

Thursday Thoughts
September 24, 2009
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Principal

During the course of a school year I often have parents ask about our school's involvement in athletics. I thought today would be a good day to address this issue and hopefully clarify and address parent questions.

Many of our students are involved in some type of sports program during the year. This may be school supported or through our local Parks and Recreation Department or some other organization. Here at St. Mary School, we financially support athletic teams at the junior high level (7th & 8th grades). This financial support includes the hiring of coaches, purchasing of equipment, and scheduling of officials for home contests to name just a few areas. Those sports involved include volleyball, football, cross country and cheerleading in the fall; boys and girls basketball, cheerleading and sometimes wrestling in the winter, and boys' and girls' track in the spring. Dave Anders is the athletic director and coordinates all activities relating to junior high sports as well as overseeing the various programs. All income comes from gate receipts taken during our home football and basketball games and participation fees. We use the practice field at Fisher Catholic for our football practices and home games. We receive no income from cross country and track nor do we receive financial assistance from Fisher Catholic. Our track team uses the track at Lancaster High School (Fulton Field) for their practices in the spring when the track is available. Obviously, we are not able to host either cross country or track meets, so that is income not realized. Other sports that involve our junior high students, but are not financially supported by our athletic department are golf, boys and girls soccer, girls softball and boys baseball. These teams are considered club teams. The junior high teams that are financially supported by our athletic department are under the guidelines of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and abide by the rules and regulations of that association. Some of the rules and regulations from the OHSAA that affect our students would be athletic eligibility, number of games permitted during a season, the start and finish dates for particular sports, and number of practices with a coach that are permitted during the off season.

Many of our students below the junior high level are members of various sport teams. Some of those teams involve our students being on teams that are called the Irish, Shamrocks, and other such names and are comprised mostly of students from our school. Although most teams are part of well-structured leagues with their own rules and regulations, these teams are not under the jurisdiction of the St. Mary Athletic Department nor are they members of the Ohio High School Athletic Association which regulates the length of various seasons and eligibility requirements. Our younger students (and sometimes we are talking about kindergarten through 6th grade) are involved in football, volleyball, basketball, soccer, tee-ball, baseball, softball, swimming to name just a few sports. The St. Mary Athletic Department has nothing to do with the hiring of coaches, purchase of equipment, scheduling of games, etc. When the space is

available, our gym is used by the younger volleyball teams and the basketball teams below the seventh grade at no cost.

It is good that so many of our students are involved in athletics. This helps to promote team play, provides an opportunity for exercise, and gives a boy or girl an opportunity to give a particular sport a try to see if this is something he or she would like to pursue into the future.

And that, in a nutshell, is a picture of athletics here at St. Mary School!

And those are my thoughts for this week.