

# HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL



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HIGH SCHOOL

# KNIGHTS

## STUDENT-ATHLETE AND PARENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

REVISED 2023

HOLY CROSS HIGH SCHOOL **ATHLETICS**

[www.holycrosshs.org](http://www.holycrosshs.org) ❖ Office: (718) 886-7250 Ext. 517 ❖ Fax: (718) 886-7257 ❖ 26-20 Francis Lewis Boulevard ❖ Flushing, NY 11358

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## **Mission of Holy Cross High School Athletics**

The goal of the Holy Cross Athletic Department is to conduct a wholesome and worthwhile program which is consistent with and contributes to the basic philosophy of the school. As an integral part of the total education process, the Holy Cross athletic program makes a significant contribution to the personal growth and development of our students. The department provides an environment where the student-athlete may develop and refine athletic skills and test these skills through competition while promoting leadership and sportsmanship.

Our dedicated coaches are very much aware of their obligations and responsibilities as extremely visible representatives of Holy Cross High School. They are cognizant of the tremendous influence their position wields and will continually strive to instill the highest desirable ideals and character traits in our student athletes. The staff strives to increase students' knowledge, to teach moral and ethical values, to help them mature in a responsible manner, and to motivate them in their pursuit of excellence so that they may realize their self-worth and full potential.

## **Measuring Success**

The willingness, perseverance and commitment to go through a process that allows one to achieve team and personal goals with character and integrity regardless of outside pressures.

To exceed expectations by continually giving consistent effort, learning from mistakes and correcting them, dealing with adversity, and not blaming others for failures.

## Athletic Program Goals

### **Freshmen & JV Sports:**

Both Freshmen and Junior Varsity levels are intended for those who display the potential of athletes who can develop into productive Varsity level performers.

- Increase the skills and knowledge of the sport.
- Elevate intensity of the competition.
- Give playing time based upon skills, practice attendance, work ethic, attitude and commitment to the team.
- Freshmen and Junior Varsity programs work toward achieving a balance between continued team success and player development.

### **Varsity Sports:**

The Varsity level provides competition at its strongest, both physically and mentally. It pushes our student-athletes to develop skills and knowledge at their highest level.

- Allow student athletes and their teams the chance to excel and prepare them for future competitions; compete for League, Sectional and State Championships.
- Expect all members to be positive role models and mentors for younger students.
- Expect that the number of participants on any given team to be a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play competitively in the contest.
- Give playing time based upon skills, practice attendance, work ethic, attitude and commitment to the team.

# Athletic Program Expectations

## **Student-Athlete Expectations**

Student-Athletes from Holy Cross High School represent the school as ambassadors throughout the community. It is imperative that all of our student-athletes realize the following expectations:

- Participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right or an entitlement.
- The team goals and achievements take precedence over individual recognition.
- Maintain solid academic standards.

All athletes must:

- Be a positive role model for other students.
- Achieve a solid grasp of time management and the demands of study/play balance.
- Support all Holy Cross athletic teams and fellow student-athletes.
- Win with class, lose with class.
- Demonstrate proper sportsmanship at all times.

## **Parent/Guardian Expectations**

Parents of Holy Cross athletes play an integral role in the culture of our athletic program. We ask the following of all of our parents/guardians:

- Display positive support for the student-athletes and coaches of Holy Cross.
- Demonstrate positive behavior and sportsmanship as fans.
- Maintain realistic expectations of their student-athletes in the classroom and on the field.
- Make an effort to understand the rules and nuances of the game.

## **Spectator Expectations**

Holy Cross High School encourages attendance at athletic events. We also expect our fans to act with a level of respect, including:

- Cooperation with school officials.
- Avoiding objectionable cheers, unsafe, or inappropriate behavior.
- Encouraging your team.
- Treat all visiting teams respectfully.
- Cooperation with coaches and game officials.
- Be positive.

## **Coach Expectations**

Our coaches also have important obligations and responsibilities since they are extremely visible representatives of Holy Cross High School:

- Personify good character for their players and the community.
- Develop players' qualities of leadership, initiative, and good judgment.
- Communicate and explain program goals and objectives to the athletes.
- Provide a safe environment for practice and games.
- Respect the athletic program and its place in student athletes' overall education.

