

# ST. PIUS X/ST. LEO ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

## ADMINISTRATION

The Athletic Committee reports to the Pastor(s) of each parish and administers the athletic programs for St. Pius X/St. Leo (SPSL) Parishes.

## DUTIES

The members of the Committee, their offices and their duties shall be:

### Athletic Director

The Athletic Director shall be responsible for the overall operation and functioning of the Committee. The Athletic Director shall preside at all meetings; prepare an agenda for each meeting; assign responsibilities and tasks; appoint sub-committees; and have the primary responsibility for planning and setting of objectives. The Athletic Director shall direct all aspects of all athletics. The Athletic Director's responsibilities include the athletic budget, athletic policy, and parity within programs, field & facility scheduling, coaches, players, equipment and team placement. The Athletic Director is to maintain clear communication between the members of the athletic committee, coaches, participants, parents, school, the pastors and religious education students. The Athletic Director acts only with the consent of the Committee.

### Assistant Athletic Director

The Assistant Athletic Director shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Athletic Director, and is responsible for special assignments given by the Athletic Director. The Assistant Athletic Director performs duties as directed by and in the absence of the Athletic Director.

### Secretary

The Secretary shall record the minutes of Committee meetings, notify members of all meetings and meeting agendas, and be responsible for the safekeeping of all official Committee records.

### Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep a record of all Committee funds received and disbursed; prepare the annual budget and monthly reports of expenditures and receipts; deposit all receipts of the Committee; and present all obligations of the Committee to the parish bookkeeper for payment.

### Sports Commissioner(s)

Each sport sponsored by the Committee shall be the responsibility of a Commissioner(s), who shall have the primary responsibility for that sport's program.

Each sport's Commissioner(s) is chosen due to his/her enthusiasm for the sport that he/she represents and for his/her past support and dedication to the various programs of SPSL. Each commissioner will cooperate with the Athletic Director in administering and managing his/her sport.

### **ORGANIZATION AND PHILOSOPHY**

The purpose of the athletic program at SPSL is to supplement the spiritual and academic curriculum. The SPSL athletic program enhances the physical development of the CHILD, promotes a sense of parish spirit, pride and unity.

This program is striving to be the most extensive and well-balanced parish program in the city for both boys and girls. A variety of sports are offered and participation is encouraged. It is not designed to be everything for everyone.

Athletic calendars are shown below for both girls and boys, illustrating the different sports that are offered during the year.

#### **BOYS**

#### **GIRLS**

##### **FALL**

Grades 4 thru 8 Volleyball

##### **WINTER**

Grades 4 thru 8 Basketball

Grades 4 thru 8 Basketball

##### **SPRING**

Grades 7-8 Track

Grades 7-8 Track

\* Note: Boys interested in competing in Football are encouraged to contact the Athletic Committee for more information on other parish-sponsored teams.

Fees for sports offered at SPSL will vary for each sport. No player will be turned away due to inability to pay. If necessary, payment arrangements can be made by contacting the Athletic Director.

SPSL will annually evaluate the possibility of adding other sports and grade participation levels to its program.

The seasons are broken into a variety of sports because it is strongly believed that year round specialization or concentration on any one sport at grade school age is detrimental and inhibiting to the children.

In addressing the question of how seriously we want to approach parish athletics at SPSL, we need to consider some questions. Do our teams play to "win at all costs" or solely to instruct the children in the basics of the sports, while totally disregarding the score of the game? The answer lies somewhere between these philosophical extremes. The age of the players on the team, among other factors, determines how seriously the game is played. For younger children sports are almost totally instructive in nature, and the score of the game should be of small consideration. At this level, if the player has finished the season with an improved basic knowledge of the sport and has enjoyed playing the season, it was a successful season, regardless of the win-loss record of the team. Players should be improving their skills in the sport, along with their level of sportsmanship in playing as each season passes.

