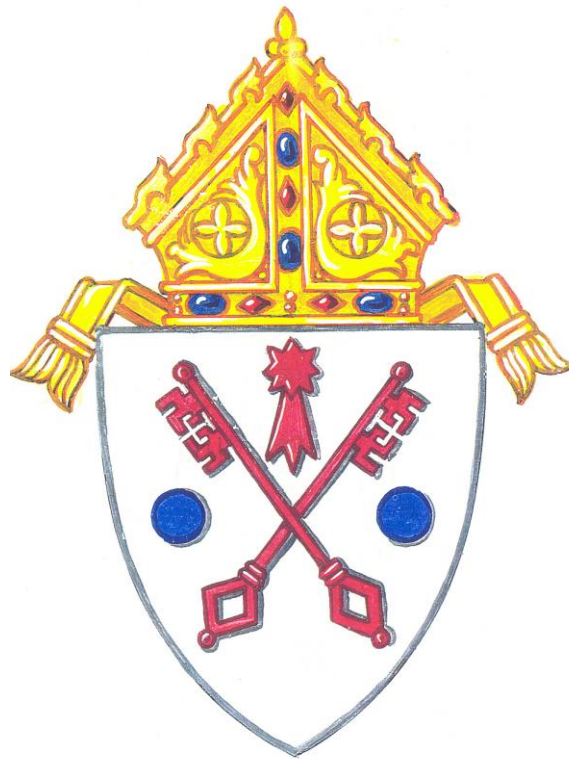


DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ATHLETIC GUIDELINES



2024-2025



Diocese of Scranton

“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one’s need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” Acts 2:42-47

Mission Statement

“We the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Scranton, in union with our Holy Father, the Pope, are called through baptism to share in the mission which Jesus Christ has entrusted to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Priests, deacons, religious and laity, under the leadership of our Bishop, cooperate to proclaim the Gospel in accordance with the teaching of the Church, to celebrate the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, for the salvation of all, and to witness by grace to the Kingdom of God so as to promote a culture of life, justice and peace.”

Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, D.D., J.C.L.
Bishop of Scranton

Mrs. Kristen Donohue
Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education/Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Christopher A. Tigue
Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) Director
Email: ctigue@dioceseofscranton.org

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2025 CHAMPIONSHIP DATES

Girls'/Boys' Diocesan Tournament Championship Weekend

February 22 and 23

Holy Redeemer High School

Girls' Pennsylvania State CYO Basketball Tournament

March 7-9, 2025

North Catholic High School

Diocese of Pittsburgh

Boys' Pennsylvania State CYO Basketball Tournament

March 14-16, 2025

Marywood University

Diocese of Scranton

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

ATHLETIC GUIDELINES FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

The welfare of our Catholic youth is the ultimate responsibility of the parent(s) together with the Bishop of the Diocese of Scranton. Currently, Ms. Kristen Donohue Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, is responsible for the development and the implementation of youth programs.

Athletics are a vital part of the diocesan youth program. Each athletic event offers competition on various levels in multiple sports. Athletic competition extends to participation at the diocesan and state championship levels.

These guidelines will assist schools and parishes in preparing their youth to participate in athletic activities in a Christian manner, while developing their God-given talents. All students, whether in Catholic school or public school should be given the opportunity to participate in an athletic activity. And, each student should be treated fairly.

Parental involvement is critical to the success of any youth program. Adult support is essential to assist and encourage student athletics. Adults should participate in a Christian manner, whether as game coaches, league or team officers, or as spectators enjoying athletic competition displayed by the young people of the Diocese.

The priests, religious and lay people assigned to specific parishes and teams are an invaluable resource for offering direction and guidance to young people in the Diocese. These guidelines were designed to assist in providing for the direct participation by families and parents, clergy, religious, school principals, together with the lay members of the athletic associations and the school faculty.

Hopefully, the implementation of these guidelines will increase the quality of the athletic programs on a local, league, and diocesan level, as well as assist in inculcating ideals of good sportsmanship, Christian charity, and service.

