

# Parochial Athletic League (PAL) Guidelines

*Schools working together for our young people*

## **BACKGROUND**

The accompanying policies represent the mission and guidelines for participation in the Parochial Athletic League (PAL) school-sponsored sporting events, as adopted by its member schools. Although the PAL had been in existence for many years, in 1995 it became clear that there was a need for written guidelines. The policies presented herein have been prepared by representatives of all member schools working together for our young people. This document should be provided, at a minimum, to all school administrators, athletic directors, and members of athletic committees.

## **MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE**

The PAL is a league that has been developed to allow Christian athletes the chance to participate in school-sponsored sporting events. As a Christian league, our first goal is to foster Christian attitudes and values in all that is promoted by the league.

The purpose of the league shall be such that it teaches skills, values, and attitudes in the following areas:

1. Christian values and behavior
2. Good sportsmanship
3. Self-discipline
4. Respect for all participants and property
5. Cooperation and fairness
6. A positive attitude toward learning skills and teamwork
7. A healthy attitude toward competition, winning, and losing
8. Participation being provided to all who wish to play
9. Developing self-confidence and a positive self-image
10. Responsibility

The methods used to teach the participants will be determined or established by the individual school administrators, athletic directors, and coaches chosen by the schools to guide the teams.

The players will be expected to exhibit these values and attitudes of the league during league play and during practices. Discipline concerning the display of improper behavior by players beyond the league event will be the responsibility of the coach, school athletic committee, or school administration.

Guidelines for expected behavior by coaches, players, and parents/fans should always adhere to the Christian principles and values upon which the PAL bases its purpose.

## **MISSION STATEMENT and GUIDELINES FOR COACHES**

As a coach in the PAL, the job of following the values outlined for the league lies with the coach. Coaches have been given the privilege to serve God and their players by giving their time

to coach. Therefore, as a coach in a Christian league, the coach should promote the following values at all times:

1. A Christian attitude and sportsmanship.
2. Christian actions and deeds on the athletic floor/field, as well as in day-to-day living.
3. A Christian attitude toward all participants, no matter what their ability.
4. The ability to be a role model to all participants.
5. Knowledge of the rules and regulations of the sport, and the ability to pass that knowledge on to the participants and to appropriately discuss or deal with any problems and concerns with the game or school officials.
6. A healthy attitude toward competition, winning, and losing, realizing that the improvement in a team or certain players is more important than to win.
7. Respect for the game officials, scorekeepers, and the gym, property, and equipment.
8. Realizing that the game is for the glory of the youth participating, not the coach.
9. The ability to allow the participant to leave each practice, game, and season seeing growth in themselves and yet experience the joy of playing the sport.

Based on these values, the PAL establishes the following guidelines for coaches:

1. Coaches must follow the guidelines set by his/her specific school.
2. Coaches should never knowingly play an ineligible player.
3. Coaches should always act in a respectful manner. Disrespectful actions include:
  - a. Inappropriate language.
  - b. Yelling or flagrant disagreements with officials.
  - c. Yelling or arguing with scorekeepers or timekeepers.
4. Coaches should always be positive role models for the players and practice good sportsmanship. This includes:
  - a. Not condoning the use of abusive language.
  - b. Never allowing unfair or inappropriate play to occur.
  - c. Never criticizing game officials, opposing players, or coaches in front of the players, nor condoning or allowing such criticism from other members or representatives of the team.

## **MISSION STATEMENT and GUIDELINES FOR PLAYERS**

Players in the PAL are being allowed to participate in a Christian league with Christian values. God gave the players the abilities used; therefore players are asked to use these talents in a Christian manner. All participants in the league should exhibit the following values:

1. Christian attitude and sportsmanship. This includes Christian language (both verbal and body language) and respect for all associated with the game.
2. As a representative of their schools, the players' job is to show Christian attitudes and deeds at school, practice, and games.
3. Players should respect all members of the teams regardless of their ability levels.

