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ATHLETICS

2023-24

Student & Parent Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

The athletic handbook defines the goals, structures, and policies for participating and coaching within the Bible Center School Athletic Program. The handbook provides guidelines for coaches and players to use as situations arise throughout the various sports seasons. We rely on coaches and players to apply these guidelines with wisdom and discernment and to communicate with the Athletic Director with any questions or concerns.

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

The interscholastic athletic program at Bible Center School is an integral part of the curriculum and an extension of the classroom. Competitive interscholastic athletics is an important part of Bible Center School's extra-curricular offerings. Athletics should never be thought of as being separate from, above, or beneath the normal operation of the school. The athletic programs should comply with and reinforce the school's overall mission statement. We believe and recognize that God has gifted students in a variety of ways, including abilities in athletics, as well as in other areas. We seek to provide an opportunity for the students to develop and use their God-given talents and abilities.

Athletics are recreational. Academics are not to be subordinate to athletics at BCS. Participation in sports should provide student-athletes with opportunities for using their God-given talents and abilities in addition to the sheer fun of competitive play. We believe that an athletic program enhances the atmosphere of the Bible Center School student body, providing students and parents an opportunity to build community.

Done in the right way, athletics are a positive learning experience. We believe that interscholastic sports provides a unique opportunity and platform to demonstrate Christian values, even under the stress of competitive play. We believe that participation in athletics provides a good opportunity to encourage Christian students in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- To recognize that athletic ability is a gift from God and to allow students to use their God-given talents and abilities.
- To encourage teams to give all glory to God, for He is the source of their talent.

- To develop student athletes who are playing to glorify and honor God as well as develop self-discipline and self-controlled attitudes.
- To teach the value of athletic competition, leadership, and teamwork.
- To provide students with the opportunity to develop socially as they work together with their peers toward a common goal.
- To encourage every student to begin and develop his/her relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ.
- To encourage every student to develop a love for learning and to live up to his/her athletic potential.
- To encourage students to put forth their very best effort in their sport(s).
- To provide a structured, controlled atmosphere to offer students good, athletic competition.
- To teach students respect for authority.
- To guide athletes in the realization that being part of an athletic team is a privilege, not a right.
- To reinforce important character qualities such as responsibility, encouragement, integrity, dedication, honesty, and humility.
- To provide an orderly atmosphere conducive to the attainment of the above goals.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM & OVERSIGHT

Although it is hoped that there will not be any serious disagreements throughout the years, problems do occasionally arise and should be handled in the right way. It should be the desire, as believers, to handle these occasions in a Biblical manner.

Matthew 18:15-17 lays out a great plan to resolve issues and conflicts that arise between two sides. As a Christian school, we believe this to be the appropriate way to handle conflict in a Christ-honoring way. In the event of a disagreement or conflict between a parent and coach, player and coach, etc., we want to encourage everyone to follow the chain of command. The following is the Athletic Department chain of command: Parent/Athlete/Spectator, Coach, Athletic Director, Principal.

Proper order of handling the situation is to first have a conversation with the coach. If the situation is not resolved, then a meeting with the coach, parents and the Athletic Director should occur. If further help is needed with the situation, then a meeting with the Principal and Athletic Director will follow.

We seek to provide quality coaches experienced in both coaching and playing their particular sport so that they understand how to teach and communicate effectively while still remaining responsive to the needs of the student-athlete. Upon the start of the season, Team Snap or GroupMe can be used in contacting the coaches. We encourage active communication between student-athletes and coaches, as well as with parents and coaches; however, we do ask that you be considerate of the personal needs and privacy for each coach.

The Athletic Director will perform the day-to-day administration of the Athletic Program. He will oversee, schedule, and coordinate all department activities ensuring focus, excellence, and effectiveness as he implements the Athletic Program philosophy.

There will be three sports' seasons – fall, winter, and spring. During those three seasons, we offer sports for both boys and girls. We seek and desire to select a head coach as well as an assistant coach to provide a high level of oversight, wisdom, and guidance, as well as coverage in case a coach cannot make particular practices or games. Please know that most of our coaches work outside of the academic arena and are juggling their own professional and personal schedules in order to serve our student-athletes. With that in mind, please be patient as some practice schedules may need to be flexible.

