

**ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK
2010 - 2011**

ORGANIZATION AND PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of the athletic program at St. Thomas More School is to strengthen the spiritual and academic curriculum of the school. The St. Thomas More Athletic program enhances the physical development of the students and promotes a sense of school spirit, pride and unity.

The program is extensive and well balanced for both boys and girls. A variety of sports are offered and participation is encouraged for all students.

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

BOYS

	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
GRADES 5-8	Football	Basketball	Volleyball/Track/Soccer
GRADE 4	Flag Football	Basketball	Soccer/Track
GRADES 1-3	Flag Football		Soccer
KINDERGARTEN	Soccer		Soccer

GIRLS

	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
GRADES 5-8	Volleyball	Basketball	Soccer/Track
GRADE 4	Volleyball	Basketball	Soccer/Track
GRADE 3	Volleyball		
GRADES 1-3	Soccer		Soccer
KINDERGARTEN	Soccer		Soccer

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

Fall and spring soccer is the only organized sport offered at the Kindergarten level.

In approaching the question of how seriously we want to approach grade school athletics at St. Thomas More, we need to consider two questions. Do our teams play to win at all costs, or do we play solely to instruct the children in the basics of the sports, while totally disregarding the score of the game? The answer lies somewhere between these philosophical extremes. Generally speaking, the age of the players on the team, among other factors, determines how seriously the game is played. For younger children, those in grades K-4, the sports are almost totally instructive in nature and the score of the game should be of small consideration. At this level, if the player has finished the season with an improved basic knowledge of the sport and has enjoyed playing, it was a successful season, regardless of the win/loss record of the team. Players should be improving their skills in the sport, along with their level of sportsmanship in playing as

each season passes.

As students move into additional sports of track, volleyball, basketball and/or tackle football in grades 5 and 6, instruction, enjoyment and good sportsmanship play a much larger role in the approach than does winning.

In grades 7 and 8, the adolescent shows a greater enjoyment in the competition of the game, though teaching the skills of the various sports, and certainly good sportsmanship, continue to be important. The Parochial League allows for “A” and “B” teams at the 7th and 8th grade level in volleyball and basketball. “A” and “B” teams are selected in accordance with Parochial League Rules and under the supervision of or at the direction of the Athletic Director and the Coordinator for the given sport. No one is “cut” from teams because of lack of ability. Everyone makes a team and has the chance to play any sport in which he/she wishes to participate. Practices are limited to three times weekly for junior high and twice weekly for all other grades. Some sports, such as Leawood Soccer, limit practice to once a week for grades K through 4. We want our students to learn how to be good winners as well as good losers, realizing that the scoreboard only tells part of the story. We must not forget that the purpose of the athletic program is only one part of the total school experience. We want our sports program to be one of the many positive aspects of St. Thomas More School life and a model to other schools we compete with and visit.

It is the policy of the St. Thomas More School and Athletic Board that, in case of a conflict, priority is given to school activities over sport activities.

ADMINISTRATION

The athletic program at St. Thomas More is administered under the principal in consultation with the School Board through the Athletic Committee and Athletic Board. The Athletic Committee consists of the following members:

The Athletic Director

The Assistant Athletic Director

The Coordinators from various sports: (football, basketball, track, volleyball and soccer).

An athletic director is hired by the principal and with the coordination of the Athletic Board. The Athletic Director is to be paid by the St. Thomas More recreation fund. The director is responsible for calling and presiding over meetings of the Athletic Committee. These meetings are to be held at the beginning of each sport season. The purpose of the meetings is to determine the needs of the coordinators and to be of assistance to them in beginning the sports seasons.

The Athletic Committee is formed to assist the athletic director in the administration and operation of the athletic program for the children at St. Thomas More School.

Members of the Committee for the 2010-11 academic year are as follows:

Athletic Director- Neely Giangreco

Gym Coordinator – Kathy Coleman
Tackle Football Coordinator- Rick Welsh
Flag Football Coordinator – John Schwertley
Girls Volleyball Coordinator – Jenny McKenzie
Boys Volleyball Coordinator – TBA
Boys Basketball Coordinator – Pat Keller
Girls Basketball Coordinator – Chip McKenzie
Soccer Coordinator – Chris Sweeny
Track & Field Coordinator – Chris Muehlbach and Mark Dierks

The above persons were chosen based upon their dedication to the athletic program of St. Thomas More. Each will work for the development and improvement of their particular sport. Each has the authority to administer their duties in full confidence that they remain within the precepts set down by the Diocese and of St. Thomas More School. Use of school grounds for practices shall be determined by the coordinator of each sport with the final approval by the Athletic Director.

