



ATHLETICS MANUAL

Updated July 2024



A LETTER FROM THE ATHLETICS DIRECTOR

"The moment you give up is the moment you let someone else win" - Kobe Bryant

The ability to be a part of a team means to be a part of something bigger than yourself. Hard work, responsibility, humility, and endurance are only a few attributes that describe what it takes to be on a team. It is our desire to create a positive environment for all our student athletes. In return, we expect all our athletes to set a good example of our school and of course Jesus Christ. A student athlete must balance demands both on the academic side as well as athletics.

We desire to create a rewarding experience for every participant while also holding a reasonable expectation from all involved. We hope parents will support all teams, coaches, and athletes. Athletes must abide by the rules outlined in this handbook and put forth their best effort. Coaches are expected to provide the instruction and team building necessary for a positive environment for learning and success. Just like the sports we play, the athletics community is a team, and as such, it is the duty of every participant to thoroughly read this handbook and understand the reasonable expectations and standards laid out.

BCS desires great success in all areas of our student-athletes and believe that a culture of Christ-like behavior is the best approach towards that goal. We look forward to your continued support of our athletics program here at Bethany Christian School and are excited to see what the future holds for our youth teams.

Sincerely,

Kara Morrison

Athletics Dir

Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to be used as a reference for coaches, student-athletes and parents of student-athletes participating in athletics at Bethany Christian. This is an effort to define the coach, student and parent responsibilities as they pertain to the rules and regulations, as well as policies and procedures for participation in the athletic program. This handbook will be used to govern all athletic programs at Bethany Christian School. The Athletic Director, coaches, parents/guardians, and student athletes shall be required to sign that they have received, read, understand, and agree to abide by this handbook.

2024-2025 Bethany Christian Athletic Offerings

Fall Sports

- K5-6 Soccer (coed)
- Girls Volleyball
- K5-8 Basketball
- K5-6 Flag Football (coed)
- K5-12 Swimming
- JV Girls Volleyball

Winter Sports

- K5-6 Soccer (coed)
- Girls Basketball
- Boys Basketball
- JV Boys Basketball

Spring Sports

- Elementary & Middle School Basketball
- Elementary Soccer
- Middle School Flag Football
- K5-12 Track and Field

Sport and team availability may change depending on interest, registration and other factors. Any changes will be announced, and notifications sent out to ensure everyone is up to date.

Athletics Philosophy

The Bethany Christian School's approach to athletics stems directly from the school's philosophy of education, since it is foundational to everything done in the school. We believe our athletic program should aid in the academic, spiritual, social, and proper physical development of the student-athlete. The athletic program at BCS is designed to be a student focused, Christ-honoring experience in participative and competitive sports. It responds to the need all students have for the age-appropriate development of basic athletic skills, physical fitness, teamwork proficiency and positive personality traits.

Ultimately, the athletic program will demonstrate to the students, their families, and the community that athletic participation can effectively develop and demonstrate Christian character.

The athletic program endeavors to take into account the distinct differences among grade school, middle school, and high school sports. The grade school student-athlete needs an emphasis on instruction and skill development with sensitivity as to how sports experiences can deeply affect personality development. The middle school student needs similar instruction and sensitivity but will also be exposed to competitive interscholastic play. Instruction continues in high school with advanced training and a heavy practice schedule. At this level, athletic expertise will be used, along with other criteria to determine playing time.

Our Goal

Our goal in the athletics department is to play as a team and demonstrate Christ like behavior on and off the court.

Objectives

1. To demonstrate strong Christian character during normal and stressful situations. A coach or student-athlete should always be in control, or quick to correct his/her mistakes.
2. To foster a desire in the student-athlete to manage their academics and behavior in such a manner as to gain the privilege of participation in the school-sponsored sports program.
3. To help the student-athlete learn to handle relationships with their peers and those in authority over them.

Philosophy of athletic participation at BCS

1. Participating in athletics is a privilege not a right.
2. All students have the opportunity to try out for an athletic team. However, based on facility limitations and league regulations, some teams will need to make cuts.

3. The team coach will determine selection of team members. This decision will be based on their academic records, practice attendance, work ethic, attitude, and skill level in that particular sport.
4. The ultimate goal is to allow each team an opportunity to play in every game. Please see the “Level of Play” section for details regarding each grade level.
5. It is NOT the philosophy of BCS to focus on wins, but rather concentrate all of our efforts on building relationships, creating a positive environment for growth, learning the benefits of healthy competition and ultimately to elevate the reputation of Christ through action.

Definitions

Student-focused: Winning, while desirable, is subordinate to student development and enjoyment.

