

**St Bridget School**

**Athletic Handbook**

**MISSION STATEMENT  
OF  
ST. BRIDGET CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**Where We Attend To The**

**Spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical needs of the students**

**Based upon the gospel message of Jesus to “love one another as I have loved you”**

**Within a**

**Safe, nurturing and academically stimulating environment**

**STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**Guiding Principles**

"This document ensures that all coaches, parents and spectators are aware of the real purpose of athletics in **our School** " Foremost on the list is that student-athletes **participate** to have fun, learn sportsmanship, practice teamwork and develop their God given athletic ability at whatever level that might be. Winning is important but only within the context of these other priorities.

Saint Bridget School supports a philosophy of competition that is guided by the highest standards of good sportsmanship and fair play and our School's Mission Statement. To this end, all parties (coaches, athletes, parents and spectators) must recognize that our students' participation in sports and extracurricular activities is an "*Extension of the Learning Environment*". For this reason, coaches, student-athletes and spectators have a duty to conduct themselves in a reasonable and acceptable manner and avoid all conduct and practices which are not in keeping with the school's mission statement or that is detrimental to the sport.

## **Principal's Message**

This handbook was compiled in order to answer some of the basic questions concerning the athletic program at St. Bridget School. The handbook is distributed to all student-athletes and we ask that parents and students read it carefully in order to understand both the opportunities for students and the responsibilities of students and parents.

We at St. Bridget take great pride in our sports program which provides an exceptional opportunity for personal growth. Athletes learn to accept personal responsibility for success or failure and to recognize both limitations and strengths.

Student athletes at St. Bridget School will learn about motivation, self-discipline, self-confidence, loyalty, leadership, sacrifice, extra effort, and a winning attitude; lessons which are invaluable in our competitive world.

Team sports offer a unique opportunity to teach students that working together within a group toward a common goal does accomplish positive and successful results.

It is important for students and parents to realize participation in the St. Bridget School athletic program is not a right of all students but rather a privilege which is afforded to those individuals who possess the ability, attitude, cooperative spirit and desire to represent the student body and school community in a manner which favorably reflects upon the mission and reputation of St. Bridget School.

There are special standards and expectations in the areas of academics, citizenship, training rules, and sportsmanship with which the participants must comply, and it is essential for student athletes to be familiar with all rules and regulations governing athletic participation. Furthermore, as with all privileges, it is important to remember that the school reserves the right to revoke the privilege from students who do not

conduct themselves in an acceptable manner both in and out of school.

## **Current St Bridget Teams**

### **Soccer:** Eligible athletes

- Varsity- Optimum # of players is 18
- Made up of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade only when needed to fill a team
  
- JV- Club level 8vs8
- Made up of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders

### **Cheerleading**

- 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade open to 5<sup>th</sup> grade if needed

### **Basketball Boys & Girls (JV & V)**

- Varsity- Optimum # of players is 12-14
- Made up of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders depending on skill
  
- JV- No cuts will be made and will be treated as developmental
- Depending on the numbers there will be a split squad.

### **Softball (V)**

- 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade
- Optimum # on a Team 14

### **Baseball V & JV**

- JV 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grades
- V 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades
- Optimum # on a Team 14

## **Athletic Director**

- The Athletic Director is the Liaison between the school, coaches/teams, and the League Directors for the Archdiocese of Hartford.
- The Athletic Director is responsible for overseeing the operation of the athletic teams and ensuring that the guidelines outlined in this handbook are met both in letter and in spirit.
- The Athletic Director should not be a current coach in the school. This avoids a conflict of interest and allows complete transparency in the position.
- The Athletic Director should lead the process and chair the committee established by which coaches are recruited vetted and selected. The AD will make the group's recommendation to the Principal.
- The Athletic Director is available to help resolve conflicts that arise during the course of a season that cannot be resolved at the coach's level.
- The Athletic Director will be responsible to explore new sports programs for the school to assure a wide variety of participation.
- The Athletic Director should act as a reference and mentor for coaches by assisting them and developing them in the administration tasks and Saint Bridget's philosophy of coaching.
- The AD should be given a copy of all practice and game times and updated on all changes as they occur during the season/year.

## Coaches

Parents who entrust their children to a St Bridget coach should feel confident that the standards employed and modeled reflect a Catholic Spirit of sportsmanship, respect, teamwork and inclusion and are consistent with the Mission Statement of the School.