All teams representing Diocesan schools are subject to the directives of the Diocesan Athletic Guidelines. Local policies and procedures are expected to be in compliance with the guidelines contained in this document.

ARTICLE I

PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy behind athletic competition for the teams representing and schools combines the principles of Catholic education and the practice of Christian virtue.

Thousands of young people have learned teamwork, sportsmanship, service, loyalty, and patience while developing their academic talents as members of Diocesan teams. Good sports programs bring out the best in young people and help them understand healthy competition.

Athletic programs can create opportunities that allow young people to perform service for their parish school or church.

Diocesan athletic teams also afford adults the opportunity to render service and thus to repay others for the opportunities given to them as youth.

The success of these athletic programs contributes to building a better spirit in the church and in the school.



ARTICLE II

PURPOSE OF SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

SECTION A:

The basic purpose of athletic programs on or school level in the Diocese of Scranton is to help young people develop the God-given talents that they possess in the area of athletics, as well as other areas connected with sports.

SECTION B:

The Catholic athletic leagues have been established for the purpose of developing athletes who have the potential to compete in sporting events as they reach the Diocesan high schools. All persons associated with the Catholic leagues are expected to encourage Catholic students to attend the Catholic schools and participate in diocesan sporting events.

SECTION C:

By competing on athletic teams with other school students, the participant can learn invaluable lessons of teamwork, leadership, cooperation, service, and sportsmanship.

SECTION D:

Athletes should be encouraged to develop a Christian spirituality in harmony with their lifestyle.

SECTION E:

Participation in sporting events allows young people to get to know members of different teams and to learn to appreciate their values and talents.

SECTION F:

Each team representing a Diocesan school must participate in one of the Diocesan approved leagues, preferably the Catholic league in the geographical area in which the Diocesan school. If there is not a Catholic league within reasonable proximity to the school the school may participate in the closest public school league.

ARTICLE III

THE CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATION ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

SECTION A: NAME

The CYO Director supervises the entire program of elementary athletic competition throughout the Diocese of Scranton and reports to the Office for Catholic Schools. He utilizes the service of the Catholic leagues and the school administrators.

PART 1:

Meetings: The CYO Director shall convene a hearing of at least three (3) impartial people (preferably school administrators and/or coaches) to conduct a hearing, when the need arises. The CYO Director will report the results of this hearing and recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools, who will make the final determination on action to be taken.

SECTION B: PROCEDURES FOR IMPOSING PENALTIES FOR DIOCESAN DIRECTIVE VIOLATIONS

PART 1:

Violations of these guidelines are to be handled initially at the local league level. Unresolved issues can be formally presented in writing to the Catholic Youth Organization Director.

PART 2:

The league chairperson will within a week notify the CYO Director, the pastor, the principal, and the person involved stating that a violation has been formally presented to the league. A copy of the complaint will be included.

PART 3:

The CYO Director will set a date, time, and place for the hearing board to review the case.

PART 4:

The school will be advised that, if they so desire, they may be represented at this hearing by the principal, the coach, the athletic director or any limited number of persons who can speak directly to the alleged violation.

PART 5:

The board of review will not make a decision in the presence of the persons from the school involved.

PART 6:

The CYO Director will inform the principal involved by letter, within a week, of the decision reached. A copy of the letter and the minutes of the meeting will be sent to the Superintendent of Schools.

PART 7:

Appropriate penalties for violations can include the following:

- a. forfeiture of game(s)
- b. probation of school
- c. probation of coach
- d. probation of player(s)
- e. suspension of school
- f. suspension of coach
- g. suspension of player(s)



ARTICLE IV

ORGANIZATION OF PROGRAMS ON THE SCHOOL LEVEL

SECTION A: AUTHORITY

The authority for decision-making for all individual teams rests with the school principal.

SECTION B: ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

PART 1:

The principal may appoint or hire an athletic director or a representative to supervise the entire school athletic program.