VISION OF THE PROGRAM

The vision for our program to be a success is dependent on everyone working together and fulfilling their role. We desire for our athletic program to be a great supplement of our academics, not replace it.

ROLE OF THE PARENTS

Parents of student-athletes have a responsibility to both their child, the team, and the school. They play such a vital role in the athletic realm at BCS. Parents need to set the standard of exemplary sportsmanship while attending games/matches, discussing BCS athletics with others and at home. It is also vital that parents honor the Lord above all else when attending athletic events. Without strong parental support, the student-athlete will have a hard time achieving his/her greatest potential, causing the team to maybe suffer. It is important that parents provide positive reinforcement and understand their role as being part of a team. Parents, as well as players, should be supportive and encourage coaches and teammates at all times.

Parents are not coaches and learning to trust coaches is a key to learning the life lesson experiences that athletics provide. Like relationships with teachers, parents should feel free to have open constructive discussions with the coach on issues pertaining only to their child. In

return, parents should expect that the coach will respond with honesty, respect, and a mutual concern for the well-being of their child. Parents will be asked to participate in a variety of volunteering ways; such as concessions, taking admission, scorestable, etc.

Above all, we ask our parents to support and pray for our coaches, athletes, and administration. Parents should always encourage their child, both on the field of competition and in the classroom, to always give their best effort.

ROLE OF THE COACHES

The coach is the “living curriculum” for the student-athlete. The coaches here at Bible Center School are vital components of the athletic program. They are on the “front lines” in pouring into and investing in our student-athletes. They have the responsibility to model Christ-like behaviors and attitudes at all times. We desire to have coaches that love their athletes, work hard to improve team skills, and model leadership and humility to all those they come in contact with.

In order to be an effective coach and role model in their designated sport, BCS coaches must be thoroughly knowledgeable in their sport, show traits of organization and preparedness, be able to motivate athletes, be able to make adjustments when needed during games, and work effectively under the authority of the Athletic Director and school administration. Our coaches take seriously this opportunity they have to impact and influence young lives for Christ.

ROLE OF THE PLAYERS

Without the student-athletes, BCS Athletics would not be possible. Bible Center School is very excited to have the opportunity to offer athletics to our students. We desire that Bible Center athletes have a genuine love for God and the confidence to represent Him at all times, both on and off the athletic field. The athletes should be diligent in preparation, give 100% at all times, demonstrate self-discipline, and be respectful in all situations, which would include but not limited to practices, games, class, chapel, lunch, field trips, etc. They should show humility and aggressively pursue excellence during competitions regardless of score, opponent, or situation.

We want our student-athletes to display their God-given talents and abilities and give Him the glory for it. BCS student-athletes must recognize exactly that: they are a student first and then an athlete at school. The ultimate responsibility falls on the shoulders of the student-athlete, for it is the student-athlete who is accountable to their schoolwork, his/her parents, coach, and ultimately the Lord.

ELIGIBILITY

- All 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students are eligible to participate in the athletics program.

- Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.3 in order to participate in extracurricular activities at Bible Center. If an athlete has an overall grade of a “D” or below in a core class (Math, Science, English, Social Studies), the athlete will be placed on probation. The athlete will then have two weeks to bring his/her grade up to regulation status, and the Athletic Director will remove the athlete from probation.
- A student who is absent from school more than one-half day may NOT participate in games without special permission from the Athletic Director or the administrator.
- Students must have an updated physical form in the Athletic Office prior to any participation in conditioning, practice, or games.
- Each student athlete is expected to conduct his/her life in accordance with the standards and principles set before us in God’s Word. This includes adhering to the BCS Athletic Code of Conduct. Any violations will affect participation in the athlete’s athletic activities.
- BCS recommends each family check with their insurance provider for coverage in the event of an injury during a school-sponsored practice or game. Most companies provide additional insurance options for student-athletes. A current medical insurance card must be kept on file for each student athlete.
- BCS student athletes must pay the athletic fee prior to the sport of which they wish to participate begins.

ATHLETIC FEES

Students who participate in athletics are required to pay a fee at the beginning of each season. An athletic fee must be paid for each student for each sport played. The fee for the sport played in the school year is \$75. Participation fees cover expenses incurred in the Athletic Department and help pay for the services and coaches, officials, transportation as well as equipment. Fees will not be refunded if a student quits a team. Athletic fees are not a guarantee of playing time on a team. All of the conditions of being a team member apply as if the fee did not exist - and that includes playing time based on the coaches’ determination of a student-athlete’s ability.

