Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic Schools
2026-2027 Student-Athlete
Parent/Student Handbook
St. Mark School Amendments and Athletics Code of Conduct

Mission Statement
At St. Mark School, athletics are an extension of our Catholic faith and academic mission. Through sports, we encourage students to develop their God-given talents, demonstrate good sportsmanship, and grow in character, teamwork, and faith. Every practice, game, and interaction is an opportunity to live out the Gospel message.

For Parents and Spectators

Initials: _____ **Be a witness of faith.** Remember that your words and actions reflect the values of our Catholic faith. Strive to be an example of Christ's love, patience, and kindness in all circumstances.

Initials: _____ **Cheer with grace.** Encourage all players with enthusiasm and positivity. Avoid criticism or negativity toward referees, coaches, players, or other spectators.

Initials: _____ **Support coaches and officials.** Recognize their service and leadership. Trust their decisions and show gratitude for the time and care they devote to our children.

Initials: _____ **Keep Christ at the center.** Let your presence at games reflect Christian joy and humility. Pray for the safety, teamwork, and good sportsmanship of all participants before, during, and after each game.

Initials: _____ **Model forgiveness and respect.** When emotions run high, take a deep breath and respond with understanding and grace. Demonstrate how faith can guide us even in moments of competition or disappointment.

Initials: _____ **Build community.** Celebrate the gifts and talents of every child—on both teams. See every game as an opportunity to strengthen our St. Mark community and share God's love with others.

Initials: _____ **Reinforce faith at home.** Talk with your child about how playing fairly, supporting others, and showing respect are ways of honoring God through sports.

Initials: _____ **Support Team Practices.** Parents who are VIRTUS compliant may show their support by observing team practices. However; parents and siblings

should not interfere with practices. Siblings and non-student athletes are not permitted to participate, interfere, or distract from the team practice.

St. Mark School administrators and athletic leadership respect the primary role of parents as the first teachers of their student-athletes and will partner with them in the formation of student-athletes. Parents and other members of the community play a vital role in the holistic education of children, including students' participation in school sponsored athletics. Together, all stakeholders should actively work to ensure that the Catholic mission and identity of St. Mark School permeates the athletics program.

Five Ways to Support Your Student-Athlete

1. Be present – Show up to games, cheer, and support our teams!

2. Be positive – Children learn from modeling.

3. Encourage independence – Encourage student-athletes to be responsible for the care of their athletic gear, be prepared for practices and games, and to speak directly with their coach about any concerns.

4. Observe the "24 Hour Cushion" –Please allow coaches the time they need to process their decisions on game situations and decisions before approaching them with any questions. Coaches **need not** discuss playing time, coaching strategies and specific plays, or information pertaining to other athletes.

5. Model behavior expectations for visiting spectators – Take pride in our athletic program and model for visitors how we CHEER for our team rather than against our opponents, RESPECT the integrity and authority of game officials, ALLOW coaches to coach without criticism from the spectators, GRANT GRACE to allow referees to do their jobs and HELP clean up at the end of athletic events.

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Our Commitment

As members of the St. Mark School community, we pledge to uphold this Code of Conduct. Together, we will ensure that all athletic events reflect the mission of our school and the teachings of our Catholic faith.

"Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." – 1 Corinthians 10:31

Initial each section of the Code of Conduct.

I have read the 2026 -2027 Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic Schools Student-Athlete Parent/Student Handbook, St. Mark School Amendments, and Athletics Code of Conduct and agree to adhere to the code of conduct as stated.

*Family Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Team: _____

Team: _____

Team: _____

**one per family*