4. Players should realize that winning is not the purpose of the game. Learning and improving individual skills and teamwork is the purpose. A team can improve greatly and still not win the game.
5. Players should show respect for the coach by listening at practices and letting the coach know when they cannot attend practices.
6. Players should show respect for game officials, scorekeepers, and the gym, property, and equipment. It is the job of the coach to appropriately discuss or deal with any problems or concerns, not the players.

Based on these values, the PAL establishes the following guidelines for players:

1. Players must adhere to the academic eligibility guidelines specified by his/her school.
2. Players should wear their uniform properly. Shirts should be tucked in and shorts should be worn properly.
3. No inappropriate language, gesture, or body language is permitted. This includes during competition, warm-up, and before and after games.
4. Players are prohibited from intimidating, taunting, or provoking opposing fans, players, or coaches.
5. Players should never argue with game officials or use inappropriate language or body gestures toward them.
6. Players should address all adults assisting in the operation of the game with respect. If a problem arises, it should be addressed by the coach.

## **MISSION STATEMENT and GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/FANS**

The success of the PAL depends on active parent and fan participation and help, along with cooperation with the coaches and compliance with league and school guidelines. Parents/fans should encourage their child's participation in the league by attending the games and practices, and displaying a positive, Christian attitude towards their child's and all participants' accomplishments.

The PAL establishes the following guidelines for parents/fans:

1. Parents/fans should always show positive support, care, and encouragement for all participants in the league.
2. Parents/fans will encourage good sportsmanship by showing positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at each game.
3. Parents/fans will place the physical and emotional well-being of any child ahead of any personal desire to win.
4. Parents/fans need to remember that all PAL programs are geared toward children learning the fundamentals of the sport in a positive way.
5. Parents/fans should expect their child/children to treat other players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect at all times.
6. Parents/fans should make the league programs a fun and memorable experience for their children and all children involved.

## **PAL COMMITTEE**

A three-person committee will oversee, schedule, and manage the league. This three-person committee, approved annually by a majority of the member schools, will consist of the commissioner, the vice-commissioner, and the scheduler of the league's events. This committee will schedule all league meetings and represent the league at any other applicable meetings. The league will have at least one meeting each year to approve the league committee and to discuss and/or approve changes to league policies or game rules. This committee will also annually provide each member school with the names and phone numbers of the league committee members, and a list of the athletic contact persons and their phone numbers for each PAL member school.

## **PAL PARTICIPATION POLICY**

The PAL programs are for children in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. Children in grades 4 and under may participate if necessary to have a sufficient number of players to have a team and that participation complies with the applicable school's policies. The PAL Committee and the member schools establish the following league participation rules:

1. As of November 1, 2001, the following schools are members of the PAL:

St. Peters – Jefferson City  
Immaculate Conception – Jefferson City  
St. Joseph – Jefferson City  
Trinity Lutheran – Jefferson City  
St. Stanislaus – Wardsville  
St. Francis Xavier – Toas  
St. Martins  
St. Thomas  
St. George – Linn  
St. Elizabeth  
Holy Family – Freeburg  
Immaculate Conception – Loose Creek  
St. Joseph – Westphalia  
Linn  
Russellville  
St. Patricks – Rolla  
St. Peters – Fulton  
Our Lady of Snows – Mary's Home  
Immanuel Lutheran – Honey Creek  
Visitation – Vienna  
Sacred Heart – Rich Fountain  
St. Marys – Frankenstein

Each member school will have one vote on any issue presented to the league for their consideration. Votes may be taken at league meetings, or by ballots mailed to and signed by a representative of a member school and returned to the league committee by the member school. A simple majority of the member schools will be needed to approve or reject any issue presented to the league for consideration. A tie vote on an issue will be considered a rejection by the league.