PART 2:

The athletic director is expected to carry out the directives of the Diocesan Athletic Guidelines and the Catholic League, of which school is a member, as well as the school's athletic policies.

PART 3:

The athletic director does not speak officially on behalf of the school unless specifically authorized to do so.

SECTION C: SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATIONS

PART 1:

If an athletic association exists, its purpose is to support the entire athletic program in the school.

PART 2:

No athletic association can determine policy or interfere with the principal's supervision of the athletic program.

SECTION D: ATHLETIC COACHES

PART 1:

The naming or hiring of coaches is done by the principal, unless shared with or delegated to another authority.

PART 2:

All coaches must be registered with the Diocese prior to the beginning of each sport season. No coach shall be allowed on the bench, sideline, or court, until he/she has registered with the Diocese in a given sport and successfully presented the required clearances and completed VIRTUS training. Act 34 and Act 151 clearances, a signed copy of the Pastoral Code of Conduct, and a completed VIRTUS training certificate must be kept on file in the school office.

PART 3:

In private life, coaches are expected to maintain a standard of morality that does not publicly reject the doctrines, laws, and teachings of the Catholic Church.

PART 4:

Coaches or their representatives from each member school must attend the annual clinic and rules interpretation session for their sport, the programs on the sports directives approved by the Diocese*, and the sports medicine programs approved by the League. This includes training in First Aid and CPR and the treatment of other sports injuries.

PART 5:

All coaches must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age to be eligible to coach. Persons under eighteen may serve as coaching advisors as long as another coach who is over twenty-one (21) years of age is present on the bench or sideline.

SECTION E: DUTIES OF VARIOUS OFFICERS

PART 1:

Directors of Catholic Leagues: Coordinate the entire Athletic Program sponsored by the league; are responsible for each sport in which the League sponsors competition; are responsible for collecting team rosters; are responsible directly or through an assigning agent for procuring competent officials for each athletic event sponsored by the League; presents protests of eligibility violations and requests for hearings to the Diocesan CYO Director; arranges the scheduling of athletic events.

PART 2:

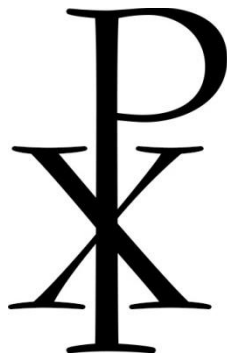
The principal is ultimately responsible for the entire school athletic program; may delegate the practical direction of the school athletic program to the athletic director.

PART 3:

Principals: Work together with athletic directors to achieve a successful athletic program; responsible for seeing to it that the student-athletes achieve minimal academic requirements, that is, passing grades in religion, language arts, math, social studies, and science.

PART 4:

Athletic directors: May be delegated to run entire athletic program in the name of the school principals; the school principal may serve as athletic director.



ARTICLE V ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A:

All eligibility rules must conform to the eligibility requirements of the Pennsylvania State Board of CYO Athletic Directors.

SECTION B:

Catholic Schools do not have the option of playing as a parish team. All participants must be enrolled in the school which the team represents. The question of sufficient numbers of participants for boys' and girls' teams will be evaluated annually. At this level of sport, no child who wishes to play should be denied participation on a team. In some cases, additional teams may be advisable.

SECTION C:

Parishes may sponsor CYO teams who can participate in a diocesan school league.

SECTION D:

Any grade school student who has reached the age of fifteen (15) before September 1 of the current school year is ineligible to participate in any Diocesan Catholic League.

SECTION E:

All students who have been promoted beyond the eighth grade are ineligible to participate, no matter what age they have reached.

SECTION F: (The following information pertains to Girls' and Boys' Basketball Only.)
The number of participants needed to field a team:

PART 1:

A minimum of 7 sixth, seventh, or eighth graders are needed for a varsity team.

PART 2:

A minimum of 7 sixth or seventh graders are needed for a junior varsity team.

PART 3:

Sixth and Seventh graders may compete with both the junior varsity and varsity teams.