Duties of the Athletic Director and his/her assistant include but are not limited to:

- attending all Parochial League and CYO League sports meetings,
- preparing for and assisting with the sports sign-ups,
- coordinating and distribution of schedules,
- procuring and inventorying equipment,
- monitoring of team selections,
- managing the maintenance of the football/soccer field
- scheduling and monitoring of sports-related gym activities, and
- managing the concession stand.

In addition, the Athletic Director is responsible for approval of all sport program related expenditures with the exception of capital improvements greater than \$2,000, which must be approved by the Finance Ministry Team. The Athletic Director is also to maintain clear communication between the coordinators, coaches, students, parents and school staff.

Duties of individual sport coordinators include but are not limited to:

- selecting team coaches (with assistance of Athletic Board as necessary)
- facilitating team selection workouts,
- distributing and collecting equipment/uniforms,
- preparing and submitting rosters to the Athletic Director, and
- maintaining clear communication between coaches, students, parents and school staff.

Additional help is employed by the Athletic Director to run the gym scoreboard and to referee flag football games.

Coordinators are selected because of their manifest enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, the sport they represent and for their past support and dedication to the school and its mission. Coordinators normally assist in selecting their successors, though anyone may volunteer for these positions. The coordinators will cooperate with the principal and the Athletic Director in

administering and managing their sport in full compliance with Diocesan regulations, the philosophy of the school and of the athletic program. The coordinators are responsible for identifying any potential conflicts with school activities through the use of the STM school calendar. The term for each sport coordinator is 2 years, which is renewable upon mutual agreement between the Athletic Director and the individual coordinator.

There is also an Athletic Board, which is described below. If one wishes to address an issue with the board at a meeting, that individual must request time from the Athletic Director, or any Board member, for the issue to be placed on the meeting agenda.

ATHLETIC BOARD

PURPOSE OF BOARD

The Athletic Board is principally responsible for the following:

- a) To review and assist the development of policies which deal with the philosophies of the school's athletic program.
- b) To assist the Athletic Director in the fulfillment of his/her responsibilities.

MEMBERS

There are seven (7) members of the Athletic Board including two (2) ex-officio members, one being the Athletic Director and the other being either the School Principal or the School Principal's designated representative. The other five (5) members shall be selected from the St. Thomas More Parishioners.

The ex-officio members of the Athletic Board are Neely Giangreco, the Athletic Director, and John O'Connor, the School Principal. The five members selected from the St. Thomas More parishioners are Brian Schafer, Scott Livingston, John Schwertley, Teresa Rellihan and Doug Schieber.

It is the policy of the St. Thomas More Athletic Board that no newly elected member can be a sport coordinator or a spouse of a sport coordinator.

TERMS

- A) EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:** The term of the Athletic Director shall be for the same term as he/she holds the position of Athletic Director. The term of the Principal or the Principal's designated representative is a permanent term.
- B) REGULAR MEMBERS:** The other five board members shall serve three (3) years. The terms shall be on a staggered basis with May 31 being the expiration date of the term. Solicitation of new members shall be made in April of each required year, by publishing notice in the school newsletter and parish bulletin. New member candidates shall complete an application provided by the Pastor. The Board shall review the applicants and recommend to the Pastor those, which it feels most closely, represent the purpose and philosophy of the STM athletic program. Upon final approval from the Pastor, the new Board members shall be notified of their selection.
- C) LIMIT OF TERMS:** Members may be appointed to serve no more than one consecutive full

term.

FINANCES

The Athletic program is required to be financially self-supporting. The general operating fund of the school or the parish is not expected to subsidize the program.

A complete financial report must be given to the pastor, the parish manager, the director of parish operations, the School Board and the Athletic Board on a yearly basis. The general financial statement is published at the end of the fiscal year, June 30. Financial records are to be accurate and are maintained by the Assistant Athletic Director. These records are to be made available to the principal, the pastor and the parish manager at any time. The Athletic Director is accountable for all of these records.

Income is provided from participation fees for each sport and from the Booster Club or by the families of the participating students. These fees are to be set at a level sufficient to cover the costs of the sport.

The athletic fund is not designed to make a profit for itself, the school, or the parish. It is the vehicle used to pay expenses incurred by the athletic program and to maintain minimum suitable cash balance. Fees are considered to be adequate to meet the operating costs of the program.

Should any family who is a member of St. Thomas More parish community be unable to pay the required fees wish to participate in the sports program, the family may request a waiver of the fees. This request is made to the Assistant Director, the Principal, or any member of the Athletic Board. No child is to be denied participation in the program due to genuine financial hardship.

CONCESSION/GATE DUTY

Parent volunteers staff the concession stand and the entry gate during games at the St. Thomas More gymnasium. In addition to the child's participation fee, parents are asked to serve periodic shifts in the concession stand or at the gate. In general, a minimum of two hours per sport season is required.

The concession stand is run by the Athletic Director and Gym Coordinator and is staffed by parents of STM. The concession stand must be supervised and operated by parents and/or adult volunteers.

