

# ST. MATTHEW CATHOLIC SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK 2018-2019

## SCHOOL SPORTS PHILOSOPHY

The middle school sports program is provided to help foster spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical development in our students by offering a competitive team sports environment. Our sports policy strives to balance the drive to win and succeed in athletic competition with the Christian principles that are the foundation of our educational program.

We encourage all students to consider participation in our athletic programs as opportunities arise throughout the year.

The SMCS Athletic program provides a variety of experiences that enhance the development of favorable habits and attitudes that will prepare students for adult life. The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Archdiocesan Interscholastic Athletic League (AIAL) and SMCS policies, rules and regulations.

While SMCS takes great pride in winning, it does not condone “winning at any cost.” It discourages any and all pressures which might lead to neglecting good sportsmanship and good mental health. At all times, the athletic program must be conducted as an educational activity of learning.

The goal of the SMCS Athletic Program is to assist students in the development of Christian character through their participation in sports.

Parents and players are obligated to acknowledge the fact that “the St. Matthew Catholic School athletic programs are competitive.”

## SPORTS PROGRAMS

SMCS competes in the Archdiocesan Interscholastic Athletic League (AIAL). The guidelines established by the member schools govern competition in the league. The league offers competition in the following sports:

Football	Baseball	Soccer**	Track*
Basketball*	Softball	Golf	Volleyball*+
Cross Country*	Cheerleading++		Tennis

\*Separate boys and girls leagues are available for these sports

\*\* In soccer both boys and girls compete in a co-ed league

+ SMCS has not competed in boys' volleyball in several years, if interest is indicated, a team could be formed

++ See cheerleading section

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Competition in boys and girls sports is divided into “A” and “B” teams in the following sports: ++

Volleyball	Track	Basketball
Cross Country		

The following sports only offer a single “A” team++:

Football	Baseball	Tennis
Soccer	Softball	Golf

++ AIAL regulations stipulate that 8<sup>th</sup> grade students may only participate on “A” teams.

## SPORTS POLICY

The sports policy may be changed at the discretion of the school administration as needed and without notice. Please direct any inquires to the School Administration. All students must meet all eligibility requirements to participate in any school team sport. Where both “A” and “B” teams are available, the school will field teams at both levels of competition. If there are not enough players to field a team at both “A” and “B” levels, only an “A” team will be established.

- 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to try out for all sports (exception for Football)
- Tryouts may be held for any sport when participation exceeds the available number of player’s slots available for the sport. In the event a roster spot becomes available after the season has begun, and at the coach’s, a student may be asked to join the team based on the tryout evaluation. The coach, athletic director and principal must approve final rosters for all sports before being sent to the AIAL office.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are only eligible for participation on “A” teams. Available slots will be filled with any combination of other participants as necessary.
- A letter will be awarded to student athletes competing at the “A” team level in the AIAL competition provided they remain eligible for competition the entire season. After the initial letter an award pin will be awarded for additional sports.
- Students and parents are expected to exhibit Christian behavior and good sportsmanship at all school related functions and activities, whether on or off campus.
- The administration and game officials, at their discretion, have the authority to remove anyone displaying unsportsmanlike conduct at any school related activity, whether on or off campus.

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**Athletic events and practices are not the time or place to express concerns or conduct discussions of a personal nature with coaches or school personnel and such will not be tolerated.** Concerns should be brought to the attention of the athletic director within 24 hours and a response will be received within a week's time.

## ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT CONDUCT OF ATHLETES

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration. All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that result in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality or violations of law, tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the athletic program and will not be tolerated. Participation on an athletic team involves discipline and willingness to make sacrifices. For this reason, those who wish to participate in interscholastic sports at SMCS must always act like ladies and gentlemen; be neat in appearance and polite in behavior.

All St. Matthew students will observe the respect and courtesies of Digital Citizenship and will follow the St. Matthew Catholic School Parent-Student Handbook with regard to the use of electronic equipment whether the practice/sporting event takes place on campus or off campus. Cardinal Rules apply where Cardinals work and play.

### **Use of Electronic Communication – taken from Archdiocese Policy 3307**

Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of electronic communication jeopardizes the safe environment of the school or is contrary to Gospel values, the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including expulsion.

This policy applies to communications or depictions through email, text messages, or web site postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication, which: (1) are of a sexual nature; (2) threaten, libel, slander, malign, disparage, harass or embarrass members of the school community; or (3) cause harm to the school community.

