

# **Bethesda Christian School**

## **Athletic Handbook**

**2010-2011**

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## STUDENT ATHLETE AND PARENT INFORMATION

### I. Handbook Acknowledgement

Coaches, parents and athletes must agree to abide by all policies and rules set forth in this Athletic Handbook, Bethesda Christian School, and the leagues of competition. Such agreement shall be noted by signing and returning the "Handbook Acknowledgement" sheet to his/her coach. ALL athletes must have this form turned in to their head coach prior to the first interscholastic contest.

### II. Eligibility

It is our desire for all of our athletes to be eligible to play on their respective teams. We encourage them at all times to maintain excellent academic standing in the classroom and to live lives that glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The following guidelines will be in affect not only for athletics, but for all extracurricular activities.

Students with failing grades in any class at the time of progress reports will be suspended from all games, practices, rehearsals, and off-campus performances starting from the day progress reports are issued. Students may regain their eligibility as soon as grades are passing. Students with any failing grade at the end of the grading period will be suspended from all games, practices, rehearsals, and off-campus performances for 2 weeks. However, students will have one "grace card" per semester for one activity of their choosing that can be used at either progress reports or report cards to retain their eligibility. All classes will be checked for grades. Teacher/administrators will have classes weighted by progress report time. (i.e. added points for honors, pre-AP, and AP will posted by progress report time.) Citizenship grades will also be checked for eligibility. Students with an "N" will be declared ineligible.

### III. Participation and Commitment

A. Bethesda Christian School strives to do all things unto the Lord. We want to be a good steward of what God has given to the school, our coaches, athletes and parents and because of this we need to understand the commitment and responsibility that is required to maintain an athletic program that will honor the Lord. If an athlete is playing for BCS and another sports team, it is the responsibility of the athlete to communicate with the coach to discuss any scheduling conflicts. Playing time in games may be affected by missed practices and games. Each athlete must weigh the cost of the commitment she/she makes prior to making that commitment.

B. An athlete who chooses to quit or is dismissed from the team before the end of the season may not go immediately to another sport that runs concurrently with the sport they have left. In addition, the athlete will not be recognized for that sport at the sports banquet.

- C. Practices and games are not optional. It is expected that once you are placed on a team you will attend all practices and games. All athletes should be on time to practice and dressed ready for the session
- D. Senior school athletes receive .5 academic credits per season for participating in athletics. Athletes lose this credit if they quit during the season, are ineligible for more than half of one season, or are dismissed from the team because of academics, conduct or choice.

IV. Tryouts

- A. Depending on the number of athletes wishing to play for a team, tryouts will be conducted prior to the start of the season. It is imperative that an athlete wanting to play a sport, tryout for that sport. The tryout months for the sports vary but fall sports tryout is the first week of August, winter sports have their tryout around the third week in October and spring sports hold their tryout in January. These are not exact but do offer a reference to go by. All athletes are expected to be there and no guarantees are made to athletes securing a position or a starting spot on a team. Coaches along with the TAPPS calendar determine the date for tryouts. New students who enroll after the tryout will be given the opportunity to tryout if there is room on the team. Certain TAPPS guidelines apply in permitting new students to tryout if this situation arises.
- B. On the elementary and junior high levels, teams will be chosen based on attitude, effort and ability. Coaches are encouraged to be as equitable as possible in giving playing time to all team members. The goal at these levels is development of the player in all aspects of the game.
- C. On the high school level, coaches will choose teams based on attitude, effort and ability. At the varsity level, coaches will play the best players. It is not guaranteed that players will play in every game. Simply put, at the varsity level, the desire is to be competitive and put the varsity sports in a position to win games and represent Bethesda Christian School in district and state levels. Junior varsity teams are developmental and the goal will be for these athletes to apply what they have learned in practice to a game situation. Equality of playing time may not be reached in these contests.

V. Parental Support

- A. We encourage parents to be involved in the athletic endeavors of their children and we greatly appreciate the support of parents and spectators at contests. As ambassadors of Jesus Christ, we are expected to encourage our athletes, opponents, coaches and officials in a positive and life giving manner. Please allow the coaches to instruct and give feedback to players as needed.
- B. Should a conflict arise and you need to conference with a coach, please follow the "24 hour" rule. That is, wait 24 hours before approaching a coach and then if the need is still there, call and make an appointment with the coach. Coaches will not discuss playing time, strategy, or decisions made on the field of play with parents. As human beings, coaches will make mistakes and parents will not

agree with every decision a coach makes. Any issues regarding playing time will be discussed with individual players.