- Coaches are responsible to ensure that the health, well-being and development of athletes take precedence over the win/loss record
- Coaches accept that they serve as a role model and that there must be congruency between their actions and words.
- Coaches provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for practices and competitions
- Coaches exemplify honesty, integrity, fair play and sportsmanship regardless of the impact that might have on the outcome of the competition
- Coaches maintain and enhance the dignity and self esteem of individuals by demonstrating respect for student-athletes ,fellow coaches, officials and administrators
- Coaches ensure that each athlete is provided sufficient playing time, a minimum of 25 percent in every game regardless of regular season or playoff. In addition they will allow every player to start in a regular season game regardless of talent.
- games,
- Coaches structure teams to ensure the broadest possible participation by St Bridget students that wish to participate. Coaches will schedule additional games and practices to allow all of the athletes the ability to participate, and get able playing time. Cuts if necessary should be used only as a last resort and always handled with transparency, fairness and appropriate discretion after consultation with the school's administration.

- Coaches must avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts in assigning playing times or All Star participation etc to sons, daughters or other related players.
- Coaches should begin practices and games with a prayer
- Coaches should find opportunities to bring their teams to church as a group in uniform to foster our faith.
- Coaches will ensure that all athletes and parents are aware of and understand the Athletic Handbook of St. Bridget School and all of its contents.
- Coaches will ensure that all safe environment guidelines are followed for themselves, Assistant Coaches, and all parent helpers.
- Coaches will ensure that all official roster forms are filled out correctly as outlined by the Archdiocesan Office and submitted to the appropriate league officer.
- Coaches will ensure that all fees are paid for referees, umpires, tournaments, etc, in a manner set forth by the administration of St. Bridget School. (download reimbursement form on website)
- Coaches are to schedule referees and games and coordinate schedule through the school office.
- Coaches will ensure that practices and games do not conflict with special holy days of the church.
- Coaches will hand out uniforms to all players and will be responsible for collecting all uniforms at the end of the season in clean and good condition.
- Coaches will give schedule of practices and games or any changes of practices and games to the principal, athletic director and office coordinator as soon as possible.

## **Athletes**

- Will develop skills to the best of my ability and give my best effort at all times.
- Will follow the rules of the sport.
- Will respect each individual (teammate, competitor, coaches, spectators, referees, umpires) at all times.
- Will be a positive influence on others through my words and in my actions.
- Will have grades and behavior that reflect my best abilities.
- Will follow the rules established by the coach.
- Will represent my school with pride, spirit, and in a spirit of competition, ever mindful of the mission of our school to follow Jesus' example to "love one another as I have loved you"
- Players will be responsible for lost or damaged uniforms.

## **What The Student Athlete Can Expect**

- Athletes should expect to play a reasonable amount of time in each and every game they are eligible for whether at a season game or tournament. Playing time should approximate 25 percent of every game.
- Athletes should expect to at least start one game during the regular season.
- A Student/Athlete can expect to be guided in the skills of the game and develop those skills under the guidance of the coach/assistant coach.
- Athletes should expect to always be treated with respect

## **Parents and Spectators**

### **PARENTS**

Be supportive of coaches in discussions with players  
Encourage student-athletes to be on time and do their best  
Make sure students are on a healthy diet and getting proper rest  
When contacting a coach do so at a reasonable time and situation  
Be willing to support the team with time and talent  
Be supportive at games and let the coach's coach  
Respect to opponents and the officials who work the games

### **WHAT PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM OUR COACHES**

Reinforce and support the values taught in the home and by St. Bridget  
Emphasize the importance of academics  
Treat players with respect  
Keep in mind other activities when planning practices  
Teach, enforce and model sportsmanship  
Respond within 24 hours to all reasonable questions  
Follow player playing time guidelines

### **SPECTATORS**

At St. Bridget's the following behaviors will not be tolerated:  
Disrespectful conduct, including profanity, obscene gestures or comments, offensive remarks  
Throwing articles onto the contest area  
Entering the contest area in celebration or protest  
Physical confrontations  
Spectator interference

Jumping up and down on the chairs or bleachers

Use of artificial noisemakers

Chants or cheers directed at the opponent's players, opponent's spectators, coaches, or officials.

## **FOR PARTICIPATION** **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

Students will be allowed to participate in the athletic program provided they meet the eligibility requirements established by St. Bridget School and submit evidence of a yearly physical examination and a completed Parent / Guardian permission form.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Eligibility status is determined by the Principal.

Students are **NOT** eligible if they receive below a **“C”** in a course.

For eligibility purposes, the end of the marking period shall be interpreted as the official date on which the school requires grades to be distributed.

In most cases, grades or incomplete grades must be made up within fifteen (15) school days following the end of the marking period as defined above. Special circumstances may warrant additional time as determined by the Principal. Incomplete grades are not to be considered passing grades.

Note: Marking period grades are to be used to determine scholastic eligibility to participate in athletics during any given marking period.

Any student whose academic standing drops below the acceptable level will be put on athletic probation. The student will not be allowed to participate in any part of the Athletic Sports Program, including but not limited to practices and games, until eligibility/academic standing has been re-established. This will be determined by the Principal.