A school reserves the right to confiscate and/or examine any electronic device in the student's possession while on campus including, but not limited to, cellular telephones, watches, tablets, gaming devices, cameras, school-issued devices or other electronic communication equipment of any type.

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## REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

**Physical Examination:** A yearly physical examination is required. The physical exam form must be completed by the physician and submitted to the coach prior to participation in any try-out or game competition. The examination will be valid for a period of one year from the date it was first obtained. The form will be kept on file in the Athletic Department Office.

**Medical Release Authorization:** Each athlete's parent shall complete an emergency Medical Release Authorization form, giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent(s) are not available. The form will be kept with each coach so that they are available at each practice and contest.

**Parental Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies:** Upon entering middle school are at the time a student tries out for an athletic team, he/she will be presented with necessary forms and information for participating in athletics. Each parent or guardian and athlete shall read all of the enclosed material and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility, rules and policies of the school. This signed document will be filed in the Athletic Department.

**Scholastic Eligibility:** In order to participate on a SMCS athletic team, each athlete must have satisfied all the scholastic eligibility requirements prior to participation. Furthermore, any student who is in violation of the school's disciplinary policies is not eligible to participate in interscholastic sports at SMCS. Any student whose conduct or appearance is not in compliance with the school's policy may be declared ineligible by the Administration for an indefinite period.

## ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for athletics, the middle school athlete must be in compliance with the SMCS policies concerning extra-curricular eligibility and the rules and regulations of the Archdiocese Interscholastic Athletic League (AIAL). Individual sports may adopt rules and regulations, with administrative approval, regarding expectations and requirements for students participating in that particular sport. These policies, once signed by the parent and student, become an extension of the student/parent handbook.

- Must be enrolled in St. Matthew Catholic School
- Must have a 70 or better cumulative average of all subjects and are not failing more than one subject at progress report grading periods
- Must maintain 75 or better cumulative average of all subjects and no grade lower than a 70 in any subject at report card grading periods

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- Students trying out for a fall sport must be a student in good standing at the time of the team tryouts. A student must have passed all core classes for the full year to be eligible to try out. If they failed a core class for the year, they must have completed summer school at their expense and received a passing grade prior to the commencement of tryouts. In the case of electives, the student must have maintained a passing average for all elective classes for the full year. If the student does not meet the elective requirement, they must make up the failed class during the summer at their expense.
- All applicable athletic fees must be paid in full prior to the first game/competition of the season
- Athletes must be marked present in school the entire day in order to be eligible to participate in games/competition or practice later that same afternoon or evening\*\*
- Any student missing more than 2hrs. (120 minutes) of the school day is marked absent for that day.
- If a student misses classes on a Friday, they will be eligible to participate in Saturday or Sunday events as deemed appropriate by the sport's coach.

\*\*The only exceptions are school sponsored or approved activities. Parents need to keep this in mind when scheduling appointments.

## INELIGIBILITY

If a student becomes ineligible, due to grades, he/she may not participate in practice or games until the deficiency is removed at the next progress report or report card grading period whichever comes first. A student may not tryout for a sport if they do not meet the academic requirements for eligibility as outlined in the Eligibility section above. If a student is unable to tryout, they will be ineligible for the full season even if they rectify the grade deficiency. If a student becomes ineligible for other reasons such as misconduct, the coach and/or administration will make a determination of the consequences up to and including permanent removal from the team.

**A student athlete who serves an In-School Suspension will receive a one game suspension to be served on the first game after the ISS is issued to the student.**

## TEAM SELECTION PROCESS

The purpose of tryouts is to fairly evaluate all student athletes on their talent, sportsmanship and knowledge of the game. All in attendance will be fairly evaluated by using a rating system that will rank each athlete in several categories that pertain to each sport tryout. The date and number of days the tryout will be conducted will be determined by the published AIAL calendar, Athletic Director and School Principal.

***Categories will be determined by each coach and approved by the Athletic Director for that sport.***

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Athletes trying out for each sport must attend all posted tryout dates. Failure to attend all tryout dates will disqualify you from making the final roster for that sport.

In the event a student is ill and not able to attend school or has to leave school because of an illness, the athletic department will allow the student to try out as long as they are able to attend 2 of the 3 posted try out dates. Failing to attend 2 of the 3 try out dates will disqualify them from the try out. This applies to illnesses that fall under the current school policy that requires them to be kept home due to health department guidelines. Each situation will be reviewed and handled on an individual basis by the Athletic Director, School Nurse and Principal.