- C. Parents are expected to be at the school to pick up their athlete in a timely manner when away games are played. Coaches work long hours and many have families themselves, so please be sensitive to this issue.
- D. Parents are encouraged to become members of the Bethesda Christian School Athletic Booster Club.

VI. Practice

- A. Practice times and sites are determined by the coach and will be provided to parents and athletes in a timely manner.
- B. All team members are expected to be at each practice.
- C. When emergencies occur, the athlete is expected to notify the coach as soon as possible.
- D. All athletes should be properly equipped according to the guidelines set forth by the coach.
- E. Guidelines for excused and unexcused absences will be determined by each coach for each team.
- F. It is the athlete's responsibility to notify a coach when he/she will miss practice.
- G. Athletes are expected to attend practice and games to their conclusion.
- H. Athletes are expected to maintain passing grades in ALL subjects.
- I. Athletes are expected to take care of academic assignments with practices and games in mind.
- J. Athletes must be present all day in school in order to participate in games and practices

VII. Games

- A. The philosophy on the varsity level is to win the athletic contests that we enter. Coaches will put players in the game that will afford the best opportunity to accomplish this. Each coach determines his/her own criteria for players and playing time.
- B. On the junior varsity and middle school levels, the goal is player development. All players, provided they have met the practice/playing guidelines for their sport, will be given the opportunity for game situations.
- C. Coaches will inform their players of expectations prior to the start of the season.

VIII. Transportation

- A. Bethesda Christian School will provide transportation to and from athletic contests. (There are rare occasions when parents may be asked to transport their child in the event of multiple away contests and limited available transportation.)
- B. Athletes are expected to travel to and from athletic contests on school-provided transportation unless prior notice, in writing via email or note, is given.
- C. Athletes may not ride with other athletes.

- D. Parents of other athletes may take other athletes if both parents agree and the Athletic Director or coach has the agreement in writing.
- E. Teams will travel on school buses, church vans or rented vans.

IX. Athletic Lettering Policy

Students bearing a “letter” or letter jacket from BCS represent our Savior and our school at all times. In light of this, the awarding of a letter is considered both an honor and a privilege. Therefore, any student involved in serious disciplinary issues may be barred from receiving a letter at the discretion of the administration of Bethesda Christian School, even if that student has met all other criteria given below.

- A. The athlete must be on the Varsity Roster of the athletic team throughout the entire season.
- B. If an athlete is added to the varsity roster during the course of the season, it will be up to the coach’s discretion whether the athlete’s contribution to the team was significant enough to justify lettering in the sport.
- C. The athlete must attend ALL practices and games except when cleared by the coach.
- D. Any student who does not finish the season by his/her own choice or by the choice of his/her parents, is ineligible to letter.
- E. Any athlete who loses eligibility more than one time throughout the season, will be ineligible to letter.
- F. Any athlete who does not finish the season for disciplinary reasons, will be ineligible to letter.
- G. If an athlete is injured during the course of the season, it will be up to the coach’s discretion whether the athlete’s contribution to the team was significant enough to justify lettering in the sport.

X. Letter Jackets

Athletes will have two opportunities to order a letter jacket during the school year if a letter is earned. Fall and winter sports, including volleyball, soccer, cross country and basketball will have a letter jacket fitting in the month of October. Spring sports including baseball, softball, track & field and golf will have a letter jacket fitting in March. Diamond S Spirit Wear in Irving is the company BCS uses for letter jackets. Their main number is 972-255-1132 and the representative is Yolanda McCormick. The cost of the athletic jacket is the responsibility of the athlete’s family. The purchase of any patches the athlete desires for his/her jacket is the responsibility of the athlete’s family and Diamond S has the ability to produce these patches.