The final academic grade average from the previous school year determines Fall Eligibility. This includes transfers/new students.

## **LOCAL RULES**

In keeping with the philosophy and objectives of the athletic program, the student athlete is expected to follow all school rules set forth in the Student Athlete Handbook and in the St. Bridget Student Handbook. Any major and/or repeated minor violations of the rules will be cause for a conference among the Athletic Director, Coach and Principal and may result in a judgment of ineligibility by the Principal.

## **GENERAL RULES**

### **Sport Specialization**

Specialization in one sport to the exclusion of others is contrary to the philosophy of the St. Bridget athletic department and will be discouraged. St. Bridget seeks to produce well-rounded individuals with interests and abilities in many areas. If students have the desire to try out for more than one sport, they are encouraged to do so.

### **CHANGING SPORTS**

An athlete who drops from one squad will not be allowed to join another squad during that season.

## **ATTENDANCE**

All student athletes will adhere to the attendance policy established by St. Bridget as explained in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Athletes are expected to attend scheduled meetings, practices, and games punctually. A schedule of practices and games will be issued by the coach at the beginning of the season. Any athlete who must miss a practice or game will report it to the coach in person, or by phone, 24 hours before that practice or game.

A student athlete will not normally be allowed to participate in a practice or contest the day they are absent from school. Should special circumstances prevail, exceptions may be made by the Principal.

Other out of school activities are not valid reasons for missing meetings, practices, or games.

Some practices and games will be held during school vacations.

If an athlete fails to comply with these attendance rules, the athlete may forfeit the right to participate in a future event or events of the team. Continued abuse will result in dismissal from the team. All of this will be determined by the Principal following consultation with the coach and Athletic Director.

### **EQUIPMENT**

All equipment and uniforms are on a loan basis and are to be worn only when authorized by the coach. Student athletes are responsible for the equipment/uniforms issued to them. All equipment will be returned immediately at the end of the season or when an athlete leaves a team. The student will pay for any lost or stolen equipment/uniforms, or those which are damaged due to gross neglect or irresponsible use. This expense will be based on the replacement cost of the item. No grades or diplomas will be issued until a student athlete has met this requirement.

### **DRESS CODE**

As representatives of St. Bridget School, the student athlete will dress appropriately for all contests and wear the team uniform with pride and dignity.

### **PARENTAL CONCERNS**

Communication between parents/guardians and coaches is essential for athletes to have a positive educational experience through athletic participation. Parents/guardians need to be informed about details of each team, the expectations of the athletes, and the general philosophy of the team's coach. Coaches need to be aware of any unusual circumstances that may affect the athlete's performance of any player's concerns. Parents with specific concerns are to communicate with the coach first. The order of reference is: Coach, Athletic Director, and Principal. However, serious circumstances warrant immediate consultation with the Principal.

## **INJURY POLICY**

It is the obligation of athletes injured during the sports season to report the injury to their coach immediately, who will then report it to the Athletic Director and the Principal. The coach has the responsibility of initiating an accident report and sending it to the athlete's parents/guardians for their input. The parents/guardians must notify the School Nurse of any medical treatment immediately.

Once athletes are treated by a physician, they must obtain the doctor's permission to return to activity. We are extremely concerned about the safety of St. Bridget athletes and urge all participants to report all injuries to the coaches immediately. Our goal concerning injuries is to treat the injured person the way we would want a member of our family treated in a similar situation.

NOTE: A notification of injury form must be filled out by the coach and given to the Athletic Director. The AD will then provide a copy to both the Principal and the School Nurse.

## **TEAM RULES**

A coach wishing to incorporate additional team rules not covered in this handbook shall have such rules approved by the Athletic Director and Principal. A copy of these rules will be given to each athlete and shall be filed with the Athletic Director and Principal.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **RIDES**

School policy prohibits our coaches from giving students rides to games and practices. Please make arrangements with other parents or set up an alternating carpool system.

## **TEAM CUTS**

Because of the developmental nature of JV sports cuts will not be made. Coaches are well aware and sensitive to the disappointment experienced by the players cut.. At the first practice session, the coach will fully explain the criteria for choosing players and the projected schedule of this selection process. Every effort will be made to allow enough time for each candidate to be observed and fairly evaluated. Reasons for non-selection include but are not limited to: lack of skill, speed, strength, lack of effort or motivation, lack of knowledge or understanding of the sport, grade level of the candidate.

### Athletic Fees

In order to maintain our athletic program of high quality, it is necessary Saint Bridget's Athletic Program to charge a fee for participation. The fee is used to offset the cost of referees, equipment and miscellaneous league fees. The fee must be paid in order for your child to participate on the team.