There are no guarantees that a student, trying out for a team, will make the squad, regardless of grade level or prior participation on a school team. In the event a student fails to demonstrate the efforts and attitude expected of a player or should the coach believe the student could not safely participate in the sport, then the student may not be placed on the team. The coach, athletic director and principal must approve final rosters for all sports before being sent to the AIAL office.

Each player will be given a number prior to tryout. **A tryout worksheet will be kept to document scores and notes during the evaluations.** This will help coaches to identify and select players in accordance with their abilities. The worksheet is solely a tool to assist the coaching staff with making final team selections. Team selection results are considered personal in nature and will only be disclosed to St. Matthew School coaching staff and administration.

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Sport	Grades Allowed to Try-Out	Number of Teams
Football *	7th & 8th	A Team
Volleyball	6th - 7th - 8th	A & B Team
Soccer	6th - 7th - 8th	A Team
Cross Country	6th - 7th - 8th	A & B Team
Basketball - Boys	6th - 7th - 8th	A & B Team
Basketball - Girls	6th - 7th - 8th	A & B Team
Tennis	6th - 7th - 8th	A Team
Golf	6th - 7th - 8th	A Team
Baseball	6th - 7th - 8th	A Team
Softball	6th - 7th - 8th	A Team
Track & Field	6th - 7th - 8th	A & B Team
Cheerleading	6th - 7th - 8th	A Team

\* 6th grade athletes will be allowed to try out for the team in the event there are not enough athletes to fill a team. The Coaches, Athletic Director and Principal will make the decision based on the current situation.

All participating in the tryout have an equal chance to make the team. Available slots will be filled with any combination of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

**AIAL regulations stipulate that 8<sup>th</sup> grade students may only participate on “A” teams. Clarification: A 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade athlete can be selected over an 8<sup>th</sup> grade athlete for a roster spot.**

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### TEAM COMMITMENT

All absences will be either excused or unexcused.

**Excused absences:** Illness, death in the family or a family emergency. If a student gets ill during the school day and goes home, their absence will be excused. If a student feels ill and stays in school, they should go to practice. If their illness gets worse, then the coach can excuse them to go home.

**Unexcused absences:** When a student/athlete gets an unexcused absence from practice, they will become ineligible for one game. In addition, players will be required to attend the competition, dressed and must sit on the team bench as teammates normally do. When a student gets a second unexcused absence from practice, parents will be notified by phone, that one more unexcused absence from practice will result in that student's removal from the program. As a result, the player will again be required to miss one game with the same conditions as stated above. When a student gets an unexcused absence from a contest (misses a game), they will be immediately removed from the program and parents will be notified by phone.

**Tardiness** will also be either excused or unexcused. The coach will have the authority to decide whether a tardy is excused or not." As a reinforcement measure, please make time to discuss these guidelines with your daughter or son. Players are expected to be on time to classes, practices, and meetings. Tardiness will not be tolerated. Corrective action will be taken by the coach. An ensuing tardy will result in the same consequence as an unexcused missed practice.

**Quitting a Sport** - The Athletic Department feels that a student has made a commitment to the school, team and coach. His or her quitting has disrupted team unity and deprived another student of participating. Any student, who remains on a team, and after minor disciplinary action, continues to demonstrate poor team morale can be dismissed by the coach with the approval of the Director of Athletics and be subject to the same suspension. The Athletic Department feels strongly that a student makes a serious commitment to a team before trying out for a sport. When an athlete quits the team to which he / she have been selected, he/she forfeits trying out or participating in another sport until the completion of the previous sport.

**Disciplinary Procedures** - Disciplinary infractions of school rules while in attendance at, or while being transferred to or from, an athletic event come under the jurisdiction of the regular school disciplinary procedures. The head coach must inform the Principal and the Director of Athletics of such infractions. The head coach may add to the punishment from the school but cannot bypass ordinary procedures.

Since discipline is a vital ingredient to a team's success, athletes can be disciplined for the following infractions:

- Unexcused absence from practice or game
- Failure to attend team meetings
- Being tardy to a practice
- Lack of sportsmanship

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- Failure to contribute your best effort
- Disciplinary reasons for missing practice are not excused
- Breaking training rules.

Sanctioned disciplinary procedures include:

- Suspension or expulsion from the team (only instituted with permission from the Head Coach of the sport and Director of Athletics).
- Benching (sitting out of practice or game as designated by coach).
- Extra physical activity (i.e. push-ups).