XI. Booster Club and Parent Volunteers

The Bethesda Christian School Athletic Booster Club is a vital part of the athletic program at BCS. They do a great deal to promote and assist the BCS athletic programs. All parents are encouraged to participate by volunteering their time and other resources by joining and supporting the BCS Booster Club. The Booster Club

provides financial and organizational support and is open to anyone interested in contributing to the success of BCS athletics. Funds are raised through concessions, spirit wear and annual fundraisers. The Booster club elects its own officers and operates under the supervision of the athletic director. The Booster club also sponsors the annual Blue & Gold Athletic Banquet. Ways in which parents can be involved are by assisting in concession stand and admissions gates. There are many opportunities for parents to assist the entire athletic department and in turn benefit the school.

XII. Conflict Resolution

One of the goals of the athletic department is to communicate with athletes and parents in a manner that will benefit all parties and glorify God in the process. We understand that conflicts will arise and it will be necessary to resolve them. The following guidelines are in place to assist in resolving these conflicts if and when they do occur. These will be resolved in a manner that upholds the dignity of student athletes, parents and coaches.

- A. The following are communications athletes and parents should expect from coaches in written form:
  - 1. Coaching philosophy and goals
  - 2. Practice and playing guidelines
  - 3. Rules and consequences
  - 4. Itineraries, locations and schedules of both practices and games
- B. The following are communications coaches should expect from parents and student athletes either in person, note, email or phone call:
  - 1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach with the athlete being the initial communicator.
  - 2. Notification of scheduling conflicts well in advance
  - 3. Positive role-modeling at practices and contests
- C. Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:
  - 1. Treatment of athletes, mentally and physically
  - 2. Ways to help the athlete improve
  - 3. Concerns about an athlete's behavior
  - 4. College options and recruiting
- D. Concerns not appropriate to discuss with coaches:
  - 1. Team strategy and coaching decisions
  - 2. Other student athletes

**E. The "24 Hour" Rule**

Many things take place during the course of an athletic contest or practice. Many times coaches are replaying decisions made in the game and may be focusing on corrections and strategies that need to be implemented for an upcoming game or practice. Because meetings of this nature rarely promote resolution, the "24 Hour" rule will always be in effect. This not only allows for reflection and prayer, but for emotions to settle so rational, facts-oriented discussions can take place.

**F. Matthew 18 Principle**

Matthew 18 gives us clear instructions for dealing with conflict. In the event that a player has a question or complaint, he/she first must go to the person (coach or other player) in a spirit of reconciliation and love to work out any differences. **This must take place before a parent approaches the coach!** If the problem is not resolved, the player may request a meeting with the person of conflict and the coach. If the issue is not resolved between players and coach, then a meeting with the Athletic Director may be requested. If the coach is the person in conflict with a player, the player may request a meeting with his/her parents and the coach **after** the player has talked to the coach personally. If the athlete, coach, and parent still have issues to be resolved, then they may request a meeting with the Athletic Director. If the issue is not resolved, then a meeting of the above parties with the administration of BCS may be requested.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in athletics at Bethesda Christian School is an exciting privilege! If you choose to allow your child to participate in athletics, you must also understand the responsibility he or she has of being a leader both in and out of the classroom and in the arena of competition. It is also imperative that you understand the important role you play as the parent of a BCS athlete. Both you and your student represent your family, our school, and our Lord. In light of this, parents of student athletes at Bethesda Christian School also choose to participate and must agree to the following guidelines and priorities.

As the parent of a BCS athlete, I agree to honor God in the following areas:

1. **SPEECH:** "Let your conversation always be full of grace..." Colossians 4:6
  - a. **Be positive and encouraging.** Uplift your student and others.
  - b. **Do not use profanity, questionable slang, or "trash talk."** Anything that can be construed as negative or insulting must be avoided.
  - c. **Never criticize coaches or officials.** Officials and coaches represent authority and obedience to their authority is not predicated on whether or not one agrees with them. If you "bad mouth" your child's coaches or officials, you cannot expect him or her to play for or respect these individuals. All authority is God-given and disobedience to authority is disobedience to God.
  - d. **Insist that your students address coaches and officials with respect.** They should call their coaches "Coach" or Mr., Miss, or Mrs. and address officials as "Sir" or Ma'am." You should use these titles as well when referring to coaches and officials.
  - e. **Never be involved in negative cheering.** Booing officials or opponents or getting into negative chants sets a bad example for your children and is counter to all we say and believe at BCS. Examples might include chanting "air ball" when the other team misses a shot or screaming while an opponent is on the free throw line.
  - f. **Never speak negatively around students or other parents about:**
    - i. The school: a negative atmosphere is contagious. Instead, create a positive atmosphere of gratitude.
    - ii. Students or parents: speak to parents only about your and their students. Speak to students only in an encouraging manner.
    - iii. Your child's teammates: this only allows your student to make excuses for his/her own performance. Do not offer excuses for your children if they are not playing. Encourage them to do their best and to keep striving for worthwhile goals.
  - g. **Always resolve differences with coaches out of sight and earshot of students and other parents.** Call to make an appointment to speak with the coach privately, honoring the "24 Hour Rule" and following the Matthew 18 principle. Pray about what you will say and what is motivating your discussion.
  - h. **Smile, meet, and greet.** Often you may be the first impression someone has of