PART 4:

Eighth graders cannot play down on the junior varsity team.

PART 5:

If there is an insufficient amount of sixth graders and seventh graders to field a junior varsity team, fifth graders may participate on junior varsity. Fifth graders may not participate with the varsity team.

SECTION G:

If two schools request a cooperative agreement, the diocesan administration will review the case.

SECTION H:

All student-athletes must satisfy the academic requirements established by the Catholic Schools' Office and the Catholic school. They must maintain at least a passing grade in religion, language arts, math, social studies, and science. Local policies and procedures may be more but not less restrictive.

SECTION I:

Any student participating in a PIAA-approved program or a program sponsored by a community or civic organization during the same sports season (fall, winter, spring) is eligible to participate in the same sport in a Diocesan Catholic league.

SECTION J:

Any competition with non-Diocesan teams must be approved annually by the Catholic leagues, and questionable situations must be forwarded to the CYO Director.

SECTION K:

No family or student-athlete may enroll in another school for specific athletic purposes. Any student who transfers solely for athletic purposes is ineligible for one year from the date of transfer.

SECTION L:

Any Catholic school student who maintains the same home address but who enrolls in a new parish and/or school is eligible immediately as long as it is clear that the transfer was not carried out for athletic purposes.

SECTION M:

Any student-athlete who transfers from a public school to a Catholic school while retaining the same home address is immediately eligible to participate in the Catholic Elementary School Athletic Program as long as it is clear that the transfer was not carried out for specifically athletic purposes.

SECTION N:

Non-diocesan schools are permitted to participate in local athletic leagues, and their admission will be reviewed annually.

SECTION O:

Each questionable eligibility situation is to be presented to the CYO Director for review prior to participation or else the questionable participant is automatically ineligible for athletic competition during the current school year.

SECTION P:

Before any student begins to participate in any Diocesan athletic program on the junior varsity or varsity level, he/she must present to the school principal a written certification of a physical examination administered by a doctor and proof of adequate accident and hospitalization insurance. The PIAA form will suffice for a seventh or eighth grader participating in a junior high sport with the diocesan high school.

SECTION Q:

Automatic penalties are imposed when eligibility violations are proven to the Catholic League or Diocesan CYO Director.

PART 1:

All games in which it is proven that ineligible players or coaches participate are automatically forfeited. Official forfeiture occurs at the time of the final decision, whether it is made by the Catholic League or by the Diocesan Elementary Review Board.

PART 2:

Any Catholic team found guilty of the use of ineligible players by the competent authority, whether it is the Catholic League or the Review Board, is ineligible for post-season Diocesan competition during the season that the violation occurred.

PART 3:

Any coach who is guilty of using ineligible players is placed on probation for a period of two school years following the completion of the season in which the violation occurred. Any subsequent violation which is proven to the competent authority will result in the permanent suspension of the coach from all athletic activity of any sort with any Diocesan team.

ARTICLE VI

SPORTS SEASON

SECTION A:

The beginning practice date for each Catholic league will be determined at the beginning of each school year. This beginning practice date may vary from year to year due to various circumstances.

SECTION B:

In the basketball season, registered teams in the Diocesan leagues, as well as Bidly/PeeWee teams, will be limited to thirty competitions which will include league games and no more than six tournaments. Single-elimination tournaments are to count as one game, while double-elimination tournaments are to count as two games. This excludes league playoff games, the Diocesan Tournament, or State tournament. The thirty-game limit is necessary due to the thirty-game limit on the state level.

ARTICLE VII

PENALTIES AND SANCTIONS NOT CONNECTED TO ELIGIBILITY SITUATIONS

SECTION A:

Any coach who is guilty of physically and/or verbally aggressively attacking any person (opposing coach, player, game official, spectator) during practice sessions, scrimmages, or game/match/meet situations is automatically suspended from participation for the remainder of the season in which the infraction occurs. If the infraction occurs at the end of the season, the matter will be referred to the CYO Director.