**NOTE:** A SMCS athlete who leaves the bench area to join in an altercation during a contest will be suspended from the team and subject to dismissal from the Athletic Program and the school, if after an investigation it is found that the student participated in such.

Another setback can occur with untimely injuries to players. Some of these injuries occur because of non-school team sports participation during the season. (Club, tournaments, etc) **While players are encouraged to participate in club sports, parents and players must understand that school athletics will take precedence over club athletics.** Similarly, if there is a conflict with another school sport, it is recommended that the parents and player decide which school sport is a priority.

It is the parents' sole responsibility to pick up their children after team practices are finished for the day. If a practice concludes at 5:00 pm their child will be dropped off at the school's After School Care Program after 5:15 pm. Parents will need to pay the costs of this care program. Most of the St. Matthew School coaches are volunteers or are not paid enough to wait and sit with your children for you. Parents are asked to be considerate and arrive on time in order to pick up their children after practices. This way coaches who conduct practices that finish after 6:00 pm will not have to sit with children until parents arrive. Please know that most of our coaches have other jobs and many need to go to work after their practices conclude.

## PERFORMANCE AND PLAYING TIME

The St. Matthew Catholic School Athletic Program is a competitive program. The coaches of each sport have full discretion when determining playing time and control of continued membership on a particular team. Discussion with the coach or Athletic Director regarding concerns of playing time should follow protocol on page 87 (Sports Policy).

SMCS Athletic Program is to assist students in the development of Christian character through their participation in sports. The student-athlete shall learn:

- To work with others. In a democratic society a person must develop self-discipline, Respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. The team and its objectives must be placed higher than personal desires.

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- To be successful. Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do so. You can learn to accept defeat only by striving to win with earnest dedication.
- To develop sportsmanship. To accept any defeat like a true sportsman, knowing we have done our best, we must learn to treat others as we would have others treat us. We need to develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
- To improve. Continual improvement is an essential component of good citizenship. As an athlete, you must establish a goal and you must constantly try to achieve that goal. Try to improve in the skills and knowledge required and those personal traits that enhance the success of a team.
- To enjoy athletics. It is necessary for athletes to enjoy participation, to acknowledge all of the personal rewards to be derived from athletics, and to give sufficiently of themselves in order to persevere and improve the program.
- To develop desirable personal health habits. To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits, and to develop the desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed.

## SPORTS TEAMS

### FOOTBALL

- The Football program is open to 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field only one Football team
- Must have a current physical on file with the Athletic Department
- The Football program averages approximately 35 players. In the past there has not been a tryout for the team unless the number of participants exceeds a manageable number. At that time the Team Selection Process will be followed to determine a final roster. Number of participants will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director.
- Minimum weight is **85lbs** with the Maximum weight not to exceed **210lbs**
- Must read and sign the St. Matthew Athletic Contract after being selected to the team
- All sports fee's must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

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## VOLLEYBALL

- The Volleyball program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field two teams (“A” & “B” teams) *see Sports Policy section for team structure*
- Must have a current physical on file with the Athletic Department
- Team rosters and the number of roster spots will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director at the conclusion of tryouts.
- Tryouts will follow the Team Selection Process which will determine team final rosters
- All Volleyball tryouts and practices are closed to only athletes, coaches and school administrators.
- Must read and sign the St. Matthew Athletic Contract after being selected to the team
- All sports fee’s must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

## SOCCER

- The Soccer program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field one “A” team *see Sports Policy section for team structure*
- Must have a current Physical on file with the Athletic Department
- Team rosters and the number of roster spots will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director at the conclusion of tryouts.
- Tryouts will follow the Team Selection Process which will determine team final rosters
- Must read and sign the St. Matthew Athletic Contract after being selected to the team
- All sports fee’s must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

## CROSS COUNTRY

- The Cross Country program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field an “A” & “B” team *see Sports Policy section for team structure*
- Must have a current Physical on file with the Athletic Department
- Everyone is encouraged to participate (Athletic Director will evaluate participation numbers each season)

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- Team rosters and the number of roster spots will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director if a tryout is warranted
- Must read and sign the *St. Matthew Athletic Contract* after being selected to the team
- All sports fee's must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