Linn (a mixture of public and parochial students), and St. Elizabeth and Russellville (from their public schools), and Loose Creek (from their parish) are allowed to participate in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade leagues. However, their participation in the league is forfeited if they drop out for any reason. (Loose Creek exception forfeited in 2005-06 season.) Linn (from the public school), St. Elizabeth, and Russellville are not allowed to participate in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade leagues. Immaculate Conception – Loose Creek's 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teams will consist only of parochial school students. Effective August 23, 1995, any new school admitted to the league must be a team made up of strictly parochial school students. Teams may not have any participants from a public school; however students that are members of the parish and being home-schooled may participate.

2. Except as noted in Part 1 above, only students attending a member parochial school will be allowed to participate. However, if a member school does not have enough students for a team, two or more member parochial schools can be combined to form a team. Players cannot be selectively chosen from member parochial schools for a combined team. All interested students in each parochial school must be given an opportunity to participate.
3. A player can only participate on one PAL team within a season, unless written permission is provided by the league committee after consideration of the circumstances. The rosters noted below and contact with the applicable school will be used to determine any players on more than one team.
4. Rosters of all volleyball teams are required to be submitted to the volleyball league scheduler by no later than September 1. Rosters of all basketball teams are required to be submitted to the basketball league scheduler by no later than November 15. If deemed necessary, these rosters will be mailed to the participating schools for verification that all students listed on the rosters are enrolled in the school(s). Violations of this policy (playing non-roster players) will be communicated by mail to the school administrator, athletic director, and coach. Two violations of this policy by the same team in the same season will result in the disqualification of this team from the league for that season.
5. Each member school is allowed to establish other conditions for participation in school-sponsored PAL events, such as medical certifications, academic requirements, or payment of fees, as deemed necessary or appropriate by the officials of each member school.

6. Each member school will pay a nominal fee to the league committee, as approved by a majority of the member schools, to cover the mailing, copying, telephone, and other costs to provide league schedules and other league information to the member schools and game officials.

## **PAL VOLLEYBALL LEAGUE**

The PAL volleyball league season will consist of eight (8) games usually beginning the first Saturday after Labor Day, and ending by the first week in November. The number of teams per grade or division is not limited. All league games will be played in accordance with the PAL Volleyball Rules (**Appendix A**) that have been adopted by a majority of the member schools for each grade or division.

To provide for the timely completion of the league schedules, the number of teams in each grade or division, dates of gym availability, and the names and phone numbers of coaches (if available) should be submitted to the volleyball scheduler by the last Friday in August. As noted above, rosters should be submitted to the scheduler by no later than September 1. The PAL Committee reserves the right to not schedule teams when information on number of teams and gym dates are not provided by the abovementioned dates. The league will also schedule the officials for all league games.

All cancellations of league games will be made by the PAL Committee or through consultation with a committee member. The league will not reschedule any league games lost due to cancellations. However, the host schools or athletic directors may schedule make-up games, as long as the make-up schedule does not conflict with scheduled league games.

There are **NO** league-sponsored tournaments. All tournaments are considered invitational tournaments and are scheduled, conducted, and overseen by the host school or organization. All tournament schedules should be planned to not conflict with scheduled league games. Tournament organizers are encouraged to conduct tournaments using PAL policies, PAL Volleyball Rules, and PAL team rosters.

## **PAL BASKETBALL LEAGUE**

The PAL basketball league season will consist of ten (10) games beginning the last week in November or first week in December, and ending by the last week in February. The number of boys and girls teams per grade or in the junior varsity and varsity divisions is not limited. Teams are encouraged to play in the highest level or division that they will be competitive. All league games will be played in accordance with the PAL Basketball Rules for each grade or division (**Appendix B**) that have been adopted by a majority of the member schools.

To provide for the timely completion of the league schedules, the number of teams in each grade or division, dates of gym availability, and the names and phone numbers of coaches (if available) should be submitted to the basketball scheduler by the established dates. As noted above, rosters should be submitted to the scheduler by no later than November 15.

