

**Bishop Leonard
Saint Mary of the Mount
Academy**



**Parent/Student Athletic Handbook
2010-2011**

Dear Parents and Athletes,

Welcome to great year of athletics at Bishop Leonard-Saint Mary of the Mount Academy. We are happy that you have joined our team, and hope that this is an exciting and fun year for everyone. Our goal is to teach your child the elements that are needed to participate not only in athletics, but to transfer these elements into their daily lives. These elements include organization, self-discipline, preparation, goal setting, teamwork, sportsmanship and performance under pressure. It also includes how to handle winning and losing gracefully. Of course, these are all handled differently at the various age levels.

A participant in extra-curricular activities is challenged to be the best person that he/she can become. When students are involved in our athletic program, they are representing BLSMMA. Students who participate in the sports program are required to maintain acceptable academic levels and acceptable behavior. Proper behavior by students, coaches and parents are expected at all times. It is extremely important that we are positive role models for the children.

First and foremost is the mind and heart of all those involved in Catholic Schools sports programs should be the interest of the young people. Every effort will be made to place competitive sports in a Christian perspective. The desire to win at all costs will be discouraged. Our emphasis will be on ensuring positive reinforcement, skill development, teamwork and good sportsmanship.

All parties involved must conform to Diocesan regulations and school policy.

When attending any sports program, please know that you are witnessing an exhibition of skills development by the students in an educational and Christian atmosphere. We ask you to give them your positive encouragement and support.

The Athletic Program at Bishop Leonard-Saint Mary of the Mount Academy is an integral part of the total school program and is designed to help our students become better citizens.

Our mission is to educate and prepare all students to become active, contributing members of the church community by providing a challenging, caring, and nurturing atmosphere. We daily strive to foster in the mind of the child a sense of personal dignity and worth as well as a respect for the uniqueness of others.

While academics have always been the primary focus of our school, we believe that participation in athletics provides many opportunities, training and experiences not available in the classroom.

Participation in athletics is entirely voluntary. All students are encouraged to participate but no one is ever required to do so. Participation in our program is a privilege and our students, coaches and parents represent Bishop Leonard-Saint Mary of the Mount Academy at all times when at a school event. Since participation is voluntary, any student who desires to participate must be prepared to follow all rules and regulations governing the athletic program. Those who do not comply risk the possibility of not being permitted to participate.

The following are certain rules and procedures as well as standards of conduct and athletic achievement with which one should be familiar. Many of these rules and regulations have been set by the Diocese of Pittsburgh. It is important that you are aware of the requirements. Please read them and share them with your parents.

In closing, we would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude for all you do to make the athletic program a success. It takes a great deal of teamwork to accomplish our goals. Together everyone achieves more. We urge you to continue to keep involved with every aspect of everything your child does.

Thank you

TRANSPORTATION:

Transportation to and from practices and events is the responsibility of the parents. Coaches are not encouraged to be responsible for transportation.

EQUIPMENT:

You are responsible for all uniforms and any equipment issued. You are expected to return all that has been assigned to you at the end of the season. You are not to wear uniforms to gym class, dress down day or any other activity. They are to be worn on the court/field only!

SCHOOL/PRACTICE ATTENDANCE:

A student must be in school by 11:00 A.M. on full days in order to participate in a contest or practice session. A student leaving school due to sickness is not permitted to attend the evening's practice/game. A student may not practice if he/she is absent from school the day of practice unless approved by the Athletic Director or Principal. Also, any student on suspension is not eligible to attend practice or contests throughout the duration of the suspension. Frequent tardiness to school may result in cancellation of participation privileges.

Attendance at practices during the participation season is mandatory and under the discretion of the coach and Athletic Director. Failure to comply with the attendance policies of the coach will result in denial to participate.

DRESS CODE:

When traveling to different schools with an athletic team, you are representing the community of Bishop Leonard-Saint Mary of the Mount Academy. The way you look and dress is a direct reflection of the school and your family. As such, you are expected to wear your school clothes to away games on weekdays. Coaches have the right to set more specific standards than outlined above.

HAZING:

Under no circumstances will initiations and/or hazing of any kind be tolerated. Any student involved in hazing or initiation of another student will be dismissed from the team and appropriately dealt with under the discipline code of the school.

BULLYING:

See above

DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO:

The possession, use, furnishing or transmission of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or other unauthorized substance and the use of any tobacco by student/athletic is strictly prohibited. The Bishop Leonard-Saint Mary of the Mount Academy discipline policy will be applied where there is an infraction dealing with drug and tobacco use.