### BASKETBALL

- The Basketball program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field four teams ( "A" & "B" boys team) & ("A" & "B" girls team) *see Sports Policy section for team structure*
- Must have a current physical on file with the Athletic Department
- Team rosters and the number of roster spots will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director at the conclusion of tryouts.
- Tryouts will follow the *Team Selection Process* which will determine team final rosters
- All Basketball tryouts and practices are closed to only athletes, coaches and school administrators.
- Must read and sign the *St. Matthew Athletic Contract* after being selected to the team
- All sports fee's must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

### BASEBALL

- The Baseball program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field one "A" team *see Sports Policy section for team structure*
- Must have a current Physical on file with the Athletic Department
- Team rosters and the number of roster spots will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director at the conclusion of tryouts.
- Tryouts will follow the *Team Selection Process* which will determine team final rosters
- Must read and sign the *St. Matthew Athletic Contract* after being selected to the team
- All sports fee's must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

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## SOFTBALL

- The Softball program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field one “A” team *see Sports Policy section for team structure*
- Must have a current Physical on file with the Athletic Department
- Team rosters and the number of roster spots will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director at the conclusion of tryouts.
- Tryouts will follow the *Team Selection Process* which will determine team final rosters
- Must read and sign the *St. Matthew Athletic Contract* after being selected to the team
- All sports fee’s must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

## TRACK

- The Track program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field an “A” & “B” team *see Sports Policy section for team structure*
- Must have a current Physical on file with the Athletic Department
- Everyone is encouraged to participate (Athletic Director will evaluate participation numbers each season)
- Team rosters and the number of roster spots will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director at the conclusion of tryouts.
- Must read and sign the *St. Matthew Athletic Contract* after being selected to the team
- All sports fee’s must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

## TENNIS

- St. Matthew will field one tennis team.
- Must have a current Physical on file with the Athletic Department
- Everyone is encouraged to participate (Athletic Director will evaluate participation numbers each season)
- Tryouts will follow the *Team Selection Process* which will determine team final rosters
- Team rosters and the number of roster spots will be determined by the Head Coach and Athletic Director at the conclusion of tryouts.
- Must read and sign the *St. Matthew Athletic Contract* after being selected to the team
- All sports fee’s must be paid prior to the start of any game competition

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### GOLF

- The Golf program is open to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- St. Matthew will field one golf team
- At this time St. Matthew is unable to provide an environment of instruction and practice. Individuals who wish to compete may do so utilizing their own practice time and coaching
- St. Matthew will enter any individual in the AIAL District golf tournament as long as the athlete is able to demonstrate they can play on their own and have a full understanding of the rules of golf.
- St. Matthew Athletic Director will evaluate the individuals to assure their acceptance into the tournament.

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## **CHEERLEADERS**

**The purpose of the St. Matthew Catholic School (SMCS) Cheerleader program is to:**

Support the curricular and extracurricular activities of SMCS by promoting school spirit, to develop a sense of good sportsmanship among the students and to improve relationships between competing schools during all athletic events.

At SMCS cheerleaders are considered athletes. Because cheerleader selection tryouts are necessary cheerleading is considered competitive in nature.

Therefore, as in any other SMCS sport, a student-athlete must be on the A-team/squad for eligibility to receive an Athletic Letter at the end of the school year.

Like all SMCS student-athletes, cheerleaders are expected to attend practices and perform at an optimum level at all school related athletic events. SMCS Cheerleaders shall NOT be required to compete in external cheerleading competitions or perform at non-school-sponsored activities. Cheerleaders, as well as cheer parents, have a demanding responsibility in itself and will not be subjected to external anxieties and/or costs.

Being a SMCS cheerleader is a genuine honor and a special privilege. Cheerleaders are first and foremost representatives and ambassadors of our school and its unique environment in which students can experience the presence of the Holy Spirit. Cheerleaders should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their notable position and in accordance with the rules as stated in the SMCS Student/Parent Handbook.

SMCS cheerleaders also have a fundamental responsibility to play a leadership role in building teamwork and helping the school achieve its goals and objectives. Because of these special responsibilities, members of the cheerleading squad will be expected to maintain higher standards of behavior, both on and off campus, and higher standards of academic achievement than that of their peers.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To cheer for any athletic event as required by school authorities.
- To promote a cooperative spirit among the student body, the faculty and administration.
- To promote unification of the crowd's involvement during athletic events.
- To promote the type of sportsmanship that will help students acquire the basic attributes of good citizenship.
- To build better relationships between schools.
- To develop a wholesome school spirit.