BENEFITS OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM

The athletic program at BCS is not designed to produce Olympic-caliber athletes. We hope our athletic program can allow students to develop Christian character and individual talents, learn to work together as a team, and glorify God using their athletic talents and abilities.

While our boundaries are driven by finances, facilities, and families, we have the awesome

opportunity to make the Athletic Department as good as we choose. We serve a mighty and able God that provides for us. Our goal with the athletic department is to supplement the academic program, not replace it. It is our goal to strengthen families, not separate or cripple them.

PRACTICES AND GAMES

LENGTH OF SEASON

Each season is approximately 6-8 weeks long. With three different athletic seasons, we strongly encourage the students to participate in more than one season, and take advantage of the multiple sports opportunities.

ATTENDANCE

Each member of a BCS athletic team must assume the responsibilities associated with such a position. The athlete has an ethical obligation to the team and the school, which includes regular attendance at practices and athletic contests. Commitment to BCS teams should come before any club or outside team. All players are required to attend all practices and games unless given prior permission to miss by their coach. Missing a practice or game without prior permission may result in consequences determined by the coach. If for some reason an athlete cannot come to a practice or game, he/she **MUST** communicate with their coach. Not being at practices not only may diminish playing time in following games, but it also hurts the team as a whole.

SCHEDULING

The scheduling of all athletic events is determined by the Athletic Director in cooperation with each coach. Coaches will be given the opportunity to have input into scheduling for their sport. Practices will be scheduled by each coach. The Athletic Director will work with coaches to schedule practices when limited facilities are shared by multiple teams. Coaches should be prepared to assist the Athletics Office in communicating changes to athletes and parents.

TIME AND DAYS

Practices for all teams should not exceed three hours on school days. All activities- warm-up, practice, coach/player meetings, team discussions, etc., should be completed within this time frame. Athletic contests are never scheduled on Wednesdays.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation by bus will be provided when available. When transportation is provided, students are required to ride the team vehicle, unless the player makes other arrangements with one of the coaches. The only exception to that is a weekend tournament/game, etc. Students may ride home with a parent if the player lets the coach know in advance.

Student-athletes may be released to their parents after an away contest with verbal or written consent to the coach. They may be released to another adult only with verbal or written consent from their parents. Coaches will stay with the student-athletes until they all have a ride home and have left.

DISMISSAL

Because of travel, it is sometimes necessary for teams to leave school prior to normal dismissal time. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange with teachers to make up any missed work.

DRESS

Student athletes are expected to dress appropriately while traveling to and from athletic events. Athletes may wear athletic warm-ups on game days. Coaches may communicate a particular dress code for athletes on away games. Coaches will also communicate their dress standards for practices. Practice and game uniforms will be worn with modesty.

UNIFORMS

The athletic department will purchase/provide all team uniforms. Athletes are responsible to take proper care of uniforms and return them in good condition. BCS issued game uniforms are to be worn only for games - not for practice or PE. Lost or damaged uniforms must be replaced by the athlete. All uniforms and equipment must be returned to the coach within a week of the last game. If a player never returns a uniform, the athlete will be charged to replace it.

CANCELLATIONS

In the event of a practice/game cancellation, we will communicate that to the students and families as soon as possible. If it is a home event that we have scheduled, the Athletic Director will try to make the cancellation call by 2:30 PM if at all possible. If it is an away event, the opponent school Athletic Director makes the cancellation call. As soon as we receive that call, the AD will communicate with the coach and a text will be sent to families. The cancellation will be announced immediately from the respective school office and students will be allowed to contact their parents to make arrangements for pick up. It is possible/necessary at times to cancel games and practices at the last minute due to inclement weather. Please do not call the school on these days. We will contact you as soon as we know.