Monies received from the operation of the concession stand and gate is given to the Athletic Director for deposit in the bank following the games. The money is accounted for, but the concession stand is intended for the primary purpose of serving guests at the games and is not considered a primary fund raising activity for the sports program. The Parish Office is responsible for an accounting of the money.

OTHER FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES

The Athletic Board, or a committee or group designated by it, may conduct an annual fund-raiser to raise funds to support the sports programs at the school. Any fund-raising activities should be approved by the Athletic Board and the Pastor before implementation.

BOOSTER CLUB

The STM Booster Club is a volunteer organization created the fall of 1995 to help support the athletic program at St. Thomas More. The organization was created to:

1. Help defray the cost of athletic participation at STM.
2. Increase parish/community involvement.
3. Enable the Athletic Department to reward the students for participation in sports.

Booster Club Policy Changes Effective June 1, 2009 – All STM families are members of the Booster Club and receive free admission to all St. Thomas More home games for the entire immediate family. This does not include any pre-season or post-season tournament games held at our gym. The tournament sponsor or Parochial League receives the fees for these games.

The Booster Club receives money through the school auction-dinner that is held every year. The proceeds from the auction are used to reduce participation fees and to help defray costs of capital improvements for the athletic facilities at STM, as well as assist the Home and School Association, Cultural Enrichment Committee, and special needs programs.

The Booster Club has three (3) officers and nine (9) other voting board members, serving, one term of a minimum 3-year term and a maximum of 5 year term on the board. The Booster Club Board members are responsible to the Athletic Board at STM. Current members are:

President	Paula Tarwater
Secretary	Sarah Haug
Treasurer	Julie Grimaldi
Auction Support	Pam Allen
Spirit Wear	Liz Romano, Jodi Cook, Luke Lobb
Special Events	Rachel Gray
Video Board	Chris Muehlbach
At Large Member	Catherine Livingston, Karen Mayer, Kelly Wagner
Athletic Director	Neely Giangreco

LEAGUE AFFILIATIONS

The Kansas City Parochial League is an association of Catholic schools organized by the

Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph to provide its member schools an opportunity to compete on the athletic fields and in the school gymnasiums in an atmosphere of Christian sportsmanship, competition and fellowship. As a school of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, we participate in this league whenever possible.

The Kansas City Parochial League offers programs in volleyball, basketball, track and beginning with the 2008-2009 academic year, the Kansas City Parochial League is also the administrative body for the tackle football program in which St. Thomas More competes.

As participants in these leagues, all St. Thomas More programs abide by the governing rules established in each of the leagues. A complete set of the rules can be found at www.pikc.org.

Since a parochial league has yet to be developed for soccer, St. Thomas More has determined that Leawood Soccer Club offers us the best available program.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

Parents are the heart and soul of the athletic program at St. Thomas More and they provide the manpower and support needed for a successful program. Parents of participating students are often asked to assist in various ways including, but not limited to, coaching, scoring, judging and concession stand/gate duty. It is required that parents volunteer their time in order for their child(ren) to play a specific sport.

SIGN-UP for each sport has a deadline and registrations will not be accepted after the deadline date. The dates for sign-ups are published in the school newsletter and parish bulletin.

It is important that you see to it that your participating children regularly attend practice sessions set by the team coach. Attendance at practice may impact playing time for the child for some sports.

This includes games and/or practices missed to play for another non-STM team. Further, STM strongly encourages players who want to be on a "A" team to make the STM team the priority over any conflicts with other teams.

Parents can be of great help in the care of student uniforms. These uniforms are provided for the child to wear in games only, not to practices or for normal play purposes. Please observe laundry instructions attached to the uniforms. It is vital that the uniforms be returned promptly at the season's end. All uniforms are to be properly cleaned and returned to the child's coach after the final game of the season, with the exception of the uniforms used for tackle football, which are to be turned in at the school during the week following the final game of the season. Uniforms may not be used for games/leagues outside of the regular Parochial League schedule. Uniforms, which are not turned in, must be paid for by the parent at the replacement cost of the uniform.

The parents are responsible to see that if their child does not attend school on any day, then that child is not allowed to participate in practices or games on that same day. Special circumstances shall be presented to the School Principal or the School Principal's representative for any waiver

of this rule.

It is important to remember that the child's coach is in charge of the team during all practices and games. Parents are not to interfere with the coach at these times. During games, especially, parents are to refrain from entering the team area. The coach is not available to answer questions or to take suggestions at this time. Should a parent wish to visit with a coach, it is necessary to make an appointment at a time outside the game.