Bethesda Christian School and of our Lord and Savior. Ask yourself this question: "Is my speech setting up an opportunity to share Jesus Christ or a need to apologize?"

2. **RELATIONSHIPS:** "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." John 15:12

a. **Develop good relationships with your student and their teammates.** God has placed your child on this team for a purpose. Use this opportunity to minister and encourage others. You never know who is hurting and needs your show of God's love in their life. If sports becomes all about you and/or your student, please do not participate.

b. **Develop good relationships with other parents.** You need their prayers and support as much as they need yours!

c. **Develop good relationships with parents from other schools.** Never miss a chance to share Jesus with others or build friendship with a brother or sister in Christ. Promote BCS and its students. The relationships you build are a reflection of our entire ministry.

d. **Develop good relationships with the coaches.** Get to know them. Pray for them. Communicate with them with an open heart and mind. Set appointments to meet with them rather than ambushing them before or after games or practices. Be open, honest, and use gentle words.

3. **UNITY:** "I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." John 17:23

a. **Develop unity within our school family.** God has called each of us to BCS with different abilities and roles. Never be jealous, envious, or critical of someone else's role – be busy fulfilling your own! Your example of unifying our school body teaches a valuable lesson to all of our students.

b. **Help your student develop unity within his/her team.** Teach him/her to respect the seriousness of their commitment by making sure they attend all practices, meetings, games, and ministry opportunities. Please make every effort to refrain from disciplining your child by "grounding" him/her from athletic events. This punishes every member of the team!

c. **Develop unity within the Kingdom.** In order for the purpose of the Kingdom of God to be met, all believers must be united. Pray for other Christian schools as you pray for Bethesda Christian School.

4. **MOTIVES:** "...whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." I Corinthians 10:31

a. **Be motivated by the love of God.** We live for Him because He demands it, expects it, and deserves it.

b. **Strive for victory as a tool to teach your students.** Teach them that athletics is a means to an end - not an end unto itself.

c. **Teach your students to abide by the rules of the game in letter and spirit.** Tactics promoting unfairness will not be tolerated.

d. **Teach your students about athletics in light of your family mission, philosophy, and goals.** What you teach them through athletics should match what you teach them at home.

e. **Use your child's experience as a chance to be involved in his or her life.** Your relationship with your child as an adult will last longer than your relationship with him/her while he/she is in your home. If you want a relationship with him/her as an adult, you need to begin building that relationship now. Athletics is a great opportunity to do this!

5. **BEHAVIOR:** "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did." I John 2:6
- a. **Maintain class and character.** Your actions reflect upon you, your family, BCS, and our Lord. You set the example for your children. Refrain from use of tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, and illegal drugs before and during all school athletic activities.
  - b. **Be an example and a guard.** Set the standard high for behavior and appearance. Do not be afraid to speak in love to those whose behavior might undermine BCS's testimony.
  - c. **Always dress appropriately.** Modest attire that does not attract attention to you and away from your child should be worn.
  - d. **Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.** Coaches, students, parents, and spectators need to be strong in this area. Smile and shake hands with visitors before and after games regardless of the outcome.
  - e. **Recognize the success of your opponent.** Compliment good play of students from the other school. Congratulate their coaches on a well-coached game.
  - f. **Insist that your student follow instructions.** Coaches depend upon a player's ability to follow orders immediately and without question. Questions may be raised at an appropriate time such as at practice or after games when there is a time for reflection and discussion.