Participative: Implies a focus on instruction and student development. All students who seek to participate and to practice will be given playing time as outlined below.

Competitive: Striving to do our best at all grade levels creates a climate for quality participation and competition. At the upper grade level, competition also refers to the necessity for try-outs and differential playing time in order to optimize the BCS interscholastic sports experience.

Age-appropriate: The program should be adjusted to the physical and emotional maturity of students. The program is distinctly different for grade school vs. middle school vs. high school.

Interscholastic: Competition between BCS and sanctioned schools.

Elementary (K-5)

The elementary school athletic program supports the belief that all students have the right to participate given the correct school guidelines are met. The emphasis will be on physical, emotional and spiritual development of the student. At this level, intramural and interscholastic opportunities are encouraged, as are community-based recreational sports.

All students will be given an opportunity to participate with emphasis on physical exercise and enjoyment. The program will help develop positive personality traits like respect for authority, self-esteem, confidence and appreciation for the contributions of others.

Winning is viewed as subordinate to student enjoyment, equal playing time and character development. Enough teams will be organized as is practical to support student interest. The program will be sensitive to student interest, parent involvement, and facility availability; its offerings will be reviewed annually.

Middle School (6-8)

The Middle School athletic program policy supports the understanding that the middle school athlete still needs participation and instruction more than competition.

Furthermore, the tremendous physical and emotional variability in this age group will need to be considered. Interscholastic competition, while permissible, will not be the exclusive form of athletic participation. Intramural, recreational and instructional opportunities will be emphasized.

All students will be given an opportunity to participate, as long as facilities and programs permit. Physical exercise, student enjoyment and skill development will be emphasized. The program will help develop positive personality traits like respect for authority, self-esteem, confidence, loyalty, punctuality and appreciation of other students' rights to participate. Winning will still be subordinate to character development and enjoyment at this level. However, winning will be considered important, and differential-playing times may result.

High School (9-12)

The high school athletic program, when being offered, will continue to emphasize character developments and utilize previous skills, interscholastic competition with competitive teams will be encouraged. Students' athletic participation will be determined by skill level and by commitment to team participatory standards.

All interested students will be given an opportunity to try out. Skill development and competitive edge will be emphasized. Teams will be organized around player capabilities and over-all interest. A limited number of teams will be available.

Minimum playing time cannot be guaranteed for every high school student athlete. However, every possible effort will be made to involve all team members in good standing at appropriate opportunities within the framework of the competitive interscholastic experience.

Role of the Participants

- **School Administrator:** The School Administrator in consultation has final responsibility for and authority over all athletics teams.
- **Athletic Director:** The Athletic Director's responsibility is to plan and oversee the school's athletic programs. The Athletic Director shall report directly to the School Administrator. Athletic related issues or concerns should be taken up with the Athletic Director first and if not resolved can be escalated to higher authority.
- **Coaches:** The Athletic Director, with the approval of the School Administrator, is responsible for appointing coaches. Coaches report directly to the Athletic Director.

Coaches shall be selected for their character and willingness to abide by school policies, as well as for their coaching skills. All coaches shall complete a formal volunteer application on a standardized form provided by Bethany Christian School and obtain all required fingerprinting prior to the start of any coaching duties.

Required Training: All athletic staff shall meet the following training requirements:

- **Orientation:** The Athletic Director shall provide an orientation meeting for all *new* athletics staff members.
- **Policy Review:** On an annual basis, the Athletic Director shall review current athletic policies, highlighting any changes as well as recapping the Code of Conduct for Personnel.
- **Review of Medical Needs:** The Athletic Director shall review the medical needs of all student athletes. Respecting confidentiality, all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the well-being of our student athletes. When necessary, additional training for coaches will be provided. Those areas of training may include:
 - Coaching skills for a specific sport
 - First Aid
 - Use of cartridge-injectors (e.g. Epi-Pens®)
 - Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
 - Use of Automatic External Defibrillators (AED)

Supervision/Evaluation: The Athletic Director shall see to it that all athletic programs are properly supervised and evaluated.

Specific Duties of Coaching and Athletic Staff

The coaching/athletic staff must always remember that they are functioning within the context of an educational community. Towards that end they must keep in mind that they bear the following duties.