The PAL Committee reserves the right to not schedule teams when information on number of teams and gym dates are not provided by the abovementioned dates. The league will also schedule the officials for all league games.

All cancellations of league games will be made by the PAL Committee or through consultation with a committee member. The league will not reschedule any league games lost due to cancellations. However, the host schools or athletic directors may schedule make-up games, as long as the make-up schedule does not conflict with scheduled league games.

There are **NO** league-sponsored tournaments. All tournaments are considered invitational tournaments and are scheduled, conducted, and overseen by the host school or organization. If provided timely information, the basketball scheduler is willing adjust the league schedules to coordinate with tournaments involving several league teams within a grade or division. All tournament schedules should be planned to not conflict with scheduled league games. Tournament organizers are encouraged to conduct tournaments using PAL policies, PAL Basketball Rules, and PAL team rosters.

## **OTHER PAL PROGRAMS**

Other PAL school-sponsored athletic programs, such as cross-country and track, will be overseen, scheduled, and managed by volunteers from the participating schools. To the extent possible, the rules and policies contained in this document should be followed.

## **COMPLAINTS**

If at any time a parent, coach, game official, fan, or school official has a complaint about any aspect of the league or any specific game(s)/event(s), including any inappropriate actions or verbiage being exhibited at any PAL league game/event or tournament games involving PAL teams, a PAL Complaint Form (**Appendix C**) will be provided to the complainant upon request to allow for a written complaint to be filed with the PAL Committee. The league committee will review and investigate the complaint to the extent possible and, where applicable, forward the verified complaint facts to the affected the school principal and athletic director.

Except as otherwise noted in these PAL policies, it will be the responsibility of the applicable school officials to take whatever action they deem appropriate regarding any complaints.

## **LEAGUE DISCIPLINARY POLICY**

Any verified complaints involving inappropriate actions or verbiage being exhibited at any PAL league game/event or tournament games involving PAL teams and following PAL League policies and rules will be subject to the following provisions:

1. The first offense during a season will result in a one (1) game suspension for the person(s) specified in the complaint.

2. The second offense during a season will result in the league committee asking the specified school's principal and athletic director for suspension of the person(s) specified in the complaint from the league's play for the remainder of the season.

Any coach or player that is ejected from a league or tournament (following PAL policies and rules) game by an official will be subject to the following provisions:

1. The first ejection during a season will result in a one (1) game suspension.
2. The second ejection during a season will result in a suspension from the league for the remainder of the season.

If a player is allowed to participate on more than one PAL team during a season without written permission of the league committee, the coach of the team that uses a player that is included on another team's roster will be subject to the following provisions:

1. The first offense during a season will result in a one (1) game suspension.
2. The second offense during a season will result in a suspension from the league for the remainder of the season.

During any suspensions, the sponsoring school will be responsible for replacing the coach on the affected team.

The league committee will notify the applicable school of any suspensions. It will be the responsibility of the school officials and/or Athletic Director to notify the coach or player of any actions taken and to inform them that they are not to participate in league games for the period of suspension. The league committee will notify the school(s) hosting any games/events involving team members during the suspensions. It will be the responsibility of the host schools to enforce the suspensions. If the league committee is aware of the applicable team participating in a tournament during any suspensions, the school or organization sponsoring the tournament will also be notified of the suspensions.

Each school should have a person in charge in the gym or at the site on each date that they host. This person is responsible for the execution of PAL policies and rules.

## **APPENDIXES**

**APPENDIX A**

**P.A.L. VOLLEYBALL RULES**

**APPENDIX B**

**P.A.L BASKETBALL RULES**

**5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE & COMBINATION 5/6 BOYS**

**5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE & COMBINATION 5/6 GIRLS**

**6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE BOYS**

**6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE GIRLS**

**JUNIOR VARSITY BOYS**

**JUNIOR VARSITY GIRLS**

**VARSITY BOYS**

**VARSITY GIRLS**

