

Holy Cross High School Athletic Program Overview and Parents' Guide

MISSION STATEMENT

The objective of Holy Cross High School's Department of Athletics is to successfully integrate academic and athletic experiences in the Holy Cross Tradition. We seek a high participation rate from our student body and we strive to provide a rewarding experience for all our participants. The philosophy of the Athletic Department is to promote sportsmanship, integrity, camaraderie, and academic and athletic excellence.

Holy Cross High School is a member of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) and the Naugatuck Valley League (NVL). The Athletic Program at Holy Cross is administered by the Director of Athletics and a coaching staff of 56 (21 head coaches and 35 assistants). There is also a full time athletic trainer on staff. The Athletic Program consists of 21 interscholastic sports and 2 intramural sports. These activities take place during the following seasons:

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
BOYS: FOOTBALL (V, JV, FR) SOCCER (V, JV, FR) CROSS COUNTRY	BASKETBALL (V, JV, FR) INDOOR TRACK WRESTLING SWIMMING	BASEBALL (V, JV, FR) TRACK & FIELD TENNIS GOLF
GIRLS: SOCCER (V, JV, FR) X COUNTRY SWIMMING VOLLEYBALL (V, JV, FR)	BASKETBALL (V, JV, FR) INDOOR TRACK CHEERING	SOFTBALL (V, JV, FR) TRACK & FIELD TENNIS
INTRAMURAL:		BASKETBALL ULTIMATE FRISBEE

NOTE:

There is no girls' golf team, but girls are welcome to participate on the boys' team. Also, Holy Cross does not field a gymnastics team but has had participants in the sport represent our school as a "team of one."

LEVELS OF COMPETITION:

Holy Cross competes on the Varsity, JV, and Freshman levels with separate schedules in Football, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Baseball, and Softball.

SELECTION OF ATHLETES:

Athletes are selected for Varsity, Junior Varsity, or Freshman teams based on their demonstrated abilities. The athletic program is designed to accommodate as many students as possible and “cutting” takes place only when absolutely necessary. The reasons for cutting an athlete are:

- To insure the safety and welfare of those individuals not suited physically for participation in that particular sport;
- To determine a reasonable number of participants for a coach to work with and bring to a level consistent with scheduled competition;
- To conform to those sports where limitations of the facility dictate teams numbers.

In each of these instances the athlete is given other options and is never simply “turned away.” These options include trying another sport or becoming a team manager.

Students who choose to participate in athletics are making a choice that requires self-discipline and commitment. Because they choose to represent HC our athletes are held to a higher standard than those students who do not participate. Consequently, we place a strong emphasis on “good training habits.” This would include making time for study and homework, following all school and team rules and regulations, a proper diet, a positive attitude, and a great work ethic. In other words, we expect our athletes to represent our school and themselves in a most positive way. To accomplish that goal, the athlete must be willing to make sacrifices.

EXPECTATIONS:

The Holy Cross athlete demonstrates respect for authority, honesty and integrity, responsibility and accountability.

The Holy Cross athlete is expected to:

- Demonstrate the highest levels of sportsmanship and fair play at all times, regardless of the circumstances.
- Comply with all school rules and regulations.
- Apply him/herself academically to the best of his/her abilities.
- Understand that the use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco (of any kind) is strictly prohibited at any time, anywhere.
- Demonstrate exemplary conduct and be a positive role model for others.
- Attend all meetings, practices, and games unless excused by the coach.

Please understand that participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege which may be revoked for failure to comply with the rules and regulations of the school, the athletic department, and/or the team. The athlete in violation may be required to sit out games, or for major violations, be dismissed from the team.

The athletic department adheres to a zero tolerance rule concerning drugs and alcohol. While the school policy calls for a four week co-curricular suspension which includes all activities, games, clubs, dances, etc.; the athletic department policy for in-season athletes is dismissal from the team for the remainder of that season.

Any student athlete found to be under the influence or in possession of any form of illegal substance will be dismissed from his/her team for the remainder of that season. (Note that the use of tobacco and chew are substances we consider to be a violation.

Athletic Commitments:

Today's students have many opportunities and choices to make concerning their free time. When a student-athlete accepts a position on a Holy Cross team, our expectation is that the student is making a commitment to the program and is willing to make the sacrifices necessary to insure the success of that team. If the athlete can not embrace all the rules and expectations of that sport, or if the athlete feels that the rules are too demanding, he/she should not participate in the sport.

Attendance- Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and contests. Due to scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations and/or holidays. The Athletic Department is hopeful that families can arrange their family vacations around the schedules of the school athletic teams. If this is not possible it is important to note that the following are examples of what will be considered by each coach when players return from extended leaves.

- No student-athlete will be guaranteed the same place on the roster upon returning from an extended leave from the team. Athletes who do not go on vacation will assume new roles in the makeup of the team, and therefore some athletes will see increased/decreased playing time.
- The conditioning and preparation for contests must always be considered for the safety of the athlete after an extended absence from the team.
- Coaches will make every effort to inform parents and student-athletes of the season's practice and playing schedule as far in advance as possible.

There are of course valid reasons for missing a practice or game, but if a student-athlete is going to be absent from a practice or contest, it needs to be communicated to the coach well in advance of the absence, unless of course it is an emergency.