Parents are expected to be good fans at the games. Parents are encouraged to cheer the St. Thomas More teams in an enthusiastic manner and in a spirit of positive and Christian sportsmanship modeling the vision of STM: welcoming, inclusive and loving. Our teams and coaches should know we are 100% supportive of their work. At least one parent of a student participating in a STM sport is required to attend "Parent Like a Champion".

PROGRAM EVALUATION

It is the responsibility of all involved in our sports program to act in a manner that is consistent with the guidelines and philosophies outlined in this handbook. In order to maintain our high level of excellence and to continue improving our program at STM, parents, student-athletes, and coaches are encouraged to present their comments and concerns to the appropriate personnel.

An Athletic Feedback Form is included at the back of this handbook for use at any time during the school year. This form provides a forum for parents to provide informative and constructive feedback regarding any aspect of the STM sports program. This form is also available on the STM website or can be obtained from the school office.

A Parents Evaluation form is also included at the back of this handbook for use at any time to evaluate and provide comments on a particular coach or sport. These evaluations are collected and reviewed by the Athletic Board.

At the conclusion of a sport season, the Athletic Director will provide evaluation forms to each coach for distribution to each participant. After completing the evaluation, the child or parent should return the evaluation form to the School Office. The Coordinator will review the evaluations with each coach. If the Athletic Director, or coach/parent, believes an issue needs to be addressed by the Athletic Board, they will notify the board. The Athletic Board recommends that all evaluation be signed, although it is not a requirement. All evaluations will be shared with the coach and considered. However, only signed evaluations will receive a response from the Board, if requested.

In the event of a problem or concerns, parents and student-athletes should first discuss the situation with their coach. If necessary, a second step would be to discuss the situation with the coordinator for the particular sport. If the concerns or problems are not, or cannot be handled by the coach or coordinator, then the parent should further address them with the Athletic Director.

If a coach encounters or is presented with a problem, he/she should first try to resolve the issue independently. If this cannot be accomplished then the coach should discuss the situation with their sport coordinator. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, then it shall be brought to

the attention of the Athletic Director for further review and action.

Concerns or problems that are brought to the Athletic Director shall be presented in written form by the originator. The information provided shall clearly state the situation, include first hand facts (i.e. events or behaviors that were personally witnessed) and describe how the concern or problem violates STM policies and philosophies.

Situations that cannot be resolved by the Athletic Director will be brought to the Athletic Board for a final review and decision. Additionally, anyone may request to be included on the agenda for any Athletic Board meeting to discuss items related to the athletic program at STM.

Positive comments regarding coaches, coordinators and the athletic program are also encouraged and appreciated.

TEAM SELECTIONS

The Parochial League allows for "A" and "B" teams at the 7th and 8th grade level in volleyball and basketball. "A" and "B" teams are selected in accordance with Parochial League Rules and under the supervision or at the direction of the Athletic Director and the coordinator for the given sport.

The try-outs for "A" and "B" selection will be conducted by evaluators chosen by the Coordinators, with the assistance of the Board. While it is the intent of STM to obtain purely independent evaluators without any family connection, the sole fact that an evaluator may be related to one of the players will not automatically disqualify the person from being an evaluator.

Following the recommendations and guidelines set by the League, there will be two tryouts. If the player would like to be considered for the "A" team, the player is highly encouraged to attend both tryouts. The Player must attend at least one of the tryouts to be considered for the "A" team. A player trying out for the "A" team should make the STM team a priority over any non-STM activity. At any time, during the sign-up process, a player can request to be on the "B" team.

Under special circumstances, if a player is unable to attend either of the scheduled tryouts and would still like to be evaluated for the "A" team, the player:

- 1) Must have been signed up prior to try-outs;
- 2) Must seek Board approval for subsequent tryout;
- 3) If approved, the player will be allowed to participate in a tryout in a manner to be determined by the coordinator;
- 4) The player will not be allowed to attend practice with either team until the evaluation takes Place;
- 5) The evaluation must occur before the team begins the regular season schedule, and is solely for the purpose of evaluating the player;
- 6) In no event will a player be moved from the "A" team to the "B" team to accommodate a Player who makes the "A" team.

In the lower grades, the Athletic Director and the coordinator for the given sport also follow

Parochial League rules and make an effort to provide for balanced teams. Different procedures have been used in an effort to obtain balanced teams. While any team, once comprised, can have more than two coaches, only two coaches are allowed for purposes of having the children of those coaches make-up part of the team roster at the time of team selection.

Obtaining balanced teams in compliance with the Parochial League Rules is the goal in team selection. Achieving exact equality in team make-up is obviously not possible. Those involved in the team selection process are expected to exercise good faith in selecting teams and parents and students are expected to understand that exact balance of students with different skill levels is not possible and that subsequent win/loss records do not necessarily indicate a flawed selection process. (See the Parochial League Handbook, p. 13, Article 9, Section 5c.)