## STUDENT ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Participation in athletics at BCS is a privilege. If you choose to participate in athletics, you must accept the responsibility of being highly visible and a leader both in and out of the classroom and in the arena of competition. More importantly, also understand that you represent our Lord!

With these things in mind, the following guidelines have been established for those students who elect to participate in the athletic program here at Bethesda Christian School.

As an athlete at Bethesda Christian School, I agree to honor God in the following areas:

1. **SPEECH**: "Let your conversation always be full of grace..." Colossians 4:6
  - a. **I will not use profanity, questionable slang, or "trash talk."** Anything that can be construed as negative or insulting must be avoided. Examples might include chanting "air ball" when the other team misses a shot or screaming while an opponent is on the free throw line (Ephesians 5:4).
  - b. **I will address coaches and officials with respect.** Call coaches "Coach" or "Mr., Miss, or Mrs." Address officials as "Sir" or "Ma'am." Respond to instructions with "Yes sir/ma'am" and "No sir/ma'am." Speak about coaches and officials only with the highest level of respect, whether or not they are present.
  - c. **I will not criticize coaches or officials.** Officials and coaches represent authority and obedience to their authority is not predicated on whether or not you agree with them (Romans 13:1). All authority is God-given and disobedience to authority is disobedience to God. Students who must express concerns to coaches must respect the "24 Hour Rule" explained in the Athletic Handbook and follow the Matthew 18 principle.
2. **RELATIONSHIPS**: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." John 5:12
  - a. **I will develop relationships and a good rapport with my teammates and coaches.** God has placed you on this team for a purpose. Participation in sports provides great opportunities to develop lifelong friendships. If sports become all about you, your team does not need you.
  - b. **I will develop relationships and a good rapport with my classmates.** Do not attempt to set yourself or your team on a pedestal. Your classmates will not respect or support you or your team. Hazing and bullying will not be tolerated.
  - c. **I will develop relationships and a good rapport with students from other schools.** Never miss an opportunity to share Jesus with others or to build a friendship with a brother or sister in Christ.
3. **UNITY**: "I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." John 17:23
  - a. **I will develop unity within my team.** No team can succeed without it.
  - b. **I will develop unity within my school family.** Do your part to help BCS complete

the mission to which God has called it by fulfilling your role and helping others fulfill theirs.

c. **I will develop unity within the Kingdom.** If the purpose of the Kingdom of God is to be met, believers must be united. Pray for the success of BCS and other Christian schools.

4. **MOTIVES:** "...whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." I Corinthians 10:31

a. **I will be motivated by the love of God and strive for victory for His glory – not mine.** We live for Him because He demands it, expects it, and deserves it.

b. **I will demonstrate Christ in my life by abiding by the rules of the game in letter and spirit.** Tactics promoting unfairness will not be tolerated.

c. **I will be committed to excellence.** In all areas of life – faith, practice, academics, worship, and games – I will act like a champion!

5. **BEHAVIOR:** "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did." I John 2:6

a. **I will maintain a good reputation.** An athlete's character should be in good standing with the administration, faculty, staff, and other students. Athletes are highly visible representatives of BCS in the community, and should model Christ-like character at all times. Athletes must understand and abide by all BCS rules and guidelines.

b. **I will know and understand all requirements.** An athlete should make an effort to understand all of the expectations of his/her team and meet these expectations in action and in spirit. This includes athletic eligibility requirements.

c. **I will show respect for all coaches, managers, and athletic staff.** This includes game plans, methods, and philosophies.

d. **I will show respect for my teammates.** The athlete will respect the seriousness of his/her commitment by attending all practices, meetings, games, and ministry opportunities and by working together to accomplish a common goal. Help hold your teammates accountable for their actions as well.

e. **I will maintain a high standard of appearance.** Adhere to the strictest interpretations of the school dress code and team dress and uniform code both in and out of the arena.

f. **I will demonstrate Christ-like character.** Both in and out of the arena, show respect in speech and actions for officials, opponents, and all those associated with our opponents, regardless of their actions. Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will not be tolerated and will warrant additional consequences.

g. **I will know and understand the BCS athletic philosophy.** Athletes will respect the eternal effects of their speech and actions as they represent themselves, their families, their school, their church, and ultimately their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.