

TRI-COUNTY CONFERENCE
BY-LAWS
Revised and approved 5-9-12

I. PURPOSE

- A. To abide by and implement the Diocese of Rockford Elementary School Athletic Programs Philosophy, Goals, Rules and Regulations (Revised and Adopted May 2003)
- B. To promote the physical development of each student and increase their potential for excellence in sports.
- C. To develop within each student a philosophy of teamwork and fair play.
- D. To develop within each student self-control and self-discipline.
- E. To promote growth in social skills and moral development.
- F. To instill each student a spirit of pride representing their school that they can share with others.
- G. To develop within each student a balance between competition and cooperation.

II. MEMBERSHIP

A. Current members:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| St. Catherine, West Dundee | St. Charles Borromeo, Hampshire |
| St. Joseph, Elgin | St. Laurence, Elgin |
| St. Mary, Elgin | St. Mary, Sycamore |
| St. Patrick, St. Charles | St. Peter, Geneva |
| St. Thomas More, Elgin | |

- 1. A goal of the conference is to offer team participation at each grade level, grades 5th through 8th. At a minimum, league member schools must field at least one team at the 6th grade conference level and a second team at the 8th grade conference level. This requirement must be met by the school before entering a conference team at the 5th and/or 7th grade levels. This requirement applies to all sports.
- 2. There must be a minimum of five teams participating in a sport at a grade level to constitute conference play. If the league fails to meet the minimum team requirements for conference play at either 5th or 7th grade levels, those participants denied conference play at their grade level are permitted to play on the team at the next highest grade level. As such, these participants will be recognized as members of the high grade level for purposes of team structure, as developed by the member school, for conference play.

3. Since a goal of the conference is to offer conference participation at each grade level, 5th through 8th, member schools must participate at each specific grade level if both the number of participating schools allows the conference to offer league play at a specific grade level, and if the school has a participation level that reasonably allows it to field a team at that grade level.

B. New members:

1. New schools may be admitted into the conference as follows:
 - a. A letter of intent will be filed with the Board of Control by July 1st of any school year.
 - b. A ratification vote of the Board of Control will take place by August 1st.
 - c. A majority vote of member schools is necessary for ratification.
 - d. New membership begins on the date of the ratification vote.

C. Dismissal of members

1. The procedure for dismissal from the conference is as follows:
 - a. When a violation of the conference by-laws is brought to the Ethics Evaluation Committee (three (3) elected members of the Conference plus the Principal Representative), they will review the offense with all principals in writing.
 - b. A special Board of Control meeting will be called to review all the facts. All schools (Principals and Athletic Directors) will be notified of its intent in writing, at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting.
 - c. The Board of Control will take action as they deem necessary (i.e., written warning, suspension, or dismissal).

III. DUES AND FEES

- a. Dues and fees shall be limited to the cost of trophies. Any additional fees will be set at the fall conference meeting. Costs shall be assessed among schools equally – not assessed per team (unless it is an additional item that is more appropriate per team [like t-shirts]).

IV. ADMINISTRATION

- a. The Board of Control is composed of the Principal Representative from the Elgin Deanery and the principal OR representative from each member school. In all matters each school will have one vote.
- b. Officers:
 1. The Board of Control shall have a Chairperson, Recording Secretary and Awards Administrator. Each/All Board of Control Officers shall rotate every year from Officer Position to Officer Position. The rotation shall follow an alphabetical rotation e.g., (2003/2004):

➤ Conference Chairperson - St. Joseph

- Recording Secretary - St. Laurence
 - Awards Administrator- St. Mary - Elgin
1. Rotation for 2004/2005:
 - Conference Chairperson - St. Laurence
 - Recording Secretary - St. Mary - Elgin
 - Awards Administrator- St. Mary - Sycamore
 2. Rotation for 2004/2005:
 - Conference Chairperson - St. Mary - Elgin
 - Recording Secretary - St. Mary - Sycamore
 - Awards Administrator- St. Patrick

The Chairperson shall rotate every year with the school that is hosting the conference meetings.