ATHLETIC FORMS:

All athletic forms must be handed in before your child can participate in the Athletic Program at Bishop Leonard-Saint Mary of the Mount Academy.

- Registration Form
- Code of Conduct Form
- Parent Involvement Form
- Physical Form/Insurance Form
- Registration fee paid

Your child is required to have a physical examination on file good for one year from date of physical. It is your responsibility to hand in an up-dated physical form when due.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

I OGETHER
EVERYONE
ACHIEVES
MORE

Parent/Coach Relationship:

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to children.

As parents, when your children become involved in our programs, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication you should expect from your child's coach:

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child, as well as all the players on the team
- Locations and times of all practices and games
- Team requirements
- Procedure should your child be injured during practice or games
- Discipline that results in the denial of your child to participate

The initial selection of coaches is vital if an athletic program is to reflect Christian values. Each coach is required to have an Act 33/34 Criminal clearance, A Child Abuse clearance, and completion of Diocesan coach's accreditation, certificate of attendance to "Protecting God's Children" and signing of the Pastoral Code of Conduct.

Communication coaches expect from parents:

- Concerns expressed directly to coach or assistant coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
- Specific concern regards to a coach's expectation for your child

Parents attend a general athletic meeting during the month of Sept/Oct if their child will be participating in any sport during the school year. It is a requirement for parents to view the Diocesan video on "Sports, A Guide for Catholic School Parents".

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

- The treatment of your child, mentally or physically
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between a coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

- Call to set up an appointment with the coach.
- If the coach cannot be reached, the Athletic Director/Principal will set up the meeting for you.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

Research indicates a student involved in extra-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood. These athletic programs have been established for that reason. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote a successful life.

This handbook is intended to inform athletes and parents of rules and policies governing our athletic program. This handbook is not all-inclusive. Each coach has the right to make reasonable rules more stringent than those listed in this book.

A successful athletic program includes the cooperation of Player, Parent, Coach, Athletic Director and Principal. We, at Bishop Leonard-Saint Mary of the Mount Academy, are concerned with the development of the whole child. To accomplish this, we believe that positive recognition is a powerful motivator and an integral part of a discipline plan. Following are expectations of all parties involved within our athletic program:

Our Athletes are expected to:

- Attend all practices and games
- Have a positive attitude
- Respect all coaching staff members, referees and opposing team players
- Attend school by 10:00 a.m. to be eligible to participate in the game for that particular day (students being sent home due to illness are not eligible).
- Maintain academic and behavior standards
- Know that the consequence of being ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct or a similar problem will may result in a game suspension
- Exhibit Christian Morals at all times
- Have a signed Doctor's release form and parent verification on file
- Abide by team, athletic and school guidelines

Our Coaches are expected to:

- Receive Diocesan Accreditation
- Receive Act 33/34 clearance
- Receive Child Abuse clearance
- Receive Protecting God's Children Certificate
- Receive Pastoral Code of Conduct Certificate
- Act professionally at all times
- Be a positive role model for our students
- Show respect towards opposing teams, referees, spectators

- Keep lines of communication open with parents
- Inform Athletic Director or Principal of any problems
- Allocate playing time based on ability, attendance, enthusiasm and competitive spirit, physical conditioning and game situations (exception to this rule is the novice program)
- Exhibit Christian morals at all times
- View the appropriate tapes for all accreditation
- Meet approval by the Principal or Pastor.

We need the cooperation of our parents to:

- See that your child attends all practices
- Contact the coach if your child will not be attending a practice or game
- Discuss the importance of a positive attitude
- Be responsible for your child's transportation to and from practice and games
- Support and participate in fundraisers
- Exhibit Christian Morals at all times
- Work the concessions when assigned
- Oversee your child's responsibility in taking care of the uniforms
- Accept the decisions rendered by the coaches and referees
- Make sure all files are current with the school office and physicals and parent verification of hospital insurance
- View the parent tape at the annual Athletic meeting

It is the responsibility of the Athletic Director and Principal to:

- Make sure all parties are following Diocesan and school guidelines
- Handle any discipline problems
- Set up schedules for practice and games
- Follow the Diocesan Sports Handbook which addresses the philosophy and policies regarding Catholic School Athletics

Athletics are extra-curricular activities at BLSMMA. It is important that all involved have the same vision - that we are involved for the betterment of our children.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.