In Grades Four and Five, instruction, enjoyment and good sportsmanship still play a much larger role in the approach than does winning.

In Grade 6 the enjoyment of competition begins to play a role for the student athlete in addition to instruction, enjoyment and good sportsmanship, although development is still the focus.

In Grades Seven and Eight, the adolescent shows an even greater enjoyment in the competition of the game, though teaching the skills of the various sports, and certainly, good sportsmanship continues to be most important. We want our children to learn how to be both good winners and good losers and to realize that the scoreboard only tells part of the story. We must not forget the purpose of the athletic program is only one part of the total parish experience. We want our sports program to be one of the many positive aspects of SPSL parish life. It is our philosophy to be competitive. "Competitive" means to be the best you can be always regardless of the outcome.

### **ATHLETIC RULES AND REGULATIONS**

The following are some of the rules observed by the teams at SPSL.

#### **RULE 1**

##### **Interscholastic**

Teams will be divided according to the league rules. League rules will vary from league to league and sport to sport. See specific sport for details.

Players cannot be downgraded within an age group or to a younger group in any league. No "A" player can play on a "B" league team. Conversely, any "B" player who plays in an "A" league game becomes an "A" player and is no longer eligible to play in the "B" league.

An Eighth Grade player cannot be moved down to the Seventh Grade team under any conditions. A Seventh Grade player may move up to an Eighth Grade team if: (A) There are insufficient Eighth Grade players to fill out the roster and (B) There are too many

Seventh Grade players and moving a player up would benefit both teams. No player can be moved up without the permission of his or her parents and the consent and approval of both coaches involved.

A good faith effort will be made to allow each player playing time in each game/match with no single player playing or no single player not playing the entire game/match.

## RULE 2

Until a team plays its first game, teams may practice as often as necessary, within reason. This allows a team sufficient time to prepare for the coming season.

Practice times are determined by:

- (A) Availability of the coaching staff
- (B) Number of teams participating
- (C) Facility or field availability

Practices are generally from one and one-half hours to two hours per time for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade teams. Shorter practices are recommended for lower grades. The general guideline is that we would like to have the last practice end by 10:00 p.m. No practice, league game or intramural event will begin before 1:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Any exceptions to these rules will be coordinated with the Athletic Director.

## RULE 3

Teams may play in a variety of different pre, post, and holiday tournaments. Listed below is the number of tournaments allowed. The fee charged will cover the following:

4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade PAL League + 1 League Tournament + 1 Additional Tournament

\*\*\*\* Any team may participate in additional tournaments and or leagues with the approval of the athletic director. Fees will be adjusted accordingly

## RULE 4

Whenever possible, students will have a minimum of one week between the end of one sport and the beginning of practice for the next.

These rules are self-imposed. Though they may at times place our teams at a somewhat competitive disadvantage to the other teams we play, we feel these rules to be beneficial in keeping athletics in proper perspective.

## **LEAGUE AFFILIATIONS**

SPSL will only participate in leagues that provide its members an opportunity to compete on the fields and in gymnasiums in an atmosphere of Christian sportsmanship, competition and fellowship.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITY**

Parents are the heart and soul of the athletic program at SPSL. From parents come the staff and support needed for a successful program. Parents of participating children are often asked to assist in various ways.

It is important that you see to it that your child regularly attends practices as scheduled by the team coach. Occasionally, you may be called upon to drive members of your child's team to games or to practices. Please help us in this area if you are able.

You can be of great help in the care of the uniforms. These uniforms are provided for your child to wear **DURING THE GAME ONLY**, not in practices or for normal play purposes. Please observe laundry instructions attached to the uniforms. It is vital that the uniforms be returned promptly at season's end. All uniforms are to be properly cleaned and returned to the child's coach after the last game of the season or as directed. Remember that you must pay replacement cost of all uniforms damaged or not returned.