- **Duty to Instruct:** Use the latest methods of proper instruction, using sound progress in learning motor skills.
- **Duty to Learn:** Keep up-to-date on coaching skills and changes in sport rules.
- **Duty to Provide a Safe Environment:** Check the facility used for protective equipment, well-marked fire alarm and exits, debris, litter, obstacles in the practice or competition area, location of an External Automated Defibrillator (EAD) and its directions for use. Bring all emergency contact numbers and a complete first-aid kit.
- **Duty to Keep Records:** Document each and every incident or injury and complete forms as required by the school. Submit such reports immediately to the Athletic Director and call the Athletic Director in the case of a major incident or when an injury requires medical attention. Likewise keep attendance at every practice, competition, or team event. The Athletic Director will make sure that all athletes have met eligibility requirements before they turn out for their first practice.
- **Duty to Follow Fair Practice:** Protect student athletes from discrimination to gender, race, color, creed, or other unfair practices from parents, students, coaches or spectators.

Report any incidences of bullying or discrimination to the Athletic Director as soon as situations are made known.

- **Duty to Safely Transport Athletes:** Ensure that all athletes have safe transportation to and from practices and/or competitions. Supervise each athlete until his/her transportation arrives. Do not (if at all possible) remain alone with a student, but at least two adults, one being the coach shall wait with any students. Every coach is provided with a notebook containing a roster and 911 forms. They MUST check rosters as the students enter the van, as they leave it and as they enter it at the end of the sporting event.
- **Duty to Foresee:** A prudent coach should be able to foresee the potential danger that may occur if an activity continues in a facility, with equipment, or with behavior in a given situation. The coach should take actions to prevent the activity from continuing until the problem is corrected.
- **Mandated Reporter - Duty to Report Alleged Abuse or Sexual Misconduct:** Any coach who, in the course of his/her coaching duties determines that he/she has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child is a victim of abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect must report to the Department of Children and Families, and shall immediately report to the Athletic Director.
- **Duty to Use Caution with Multi-Aged Teams:** When combining students in grades four and five into one team, consideration must be given to the different levels of ability and stages of physical development.

Eligibility and Participation

The following shall be the norms governing participation in the Bethany Christian School athletics programs.

- **Only students enrolled at Bethany Christian School** may participate in the sports programs at Bethany Christian School.
- **Homeschool Students** are granted athletic participation on an individual basis and are subject to a sports participation fee. Students will follow specific guidelines seen in the [HB 3127](#) bill.
- **Only students receiving grades of C and/or a 2.0 or better in all academic subjects may participate** in the sports programs at Bethany Christian School. He/She must show consistent effort in classes and model a positive attitude toward his/her teachers and peers.

*Participation in athletic programs is a **privilege** and not a right.*

- **If a student has been suspended from school** (whether in or out of school), he or she is deemed to have been suspended from participating in athletic programs for the duration of the suspension from school.
- **If a student is out of school because of illness**, he or she is ineligible to participate in sports that day. If the illness occurs on one day, and there is no school the next day, but there is either a competition or practice, he or she is eligible to participate.

- **If a student is absent for all or part of a day** for any reason other than illness, the student's eligibility to play is left to the Athletic Director's discretion. In this case, the parent/guardian shall request permission for the child to participate. The Head of School shall render the decision in writing. Without authorization from the Athletic Director, the coach shall not allow the student to participate.
- **If a student has been absent from practice**, he or she will not be able to play in the next competition/game but must attend the game in uniform.
- **All parents/guardians shall sign an athletic participation permission slip and provide the coach with necessary emergency information.** Absent these documents, students are not eligible to participate in practices or competitions.
- **Allergies and Medications:** Parents/guardians who are aware that their child has a serious allergy shall also provide written permission for the administration of an Epi-Pen® or other prescribed cartridge auto injection and shall supply the coach with that medication. ***In the absence of a coach who has been trained to administer such a medication, the parent/guardian shall attend all competitions. As per any time a medication delivered by cartridge auto injector is administered the coach shall see to it that emergency medical services are summoned.***

Practices

The gym at Bethany Christian School is a shared space. Therefore, it will be necessary for all teams to divide the available time equitably, keeping in mind the noted restrictions for holidays and weather. Students should enter and exit the building through the gym doors. Parents are asked to drop their child off for practice on time and return at the appropriate time for pick-up.

Parents and guardians should not remain in the school during practices. The focus of the practices should be on the coaches and the exercises planned.

Weather Related

When school has been cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergencies, all practices and competitions are likewise cancelled.

Games

All game schedules are set down by the appropriate association. Every effort must be made on the part of the Athletic Director and coaches to protect the physical, emotional and academic needs of our students.

Use of Facilities

The Athletic Director has key access to the building. The key must not be duplicated or shared with anyone. The use of the building for practice allows access to the gym and bathrooms.