2. The term of office is for one year.
3. Principal Representative:
 - a. This is a rotating position that changes at the beginning of each school year.
 - b. Shall be selected by the Conference Principals to represent and act as a Liaison for the Principals at all Athletic Director and Ethics Evaluation meetings.
4. The Chairperson shall:
 - a. Host, organize and chair all conference meetings and votes.
5. The Recording Secretary shall:
 - b. a. Record minutes of meetings and e-mail copies to the assigned representatives of member schools (athletic director and principal).
 - c. Record results of scheduling sessions and e-mail copies to the athletic directors of member schools.
6. The Awards Administrator:
 - a. Responsible for selecting a vendor and for organizing the purchase and delivery of all conference tournament trophies and awards i.e. t-shirts, trophies, etc.
7. Athletic Director:
 - a. Record scores and standings of all contests and e-mail summaries and team rosters to each athletic director and tournament director at the close of each season, as well as periodically during the season.
 - b. Attends all Athletic Director meetings and other necessary meetings that are called.

- c. If school is canceled due to weather and/or other emergency causes, affected activities will be rescheduled as needed. It is the responsibility of the closing school and their Athletic Director to notify the non-affected school as soon as possible. Principals shall make the determination prior to 1:30pm on school days. After that (and on non-attendance days) the AD's shall make the determination regarding game cancellation.

V. MEETINGS

- a. The Board of Control shall meet prior to each sports season for the purpose of scheduling athletic events. The first meeting is toward the end of August and prior to the beginning of the academic school year. Then, meetings are for general business purposes and necessary agenda items, as well as scheduling. There will also be a meeting once at the end of the sport seasons / school year (April/May).
- b. The Principal Representative and the Chairperson may call additional meetings as needed.
- c. The Athletic Director meetings shall be scheduled for the following year at the April/May meeting. All meetings for the following academic year shall be set at the last spring meeting of the current school year.

VI. ATHLETIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- a. A candidate for an athletic team may not practice or play in a game until/he has filed with the school a certificate of physical fitness issued by a licensed medical doctor for the current school year and a proof of insurance waiver signed by the parent/guardian.
- b. Lower grade (through 6th) programs shall have as their primary emphasis instruction and participation. Upper grade (7th and 8th) shall emphasize instruction, participation, and competition. At lower grades (5th through 6th) in order to emphasize instruction and participation, playing time in a given contest is to be equitable among all athletes on a team.
- c. Coaches and athletic directors must cooperate in teaching methods, styles of play, etc. so as to provide the best opportunity for athletes to develop proficiency and character.
- d. It shall be the responsibility of the host school to lead those assembled in a public prayer and the recitation of the pledge of allegiance or playing/singing of the national anthem.
- e. It is mandatory that all team members who are listed in the official scorebook for each contest be given playing time. Every member listed in the book must enter and play in the game/match/contest before it ends. Likewise, it is mandatory that all team members who are listed in the official scorebook sit out a portion of each contest. Exception: When the number of team members is equal to the number of athletes necessary to field a team. Note: Regarding Volleyball, it is mandatory that all team members who are listed in the official scorebook for each contest be given playing time. Every member listed in the book must enter and play in the

game/match/contest before it ends. Likewise it is mandatory that all team members who are listed in the official scorebook sit out a portion of each contest. Exception: The sit out rule will not apply for girls' volleyball and boys' volleyball.

- f. Host schools are responsible for having a designated person in charge of the game facility at all times. Such person will notify visiting coaches of his/her role.
- g. Each school shall establish, implement and communicate scholastic eligibility requirements for its students.
- h. Each school shall establish, implement and communicate conduct eligibility requirements for its students.
- i. Religious activities take precedence over all athletic activities.
- j. A properly equipped first aid kit must be available to coaches at all practices and contests.
- k. Conference rules and regulations shall govern play in each sport. If no conference regulation exists, decisions are referred / made according to IESA guidelines.

VII. ETHICS EVALUATION COMMITTEE

- a. During the year, possible violations or concerns of the conference by-laws shall be brought to the attention of the Ethics Evaluation Committee in writing by the school citing the violation or concern.
- b. The EEC will resolve these questions/concerns with a consensus opinion on by-law interpretations/violations.
- c. All responses from the EEC will be in writing with copies sent to all member schools.
- d. Any subsequent action taken will be conducted at a special meeting of the Board of Control. All member schools will be notified in writing at least two weeks in advance of this meeting. Action taken can include written warnings, suspension, or dismissal from the conference.
- e. The EEC will be comprised of three athletic directors, #1 alternate and #2 alternate from member schools. They will be elected at the annual Board of Control meeting in April. They will serve a term of one year. Alternates replace any athletic director if said athletic director's school is involved.