## Requirements for Participation

### **Academics:**

The athletic department recognizes that the primary responsibility of student-athletes is educational. There is a reason that the word “student” comes before “athlete”- education is the main goal of Holy Cross.

### **Academic Eligibility:**

While scholastic achievement is determined on an individual basis, the administration and the athletic department reserve the right to determine a student-athlete’s eligibility to participate in athletic contests and practices. ***Any student who is not in good academic standing (failing two or more subjects during a grading period) will be ineligible for all activities related to the sport (including off season conditioning) until the start of the next marking period.***

### **Disciplinary Status/Eligibility:** *As stated in the Holy Cross High School Student and Parent Handbook:*

A student who remains on Disciplinary Probation for two consecutive quarters is ineligible for all co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Administration also reserves the right to declare any student ineligible for all co-curricular activities based on infractions of the Code of Conduct at any time.

### **Physical Examination:**

A prospective student-athlete must obtain a physical exam by a medical doctor recorded on the Holy Cross Medical form, stamped and signed by that physician prior to trying out for any sport. The form must be submitted to the school nurse and recorded. Failure to do so will render the prospective student ineligible for athletic activity.

### **Attendance in School:**

Participation in a sport is one part of our overall educational program. In order to participate in a practice, game or activity that day, it is understood that students will be present in school.

- A. The school’s policy is that no student may participate in athletics on a day in which he/she does not attend school. This rule may be waived for extenuating circumstances that would include funerals, college visits (seniors only), etc.
- B. In order to be considered in school for athletic participation, a student must arrive no later than 11:00 AM and remain in school for the rest of the day, attending classes as scheduled.
- C. Team members on suspension for any disciplinary infraction will not be allowed to practice or participate in any event for the day. In the event a student is assigned to detention or held back as a class after school, students will be expected to attend the disciplinary function prior to reporting for extracurricular or athletic activity. Student athletes will explain the circumstances to their coach.
- D. If a student will need to miss part of a school day to attend an athletic contest, it is the responsibility of the Athletic Director to inform the attendance office and faculty. However, the student-athlete should inform their individual teachers in advance, and the student-athlete is responsible for all work missed during that time, i.e. homework, class notes, tests, etc.

### **Attendance at Practices and Games:**

A. It is the expectation of the athletic department that student-athletes will attend all practices and/or contests. Being a member of a team is a commitment made to coaches and teammates, which may involve giving up school vacation time, weekends, and other activities. This includes prioritizing Holy Cross over all non-high school travel teams.

B. Missing practices and contests without giving proper notification to a member of the coaching staff will result in consequences. The severity of repercussions taken will be decided by the athletic department and the coaches of the team.

C. Unacceptable reasons for absences include, but are not limited to the following:

- Non-required academic class or group trips
- Family vacation during school break periods
- Participation with another outside team in a different sport
- Trips to visit relatives during school break or on weekends
- Participation of the same sport with a club or travel team

D. Coaches will allow excused absences for the following, provided they receive prior notification:

- College visits for seniors
- Family emergencies
- Family weddings or funerals
- Religious obligations
- Any similar event that would require the student-athlete to be present elsewhere

E. Suspension from school prohibits student-athletes from participation in practice or contests throughout the duration of the suspension. Disciplinary action may also be taken by the coach, following consultation with the Assistant Principal and/or Athletic Director, as a consequence for athletic time missed during a suspension.

F. Physical Education Requirement: Athletes with unexcused absences or inability to perform in physical education class will not be permitted to attend practices or games on the day of the absence/class.

### **Academic Intervention/Extra Help Sessions:**

Team members must be present and on time for all scheduled practice sessions and games. Students who are in need of academic assistance causing a conflict with a scheduled practice or game should notify the coach before these sessions. A student who needs to attend extra help sessions or other extracurricular activities should have prior permission from his/her coach or obtain a note from the extra help teacher or advisor to be excused. Remember that once you become a member of an athletic team you have made a commitment for the entire season. Students are allowed to be late for practice to attend academic extra help sessions. There will be no penalty for this.

## **Athletic Department Regulations**

### **Uniforms and Equipment:**

At the beginning of every season, all student athletes purchase uniforms and equipment for their sport to keep. It is the responsibility of every athlete to take care of the equipment. Any lost equipment can be repurchased from the Athletic Department. Lockers are provided to secure this equipment. A school issued Master V-22 combination lock is the only authorized lock for the athletics lockers. Any non-school issued locks will be clipped with a \$75 clipping fee applied for removal. If there are problems and equipment needs to be repaired or is lost, it should be brought to the attention of the coach immediately.