COACHES

At various time parents may be asked to help coach a team at St. Thomas More. In fact, the greater majority of our coaches come from the ranks of parents since each team generally needs more than one coach. Expert knowledge of the sport is not a requirement. If a parent does not feel qualified to be the head coach, perhaps she/he could assist another parent who may have more experience and expertise.

Any parent or volunteer that desires to coach a team will be required to fill out an application; so that a decision can be made by the sport coordinator, Athletic Director and Athletic Board as to who is most appropriate to coach the team. An application will be required for each sport that a parent/volunteer is interested in coaching. This application is available at the back of this handbook as well as on the school website.

Coaches are chosen each year based on what is in the best interest of the players and following the PL procedures. Determination is made based on volunteer coach availability and who in that group will best meet the goals and philosophies of the STM sports program. Using the available and completed applications as a guide, coaching selections will be made by the individual sport coordinator and then approved by the Athletic Director and Athletic Board. A parent that will be coaching an A or B team cannot be part of the final team selections. Further, it is the preference of STM to have a coach who does not have a child on the same team he/she is coaching.

Coaches are expected to abide by the rules set down by the Kansas City Parochial League, St. Thomas More School and by the STM sports program Code of Ethics promulgated by the Athletic Board, which is included in this handbook.

At St. Thomas More, winning is not top priority. No coach has been or ever will be denied the opportunity to coach again because she/he did not win enough games in a previous season. Coaches are viewed as teachers of the sport involved and should strive to set a good example for the players in language, sportsmanship and respect for the philosophy and mission of the STM sports program. An individual coach who does not abide by the rules set down by the school administration and/or ethical standards of the athletic program will not be allowed to coach again. When a written complaint is logged against a coach, that coach will be immediately suspended pending further investigation of the incident by the Athletic Board. An incident meriting suspension would be, but not limited to physical, mental or emotional abuse.

The St. Thomas More Athletic Board endorses and our sports program will fully abide by the “Absence of Threat” policy as stated in the STM School Handbook. Coaches should refer to that policy and consider the issues addressed therein when responsible for the student-athletes of our school.

The Diocese of Kansas City – St. Joseph requires that coaches complete a criminal background check every three (3) years. The Athletic Director is responsible to ensure that all coaches complete this form.

The KC Parochial League requires that coaches attend mandatory meetings. These meetings are offered at St. Thomas More and other locations to assist in meeting this requirement. We participate in and support diocesan programs to promote good sportsmanship such as “Play Like a Champion,” Parent Like a Champion,” and “Enjoying the Game.”

Although not required, it is recommended that all coaches be certified by the National Youth Sports Coach Association (NYSCA). The Athletic Department will pay the cost of the certification process, which includes liability insurance. The purpose of the certification process and of our entire program is to make sports at St. Thomas More a positive experience for the children.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Please refer to the STM School Handbook for eligibility requirements.
Academics take precedent over any sport activity.

SPORTS DESCRIPTIONS

[These descriptions are subject to change by Diocesan Rules or other governing body rules.]

VOLLEYBALL

Volleyball is the fall sport for the girls in grades 3 through 8. Volleyball is a spring sport for boys in grades 5 through 8. The teams play in the Kansas City Parochial League. The program is large and well established. Games are played in the gymnasiums of participating schools.

Playing rules will be taken from the current year volleyball rulebook of the National Federation of State High School Association.

Each team member will participate in a minimum of one continuous complete game of each match as long as they meet the team rules and participate in practices. This is a league rule that is supported by the Athletic Board and to which each coach must abide. Each player is responsible for informing the coach if she/he will miss a scheduled practice. Failure to attend practice and/or abide by the disciplinary procedures of the school or of the team will impact the player's participation in the games. Participation rules apply to pre-season, post-season and all tournament matches.

Before team rosters are made-up, a general clinic may be held so that coaches can place the athletes on teams with varying abilities. The Parochial League allows for "A" and "B" team divisions at the 7th and 8th grade level for girls and boys.

Sportsmanlike behavior will be expected from all coaches, participants and fans. Teams can be carded (penalized) for their behavior as well as their fans' behavior.

In order to receive equipment for volleyball, a deposit check of \$40 per player must be received. This deposit will be held (not cashed) by the Athletic Department until the equipment is returned in full at the end of the season. If the equipment is not returned within three (3) weeks of the designated turn in date, the deposit will be forfeited.

FOOTBALL: TACKLE AND FLAG

Football is the fall sport for boys in grades 1 through 8. Boys in grades 1 through 4 play flag football in an Intramural League at St. Thomas More. Flag football games are played on the school grounds at St. Thomas More. Boys in grades 5 through 8 play in the Parochial League Football League. The league has two (2) divisions; 5th/6th combo and 7th/8th combo. Parochial League schools are allowed to field single grade teams, if numbers allow.