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- To develop loyalty to your school and team, regardless of the outcome.
- To help your school achieve the objectives of its interscholastic athletics activities.
- To promote all competitions in which the school participates.
- To attend activities as necessary to promote school pride and spirit.

### **GUIDELINES FOR CHEERLEADING**

- Your appearance and your conduct will reflect upon SMCS. The students who chose you for this position do so because they think they will make a favorable impression. SMCS will give them every opportunity to try to fulfill their expectations.
- Because a cheerleader is regularly in the public eye, the cheerleader is both a representative of SMCS and a leader in the school, personal appearance must reflect the positive, respectful attitude instilled at SMS.
- Absolutely NO Jewelry is allowed during practice, games, competitions, or any school function.
- NO make-up, including lip color will be allowed on the school campus. Face paint, body glitter and cardinal tattoos may be worn at camp and other specified school functions as approved by coach/sponsor.
- The SMCS Cheerleader's role is to improve the student morale, to boost team spirit and to help our school achieve the objectives of its supporting interscholastic league and other programs. You are to direct the student body in its support of your school's teams. This role makes you a strong influence in guiding other student conduct at games and you should maintain the proper dignity in this leadership.
- After the school fall sport season, cheerleaders will be permitted to tryout or join other athletic teams at SMCS. If the cheerleader makes the sports teams, her first priority will be to the team in season. Cheerleaders are expected to attend any practices or activities with the cheerleading program as long as the two do not conflict. This commitment does not apply to external cheerleading competitions or outside commitment at non-school-sponsored activities.
- The exception will be that a cheerleader can participate in the fall Cross Country season as long as the Cross Country practices do not conflict with the Cheerleading practice or performance schedule

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- One squad consisting of a maximum of sixteen (16) students. If there are seven (7) or less who are qualified for tryouts, the squad will be made up of those eligible and tryouts will not be held.
- The sponsor will designate a head cheerleader ONLY after receiving input from the entire squad.

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- Additional members may be admitted and allowed to fill regular squad positions as they reach performing proficiency, vacancies occur, or temporary positions in the event a regular cheerleader is unable to perform his/her cheerleader duties. The addition of members will be at the sole discretion of the Cheerleader Review Board.

## **QUALIFICATION AND ELIGIBILITY**

To remain in the organization, each cheerleader must maintain eligibility under the school athletic and Cheerleading policy.

To be eligible for extracurricular activities, including cheerleading, a student must be passing ALL subjects:

- Must have a 70 or better cumulative average of all subjects and are not failing more than one subject at progress report grading periods.
- Must maintain 75 or better cumulative average of all subjects and no grade lower than a 70 in any subject at report card grading periods.
- In the fall, cheerleaders must have received a 70 or better final average in all subjects the previous school year.
- All athletes must be marked present in school the entire day in order to be eligible to participate in games or practice later that same afternoon or evening.
- Poor citizenship can also result in ineligibility for cheerleading and other extracurricular activities. Any student earning a U (Unsatisfactory) or two Ns (Needs Improvement) in citizenship for a six-weeks grading period will be suspended from extracurricular activities for the following six-week grading period.
- Any student earning N (Needs Improvement) in the same class for two consecutive grading periods will be suspended from extracurricular activities for the following six-week grading period.
- Any N or U earned by a student involved in athletics will merit additional consequences that will be assigned by the Athletic Director and/or coaches.
- Any candidate who has been ineligible two six-weeks of the school year will be disqualified from cheerleader try-outs.
- Beginning September 1, 2007, any candidate who has failed one semester in any course of the school year will be disqualified from cheerleader try-outs.
- Have written permission from parents to compete.
- Attend all workshops, practices, etc. unless excused in advance by the sponsor.
- Attend cheerleader summer camp or similar type facility as designated by the Cheer Sponsor.
- Students with excessive absences, as deemed by Attendance Committee, may be disqualified.
- Any or all financial responsibilities with SMCS shall be paid in full prior to try-outs.

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- Cheerleaders must maintain passing grades as required by the student handbook eligibility rules in order to perform or participate in Cheerleading activities.
- Beginning September 1, 2007, any student who has been selected or elected previously as Cheerleader, but has either voluntarily resigned or been dismissed from the squad will be ineligible for tryouts unless the resignation was due to circumstances beyond the candidate's control.