EJECTIONS

Any ejection from a game, whether it be of a coach or a player, will result in an automatic two game suspension. Parents ejected from a game will also be asked to not return for two games. The coach or player ejected will also have a mandatory meeting within two days of the game with the Athletic Director and the administrator to discuss the cause of the ejection and further disciplinary action if necessary. We understand that during competition, things may

happen that may make us upset, displeased, or even angry - whether that be an official, an opposing player, or an opposing fan. It is our responsibility to control our tempers and respond in a Christ-like way. Coaches should limit discussion with officials to matters of rule interpretation. Coaches must report to the athletic director all occasions they, or a player, receive a technical foul, yellow card, any other sportsmanship related penalty, or even ejection.

INJURIES

It is assumed that injuries will happen in the realm of athletics. It is our number one goal to make sure our students are safe. Players will be excused from practice and games if they are injured. If a player misses three or more consecutive practices because of injury, he/she must be cleared by a doctor to return. If an injury occurs during a practice or a game, the coach will submit a written accident report to the Athletic Department within 24 hours. If the injury is serious, the coach will call EMS, with parental permission granted. The coach will not try to diagnose an injury. It is better to be criticized for being too cautious than to be blamed for aggravating an injury. The coach will stay with the injured player and have another coach or player contact the parents. If the Athletic Director is on scene, he will be contacted as well and take action as well. If a player becomes unconscious for any reason, he/she may not continue to participate that day. Parents and EMS may be notified. In order to resume athletic activities, the player must bring a release from the doctor giving them permission to resume play.

PLAYING TIME

Coaches are *encouraged* to involve all of their team members in the game as much as possible. Starters for games will be chosen by the head coach based on skill, past performances, practice effort and attendance, attitude, and leadership. Often in a team sport, it becomes necessary to put the individual's needs aside for the greater good of the team. This type of teamwork must be taught and is a valuable skill for life. We encourage our coaches to strive to actively involve all team members in the contest. Players should be taught to accept their various roles and support their teammates in any way they can, even from the bench, if necessary. How much, if at all, a student plays is the coach's decision, but we will always encourage coaches to play as many team members as possible in each contest.

MANAGERS

Student managers (not exceeding two) can be kept on a team at the coach's discretion. Student managers may be responsible for handling equipment, keeping stats, and running the scoreboard. They may participate in practices if the coach sees it as beneficial to the manager and to the team. Student managers must follow the same academic and athletic policies student-athletes are required to follow.

EQUIPMENT

Students are responsible for all equipment issued to them. Athletic uniforms are supplied for the sole purpose of athletic participation. Any damage to or loss of the equipment/uniform will be considered the direct financial responsibility of the student-athlete who is responsible for its care. Students are expected to treat the equipment owned by the school with the utmost care and respect. Privileges to use the school's equipment, which includes buses, will cease if students do not take care of the equipment.

Coaches will also use their own equipment they have purchased and used themselves. The same respect and treatment of their equipment is expected as well.

COMMITMENT

PARTICIPATION

Participation in athletics is highly encouraged at BCS. However it is expected that if a student starts a sports season, he/she finishes it. All students are expected to commit to attending practices as well as games. We recognize that various issues may arise during the season (sickness, doctor's appointment, family emergency, etc), the student **MUST** tell the coach; otherwise, team members are expected to attend all practices and games.

QUITTING THE TEAM

Students will be given a one-week grace period at the beginning of the season where if they decide that a certain sport is not for them, they may leave the team. If a student is considering quitting a team, he/she should arrange a meeting with their coach to discuss the situation. The student-athlete needs to communicate to their coach and the Athletic Director about why they want to leave the team. Quitting a team after being selected for the team is strongly discouraged. It is our desire to teach students values such as persistence, perseverance, and accountability in overcoming any obstacles they may endure.

COMMUNICATION

We want the lines of communication to always be open. The BCS athletic department is committed to communicating goals, objectives, rules, and policies of the athletic program, eligibility, and expectations of our student-athletes to the very best of our abilities. If questions arise that are not clear, the athletic department and school administration will work together to develop an answer. We want our athletes to know that our coaches are approachable. The coaches want the players to communicate with them. If they are going to be late or absent from a practice, it is the athlete's responsibility and duty to contact their coach and let them

know.

The student athlete should first directly reach out to the coach if a question or concern during an athletic season. If further clarification is required, a parent should then contact the coach 24 hours after the incident/event. If the issue remains unresolved, the parent should then communicate his/her concerns to the Athletic Director. We encourage all of our players and parents to voice their concerns in a respectful manner. Complaining is not the same as voicing a concern; the difference may be in one's attitude and approach.

DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR

To be a BCS athlete is an honor. Students participating in extracurricular activities must abide by all policies in the BCS Student/Parent Handbook. As a Christian school, it is our number one goal and responsibility to represent the Lord Jesus in all aspects. It is of the utmost importance that every player's actions are consistent with what we believe. All coaches and players must set a Christ-like example to their opponents.

Students are expected to behave in the same manner as required on school grounds, with appropriate respect and courtesy. Electronic device/phone usage is permitted while traveling for athletics. Any inappropriate use of the device will result in the device being taken away as well as communicating to the parents the details surrounding the incident.

We want to instill in our athletes good work ethic, effort, and attitude. Our coaches at BCS truly love and care about the athletes. When appropriate, discipline may need to be enforced due to poor effort during practices or games, outright disobedience, academic issues, or bad attitudes towards coaches, teachers, or other teammates.

All student-athletes will adhere to the Athletic Code of Conduct. A violation can result in suspension or ban from an athletic team.

RELATIONSHIPS

THE PLAYER-COACH RELATIONSHIP

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics. Unfortunately, a parent can have a direct impact on this very important and delicate relationship. Parents may not agree with every decision the coach may make, but it's how and when parents express their feelings that can have a direct impact on the child. The student-athlete will have to interact with the coach. Receiving technical or strategic instruction at home may interfere and conflict with the instruction and advice given by the coaches at practices or games. Having a good player-coach relationship can have a huge positive role in the

student's athletic career at BCS.

THE PARENT-COACH RELATIONSHIP

You, as parents, love your child and are concerned about their well-being. You want the very best for your child, and that is understandable. In the realm of athletics, an athlete can only have one coach. During the season, we ask that you as parents allow the coach to coach your child during practices and games.

Allowing the coach to instruct and guide the athlete, as well as the team as a whole, is crucial in many respects. Should a parent have questions or concerns, we encourage the parents to not approach the coach immediately after the practice or contest. Coaches have other responsibilities and it may be an emotional time, so we ask the parents to wait 24 hours to approach the coach. If questions and concerns need further addressed, an appointment may be made with the coach and the Athletic Director.

THE PARENT-PLAYER RELATIONSHIP

It is not uncommon for some parents to try to live through their child's athletic efforts. Not only is being positive and supportive vital, but adding pressure and unrealistic expectations can be harmful. We desire for the students to enjoy and grow in the opportunity of playing athletics at BCS. We want our student-athletes to strive to have fun and enjoy their experience playing sports. Instead of asking about the child's individual performance or dwelling on their play, we want to encourage the parents of our student athletes to first ask how the team did as a whole and ask if the child gave 100%.

VOLUNTEERING & COACHING

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering at BCS is always welcome, and also encouraged, including in our athletic programs. Having volunteers not only helps the BCS staff, but also helps and encourages our students as well. Seeing parents and other adults volunteer their time and efforts to help them succeed, encourage them, and support them means more to them than we probably realize. If one would like to volunteer, we encourage them to talk to our staff or Athletic Director for opportunities to be used and serve.

COACHING

All head coaches must be interviewed by an administrator. All volunteer coaches must be interviewed by the head coach to ensure proper knowledge of the sport they will be coaching, as well as to determine if they will be a positive, Christ-like role model to the athletes. The

Athletic Director must approve all volunteers. Once approved, potential volunteer coaches must obtain a background check through the school office. Once the background results are returned, the coach may begin working with the team.

All coaches will not show favoritism with children of their own on the team. If the coach does show favoritism, he or she will be asked to resign the position.

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK COMPLIANCE FORM

I have read and understand the rules, regulations, expectations, and guidelines set forth in this handbook. I agree to abide by these rules, regulations, expectations, and guidelines and I will faithfully support the coaches, athletic director, and administration of Bible Center School.

Athlete's Name: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Athlete's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

IMPORTANT: Please read, sign, and return this form to your coach or the Athletic Director. This, along with your Athletic Code of Conduct, current physical form, athletic fee, copy of insurance card, Travel Permission Form, and Emergency Contact Form must be received by the athletic department prior to your first practice. Without these items, you will not be permitted to practice and your place on the team may be awarded to another student.