There will be demands placed on the student-athlete that require him/her to consistently make positive choices. He/she will be expected to always attend practice when others might choose to go elsewhere, to always do what is right when others might choose wrong. It is not easy choosing to be an athlete at Holy Cross High School and we don't want it to be easy nor do we believe it should be easy. We want student/athletes who are willing to work hard, share experiences with their teammates, and see things through to the end.

Commitment and perseverance are an integral part of the total educational process.

Keep in mind that athletics is a privilege, not a right. The coach and athletic director will set sport specific expectations and there will be consequences for non compliance. These consequences are not intended as a punishment but are intended to insure the participants' safety, preparation and conditioning, the team's morale, and fairness to all the athletes and coaches. All athletes will be treated with respect and will benefit from their commitment to their athletic team.

Interscholastic athletics is not a recreational activity, nor is it something just to be written on a college application. It is a commitment of excellence to one's teammates, coaches, and the individual athlete him/herself. If it is felt the athlete cannot make the sacrifices and commitment asked of them, he/she should not choose to participate.

Team/Parent Meetings:

It is important that the coach schedules a pre-season meeting with parents and that all parents attend this meeting. At this time the coach will disseminate all pertinent information concerning expectations, practice times, policies and procedures, and answer questions concerning the rules and regulations.

Communication:

It is imperative to keep the lines of communication open with your coach. Most communication can take place effectively between the coach and the athlete. However, there are appropriate concerns a parent may wish to discuss with the coach. If the parent has concerns about the treatment of the child, the ways to help the child improve, academic concerns, or concerns about the child's behavior, the parent should contact the coach or athletic director. The coach or AD should be contacted at school, not at home, and a return call will be made promptly.

It is not appropriate however to discuss with the coach playing time, team strategy, play calling, or other student-athletes. Please do not confront a coach before, during, or after a contest or practice. The coach's responsibility at those times is to supervise his/her athletes.

Sportsmanship:

Poor sportsmanship by the players, coaches, parents, or fans will not be tolerated. This sportsmanship extends to the behavior in the stands as well. Overzealous or disrespectful and abusive fans will be removed from the site.

Hazing:

Hazing is defined as any activity that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person's physical or emotional health for the purpose of initiation or membership in an organization, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. Participation in any such conduct will result in immediate disqualification from a team and possible further school and legal disciplinary measures and consequences. Team initiations are a form of hazing. There is no recognized initiation of any kind at Holy Cross High School.

ELIGIBILITY:

Participants in Holy Cross interscholastic athletics must comply with all eligibility requirements outlined in the CIAC Handbook as well as the Rules and Regulations of Holy Cross High School.

HEALTH AND WELFARE OF ATHLETES:

All student/athletes involved in Holy Cross interscholastic athletics must have a current physical. A physical remains current for 365 days from the date of issue. Holy Cross employs a full time athletic trainer to deal with athletic injuries, rehabilitation of injuries, conditioning of athletes, nutrition, and overall health issues. Our policies are as follows:

- All injuries should be reported immediately to the coach.
- The coach will follow prescribed emergency medical procedures, when necessary.
- For injuries that are "routine" in nature, the coach will make a referral to the Athletic Trainer who will evaluate, treat, and make any necessary medical referrals.
- Any student/athlete who is under a doctor's care for any injury, condition, treatment, etc., must receive a release from his/her doctor before being allowed to resume participation in the activity.

TRANSPORTATION:

In most cases, especially in events that take place after school, transportation is provided to and from scheduled events. All athletes are required to use the provided transportation unless special arrangements are made with the Athletic Director and Assistant Principal. For some activities which take place at night or on the weekend, the athletes, with the coach's permission, may travel with a parent and meet at the venue. Also with the permission of the coach, the parent, and the Assistant Principal, an athlete may provide his/her own transportation to and from the event.

Athletes may not transport other student/athletes to any contests or practices.

AWARDS;

Student/athletes who participate in interscholastic sports are eligible for several state (CIAC), league (Naugatuck Valley League), and school (Holy Cross HS) awards. Most of the awards presented by the Athletic Department are earned for participation in the sport. There are also several special awards given for outstanding achievement in the sport. Presently there are three sports banquets per year.

EQUIPMENT and UNIFORMS:

In most sports, uniforms and equipment are owned by Holy Cross and are loaned to student/athletes. The care of the equipment is the responsibility of the athlete, therefore, the cost of damaged, lost, or stolen equipment is also the responsibility of the athlete. In several sports, the athletes themselves purchase parts of the uniform (jerseys, 'under armor'), and in these cases the athlete would keep the equipment at the conclusion of the season.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

There are several websites available to athletes and their families to receive athletic information concerning our teams. This is especially useful on days of inclement weather. Postponements are posted on the NVL website (www.nvlsports.org) and Edline. Information about schedules, times, sites, team records, etc., is posted on the CIAC website (www.ciacsports.com). You can also find the athletic schedules and results on the Holy Cross website and Edline at (www.holycrosshs-ct.com).

Good luck to all the athletes and their families and it is our hope that your four years at Holy Cross High School will provide a rewarding experience.