected to consequences as deemed appropriate and in accordance with diocesan policy noted earlier in this handbook. A Disciplinary Report Form will be completed for the violation and kept on file.

Modification of Athletic or Team Uniform

Students may modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of the student's religion or the student's cultural values or modesty preferences.

Diocesan Athletic Policy

Athletics §5561 *The Handbook of Catholic Education Policies*

The purposes of school-sponsored athletic programs are to teach the skills of games, to foster healthy exercise, to teach fair play, and to give enjoyment to students. Athletic programs which deny to certain students these opportunities, or that exert undue pressures on students, are inconsistent with these purposes.

School-sponsored athletic programs are part of the school curriculum and are subject to policies of the pastor and board as well as to the general administrative responsibilities of the principal of the school.

Further, school-sponsored athletic programs are to be guided by the general curriculum goals of the school and should in no way detract from the academic and religious goals of the school. Academic and religious policies and norms for students participating in these programs shall be established by the pastor (board) and principal and enforced by the principal.

The following are requirements of elementary school-sponsored athletic programs:

- signed Statements of Understanding form
- \$75.00 fee paid for each sport, except for cross country, track, and scholastic bowl who will have \$50.00 fee. A \$400 family cap will be in place.
- physical examination within the appropriate school year
- supervision by qualified adult coaches who understand the sport and have completed required Diocese and IESA trainings
- students shall be grouped into teams based on grade level
- proper physical conditioning prior to participation in games
- appropriate equipment, including properly fitting protective gear, and well-maintained facilities

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In those cases where the number of students prohibits play under the current policy, exceptions to the two clauses marked may be permitted by mutual agreement of the local pastor, athletic directors and local school principal/s in accordance with the purposes outlined at the beginning of this section

- reasonable scheduling of practices and games — generally, this would exclude games requiring substantial travel time on weekdays unless followed by a free day.
- athletic schedules will be given to all principals, secretaries, athletic directors, and coaches

The following practices are prohibited in elementary school-sponsored athletic programs:

- the denial of play for students who cooperate with coaches through effort and practice participation of students on more than one team in the same sport
- high-pressure contests, excessive publicity, elaborate recognition ceremonies, or exploitation of children in any manner

Decatur Catholic Athletics complies with the rules and regulations of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois and with all IESA (Illinois Elementary Schools Association) regulations.

Eligibility for All Sports

All students in grades 4 through 8 who participate in athletics are bound by the following eligibility policy. Students in Grades 1-3 who play soccer may participate at the discretion of their parents and teachers.

- Students **MUST BE PASSING ALL SUBJECTS** which include reading/literature, language arts, mathematics, music, band, physical education, religion, science, social studies, and spelling/vocabulary, with a weekly cumulative average of 60% or above. Failure to pass these subjects will result in a period of ineligibility lasting **ONE WEEK**.
- The following will result in a student's being ineligible for **at least** a one-week period: an accumulation of **3 infractions** per week involving the teachers' rules of classroom conduct, and/or incidents of serious misconduct as defined in the school specific handbook.
- The period of ineligibility will last one week. Determinations will be made by the teachers, and coaches will be notified on Mondays or the first school day of the week in the event of a Monday holiday. Students are considered ineligible from Monday morning to the following Monday morning. Three consecutive weeks of ineligibility will lead to removal from the team.

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- A rating of "ineligible" pertains to all extracurricular activities including all sports. Students who are ineligible **must attend practices**. Student athletes will wear street clothes and sit on the bench with teammates to support the team.
- Services to the school and parish (i.e. altar servers, student council, etc.) are not affected by eligibility.
- Students who are absent from school on weekdays are ineligible to participate in activities that evening. Students who leave school due to illness will not be allowed to play in the game scheduled that day. Students must attend school half-day in order to play. Exceptions to this rule include medical/dental appointments.

Athletic Fees and Physicals

The Athletic Fee for each sport is \$75.00, except for cross country, track, and scholastic bowl which will be \$50. There will be a \$400 cap per family. There are no exceptions or waivers of the fee, and it must be paid before a student is allowed to practice. In addition, athletic physicals and Statements of Understanding form must be on file with the Athletic Director before a student is allowed to practice.

Decatur Catholic Athletic-General Rules

- Weekly practice schedule must be shared with the athletic directors, school secretary and principals! No 5th or 6th grade practice can last beyond 8:30 p.m.
- No practices can begin before 4:00 p.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes on a school day due to the use of the gym by the Extended Care Program.
- Practices are sports specific. Only teams involved and others assisting should be in the gym.
- Number of Games in a Season: IESA guidelines will be followed*

Decatur Catholic Athletics abides by all Diocesan and IESA regulations regarding the number of games and tournaments (including regular season tournaments) to be played in a season.

Volleyball:

PLAYING TIME:

- In the 5th and 6th grades, playing time should be divided as equally as possible.
- In the 7th and 8th grades, playing time will be at the discretion of the coach.