Any player who is guilty of physically and/or verbally aggressively attacking any person (opposing coach, player, game official, spectator) during practice sessions, scrimmages, or game/match/meet situations is automatically suspended the present activity and the next game.

Complaints of this nature should be brought to the attention of the CYO Director.

SECTION B:

Any situation in which an automatic suspension of a player or coach occurs may be appealed to the CYO Director by either side. The CYO Director may issue an even more serious penalty to the coach/player/team or may overturn a decision, if the evidence justifies it.

SECTION C:

Serious misconduct by spectators may result in one or more persons being banned from attendance at subsequent League/Diocesan competitions in the same school year. If spectator misconduct results in serious problems to police or game management, the team or teams whose fans are involved may be put on probation or suspended from further participation in League or Diocesan competition. The local League has primary responsibility for this section.

SECTION D:

Violations of misconduct are the primary responsibility of the athletic officials, if they occur during actual competition and are committed by participating student-athletes. Spectator misconduct becomes the responsibility of game management. For player misconduct, sometimes the only penalty which should be imposed is that of the game/match/meet official. For spectator misconduct, each league is given the authority to attach additional penalties. Misconduct during Diocesan post-season competition will be addressed by the CYO Director.

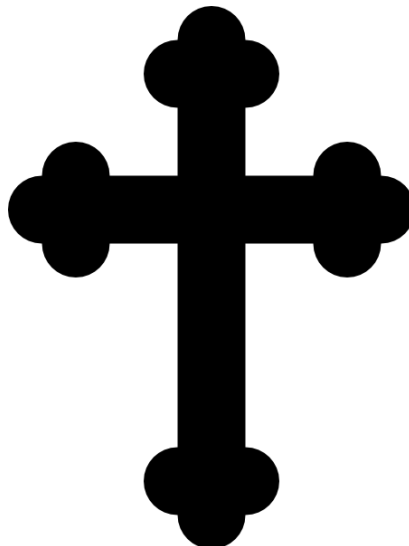
SECTION E:

The order of jurisdiction for imposing penalties for the violation of Diocesan regulations starts with the game/match/meet officials. Then, it moves on to the proper local authority (pastor, priest, principal, athletic director). From there, it moves on to the league director and his/her board of control. Appeals and protests may then be brought to the CYO Director.

SECTION F:

If there is a serious violation of Diocesan guidelines during the regular season, teams may be ineligible to participate in the Diocesan playoffs or any other post-season competition connected with that season.

If there is a serious problem of the violation of Diocesan Guidelines during the Diocesan playoffs the team will be placed on probation for the following season. If at the end of that season, there were no additional serious problems or violations, the probation will be lifted.



ARTICLE VIII

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARTICIPANTS IN DIOCESAN ATHLETIC EVENTS

SECTION A:

The student athletes participating in Diocesan programs must realize that such participation is not a right but a privilege which carries with it the responsibility of reflecting Catholicism as responsible persons.

SECTION B:

All participants in Diocesan athletic events must always abide by the decisions of game officials.

SECTION C:

No participant in the Diocesan athletic programs is allowed to indicate objections to decision by game officials, coaches, or any other personnel associated with the team at practices/games/matches/meets by physically/verbally attacking anyone or by throwing equipment.

SECTION D:

No player is allowed to lay hands upon, push, shove, strike, or threaten to strike any coach, player, spectator or game official.

SECTION E:

The showing of disrespect in instances such as the property of another team, their team bus, or the facility used by the team or league but not limited to will be looked upon as an act of vandalism and punished accordingly.

SECTION F:

Student athletes participating in the Diocesan athletic programs are obliged to follow all of the rules set up on the local level by pastors, principals, athletic directors, and coaches.