### Physical Examination

Each athlete must have a physical examination certificate dated after the completion of the previous school year on file in the school office. The physical must be on file with the school prior to participating in any first practice, game or tournament

### Practice and Game Schedule.

Generally practice should not last more than 2 hours in length. Physical exercise such as running is encouraged for conditioning. However coaches are prohibited from using excessive running as a discipline measure on players.

The total number of games and practices in one week should not exceed 4 per week. The only exception is due to rescheduling of games due to scheduling change.

**Disciplinary Matters**  
**SUSPENSION AND/OR DISMISSAL**

The coach shall first notify the Principal and the Athletic Director of his/her request to either suspend or dismiss an athlete from the team. Due process shall be followed in all cases. Appropriate notification will be given to all parties involved.

**DUE PROCESS:**

- In disciplinary matters resulting in a suspension or dismissal, a student athlete will be provided with the following rights:
  1. The student athlete will be notified in writing by the Athletic Director of the reasons for the discipline.
  2. The student athlete will have the opportunity to present his/her position on the matter to the Athletic Director.
  3. The student athlete will have the opportunity to demonstrate to the Athletic Director that the rules or regulations are being applied in an unreasonable, arbitrary, or discriminatory fashion.
  4. The student athlete will have the right to appeal this decision.

**APPEAL PROCESS:**

1. The student athletes must make their request for an appeal in writing to the Principal within ten (10) days of the disciplinary action.
2. The appeal will be heard by the Principal within five (5) working days of the request.
3. The student athlete will remain suspended from sports participation until the appeal is heard.
4. The decision of the Principal will be binding.

**Detentions**

Any student athlete who receives a Detention will be suspended for the next scheduled game and any practices that precede it.

## **SPECIFIC RULES**

St. Bridget School coaches, teachers, and administrators believe that experiences ***in and out*** of the classroom help students grow intellectually, physically, and socially. With an understanding of the temptations students face concerning the use of tobacco, alcohol, and controlled substances, St. Bridget School wishes to form a partnership with students and parents. The goal of this partnership is to educate student athletes about the health hazards created by the use of these substances.

The following policy details the consequences that will be faced by any student athlete who chooses to use tobacco, alcohol or drugs while representing St. Bridget School.

### **TOBACCO PRODUCTS, ALCOHOL, AND DRUG POLICY**

Use of tobacco products is hazardous to a person's health and decreases an athlete's efficiency. Therefore, a student athlete who uses tobacco products will be banned from playing.

The possession and/or use of alcohol or any controlled substances (drugs, capsules, pills, etc) other than those currently prescribed by a physician, is absolutely forbidden, and involvement with any of these may merit suspension or expulsion at the discretion of the Principal.

### **THEFT OR MALICIOUS DAMAGE TO PROPERTY**

Serious defacement of school property or private property of others demands repair and/or replacement, and those involved are financially responsible. Other more serious action may be taken by the administration depending on circumstances.

### **SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY CITIZENSHIP**

Every student athlete is expected to demonstrate proper school and community citizenship at all times. Failure to abide by school rules or laws of the community may result in the suspension or dismissal of the

student athlete. The extent of any disciplinary action will be determined by the Principal.

### **PLAYER EJECTION RULE**

Any player who gets a technical foul or a yellow card will not be allowed to play the remainder of the game.

Student athletes who are ejected from any contest will not be allowed to participate in any other contest until they have been withheld from the next contest at the same level of play. The Athletic Director must be informed by the coach of all ejections within 24 hours.

## **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION FOR PARENTS** **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

The schedule for all games will be available in the Main Office. Any change in time or site of a game will be announced. Parents may secure this information by calling the Athletic Director.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event that school is canceled due to inclement weather, all contests will also be canceled. If school is dismissed early due to inclement weather, all after school practices or contests will also be canceled.

### **RELIGIOUS, STATE OR NATIONAL HOLIDAYS**

No contests will be scheduled on the following religious holidays:

Christmas Eve, Christmas, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter Sunday.

When there is no school due to state or national holidays, contests will be avoided but may be scheduled upon the approval of the Principal. Optional practices may be scheduled on these days only if the team has a scheduled game the following day.

Sundays will be respected as a family day. As such, practices will not be scheduled on Sunday. The administration realizes that Catholic holy days and holidays do not always correspond with other schools' schedules, but every reasonable effort will be made to honor and respect all religious days.

Official games may be scheduled on Sunday afternoons.

## Student and Parent/Guardian Consent Form

I have read the 2010-2011 St. Bridget School Athletic Handbook and agree to support and be governed by the policies, procedures and philosophies contained herein.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

All response forms must be signed by a parent. Students in grades 5,6,7 and 8 are to sign their own signature after reading the Handbook.

This form must be signed and returned to the school office prior to final cuts being made. Failure to return this form on time will result in your student's name being withdrawn from the eligibility list.