If there are any school issued equipment items (football helmet, shoulder pads, etc.) missing the student will be required to pay to replace them. Failure to do so may result in the withholding of report cards or transcripts.

### **Transportation:**

All students must use school transportation to and from an athletic event unless prior written permission from his/her parents is given to and approved by the coach. Only coaches, team members, managers, and statisticians may ride the school bus to and from contests. The "Travel Release Form" must be used to obtain permission for alternate transportation. An individual other than his/her parent may transport students from an athletic contest if a proper authorization form is completed by the parent and is on file with the coach.

Athletes are expected to be courteous and considerate on the bus at all times and are to remain seated for the duration of the trip. Athletes are reminded that they are to take all their belongings with them if the driver or bus is not staying with the team. They are also reminded to discard any trash they created during any rides. In accordance with school policy, coaches may not transport students in their personal vehicle.

### **Conflict with Other School Activities:**

An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities may encounter a conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences. Attempts to schedule events will be made to minimize conflicts. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can do to avoid conflicts. This includes being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise.

The Athletic Director, club/activity advisor, and coaches will attempt to work out a solution with the student. If a decision cannot be agreed upon, the Principal will make a decision based on the relative importance of each event to the individual, the team, and the school. Once a decision has been made, and the student abides by the decision, they will not be penalized. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of both activities, they should withdraw from either the sport or activity.



### **Team Selection/Tryouts/Roster Cuts:**

It is important that both parents and student-athletes understand that in a number of sports there is a need to make cuts. This is one of the most unpleasant tasks that coaches have to face. However, at this level of competition, cuts are necessary so that the team sizes are kept manageable. This ensures there are not more athletes on a team than can be played for a reasonable amount of time in a contest. Tryouts for teams allow those competing to make a team to have an opportunity to show their skills and feel that they have had a fair chance to make a team. The coaches are the sole judge for team selection and their decisions will not be changed by the athletic administration.

### **Playing Time - Freshmen, JV and Varsity:**

At the high school level, playing time must be earned. It is completely at the discretion of the coaching staff.

On the Freshmen, JV and Varsity levels, emphasis towards winning the interscholastic contests increases as athletes move up and level of play advances on each higher level. This does not mean that winning takes precedence over sound educational values and integrity.

### **Season Start Dates:**

The start dates for the fall, winter and spring seasons are set by the CHSAA/CHSFL. Below is a guideline for the athletic teams start dates:

Fall Season:	Typically begins during the third week of August
Winter Season:	Typically begins on the first Saturday of November
Spring Season:	Typically begins on the first Saturday of March.

Athletes who intend to compete during the fall season are required to attend the first official start date in August and all subsequent days during the selection phase (tryout).

The athletic department recognizes that unforeseen circumstances may arise that will prohibit a student-athlete to attend practice/tryout sessions in August. If there is a conflict, please contact the Athletic Director and all conflicts will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Please note that family vacations are not viable excuses for missing sessions in August. Families should arrange their schedules accordingly.

# Communication

## Parent/Coach Communication

Situations arise that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others' position. Here are situations that warrant a discussion:

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

There are other situations that arise, but are not topics open for discussion. These topics include:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes
- The direction of the team/program

We understand that every parent is a champion for his or her child. You want them to succeed; you want them to play a main role. It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may want. However, playing time is earned in the estimation of the coaches and is not an entitlement. Coaches make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have read from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with the coach. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

## Contacting Coaches

As for all contact between coaches and parents, the following guidelines apply:

1. Before the start of each season, the coach will meet with the team. Team meetings will include topics such as practice and game schedules, team rules regarding attendance, and all pertinent regulations. Information regarding contacting the coach should also be handed out.
2. Parents should encourage their student-athletes to have open communication with their coach. This provides clarity for both parties at all times.
3. If the meeting between the coach and athlete proves to be unsatisfactory, then the parent should arrange to meet with the coach.

4. During the season, if a parent wishes to meet with a coach, it is strongly recommended that on field or locker-room meetings following athletic events be avoided. Parents should contact the coach to arrange a meeting at a mutually convenient time.