SECTION G:

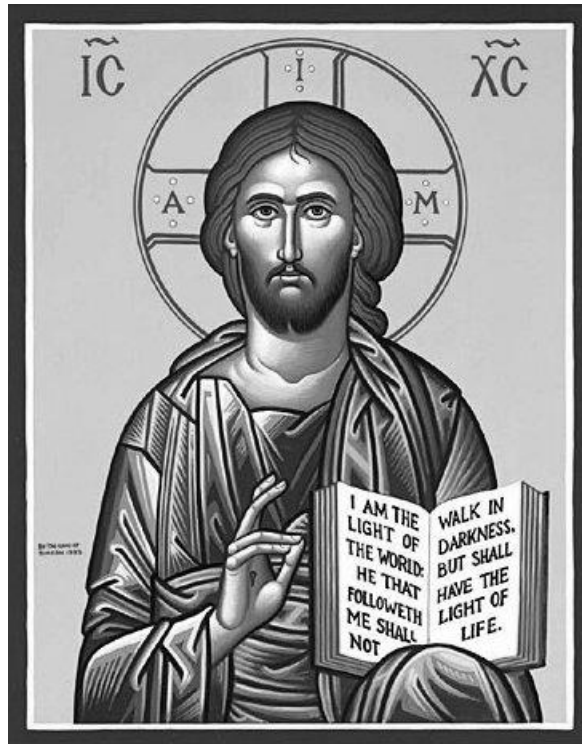
In order to be eligible to participate at every level of Diocesan athletic competition, the participant must satisfy the basic academic requirements. That is, achieve a passing grade in religion, language arts, math, social studies, and science.

SECTION H:

Any observed violation of the rules of conduct by student athletes in the Diocese may be reported to the league directors and CYO Director by Catholic league members, by pastors/principals, or by opposing coaches. All complaints registered solely in the name of parents or Catholic athletic associations are to be referred to the proper channels starting on the lowest level.

SECTION I:

Sanctions and penalties for the violations of any of the above-mentioned regulations are to be handled according to the regulations set forth in Article VII.



ARTICLE IX

ATHLETIC OFFICIALS

SECTION A:

Each registered Catholic league will use PIAA certified officials at least on the 7th/8th grade level.

SECTION B:

The director of each Catholic league is responsible for providing competent officials for every game/match/meet.

SECTION C:

League directors may use an assigning official for providing athletic officials in the athletic competition under his/her direction.

SECTION D:

No official is to be assigned to a game where there might be a conflict of interest (former coach, relatives, league official, etc.) if at all possible.

SECTION E:

An athletic event may be played with fewer officials than those agreed upon for the event, but only if the game manager and the athletic directors of both teams agree. In the absence of the athletic director, the head coaches may make the decision to play or not to play.

SECTION F:

Each Catholic league is to provide game officials with forms for notification of situations in which a coach or player was ejected from the game or in which spectator misconduct has caused a game to be delayed, suspended, or forfeited. Forms are to be sent to the league director.

ARTICLE X

MANAGEMENT OF ATHLETIC EVENTS

SECTION A:

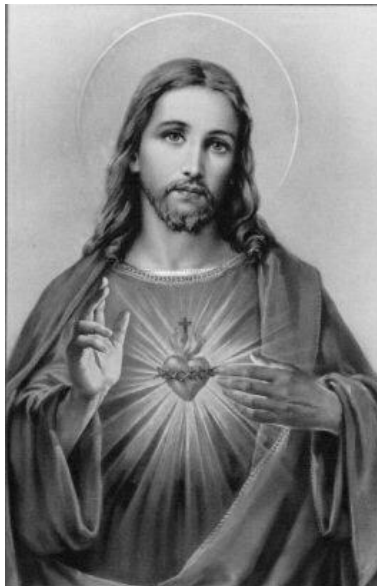
It is the responsibility of the home team to provide a manager or director for each athletic event.

SECTION B:

Ordinarily, the game manager or the meet director should not be a member of the coaching staff of the home team.