Basketball:

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PLAYING TIME:

- A player who does not follow team rules (i.e. not attend practice or not participate in practice) can be sat down the entire game.
- 5th and 6th Grades:
 - Our belief is that all persons playing basketball in 5th and 6th grades should play as close to half of every game as possible, some exceptions are listed below:
 - If there are more than ten (10) players dressed for the game, then the coach will try to play all players dressed for that game as equally as possible.
 - If there are less than ten (10) players dressed for the game, then the coach will play everyone dressed half of the game. The rest of the playing time is at the discretion of the coach.
- 7th and 8th Grades:
 - Our belief is that in this age group playing time is on an earned basis and is within the discretion of the coaches. However, all players dressed for the game should play.
 - The DCA Board suggests that in games where the outcome has no doubt (i.e. a 20-point lead by either team in the fourth quarter) that the players who participate in practice and follow team rules get to play during this time.

Soccer:

Decatur Catholic Athletics program is designed to allow the students to compete in Spring Soccer is offered to all students in Grades K-8 in co-ed teams. The season runs approximately 4-5 weeks and is considered a recreational league.

Cross-Country/Track:

This program is designed for participation at the 5th through 8th grade levels for both boys and girls. A fall cross country program is also available for jr. high students.

Attendance at practice is mandatory and all meets are scheduled with the highest level of competition expected from all athletes. On rare occasions, students are dismissed early from school in order to travel to an out-of-town meet. When this early dismissal occurs, ALL STUDENTS are responsible for inquiring about assignments from a responsible source and are responsible for completing all work missed on time.

Referees

DCA will hire only registered officials for junior high games. Decisions of the referees are final, and both the decision and the person of the official must be treated with respect by coaches, players, and spectators. Those persons who will not act in a respectful manner will be

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subjected to consequences as noted in the code of conduct sections in this handbook.

Role of Parents/Guardians

Parents and/or guardians are encouraged to become involved in a supportive way in the athletic programs in which their children participate. This includes assuring prompt and regular attendance at practices and games/meets, supporting the eligibility policy of the school, working the concession and ticket sales stands on a rotating basis, and working cooperatively with coaches to resolve any differences which occur during a season.

In addition, parents must give written permission for their child to participate in each sport, complete the statements of understanding form, provide proof of medical coverage prior to the season, pay all athletic fees, and provide a doctor's physical examination for the player to prove that they are in good health and able to participate in strenuous physical activity.

Schedule of Games

All previously mentioned regulations regarding scheduling of games apply. In addition:

- According to Diocesan policy, the principal must approve all athletic schedules prior to publishing them.
- Coaches MAY NOT schedule additional games or make changes to scheduled games once the schedule has been approved.
- Games which are canceled due to inclement weather or other emergencies, MAY be rescheduled.

Uniforms and Equipment

Uniforms are provided to student-athletes by the schools. Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for the upkeep and cleaning of uniforms. Uniforms will be turned in directly at the end of the season after having been washed and repaired. A fine per uniform piece will be levied on the parents/guardians if uniforms are not turned in at the end of the season in usable condition. The fine will be equivalent to the current cost of replacement]. Failure to pay the fine will result in withholding the student's report card.

Aside from uniforms, student-athletes are expected to use reasonable care in handling equipment purchased by the Decatur Catholic Athletics for their use. Willful or negligent damage to equipment is also the financial responsibility of the parent/ guardian, and a fine will be issued equivalent to the current cost of replacement. Failure to pay the fine will result in withholding the student's report card.

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Decatur Catholic Athletics Statements of Understanding

Permission to Participate

I, the parent/guardian of the student-athlete (s) listed below, hereby give permission for my child(ren) to participate in athletics, as directed by the school/coach. I understand that there is an inherent risk of injury in sports. _____ Parent/Guardian initials

Insurance Coverage

Our family has provided proof to the school office confirming that the student-athlete(s) are covered by medical insurance.

_____ Parent/Guardian initials

Pre-Participation Physical

Our family has provided a current certificate of physical fitness issued by a licensed physician, an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant dated within one year of participation. The preferred certificate of physical fitness is the IHSA's or IESA's "Pre-Participation Physical Examination Form," which is available at your medical practitioner's office or at www.decaturcatholicathletics.com (within the Forms & Resources link).

_____ Parent/Guardian initials

Codes of Conduct

Our family has read the Code of Conduct policy contained in the Decatur Catholic Athletic Handbook. We agree to abide by all School, Diocesan, and IESA conduct regulations as described in the Handbook. We are aware that the Handbook is accessible electronically at decaturcatholicathletics.com.

_____ Parent/Guardian initials

Concussion/ Brain Injury

Our family has read the Concussion Information Sheet issued by the IESA. This information sheet is accessible at www.decaturcatholicathletics.com (within the Sports Medicine link). It can also be accessed directly on the IESA website at www.iesa.org. A hard copy is available upon request. By signing this form, we acknowledge we have been provided information access regarding concussions and brain injuries.

_____ Parent/Guardian initials

General Acknowledgement

By signing this form, we acknowledge our family's awareness of all policies and procedures within the Decatur Catholic Athletic Handbook. The student-athlete(s) in the family will not be permitted to practice or play athletics until the Statements of Understanding form and all required documentation are completed and returned to the Athletic Director or home school.

If you have multiple student-athletes and/or have multiple sports being played, it is only necessary to complete this form once each academic year.

Parent/Guardian (Please Print): _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student (please print) _____

Grade: _____

Student (please print) _____

Grade: _____

Student (please print) _____

Grade: _____

Student (please print) _____

Grade: _____