

## Diocese of Pittsburgh Boys Basketball 2008-2009 Season

# Student Sport Participation Policy for Catholic Elementary Schools

The overall objective of Catholic elementary school sports is to provide each student with a positive Christian athletic experience through instruction, practice and game participation. Although a reasonable competitive approach is encouraged, a win-at-any-cost philosophy is not.

It is extremely important that each school provide some way for every interested student to be able to participate. This can be done by having an additional team to serve students unable to make the more competitive team. This would eliminate any necessity to "cut" students out of a sports program.

Every child is to be given the opportunity to participate in some portion of every competition. A good coach is able to devise a strategy to insure that every young person under his or her care gets an opportunity to play.

Because children develop differently, their ability to acquire the skills necessary to perform well in any sport will vary widely. Coaches must keep them interested, committed, content and confident. Too many children have such a bad experience with sports programs that they quit early in life, never having the chance to meet their full potential.

Boys should play on boy's teams and girls on girl's teams when available. A co-ed sport, such as soccer, is designated as such by the Diocesan Sports Coordinator. When there is no access by one gender to a sport, the individual student may be granted permission by the pastor to participate.

Participation by catholic elementary school students on other teams while playing in that sport for their school is prohibited.

The following guidelines are provided:

### 3rd and 4th Grade - Introductory Levels

- At this level, any sports program offered is strictly introductory and developmental. Basic skills and fundamentals should be taught. There is no scorekeeping in any games until end of the year tournaments.
- Playing time should be equal.

### 5th and 6th - Junior Varsity Levels

- Teams may be formed on the basis of player proficiency, but every student should have a place to play and playing time should be as equal as possible.

### 7th and 8th - Varsity Level

- Varsity teams may be formed on the basis of player proficiency, allowing players to compete at a level appropriate to their development.
- There is no guarantee of equal playing time, but every school is asked to provide a second team so that no student is excluded from playing. Every effort should be made so that every player has some playing time in every game.

### Player Movement

- A player may be permitted to play up to a higher level, but never forced to play down to a lower level.

### Responsibility of Student Participants

- Players must realize that attendance, behavior, effort and attitude are factors that may effect their playing time.