It is important to remember that your child's coach is in charge of the team during the practices and games. Please, do not interfere with the coach at these times. During games, and immediately before and after the game, please refrain from entering the team area. The coach has enough on his/her mind at this time, and cannot be expected to answer parents' questions or to take suggestions at this time. Please observe the "24 hour " rule by waiting to talk to a coach for at least that time after a game.

Lastly, it is hoped that parents will be good fans at the games. We would like to encourage parents to cheer the SPSL teams and their opponents enthusiastically and in a spirit of positive and Christian sportsmanship. Let your teams and their coaches know you are 100% behind them.

### **COACHES**

At some time you may be asked to assist in coaching a team at SPSL. We hope you will be willing to help if you are asked to do so. Expert knowledge of the particular sport is not always required. Perhaps you could help another, more-experienced individual who has volunteered to coach. Every team needs more than one coach. At the same time, do not coach unless asked to do so, especially from the sidelines during games.

Coaches are expected to abide by the rules set down in this handbook. Coaches are required to support the seasonal sport concept of the parish and not to encourage the playing of any one sport year round.

At SPSL, winning is not the top priority. A coach will not be denied the opportunity to coach again because they did not win enough games in the previous season. Coaches are viewed as teachers of the sport involved and should strive to set a good example for their players in their language, their sportsmanship, and their respect for the philosophy of the program.

SPSL's goal is to have dedicated coaches. We do this primarily to help bring more knowledge to the sports and to refine the skills of the player.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Any child having difficulty with underachieving in academics, or complying with the disciplinary standards of the day school, will receive appropriate action from the school authorities. As a part of the moral growth of the student, parents and coaches are to respect and support the disciplinary action taken by the school authorities.

Suspension from day school or religious education classes, or dismissal from the same, is an automatic suspension from any SPSL athletic activity during the week the student is not allowed to attend school. This includes an automatic one game suspension.

You as parents have the ultimate voice in whether your child participates in the program. If you are unsatisfied with your child's academic progress or his/her behavior to the extent that their participation should be withheld, advise the coach who shall honor your wishes. The child may resume participation only when you advise the coach again that it is acceptable for the child to do so.

To participate in the athletic program at SPSL, the child must be a member of St. Pius or St. Leo Parish and attending school at SPSL or a Catholic attending religious education classes at one of the two parishes.

If you have any additional questions concerning eligibility, please contact the Athletic Director or any member of the Athletic Committee.

Please remember that participation is a privilege, not a right. If your son or daughter participates in a sport, both of you make a commitment to the program. As a result, the following policy outlines the commitment of a SPSL student-athlete:

### **SPSL Student-Athlete Commitment Policy**

**The SPSL Athletic Board is committed to provide the student athlete with a comprehensive athletic experience in each sport. It is very important for each**

**student athlete that participates on any of our teams to recognize the commitment level of the SPSL Athletic Board as well as their coaches and be committed to practices and games.**

**On SPSL's highest level team for seventh and eighth grade girl's volleyball, girl's basketball, boy's basketball, and boy's baseball ( a/k/a the "A" teams ) there will be the highest level of commitment from the SPSL Athletic Board and its' coaches which will also require the highest level of commitment from each student athlete participating on these teams.**

**The SPSL Athletic Board expects each student athlete on the highest level team to make that team their top extracurricular commitment during the season while that team is participating. This policy is intended to promote fair and consistent guidelines regarding participation on the top level team. The SPSL Athletic Board in conjunction with the coaches reserves the right to make judgments concerning individual cases for the good of the program and the particular athlete**

Coaches will set practice times within the guidelines of the program. Ordinarily no player can miss any practice, game, and match or meet without obtaining permission in advance from the coach. Excessive absences may result in dismissal from the team -- with no refund of fees.

It is this committee's recommendation that no SPSL athlete should be registered in more than one SPSL Interscholastic sport per season. It is our feeling that it is impossible for a player to participate on a SPSL team and a select team at the same time and do either justice. We, therefore, encourage you to make a decision -- and then give whatever team your best effort.