Tackle Football

In order to facilitate team selection and placement within the League, sign-ups for tackle football are held near the end of the school year in late May. Practices generally begin in mid to late August.

Football is known as a contact sport and requires protective pads and equipment. The teams will be provided with the appropriate equipment needed for the protection of the players. Physical conditioning prior to the start of the season is stressed.

Due to the rigid technical rules of football, each play requires every player on the team to perform to his best ability. This enhances a strong sense of personal discipline and an even greater sense of cooperation among team members. The players learn this, and as a result, an extremely close feeling of teamwork and team pride marks the successful football team. It is these qualities of teamwork, team pride and physical conditioning that the football program at St. Thomas More endeavors to achieve.

Each player is responsible for informing the coach if he must miss a scheduled practice. Failure to practice or abide by the disciplinary procedures of the school or the game will impact on the player's participation in games.

The minimum required playing time for each participant on the team is fifteen (15) plays. A play is considered any offensive, defensive or kicking play. This is a league rule that is supported by the Athletic Board and to which each coach must abide. The entire set of rules are available on the Parochial League website.

Tackle Football Practice Guidelines:

All Grades: No practice shall last more than 2 hours. If teams choose to meet and carpool to games, that meeting time shall occur no more than 1 hour and 30 minutes prior to game time. Any time more than that shall be deemed as part of that team's total practice for the week.

5th and 6th Grade:

* Prior to the start of the season (games being played) total practice time shall not exceed 6 hours per week, with a maximum of 3 week nights (Mon-Fri) involved.

* After the start of the season, practice time shall not exceed 5 hours per week with a maximum of 3 week nights (Mon-Fri) involved.

7th and 8th Grade:

* Prior to the start of the season (games being played) total practice time shall not exceed 7 hours per week, with a maximum of 3 week nights (Mon-Fri) involved.

* After the start of the season, practice time shall not exceed 6 hours per week with a maximum of 3 week nights (Mon-Fri) involved.

In order to receive equipment for tackle football, a deposit check of \$100 per player must be received. This deposit will be held (not cashed) by the Athletic Department until the equipment is returned in full at the end of the season. If the equipment is not returned within three (3) weeks of the designated turn in date, the deposit will be forfeited.

Flag Football

Sign-ups for flag football are held within the first few weeks after school starts.

Flag football is a more "low-key" program than the tackle football played in the older grades. No helmets or pads are required in these games. There is no tackling involved in the game; instead, a "tackle" is made by pulling a flag from the belt of the boy running with the ball. Two referees are hired by the Athletic Director for these games.

This sport ranks at the lowest end of the competitive scale. In this age group, coaches should not be concerned with winning games, but solely upon teaching the rudiments of the game to the players. Flag football is nearly totally instructive in nature and will remain that way.

All participants should receive relatively equal amounts of playing time in each game.

In order to receive equipment for flag football, a deposit check of \$20 per player must be received. This deposit will be held (not cashed) by the Athletic Department until the equipment is returned in full at the end of the season. If the equipment is not returned within three (3) weeks of the designated turn in date, the deposit will be forfeited.

BASKETBALL

Basketball is the winter sport for boys and girls in grades 4 through 8 at St. Thomas More. (The

Red Bridge YMCA has programs for younger boys and girls.) Sign-ups are held in mid to late October with practicing beginning in early to mid November. The season usually ends in March.

Our teams play in the Kansas City Parochial League, which is comprised of 20 parochial schools in the metro area. We typically have 2 or 3 teams per grade for both boys and girls.

Before team rosters are made-up, a general clinic may be held so that the coaches can place the athletes on teams with varying abilities. The Parochial League allows for "A" and "B" team divisions at the 7th and 8th grade level only for boys and girls.

Each team member will participate in a minimum of one continuous quarter of uninterrupted play for each game as long as they meet the team rules and participate in practices. This is a league rule that is supported by the Athletic Board and to which each coach must abide. Each player is responsible for informing the coach if she/he must miss a scheduled practice. Failure to practice or to abide by the disciplinary procedures of the school or of the game will impact on the players' additional participation in games. Participation rules apply to pre-season, post-season and all tournament games.

In order to receive equipment for basketball, a deposit check of \$40 per player must be received. This deposit will be held (not cashed) by the Athletic Department until the equipment is returned in full at the end of the season. If the equipment is not returned within three (3) weeks of the designated turn in date, the deposit will be forfeited.

SOCCER

Currently our teams participate in the Leawood Soccer Club since there is no Parochial League soccer program.

Soccer is offered in grades K through 3 for girls and grade K boys in the fall with sign-ups being held in late May. Soccer is again offered in the spring for girls grades K through 8 and for boys K through 8 with sign-ups in February.

The Leawood Soccer Club limits its teams to an absolute maximum of 18 players per team, which sometimes conflicts with our school policy of never "cutting" players. Every effort is made to make our "no cut" policy compatible with the league's firm player limit.

