

Immaculate Conception School Basketball Program

Playing Time Expectations

The purpose of the Immaculate Conception School Basketball Program is to allow the students to have fun while competing in the Syracuse Diocese CYO basketball league. As an extension of the classroom, the basketball program will provide an environment where the students can achieve their spiritual, intellectual, social, cultural and physical goals essential to their development. The basketball program has the following goals:

- *To provide a fun experience for all students that choose to participate*
- *To teach teamwork and sportsmanship*
- *To teach players the rules and fundamentals of basketball*
- *To provide the opportunity to experience the thrill of competitive sports*

~IC School Basketball Program Mission Statement

As part of our ongoing efforts to create an intentional approach to the IC School Basketball Program, Mrs. Lisi, Mr. Bell, and members of the Athletics Advisory Committee want to take this opportunity to clarify some important details around playing time, which is addressed in Sections 7.2 and 7.3 of the program by-laws. Section 7.2 refers to *minimum playing time*. Section 7.3 refers to *equal playing time*. Since the letter of these sections is open to interpretation, we believe it is important to spell out with greater clarity the expectations moving forward.

As an extension of the classroom, we recognize that excellence matters, whether it's getting an A in the classroom or winning a game. Winning is an important part of the learning experience provided by our basketball program, but never at the expense of learning. Unlike "open gym" or other similar experiences, participation in IC basketball is meant to help students learn what it takes to push themselves and to experience competitive athletics. Playing different positions and at different times of the games is part of the educational experience we seek to provide. Having only the best players play in the most competitive parts of the game is great for those players, but not for the others who play the minimum and at times in the game that are not meaningful. Our goal with playing time is to balance equal playing time for all with the competitive excellence. We believe our teams can win, and can do so while providing roughly equal playing time for all.

We also want to balance parents' right to advocate for a positive learning experience for their child with the very real challenges coaches face to try and provide an educational and competitive experience for all. The bylaws speak of "roughly equal playing time," which includes many factors like stopping the clock to get subs in, injuries, and helping the team to have a winning experience. Larger teams make ensuring equal playing time very challenging for coaches. ***Roughly equal playing time*** is the standard we have set and will continue to enforce.



We understand that historically things may have been done differently. But in the best interest of all, we intend to assert the following as clarified expectations for coaches, parents, and students:

- **Coaches should ensure that playing time be roughly equal among all players in ALL games (including tournaments).**
 - Coaches should strive to create equal ability lineups that roughly match the other team's strengths and ensure competitiveness.
 - Playing time for players who miss substantial amounts of practice is up to the discretion of the coach (coaches should communicate openly with students and parents when this has become an issue).
 - Playing time for players who show poor attitude or poor sportsmanship is up to the discretion of the coach (coaches should communicate openly with students and parents when this has become an issue).

- **In the FINAL QUARTER OF PLAY for TOURNAMENT GAMES coaches** may create the lineup that gives the team the best chance of winning.
 - In these games *minimum playing time* is defined as *equal playing time* across three quarters.
 - For three quarters coaches should compete to win by creating equal ability lineups that balance equal playing and strategic matchups with the other team. But in the final quarter coaches may compete with whatever lineup they choose.
 - Whenever possible, coaches should compete to win by staying with equal playing time throughout the fourth quarter or as far as they are able.

- **Parent concerns regarding playing time should be addressed the DAY AFTER THE GAME** and should include **written communication to the coach, the athletic director, and the principal.**
 - Parents should not address their concerns during the game or immediately following the game.
 - Parents should create a simple email that expresses their concern (which allows for clarity and transparency of communication) copying the AD and the Principal to ensure timely resolution of concerns.

No school, coach, parent or student is going to be perfect. We're striving to balance an educational experience with a competitive sport experience. Our hope is that clarifying our expectations around these important issues will help all to have a positive experience in one of the most popular and cherished IC School activities. Let's work together to ensure that through Basketball all can experience the *Faith & Values, Academic Excellence, Family & Community* that define the IC WAY! GO EAGLES!