## **HEAD CHEERLEADER'S DUTIES**

- To ensure that the agenda and theme of each pep rally is given to the sponsor Tuesday before the pep rally.
- To coordinate outfits, props, etc. that are needed for pep rallies and/or games.
- To be sure of game times and to ensure that all cheerleaders are present and on time.
- To call a meeting of the cheerleaders, with sponsor approval, when necessary.
- To see that all areas, supplies, etc. are in order after practices, sign painting, or any other group activities.
- To arrange necessary hospitality to all visiting teams.
- The Head Cheerleader must possess the following leadership traits: to take pictures in any cheerleading uniform. Dismissed cheerleader will not appear in any group pictures in the current school yearbook.

## **EXPENSES**

Expenses for uniforms, camp and other incidentals may exceed \$700.

- Each cheerleader will purchase cheerleading uniforms, tennis shoes, socks, camp outfits, and pom-poms. The school does not pay for any part of the uniform. The St. Matthew cheerleading department will provide megaphones, sweats, and other items that belong to the school. The cheerleaders will checkout these items to utilize for the entire school year.

## **UNIFORMITY**

Uniformity equals unity. St. Matthew Catholic School promotes unity; therefore, all cheerleaders are to be in proper uniform while at practice and at games.

## **PRACTICE UNIFORM**

The practice uniform consists of the P.E. uniform (or any other St. Matthew T-shirt), red/black/white biker shorts (under P.E. shorts), cheerleading tennis shoes, and white socks. The game uniform consists of the cheerleading outfit specified by the coach and sponsor.

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## **GAME UNIFORM**

The game uniform includes uniform top, skirt, biker shorts, cheer socks, cheer tennis shoes, ribbons/bows, pom-poms, megaphone, cheerleading bag, and water jug. If a cheerleader is absent prior to a game or event, it is the responsibility of the cheerleader to contact the head captain to find out what uniform and accessories are to be worn.

All cheerleaders will be required to replace lost equipment either by paying for replacement equipment or by giving the school the equivalent equipment. This includes equipment such as megaphones, raincoats, sweats, CD's, etc. Equipment must be turned in to coach/sponsor as requested by the coach/sponsor.

## **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION**

All cheerleaders will be required to have a signed physical examination on file before competing in AIAL events.

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR INCORRECT UNIFORM**

- If a cheerleader attends an event with the entire incorrect uniform or the incorrect skirt, she will not be allowed to participate. The cheerleader will run three laps at the next practice.
- If a cheerleader attends an event out-of-uniform (incorrect accessories, tennis shoes, ribbon/bow, etc) she will suit up in full uniform and sit next to the coach/sponsor for ¼ of the game or event. The cheerleader will run one lap for every item or piece of clothing forgotten.
- If a cheerleader attends practice out-of-uniform, she will run one lap for every item or piece of clothing forgotten.

## **CHEERLEADER DUTIES**

Each member of the squad will perform her share of duties. Duties will be equally divided. Duties will not prevent a cheerleader from participating in athletics and other school activities. On the contrary, cheerleaders are allowed and encouraged to compete in athletics and other activities. However, cheerleaders should consult with the advisor concerning other commitments for scheduling purposes.

- SMCS Cheerleader will be required to attend most of the various sport activities.
- Members must contact the sponsor to inform her of the absence before the performance takes place.
- When transportation is provided by the school, members are expected to travel as a unit.
- Members are expected to support all financial projects sponsored by the cheerleader.

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- Cheerleaders are expected to learn and stay current with any or all material that is presented to them (i.e. dances, cheers, etc.)

## **PRACTICES**

### **AFTER SCHOOL PRACTICES**

Cheerleader practices will be called for, as deemed necessary, by the cheerleader sponsor, and the head cheerleader. Ample notice will be given so that the cheerleaders can make the necessary arrangements.

### **SUMMER PRACTICES**

The sponsor and the head cheerleader, prior to the dismissal of school, will set up specific dates for summer practices. This summer practice schedule will entail the cheerleader spending part of the summer involved in various cheerleader activities.

During this period, SMCS Cheerleaders may compete in external cheerleading competitions or perform at non-school-sponsored Activities.

Absences during the practices will be excused for the following reasons:

- \* Death in the Family
- \* Illness

If a cheerleader has two or more unexcused absences from practice, she will not cheer during the game or take part in any pre-game preparation (prep rallies, skits, etc).

## **CONDUCT CODE**

### **EXPECTATIONS**

- Conduct themselves as good citizens at all times.
- Demonstrate leadership qualities and use mature, sound judgment
- Demonstrate excellent conduct in the classroom as well as during cheerleading activities.
- No public display of affection AT ANY TIME.