SECTION C:

The responsibility of the game manager or the meet director is to carry out everything necessary for the successful completion of the event, with the exception of coaching. Delegation of responsibility is recommended in the following areas, crowd control and supervision, proper supervision of the locker room areas and the areas used by cheerleaders for preparation and practice, payment of necessary expenses, and other approved expenditures, policing field or gymnasium for paper, debris, etc.



ARTICLE XI

PLAYING RULES

SECTION A:

For most sports, the rules adopted by the National Federation of State High School Associations are used with junior high application.

SECTION B:

Upon the addition of new sports, each Catholic league has the opportunity to choose the appropriate rules unless there is a post-season Diocesan competition, in which case the rules are to be designated by the CYO Director.

SECTION C:

During the basketball season, the Diocese will host a basketball tournament on the varsity boys' level and the varsity girls' level. The winner of each tournament will advance to their respective CYO State Basketball Tournament. The Diocesan Tournament is open to all Diocesan school teams, regardless of their record during the season, as long as the said team fulfills all requirements mentioned in the guidelines.

A school that is large enough to split into two or more teams during the regular season may enter the Diocesan Tournament as the separate teams they were during the season, or combine to make one team for the Diocesan Tournament.

A team is never permitted to practice on a game day or to play a game on a day there is scheduled practice.

SECTION D:

Any Diocesan school or team existing in the geographical area of an organized Diocesan Catholic league must belong to that league, playing a full league schedule. If there is a question as to whether or not a particular team lies within a geographical area covered by a Diocesan league, that team must seek the interpretation of the CYO Director whose decision is binding. However, schools which have more than one team may place one of the teams in a league other than the Diocesan league.

ARTICLE XII

CHEERLEADING

SECTION A:

Cheerleading is that organized sport which allows other students to cheer for and support their teams, or participate in organized cheerleading competition. Where applicable, the rules, as outlined in this document, apply, e.g. eligibility (Article V). In no case, at the elementary level, will cheerleaders be permitted to engage in drills or routines that are not permitted to high school students.

SECTION B:

Every Catholic league is free to sponsor an annual cheerleading contest for its member schools. However, no cheerleading team is permitted to participate in more than five (5) tournaments a year excluding the Diocesan Tournament. The rules and protocols for such contests must be made known to every team before entering such competitions.

SECTION C:

A Diocesan-wide cheerleading contest may be scheduled with the approval of the Catholic Schools' Office in any given school year.

SECTION D:

Sportsmanship and courtesy are to be shown by cheerleading squads of the Diocesan schools at all times. Visiting cheerleading squads should be treated as guests by the home cheerleaders. Floor time should be shared equally by both squads during basketball games. Squads should alternate at time-outs, quarter and half-time intermissions with the visiting squads taking the first time-out.

SECTION E:

Since the length of the basketball full time-out by rule is "one minute", from the whistle ending the play to the throw-in, cheers during basketball time-outs should be no longer than forty-five (45) seconds floor time.

SECTION F:

Every cheerleading squad will observe the following regulations: (1) no obscene or demeaning gestures or foul language is permitted from the cheerleaders; (2) no unsportsmanlike conduct is allowed during free-throw shooting in basketball games; (3) no kicking or pounding on bleachers.

SECTION G:

No cheerleading team is allowed to cheer at any athletic event unless the cheerleading coach or coaches or adult supervisors are present. Anyone supervising cheerleaders must be approved by the Diocese. Cheerleading coaches will follow Article IV guidelines for coaches.

SECTION H:

General rules and safety guidelines are updated annually and will be available at the meeting held at the beginning of the school term. The safety of all participants is of primary consideration. Rules and guidelines must be followed by all participating Diocesan teams.

SECTION I:

A cardinal rule for all cheerleaders is this: “Your job as cheerleaders is to lead the rest of the school by your good Christian example before, during, and after all athletic contests, no matter who wins or loses.”

SECTION J:

This section shall pertain to cheerleading mounts, builds, partner stunts, pyramids, and basket tosses. These activities will be prohibited at all league games and competition which include all school and other tournaments in which a diocesan school or parish cheerleading squad participates. The purpose of this prohibition is the safety factor for our students at this stage of their physical and psychological development. Jumps and cartwheels are allowable. However, at other times, two feet must remain on the floor.