VIII. PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

- a. All participants must be enrolled in the school they represent.
- b. To be eligible to play in conference tournaments and games the student must be in grades 5th through 8th.
 - 1. At the principal's discretion, 4th graders may be allowed to participate:
 - i. On a 5th-6th combined team to bring that school into conference membership compliance (see Section VII. - Participant Eligibility-Section B-6).

- ii. On a 5th grade conference level team where the member's school deems necessary.
2. No 4th graders will be allowed to participate at levels above 6th grade.
 3. No participants may play "down" a level on another conference level team (i.e., 8th grader on a 7th grade team).
 4. Participants may play "up" one conference grade level (6th grader to a 7th or a combined 7th-8th team). Participants who are moved "up" must remain with that grade level for the remainder of the season.
 5. In order to allow schools to meet the minimum conference membership requirements at a specific level, the conference may be petitioned IN WRITING by said school for a one-year waiver regarding participation eligibility for that sport. A majority vote of those conference schools in attendance at that respective sport pre-season scheduling meeting is needed for approval. An explanation for the necessity of the waiver must be provided and reviewed prior to permission for a waiver being voted upon / granted.
 6. In the event of uncontrollable or foreseeable circumstances i.e. there are not enough children to complete a team at any grade level, a child may be moved up from a lower grade level team or over from a second team competing in conference play, on a contest by contest basis. **The movement of players cannot take place without the prior approval of the coaches and Athletic Directors or a forfeit may occur.** This can only be done in order to complete a contest with the appropriate number of participants.

In the event that players need to be moved, the following procedure is to be followed:

BASKETBALL

- 6 Players – no players permitted to be used
- 5 Players – 1 player permitted to transfer
- 4 players – 2 players can be moved

VOLLEYBALL

- 6 Players – no players permitted to be used
- 5 Players – 1 player permitted to transfer
- 4 Players – 2 players can be moved

- c. Age limitations or participants are as follows:

Eighth graders will become ineligible on the date they become 16 years of age, unless their 15th birthday occurs during a regular sport season. In that case, they will become ineligible in regards to age at the beginning of the sport season during which they will turn 15.

7th grade – 14 years old

6th grade – 13 years old

5th grade – 12 years old

There will be a maximum of four (4) years of eligibility for an athlete, with the exception of a 4th grader playing up to fill out a 5th grade roster. In this case, the athlete may have five years of eligibility – two years at the 5th grade level, one year each at the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.

VIII SPECTATOR GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

A. All spectators and participants (i.e. parents, grandparents, coaches, players and referees) are expected to exhibit acceptable conduct at all times. If not, they may be removed from the premises of the school by the game officials or authorized personnel of the school.

1. Fans are expected to be courteous and respectful of the host school facility and those in authority.
2. Obscene language and behavior will not be tolerated towards any official, coach, player and/or fan.
3. Kicking and stomping on bleachers is not permitted.
4. Local host rules regarding food and drink in gyms must be observed.
5. All student spectators are to be accompanied by a responsible adult.

B. It is expected that

Parents and family members will conduct themselves in an exemplary Christian manner.

C. It is expected that coaches will conduct themselves in a Christian manner. Coaches shall instill in each student, good sportsmanship and a sense of responsibility for being good examples to one another. (Sportsmanship covers not running up the score on another team.) Coaches should not incite the fans toward opposing coaches, players, or officials. Athletic Directors are instructed to caution their coaches and remind them of their responsibilities in this regard.

d. It is expected that players will conduct themselves in a Christian manner.

e. Serious infraction regarding sportsmanship should be brought to the attention of the conference Ethics Evaluation Committee by those schools involved.

f. Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) rules governing sportsmanship shall apply in all cases.

IX TEAM ORGANIZATION, SPORTS LIMITATIONS AND SPECIFICS

The Diocese and The Conference enact the following sport limitations and specifics using the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) rules and regulations as a basis.

1. There shall be no cutting of players in the athletic programs. Schools may divide the teams if there are too many players at one level.

2. Team division shall be left to the discretion of each member school.
3. Any contests and practices scheduled on Sundays shall begin at 1:00 PM or later.
4. Playing/Practice time for Diocesan Schools shall not exceed a maximum of four days of practice/contests in a given week – Sunday through Saturday.