### **PENALTIES**

No member shall be allowed to cheer in one performance if she:

- Is excessively tardy to a game, performance, practice or activity two (2) times.
- Is considered absent from school after 10:00a.m. on the day of the performance.

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## **DISMISSAL**

This will occur if the cheerleader is:

- Absent from a performance without an excuse and does not notify the sponsor prior to the performance.
- Academically ineligible after failing to bring up his/her grades after two (2) six-week periods.
- Inappropriate behavior and/or public display of affection.
- Failure to meet financial responsibilities within the specified time lines.
- Determined by the Review Board following an investigation to have been drinking, smoking or taking illegal drugs at any time.

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES PICK-UP POLICY**

Cheerleaders not picked up by a parent/designated person after school-sponsored activities will be sent to the Extended Day Program. (Cheerleading Coach/Sponsor will give a five-minute grace period). Parents of a cheerleader not picked up by 6 p.m. will be charged per minute according to the Extended Day Program fees for children left after 6 p.m. This policy applies to any activities, including those off campus. Please notify coach/sponsor by phone if you are running late.

## **DEMERIT SYSTEM**

Members are permitted no more than a total of TEN demerits per school year. FIVE demerits will result in suspension from the squad. TEN demerits will result in permanent dismissal from the squad. This is a system of demerits that will be in effect immediately after tryouts. Demerits cannot be exchanged or worked off. Once given, it remains

### **CLASSIFICATION AND NUMBER OF DEMERITS:**

- \* (2 Demerits) If you fail to call your coach and leave a message that you will be absent.
- \* (1 Demerit) If you are absent due to a reason other than sickness or an extreme emergency. This includes practices and all games. If you are sick, you must bring a note from your parents. If you had a doctor's appointment, you must bring a doctor's note. If not, this will result 1 demerit also. Second unexcused absence will result in 2 demerits and a third unexcused absence will result in 3 demerits.
- \* (1 Demerit) If you do not bring fall cheerleading equipment/uniform to each game.
- \* (1 Demerit) If not prepared and dressed-out for practice on time. This includes T-shirt, shorts, socks, and proper athletic shoes.

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- \* (1 Demerit) If you are tardy to practice or other school events.
- \* (1 Demerit) If you wear jewelry to practice or game.
- \* (1 Demerit) If you goof-off, do not pay attention, talk a lot, or slack off during practice or a game. This also includes time during tumbling or gymnastics.
- \* (1 Demerit) If you do not meet a deadline for instance, payment, turning in forms .
- \* (1 Demerit) If you do not stand at attention or if you talk during the national anthem.
- \* (1 Demerit) If you do not stand and stay in position during games.
- \* (1 Demerit) If you are chewing gum.
- \* (1 Demerit) If you are out of uniform including but not limited to... wrinkled uniform, dirty shoes, etc.
- \* (3 Demerits) If you are late for a game { up to 3 demerits and sit out quarter(s) } (5 Demerits) Bad attitude, disrespect toward another cheerleader or coach, discipline referrals for classroom behavior, foul language, insubordination, lack of enthusiasm.
- \* (10 Demerits) If it is evident that you are drinking, partaking of drugs, or smoking or if you are cited or arrested this will result in immediate removal from the squad.
- \* (5 Demerits) If you represent St. Matthews or the School in a derogatory manner in or out of uniform.
- \* (10 Demerits) If you miss a scheduled St. Matthews practice, game or other activity because of participation in an All-Star team.
- \* (3 Demerits) If you are ineligible for one grading period.

## **REVIEW BOARD**

Any cheerleader who fails to maintain the standards of conduct and character required of the organization must appear before the review board. This could entail behavior or conduct which reflects unfavorably upon the school and/or the cheerleaders or a violation of the constitution or failure to meet other requirements.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The Review board will consist of the following voting members:

- The school principal
- The school athletic director
- The squad sponsor

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## **ACTIONS**

The review board may decide upon the following actions:

- The cheerleader may be placed on probation.
- The cheerleader may be suspended from cheerleading activities for a designated period of time.
- The cheerleader may be dismissed from the squad.

**The SMCS Student/Parent Handbook applies to all athletes and their behavior during practice and competition since these are school-related activities. The consequences for any violation of the SMCS Student/Parent Handbook are listed in that document; Cheerleaders will receive the same consequences for misconduct as an athlete.**

Some elements of the St. Matthew School Athletic Manual have been adopted from other educational institution athletic programs.