Each player is responsible for informing the coach if she/he must miss a scheduled practice. Failure to practice or abide by the disciplinary procedures of the school or of the game will impact on the player's participation in games.

The Leawood Soccer Club requires that all coaches be certified. This certification program provides each coach with liability insurance up to \$500,000.00. Coaches view and discuss videotapes on positive coaching and sportsmanship. They are also trained in basic first aid skills. This is an ongoing process that requires re-certification for three years, after which coaches become certified for life.

Soccer is an excellent conditioning sport that involves speed, control, coordination and teamwork. Youth sports are only a small part of a child's life. Strong parental commitment to a positive sporting program can make soccer a memorable part of a child's athletic experience.

The above policy applies to teams sanctioned by St. Thomas More. The individual coaches or team leaders will govern teams formed outside of those set up by the school.

TRACK

Track is a spring sport for boys & girls in grades 4 through 8 and sign-ups are usually held in March. It's the only sport at St. Thomas More that is co-ed and all boys & girls 5th through 8th grade participate together as one team. The track team participates in the Kansas City Parochial league. At the meets, there are 4 Divisions for each event.

Division:

- A. Class A - 7th and 8th grade boys.
8th grade or below and has not reached 15th birthday before November 1st .
- B. Class B – 4th, 5th and 6th grade boys.
6th grade or below and has not reached 13th birthday before November 1st .
- C. Class C - 7th and 8th grade girls.
8th grade or below and has not reached 15th birthday before November 1st.
- D. Class D – 4th, 5th and 6th grade girls.
6th grade or below and has not reached 13th birthday before November 1st .

There are co-ed relays for 4th, 5th & 6th and 7th & 8th grades.

Participation:

- A. No more than four (4) events per athlete if at least one is a relay for classes A & C.
- B. No more than three (3) events per boy or girl with relays counting as one for Classes B & D.
- C. Relays count as one event.
- D. No one will be allowed to run more than one (1) distance event per meet.
- E. Distance event is any event from 440 yds or more for Classes B and D and 880 yds for Classes A and C.
- F. An athlete competing in a distance event may run a relay or other event as long as it is less than 440 yds in Classes B and D and less than 880 yds in Classes A and C.

Track practice will begin 2 to 3 weeks before the 1st meet starting generally around the middle of April and end at the City Championship which is usually the 2nd week of May.

INSURANCE

Every child at St. Thomas More in grades 1 through 8, who is participating in a given sport through the Kansas City/St. Joseph Diocese, holds catastrophic insurance paid for by our athletic department. The details of this insurance coverage can be determined by reviewing the policy of insurance.

STM SPORTS PROGRAM CODE OF ETHICS

To: Coaches, Student-Athletes, Parents, Family and Friends,

Thank you for choosing to participate in our sports program. We look forward to working together to make this season a positive experience for all involved; student-athletes, coaches, families, game officials, hosting schools and visiting schools, etc. In addition to our mission and policies outlined in this handbook, our expectations and rules follow.

Commitment to team and coaches (Coaches and Student-Athletes). Your commitment is necessary for skill development, team cohesiveness, and team success.

Student-Athletes shall:

Attend and be on time for every practice and game. Illness and academics are acceptable reasons for missing practice. Absences must be called in to your coach. Tardiness and absences from practices will adversely affect game playing time.
Be prepared for, and work hard at, practice and games.

Coaches shall:

- Be prepared for, be on time, and teach the children at both practice and games.
- Fulfill the mission and policies set forth in this handbook.

Sportsmanship/Respect for People and Property (Coaches, Student-Athletes, and Parents).

We represent St. Thomas More School and Parish. Therefore, we expect to leave only positive impressions on those we meet.

Coaches, student-athletes, parents, families and fans shall:

Show respect for coaches, athletes, opposing team, game officials and spectators. Speak positively and encourage others to do the same.

Show respect for property, such as the gymnasium or playing field. Place used or empty food and drink containers in trash receptacles. Team members should sit together in bleachers while waiting for games.

Understand that negative or derogatory behavior or unsportsmanlike conduct may cause our STM team some form of violation. A serious offense may cause our team forfeiture.

Concession/Gate Duty (Parents). Each family will be assigned a time to work the concession stand and/or the gate. If you cannot fulfill your assigned time, it is your responsibility (not the coach's) to find a substitute or switch with another family. Failure to fulfill concession or gate duty will adversely impact your child's position on the team.

Have Fun (Coaches, Student-Athletes and Parents). Help make this experience fun. Volleyball, soccer, basketball, football are lifelong skills that can be used recreationally, and for some, played at a higher level (high school, college, adult competitive programs, etc.). Remember the games are for the children.