Diocesan athletic rules provide guidelines as to limitations on the number of contests (every interscholastic competition/scrimmage shall be considered a contest); **From ARTICLE 7 of SECTION 4 of Rockford Diocese Guidelines:**

Football - The total number of regular season contests may not exceed nine
Soccer - The total number of regular season matches may not exceed seventeen
Volleyball (7th and 8th Grade Levels) - The total number of regular season contests may not exceed:

- a) Twenty-one matches and no tournaments; or
- b) Nineteen matches plus one tournament; or
- c) Eighteen matches plus two tournaments; or
- d) Sixteen matches plus three tournaments; or
- e) Fifteen matches plus four tournaments

No volleyball team shall play in more than five different matches during any given tournament.

Volleyball (5th and 6th Grade Levels) - The total number of regular season contests may not exceed:

- a) Eighteen matches and no tournaments; or
- b) Sixteen matches plus one tournament; or
- c) Fourteen matches plus two tournaments.

No volleyball team shall play in more than five different matches during any given tournament.

Basketball (7th and 8th Grade levels) - The total number of regular season contests may not exceed:

- a) Twenty-one games and no tournaments; or
- b) Nineteen games plus one tournament; or
- c) Eighteen games plus two tournaments; or
- d) Sixteen games plus three tournaments.

No team shall play in more than five different games during any given tournament.

Basketball (5th and 6th Grade levels) - The total number of regular season contest may not exceed:

- a) Eighteen games and no tournaments; or
- b) Sixteen games plus one tournament; or
- c) Fourteen games plus two tournaments.

No basketball team shall play in more than five different games during any given tournament.

Cheerleading and Pompons

Regular season contests plus two cheerleader competitions per squad per year

Track & Field and Cross Country

Established school teams should engage in at least three interscholastic contests, however, for the purpose of these rules and regulations, no diocesan school team shall compete in more than eight interscholastic meets/contests.

5. Conference Play

1. Teams will be organized along grade levels from 5th through 8th grades. Schools with combined 5th-6th or 7th-8th teams must play at the 6th and 8th grade levels respectively.
2. There must be a minimum of five teams per grade level to constitute conference play.
3. Schools shall declare at the pre-season scheduling meeting for that respective sport the number of teams and their grade levels for that sport.
4. Conference Teams will play 1 game per year v. each other team on a two-year rotational schedule (every team will play each conference team once, e.g.: home one year, away the next. See attached "Schedule Rotation" for even years / odd years.
 - a. Scheduling for conference games and tournaments shall take precedence over non-conference games or tournaments.
 - b. Games shall not be scheduled to start after 8:00 p.m. or allowed to start after 8:30 p.m. or before 1:00 p.m. on Sundays.
 - c. When scheduling grades 5 and 6 all efforts should be made to schedule these grade levels as early as possible.
5. Principals shall approve and sign schedules before adoption. A copy of the schedule must be e-mailed to the conference secretary of that respective sport.
6. Team uniforms must follow IESA guidelines. Exceptions by mutual agreement of the opposing coaches are allowed.
 - a. Schools are not required to have home and away uniforms.
7. Requirements for Coaches
 - a. Head Coaches must be at least 21 years of age. An assistant coach may be under 21 provided an adult is at every game and practice when the head coach is unavailable.
 - b. At least one adult female must be in attendance at all girls' teams' practices and contests. At least one adult male must be in attendance at all boys' team practices.
 - c. All coaches or other adults involved in student supervision must complete all diocesan requirements regarding criminal background checks, Sexual Misconduct Norms Receipt, Pastoral Code of Conduct, Blood Borne Pathogen training, Protecting God's Children classes, etc.
 - d. Coaches shall display good sportsmanship to instill in each student a sense of responsibility for being good examples to one another. Coaches are always to be positive in coaching and encouraging a good attitude toward

officials. Sportsmanship covers not running up the score on another team. Obscene language and behavior will not be tolerated. Coaches are not to incite the fans toward opposing coaches, players, or officials. Athletic Directors are instructed to caution coaches and remind them of their responsibilities and accountability in this regard.

- e. All coaches will answer directly to their Athletic Director who in turn answers to his/her Principal.
- f. IESA rules governing sportsmanship and coaches shall apply in all cases.

(Actual and specific start and end dates for each season shall be decided at the annual meeting in May/August. The dates listed in the sections below are guidelines.)