ARTICLE XIII

TOURNAMENTS

SECTION A:

The basketball tournament Diocesan playoffs held at the end of each regular season determine the Diocesan champion boys' and girls' teams who represent the Diocese of Scranton in the state championship tournaments.

SECTION B:

The Diocesan Athletic Guidelines will issue rules for participation in the Diocesan play-off tournament.

SECTION C:

Registered teams in Diocesan leagues are allowed to participate in tournaments in accordance with Article VI, Section D.

ARTICLE XIV

BIDDY/PEE WEE SPORTS

SECTION A:

Students at the elementary level participate in sports in different leagues and with different rules. At all times, however, the purpose of this activity is for the students to have fun; they likewise should be learning skills, drills, sportsmanship, and teamwork.

SECTION B:

Unless something is stated to the contrary, the previous guidelines apply to Bidy/Pee Wee sports.

SECTION C:

Specifications for varsity teams do not apply to Bidy/Pee Wee teams since programs of this nature are for instructional purposes and fun.

SECTION D:

Bidy/Pee Wee teams may participate in only one post-season tournament.

The Coach's Prayer

Heavenly Father, guide me as I try to coach my team, to build each player's character and self-esteem. May I keep an even temper and remember it's a game, let me not have favorite players, but treat them all the same. Grant me prudent wisdom as I praise them or correct, remembering that I must work to earn each one's respect. Lord, whether we may win or lose, may all who are watching see the kind of coach at every game that you would have me be. Amen.

ARTICLE XV

DIOCESAN REGULATIONS

SECTION A:

All coaches must have Act 34 and Act 151 Clearances and VIRTUS training. A signed Pastoral Code of Conduct must also be on file. The Diocese of Scranton reserves the right to request further information as necessary.

SECTION B:

Diocesan representation at State CYO tournaments depends on the individual parish/school upholding all of the State CYO's rules.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

June 23, 1994

AMENDED:

January 3, 1996

April 25, 1996

September 30, 1999

January 18, 2001

August 2005

August 2006

August 20, 2024

PRAYER TO SAINT SEBASTIAN, PATRON SAINT OF ATHLETES

Dear Saint Sebastian, you chose to be a soldier of Christ and dared to spread faith in the King of Kings during a time of persecution, - for which you were condemned to die. Your body, however, proved athletically strong and the executing arrows extremely weak. Another means to kill you was chosen and you gave your life to the Lord. May athletes be always as strong in their faith as their Patron Saint so clearly has been. Amen.

QUOTATION ON SPORT BY POPE PIUS XII

"Sport, properly directed, develops character, makes a man courageous, a generous loser, and a gracious victor; it refines the senses, gives intellectual penetration, and steels the will to endurance. It is not merely a physical development then. Sport, rightly understood, is an occupation of the whole man, and while perfecting the body as an instrument of the mind, it also makes the mind itself a more refined instrument for the search and communication of truth and helps man to achieve that end to which all others must be subservient, the service and praise of his Creator."

--*Pope Pius XII, Sport at the Service of the Spirit (July 29, 1945)*

QUOTATION ON SPORTS BY POPE JOHN PAUL II

"The correct practice of sport must be accompanied by practicing the virtues of temperance and sacrifice; frequently it also requires a good team spirit, respectful attitudes, the appreciation of the qualities of others, honesty in the game and humility to recognize one's own limitations. In short, sports, especially in less competitive forms, foster festive celebration and friendly coexistence. While playing sports, Christians also find help in developing the cardinal virtues—fortitude, temperance, prudence and justice."

– *Pope John Paul II at the 25th World Day of Tourism*
– *"Sports and Culture: Two Vital Forces for Mutual Understanding, Culture and Development among Countries."*
(September 27, 2004)



Saint Sebastian – Patron of Athletes
Feast Day – January 20