Financial Arrangements, Contracts and Emergency Forms

All financial transactions, athletic contracts and emergency forms must be finalized before the beginning of the season. A student will not be allowed to attend practices or acquire a uniform until the necessary paperwork has been submitted to the coach and reviewed by the Athletic Director. ALL uniforms not properly returned to the school when the season ends will result in a fine up to \$300 at cost of said uniform.

Codes of Conduct and Related Matters

The Bethany Christian School Athletic Program seeks to further the mission of our school and the Christian Church. Therefore, it is expected that all practices and games shall begin with prayer.

When the national anthem is played or sung, all players shall stand on the sideline in a respectful posture with hands on hearts (failure to do so shall result in the forfeit of participation in the event.)

During prayer all players shall stand on the sideline in a respectful posture with hands clasped behind their backs and heads bowed (failure to do so shall result in the forfeit of participation in the event.)

The school athletic handbooks shall include codes of conduct for athletic staff, participants, parents/guardians, and spectators.

Athletics and Discipline

Sportsmanship is not an option! At any given sporting competition, the coach holds primary responsibility for maintaining good order. If the school Headmaster, athletic director, or other designated supervisor is present he or she shall assist the coach in maintaining good order, especially working with the student-athletes, parents/guardians and spectators.

There are some disciplinary issues which will be addressed directly by the School Headmaster which may have ramifications beyond limiting participation in athletic programs and which may be cause for detention, suspension, or expulsion from school as outlined in the school's parent handbooks.

Violation of the Code of Conduct

1. In the event that a student violates the code of conduct, the coach reserves the right to provide appropriate corrective action that is proportional to the violation. Such corrective actions may include, but are not necessarily limited to:
 - Counseling the student regarding the conduct.
 - Advising parents of the violation.

- Removing the student from the practice or competition.
2. In the event that a student has repeatedly violated the code of conduct or if the student has engaged in a serious violation that is completely inconsistent with school or athletic rules, the coach reserves the right to:
 - Notify the parents in writing of the violation.
 - Notify the Athletic Director or designee of the violation.
 - Remove the student from the practice or competition.
 - Suspend the student from the team, after consultation with the Athletic Director or designee.
 - Permanently remove the student from the team after consultation with the Athletic Director and School Headmaster.
 3. In the event that a spectator violates the rules, the coach, Athletic Director, or School Administration (if present) shall take appropriate corrective action to remedy the situation. Such actions may include:
 - Reminding groups or individual spectators of the rules.
 - Quietly counseling the spectator.
 - Asking the spectator to leave.
 - Having the spectator removed (only in extreme situations).
 - Reporting the incident to parents of the spectator when the spectator is a minor.
 - Reporting the incident to the school administration and requesting that the spectator be barred from attending additional competitions.
 - Barring the spectator from future attendance at sporting events.
 4. Parents/guardians attending as spectators who violate the code of conduct shall be subject to the same corrective actions as above.
 5. In the event that the spectator is a student from the opposing school, the problem will be brought to the attention of the opposing coach who will address the issue with the student and the adult who brought the student to the competition.
 6. Coaches shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.
 7. In more serious matters the parties involved shall follow a resolution process.

Suggested Resolution Process

The resolution process should be flexible and enable a choice or course of action to be taken which specifically suits each complaint. The process reflects Jesus' teaching about conflict with our brothers and sisters and dealing with them with honesty and integrity. Below are two approaches that can be used either on their own or as a step-by-step process toward resolution.

Direct Approach:

The direct approach involves a clear and polite request for conversation about a specific situation or concern that has been observed. This is best done at least one day after the incident when calmer tempers prevail. Examples of situations in which this approach can be useful include:

- A coach asking a parent (or other spectator) to be more positive when supporting the team.
- A parent speaking to a coach about being more encouraging rather than critical when addressing the team during breaks.

Indirect Approach:

The parties involved in the complaint meet, either together or separately depending on the situation either with the Athletic Director or Designee to resolve the issue. This would be appropriate when:

- The complaint is of a serious nature.
- The person making the complaint has good reason to feel uncomfortable in using the direct approach.
- The direct approach has not worked.
- In the event that the parties have met with the Athletic Director, they may have recourse to the School Headmaster.
- The Athletic Director or Designee shall explain the process to all parties involved and shall document the outcome of the process.
- Remedies coming out of the resolution process include, but are not limited to:
 - Student suspension from practice/competition for short term
 - Student removal from team
 - Additional disciplinary actions as per school handbook
 - Parent/guardian restricted from attendance at games
 - Coach counseled by administration
 - Suspension or removal of coach