

THE DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

Dear Parents,

Throughout the Diocese of Belleville, all the Catholic churches, and all of their schools, have one goal in mind: to teach the people to live according to the teachings of Jesus Christ. The parishes and schools have many ways to carry out this task: mass, gospel readings, sermons, PSR, religion classes, everyday activities by priests and teachers ... and interscholastic athletics through the *Win the Prize* program.

The sports program at all schools deals primarily with the athletes, teaching the respect, self-discipline, responsibility, and thanksgiving for the God-given talents the athletes have developed to use in the athletic contests. As coaches strive to teach the athletes the above qualities, so must the schools, principals, and athletic directors strive to teach the parents the same things.

As a parent, it is only natural to want the best for your children. Hopefully, their experiences in interscholastic athletics on the grade school level will help them learn respect for authority, for teammates, and for their opponents. Hopefully, they will learn self-discipline and restraint concerning "getting back" at an opponent. Hopefully, they will be responsible concerning wearing the correct uniform, showing up at practices, and working hard to the best of their abilities.

As in life, not everyone can be the "best." There are winners and losers in all aspects, but everyone can be successful. As in school grades, musical talent, size, athletic ability, and in many other things, not all people are the same. But they can still try to be the best they can be.

With this in mind, from a parenting standpoint, you should have faith in the coaches that they will put your child into situations in which they can succeed, not fail. Remember in team sports, it is the success of the team that matters most. This success can be defined as a team striving to do their best while keeping in mind the *Win the Prize* philosophy. Players can contribute to that success, whether in practice or in games. Just as all students do not get equal grades in school, all players may not get the same playing time in games. But they can still be an important part of the team.

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Remember, you as parents represent your child, your parish, and your school when you attend athletic contests as a fan. You, too, must show self-discipline and respect. Referees and officials are human, just like the players are. Everyone will make mistakes. Realize that your player may miss a lay-up, or a serve, and a referee may miss a call.

At times, it will be difficult and frustrating to watch your child play in an athletic contest. The primary concern is for the athletes to do their best. ... and hopefully be successful as a team ... and win the game. But even if they play hard, they may still be defeated by a better team. In order to help all people involved in interscholastic sports, the Diocese of Belleville has mandated that ALL parents attend a meeting to discuss their behavior and attitudes at athletic contests. Parents must sign a paper that states they will act according to the Code of Conduct and abide by the written policies of the Diocese of Belleville. This paper must be signed before their child will be allowed to compete in interscholastic sports.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. Parents/fans and supporters of the parish athletic program do not use abusive language at the referees, players, coaches, or fans from either team.
- B. Parents/fans and supporters of the parish athletic team treat all officials with respect and refrain from criticizing officials during and after games.
- C. Parents/fans are reminded that their actions reflect on the reputation and good name of the school.
- D. The actions of parents and fans promote good sportsmanship among everyone present.
- E. ANY COACH, PLAYER, PARENT, OR SPECTATOR EJECTED FROM A GAME WILL RECEIVE A ONE GAME SUSPENSION, AND MAY NOT ATTEND THE NEXT CONTEST. THIS SUSPENSION INCLUDES ANY GAME FOR THE REST OF THAT DAY AND THE NEXT SCHEDULED GAME. TWO EJECTIONS OF A COACH, PLAYER, PARENT, OR SPECTATOR WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC SUSPENSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL YEAR FROM ALL ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

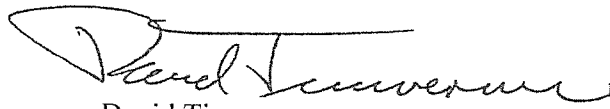
Each school should submit an Incident Report Form to the Diocesan Office of Education in the event of any un-sportsmanlike conduct by coaches, players, parents, or spectators. These reports should be submitted within 72 hours and should not be based on the calls of officials or referees. A copy of the Incident Report Form will be sent to the principals of the schools involved.

EVERY SCHOOL IS TO ADOPT AND FOLLOW A "24 HOUR" COOLING OFF PERIOD TO DIFFUSE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS BETWEEN PARENTS, SPECTATORS, OFFICIALS, AND COACHES.

Any parent, fan, or spectator disregarding these guidelines shall be asked to leave the gym or playing field. If the parent, fan, or spectator disregards the request to vacate the area, the game shall not continue until the person(s) leave, and could result in forfeiture of the game. The athletic director/designated representative, or coaches shall see that these regulations are enforced. Any parent, fan, or spectator that consistently violates these regulations shall not be allowed to attend games until determined by the principal or parish athletic director. Any athletic director/designated representative, or coach refusing to enforce these regulations shall be suspended temporarily or permanently as determined by the principal.

It is the hope of the Diocese of Belleville that by following these guidelines, you and your children will have an enjoyable and beneficial sports year.

Sincerely,



David Timmermann
Associate Director of Education

As the parent(s), I/we have read the above Code of Conduct and agree to follow and abide by these written policies. I/We hereby affirm with my/our signature(s).

.....

(sign & date)

(sign & date)

School/Parish, Town _____