By signing the cover sheet attached to this handbook in the fall of each school year, you and your family agree to follow this code of ethics as well as all guidelines and philosophies outlined in this handbook.

SUMMARY

This handbook has presented a picture of the athletic program of St. Thomas More. Through it we have attempted to explain the philosophical approach the school takes toward sports, the financial support of the programs, and the functions of the director of athletics and the athletic committee. We have explained what sports are offered, why each sport is important, the importance of athletics to the total experience of the student and how our programs are administered.

We have made no attempt to answer each possible question you may have concerning athletics for young children. Should you have further questions, kindly contact the principal of the school, the athletic director or a member of the athletic board.

St. Thomas More offers as complete and varied an athletic program of introductory athletics as we can provide. The success of the program depends on each of us to make it work!

POLICY ON THE USE OF THE GYMNASIUM
Proposed March 14, 1998
Effective until finalized or amended

The Gymnasium at St. Thomas More is maintained for the use of organized sports programs:

- a) By the School in the hours they define
- b) By the Athletic Director in an annual schedule proposed with the Athletic Committee and shared with the Pastor, Principal, and School and Management Ministry Teams.
- c) By officially organized parish groups (i.e. STM Singles) through requests submitted annually in August.

In addition a qualifying parish member may be given gym time outside the above primary usages provided that:

- a) He/she accepts responsibility for opening, disarming alarms, restoring the gym to the sport in season, and cleaning up.
- b) 80% of the group using the gym are parish members (supply list).
- c) All gym policies and rules will be observed.

Use of the gym is limited to volleyball or basketball (never soccer, softball or football). Food or beverages are never allowed on the gym floor. Beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the school property. Sunday use is limited to the times after the completion of the morning Masses.

It is parish policy not to rent or lease the gym to groups or individuals, but not limit its use to the parish community for which it was built.

All requests for use of the gym are to be addressed to the Athletic Director (Neely Giangreco) and gym manager (Kathy Coleman), who will make it available in accord with these policies.

Athletic Feedback Form

Date: _____

Sport: _____ Grade: _____

Team / Coach:

Name (Child & Parents):

Phone Number(s):

The Athletic Board is interested in your informative and constructive feedback
(Please be specific):

If additional space is needed, use the back of the page and/or attach sheet(s).

Completed Athletic Feedback Forms need to be turned in at the School office.

Review Process:

The School office will forward the Athletic Feedback Form to the Athletic Director.
You will receive a phone call from the Athletic Director acknowledging receipt of
your feedback.

The Athletic Director will then determine what action is appropriate (i.e. review
with Athletic Board, School Principal, Sport Coordinator, etc.).

You will receive follow-up from the appropriate source.

**ST. THOMAS MORE ATHLETICS
PARENTS EVALUATION FORM**

Your input is important to us. These evaluations are an important tool in making improvements to the sports programs.

Grade_____ Sport_____ Coach_____

1. Based on your child's experience this season, would you enroll your child to participate in this program next year?

Yes No Maybe Comments:

2. Were you pleased with the organization of the program? (i.e. Practice times, game times, schedules, etc.)

Yes No Somewhat Comments:

3. Did your volunteer coach meet your expectations?

Yes No Somewhat Comments:

4. Would you be willing to volunteer to coach in this program next year?

Yes No Maybe Name and phone number if yes:

5. Did the officiating of the program meet your expectations?

Yes No Somewhat Comments:

6. Did the program meet your expectations?

Yes No Somewhat Comments:

7. Did you find the fees acceptable?

Yes No Comments:

8. Were the practice/game courts and facilities adequate for this program?

Yes No Comments:

What suggestions can you make that you feel would improve this program?

Additional comments:

Signature (optional)_____

(Responses are weighted the same whether you sign your name or not but we cannot personally respond to any unsigned evaluation)

APPLICATION TO COACH IN THE STM SPORTS PROGRAM

Sport applying for: _____ Grade: _____

1. Name: _____
2. Child(ren) Name: _____
3. Has your son/daughter played this sport before? Yes _____ No _____
If so, what years? _____
If so, in what league? _____
4. Have you coached your child previously in this sport? _____
Were you the head coach or assistant coach? _____
If so, what league and what year(s)? _____
5. Have you previously coached other boys/girls from St. Thomas More in this sport?
Yes _____ No _____
If so, please describe.
6. During this particular season are you coaching any other teams other than the one that
you are applying for? Yes _____ No _____
If so, which teams? _____
7. What do you want the kids to take from the STM program and as a coach how do you see
your role?
8. Have you ever been suspended, reprimanded or disciplined by a league or a governing
board of a league regarding your actions while coaching any sport?
Yes _____ No _____
If so, please describe in full detail.
9. Briefly describe your previous experience in coaching this sport.

10. Briefly describe your knowledge of the sport you are applying to coach.