8. Boys' and Girls' Basketball

a. Boys:

- i. Practices or scrimmages shall not begin before October 15th
- ii. Conference games shall not be scheduled before November 10.
- iii. Tentative schedules shall be completed at the annual meeting in September.
- iv. The conference season will end on or before January 31st followed by the conference tournament.

b. Girls:

- i. Practices or scrimmages shall not begin before mid-November (end of volleyball season).
- ii. Conference games shall not be scheduled before December 10th.
- iii. Tentative schedules shall be completed at the annual meeting in November.
- iv. The conference season will end on or before February 28th followed by the conference tournament and the Diocesan tournament.

c. IESA rules shall apply with the following exceptions:

5th-6th grade

Five minute quarters

Two (2 ½ minute) overtimes

After 2 Overtimes the game goes to a sudden death. The first team score wins the game.

Five minute warm-ups

5th and 6th grade only. No full-court press until last two minutes of each half.

Five Seconds permitted in the lane

A team may not use a full-court press if leading by 15 or more points.
There are 3 (full) and 2 (30 second) time outs per game.

7th-8th grade

Six minute quarters

Three-minute overtimes

Five minute warm-ups

3-point baskets allowed on courts so marked.

After 2 Overtimes the game goes to sudden death. The first team score wins the game.

Three Seconds permitted in the lane

A team may not use full-court press when leading by 20 or more points.

There are 3 (full) and 2 (30 second) time outs per game.

9. Cheerleading

1. Practices shall not begin before October 15th.
2. The conference tournament shall be set by the host school and presented at the boys' basketball annual pre-season meeting in September.
3. The conference season shall end with the end of the boys' basketball season.
4. I. E.S.A. rules apply.

10. Girls' Volleyball / Boys' Volleyball

A. Girls:

Practices or scrimmages shall not begin before the last Monday in August.

Conference matches shall not begin before September 15th.

Tentative schedules shall be completed at the annual meeting in August.

The season ends with the conference tournaments, which will be concluded no later than November 20th.

B. Boys:

Practices or scrimmages shall not begin before the on 15th February.

Conference matches shall not begin before the 1st of March.

Tentative schedules shall be completed at the annual meeting in January.

The season ends with the conference tournaments, which will be concluded no later than April 30th.

C. I.H.S.A. rules shall apply for Boys and Girls with the following exceptions:

- i. Parents may be used as line judges.
- ii. Rally Scoring will be instituted for all grade levels.
- iii. 5th grades will be allowed a 4-foot step-in on serve.
- iv. 6th grades will be allowed a 2-foot step-in on serve.
- v. Schools to mark gym floors for serves.
- vi. Teams will be allowed to begin a game with only five players. At that point the “ghost rule” must apply.
- vii. The net height for 7th and 8th grade matches is 7 ft. 4 ¼ in.
- viii. The net height for 5th and 6th grade matches is 7 ft. 4 ¼ in.
- ix. There are two time-outs per game

12. Cross-Country/ Track & Field

- d. In accordance with IESA rules and regulations, established school teams should engage in at least three interscholastic contests, however, for the purpose of these rules and regulations, no diocesan school team shall compete in more than eight interscholastic meets/contests.

13. Tournament Rotation

1. All conference tournaments shall be hosted by a conference member school. The tournament rotation shall begin alphabetically for each sport and continue alphabetically for each sport. Please note that the AD Meeting Minutes will be used to determine the next school to begin the hosting process.

Note: In the event a school cannot host a conference tournament, the recording secretary shall note which school declined and the next school in the alphabetical order will be asked to host the tournament. This will be noted in the minutes. The procedure for hosting conference tournament each year will begin as designated above.

(See Attachment for Tournament Bracket Information and Conference Award Information.)

X AMENDING BY-LAWS

- a. By-laws may be amended at a regular meeting or any special meeting of the Board of Control called by the chairperson for that purpose.
- b. Amendments to be considered must be submitted, in writing, to the conference chairperson at least four weeks prior to meeting date.
- c. The chairperson shall notify member schools in writing of the proposed amendments or changes at least two weeks prior to say meeting for their review. This communication is to be directed to both AD's and Principals.
- d. A passing majority of those schools present is necessary to approve a proposed amendment. A quorum of one member school over one-half of the number of schools in the conference at the time is necessary to vote. Once approved by the Board of Control, proposal must be directly approved by the Conference principals.
- e. New by-laws, amendments, or changes become effective on the date they are approved by the Tri-County Conference principals.