## **The 24 Hour Rule**

### **The 24-Hour Rule**

**No discussion is permitted with a coach for 24 hours following the completion of the contest.**

Typically, emotions of players, coaches, and parents are riding high during and after contests. It is rare for any productive conversation to occur immediately after an event. In fact, often the opposite happens, which benefits nobody.

Waiting 24 hours before contact allows everyone involved to step back from the situation, reassess needs, and engage in a more civilized manner. Nothing is guaranteed to change as a result of any talks, but a professional discussion with clarity from both sides often can help all parties understand where each side is coming from.

### **Contacting the Director of Athletics**

If the meeting is unsatisfactory, the parent may then contact the Director of Athletics (kgoggin@myhchs.org or 718-886-7150 x517). Please keep in mind that selection to a team, varsity status, positions played, and playing time are all decisions made by coaches. Also, the Director of Athletics and the school administrators will never instruct the coaches as to whom to play, how to play, or keep on a team.

## NCAA Eligibility

### **Student-Athletes & College Competition/NCAA Clearinghouse**

If a student-athlete plans to compete at the Division I or II collegiate level, they should make their guidance counselor aware of these intentions so they can begin the NCAA clearinghouse process. Student-athletes who may have intentions of competing at the Division III collegiate level only do not have to go through the NCAA clearinghouse process. However, the athletic department strongly recommends that any student-athlete who has any intentions of competing at the collegiate level go through the process.

Student-athletes should find out if they will meet the academic eligibility and core-course requirements for the college they may be attending. The guidance counselors will assist student-athletes in NCAA Clearinghouse procedures, if necessary, towards the end of their junior year.

Once a student-athlete has decided that they would like to play at the collegiate level, it is suggested that the student-athlete contact the coaches about these intentions.

If you would like more detailed information, please contact the NCAA directly and ask for the **NCAA Guide for the College-Bound/Athlete**. This publication is a fantastic source of knowledge for parents and student, covering topics like financial aid, Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse, necessary forms and recruitment.

### **Contacting the NCAA**

*National Collegiate Athletic Association*

You may **contact the NCAA** using the information listed here:

#### **Document mailing address:**

NCAA Eligibility Center  
Certification Processing  
P.O. BOX 7136  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46207

#### **Overnight/Express mailing address:**

NCAA Eligibility Center  
Certification Processing  
1802 Alonzo Watford Sr. Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Phone number: 877-262-1492  
Fax: 317-968-5100  
Website: [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)

## Social Media Usage

### Student/Coaches Use Of Social Media

The Holy Cross Student Handbook outlines current Social Media policies for all students. The Athletic Department also has guidelines for student-athletes and coaches when it comes to the use of this media.

Students who use social media platforms should always exercise caution when participating in any form of online communication. Students who participate in online conversations must remember that their posts reflect upon the entire Holy Cross community and, as such, are subject to the same behavioral standards set forth in the Student Handbook. Students and parents are reminded that students are prohibited from using their phones during the school day, keeping them off of sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter, etc.

Holy Cross student-athletes and coaches are expected to adhere to the following:

- It is imperative for student-athletes to be mindful of the social media policy that Holy Cross has established for all students. Violation of the social media policy will result in corrective actions by the Athletic Department, Administration, or both when deemed necessary.
- **Think before you press send to whatever site you utilize. Once your post, tweet or photo/video etc. is out there, it is for the world to see. FOREVER.**
- Coaches – please refrain from using social media in any manner that would be inappropriate with student-athletes. Remember, we can be cordial to our student-athletes; however, they are not our friends, peers, or associates. Therefore, social media should never be utilized to engage in unprofessional/personal communications with student-athletes.
- If social media and/or texting players and parents is to be used as a platform for communication, keep it in a professional context. (such as time changes for scheduled practices or games, changes in venues, calling for a meeting, etc. ***Coaches shall never criticize individual players or collective teams over social media.***)
- Coaches are encouraged to use social media for comments, scores, and promoting positive stories about their program.
- Coaches need to be mindful of what is posted to their personal sites as well. It is vital to understand that, while freedom of speech and expression is granted, posts that include inappropriate content that is explicit or in violation of the mission of Holy Cross will be subject to corrective actions by the Athletic Department, or Administration, when deemed necessary.
- Coaches who violate these standards or misuse social media may be suspended from coaching or terminated immediately.