

STMA Athletics Handbook  
2017-2018

(Quotations from the 2017-2018 STMA Community Handbook (CH) are italicized)

1. *(CH Intro.) St. Thomas More Academy (STMA) offers a classical Catholic college preparatory education ordered to truth. Students work in a joyful and faithful community that nurtures human excellence. Graduates are formed as whole persons with high ethical standards and superior skills and sent out to love and serve as Christians disciples.*

*(CH #26.) The fundamental expectation pertaining to personal conduct in the STMA community is the Gospel rule of love toward God and neighbor. It encompasses all personal interactions that might occur in the community among parents/guardians, students, and staff. The question is always whether or not one has expressed Christian charity in word and deed.*

*(CH #29.) STMA's founder and leaders endorse values that are proper to a Catholic classical preparatory school. The school's teachers and staff are engaged in a shared labor for the good of young people. By freely enrolling, parents/guardians and students express aspiration toward and support for the ends of the STMA education and signal trust in the school and intended cooperation with school expectations. Antagonism toward school policies or persons conflicts with the Gospel and undermines key outcomes (See Galatians 5:20). The student who is not profiting from his or her learning opportunities at STMA merits serious consideration as well (See Matthew 25:14-30). The situations require prompt resolution in accord with administrative counsel.*

- a. Love of neighbor extends to all players, coaches, officials, fans, etc.
  - b. Parents should model for students how to express gratitude and support for our coaches who are effectively volunteering their time for STMA students.
2. *(CH #23.) Participation in extracurricular organizations and activities is a valuable privilege at STMA. Studies come first. A student who posts a failing grade on a quarterly Registrar's report may not participate until he or she elevates the grade to passing on the next report. With exception for professional appointments, a student must attend school for a full day on the day of an extracurricular event to participate. Extracurricular organizations may establish their own unique standards, e.g. around GPA, quality of contribution, etc. These standards are at the discretion of faculty advisers.*
  3. *(CH#24.) STMA's athletics program offers strong witness to the school's core values...It is important to note that teachers are unable to supervise students at off-campus public gatherings, including athletic events. Parents/guardians are the proper resource.*
    - a. Parents of student-athletes are required to assist the team by volunteering as support staff for games (collecting gate money, running the clock and scoreboard, etc.)
    - b. STMA rents athletic facilities and all members of the community must abide by the "house" rules.

- c. STMA does not take responsibility for coordinating rides for students to events. The lone exception is when the STMA activity bus is reserved for a game. Seating is limited, however, and the bus is shared amongst teams and other school groups.
  - d. The STMA athletics program is streamlined by design. Coaches are not responsible for organizing social events for students and will not be responsible for supervising them. Socializing outside of practices and games can be valuable for a team but must be organized by students and parents and not by STMA employees.
4. STMA students must make meeting fitness standards and attending tryouts, practices, and games a priority. Falling short on fitness standards and/or missing tryouts, practices, and games will impact playing time and placement on a team.
5. *(CH #2.) Questions or concerns about a student's experience in the school must be directed first to the nearest competent authority (See Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1883). Depending upon the activity, this is ordinarily the classroom teacher, coach, or club leader. Because of our commitment to subsidiarity questions and concerns that are not directed first to the nearest competent authority are always redirected.*
  - a. Coaches should not be contacted by parents about coaching decisions (placement on a team, playing time, game tactics and strategy, team discipline etc.); any concerns must be respectfully and privately raised by athletes with their coach. Parent requests for meetings with coaches will not be honored if the student athlete has not first raised the pertinent issue/s with the coach. Parent requests for meetings with the athletic director likewise will only be honored if first the player and then a parent have talked with the coach. Exceptions to this ordering are only allowed for grave and urgent reasons.
  - b. Meeting requests are not guaranteed to be honored if the issue is not sufficiently serious to warrant a meeting.
6. Proportionate responses to coaching decisions are crucial and must be modelled by parents and practiced by athletes.
7. Prior to starting any sports related activities aspiring student-athletes must present a physical (no more than a year old) and a green card.
8. Once a student has earned a roster spot, the athletic fee for the season (Fall, Winter, or Spring) must be paid online by the deadline set by the athletic director in order for a student to remain eligible for STMA athletics. The 2017-2018 athletic fee is \$100 per season.
9. The STMA athletic awards at the end of the school year will acknowledge all student-athletes who completed their season in good standing. Attendance is not mandatory but should be a normative expression of appreciation for coaches and teammates.

The St. Thomas More 2017-2018 Athletics Handbook abrogates and supersedes any prior statements of STMA athletics policy.

St. Thomas More Academy requires the parents/guardians of all student-athletes to submit the signed Athletics Handbook Certification within a week of the start of the first season (Fall, Winter, or Spring) their student is participating in. A student who does not have certification on file by this date will be unable to continue in athletics until certification is submitted.

For Fall, 2017, certification should be submitted by September 11th; for Winter, 2017-2018, certification should be submitted by November 6th; for Spring, 2018, certification should be submitted by February 26th.