### **VOLLEYBALL**

Volleyball is a fall sport for girls in Grades 4-8. SPSL plays in the PAL (Parochial Athletic League). Games are played in the gyms of the various participating parishes including ours. Games will be played weeknights and weekends. Teams will be divided into AA, A and B. League rules require a minimum of ten players per team.

No one is "cut" from our volleyball teams because of a lack of ability. SPSL will attempt to have as many teams as we have players. If the number of players involved dictates, additional teams may be formed within a grade or by combining two grades.

### **BASKETBALL**

Basketball is the winter sport for both girls and boys in Grades 4-8. All of our teams play in the PAL (Parochial Athletic League) and at times, other leagues.

SPSL will have two teams for both boys and girls at each of the seventh and eighth grade levels. Depending on the number of players that try out “cuts” might have to be made.

SPSL will place 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade athletes on the team where that athlete will have the best opportunity to be successful. The number of sixth grade teams as well as the number of players on each sixth grade team will be determined after an organized assessment session. No cuts will be made in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

SPSL will divided 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams evenly if there are enough players for multiple teams. No cuts will be made at this level.

We would like to see at least 7-10 players on a team. Each team will be given as much practice time as available per week with priority in scheduling coming from eighth grade down.

5<sup>th</sup>- 8th Grade -Teams will be divided into AAA, AA, A and B by league rules. Placement on a team will be based on skill levels, attitude and work ethic.

### **TRACK**

Track is a spring sport for both boys and girls in grades Six, Seven and Eight. It is a very short season of about a month. Track starts in mid-March and ends in mid-April.

No one is “cut” from our track teams because of a lack of ability.

### **LIABILITY**

The parish has and assumes no liability for any injury to players. Insurance is the responsibility of the parents.

### **THEFT / VANDALISM**

All players are cautioned to take care of their personal property, and neither the coach nor the parish is responsible for property left unattended at games and practices.

### **COMPLAINTS**

Any individual having a complaint about a coach or program should:

1. Player speak to the coach first to attempt to resolve the problem;
2. Parent speak to the coach to attempt to resolve the problem;
3. Parent speak to the appropriate Commissioner to attempt to resolve the problem;

4. If the problem cannot be rectified at that time, the individual should talk to the Athletic Director;
5. If that fails, a presentation can be made to the Athletic Committee at its scheduled monthly meeting;
6. If that fails, a presentation can be made to a Pastor(s).

All such contacts should be made at a scheduled time, not immediately before or after a practice or game unless previously scheduled at that time.

### **GYM USAGE**

The St Pius / St Leo gym shall be primarily used by those teams operating under the St Pius / St Leo Sports Club. The gym usage may be allowed to teams that consist of current St Pius / St Leo Students or those enrolled in CCD program. This will include alumni of St Pius / St Leo School. All alumni gym usage will be coordinated through the Athletic Director and School principal. All participants of alumni activities will be required to sign a liability waiver. Alumni activities will be limited to 2 teams per season.

### **SUMMARY**

This booklet has presented a picture of the athletic program of SPSL. It is an attempt to illustrate, for the information of the parents of our children, just what sports are offered and the importance of athletics to the total educational experience of the children. We have tried to explain the philosophical approach the parish takes toward sports; how these sports are financed, and what the functions of the Athletic Director and the Athletic Committee are.

Due to the length of the booklet, there are undoubtedly questions that remain unanswered concerning the program at SPSL. We have not attempted to answer each possible question. Should you have a specific question, please contact the Athletic Director or any member of the Athletic Committee. An honest attempt will be made to provide a complete answer for you.

In short, it can be said that the athletic program at SPSL is striving to be the most complete and varied program of any Omaha Catholic parish. We feel the program will be unequalled, and we sincerely hope our children take advantage of it. The success of the program depends on each of us to make it work!