

# ANNAPOLIS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



*Athletic Handbook*  
**2023-2024**

To Parents and Student-Athletes:

Welcome to another athletic season at Annapolis Christian Academy. You are now part of the Warrior athletic program which began in the year 2000 with varsity Boys Basketball and has since expanded to offering fall, winter and spring sports in grades 3 through 12.

Athletics, rightly understood as an integral part of education, compliments our greater mission at ACA. Lessons of *commitment, teamwork, tenacity* and *overcoming adversity* are advanced on our courts and fields. It is in the midst of “running to win the prize” that our student-athletes experience great life lessons. These lessons go beyond the x’s and o’s and into the heart of each one as they develop a love for Christ and service to those around them. Along the way, our programs also provide wonderful opportunities to strengthen the larger community of ACA. Relationships built on the sidelines provide cohesiveness among our parents as they support their children. Your enthusiastic participation is important as we continue to seek to honor God through our athletic program.

This handbook contains the philosophies, policies and guidelines which govern the ACA Athletic Program, as well as some of the more important rules and regulations required by the school and governing leagues. Although it is intended to be comprehensive in nature, there will inevitably be situations that occur that are not outlined in this handbook. Having a common understanding of the rules and regulations that govern athletics will assist in significantly reducing concerns and unforeseen problems.

We ask that you read this handbook thoroughly with your student-athlete(s). The athletic office must have a current, signed **Acknowledgement Form** (located at the end of the handbook) on file before a student-athlete can participate.

We look forward to another great year in athletics.

Go Warriors!

**Virginia Dempsey**  
*Athletic Director*

**Travis Lockyer**  
*Head of School*

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## **PREFACE**

The Annapolis Christian Academy Athletics Handbook provides the policies, guidelines and expectations necessary for the proper administration of the school's athletics program. This handbook is provided to ACA's student-athletes, coaches, parents and administrators with the expectation that all the information contained herein is understood and followed by all involved in athletics. This handbook does not contractually bind Annapolis Christian Academy and is subject to change without notice by decision of the school's Board of Trustees. A shared understanding of the rules and regulations that govern the school's athletics program will alleviate many concerns and problems. However, it is inevitable that situations or issues will arise that are not addressed in this handbook. The school administration will address these issues on a case-by-case basis and will add to or modify this handbook as needed.

The school requires that all student-athletes, parents of students participating in athletics and coaches read this handbook carefully and indicate completion of doing so by signing and returning the Acknowledgement Form each school year to the athletics office. This form must be on file before a student-athlete can participate in school athletics.

## THE MAN IN THE ARENA

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.” – Theodore Roosevelt

## **ATHLETIC PROGRAM PROFILE**

*Mascot* – Warriors & Lady Warriors

*Colors* - Navy Blue, Scarlet & White

*Leagues* – Texas Christian Athletic League and/or private school league

*Sports* -

Grades 6-12: six-man football, volleyball, basketball, track, tennis, cross country

Grades 6-8: co-ed soccer

Grades 3-6: flag football, volleyball, basketball, track

### NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Men's Basketball                      2017

### STATE CHAMPIONS

Football                                      2004, 2009, 2021

Volleyball                                    2009, 2020, 2022

Girls Track                                    2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2022, 2023

Boys Track                                    2022

Girls/Boys Track                            2021

Girls Basketball                            2017, 2021

Boys Basketball                            2019, 2020, 2023

### STATE RUNNER-UP

Football                                      2010, 2015, 2017

Boys Basketball                            2017, 2018, 2022

Girls Track                                    2019

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## **PHILOSOPHY**

Athletic competition is an artificial endeavor. It mimics real life without being real. This is evidenced by the terms we use: we “play” a sport and competitions are called “games.” The exception is for those who derive or wish to derive their livelihood from athletic performance. While we welcome student-athletes of such high ability, our primary program goal is not intended to develop them to that level. Instead, we wish to use our athletics program to further the mission of the school:

*Annapolis Christian Academy exists to glorify God by providing an educational community committed to the classical and Christian ideals of truth, goodness and beauty, the cultivation of wisdom and virtue, and the integration of faith and learning with all of life.*

That athletics is artificial is not to say it is without value. Just the opposite is true. It is because of athletics’ artificiality that it holds great value to a school such as ACA that seeks to develop not just academically astute students but well-rounded young men and women who demonstrate qualities such as humility and selflessness coupled with confidence and poise. Within athletic competition, student-athletes encounter many positive and transforming experiences.

The positive role of athletics is on display when students’ interest in competition and sport is used for the greater good. Many students grow up loving sports and look forward to representing their school in competition. Sadly, such interest is not often found with academics. Students don’t typically dream of learning advanced biology or ancient history in high school. This results from a lack of emphasis on learning in our culture and homes. On the other hand, sports are often given too much attention as athletes serve as modern gods for young men and women. While we may not change the culture, we are given a great opportunity to capitalize on this interest by using it to change and develop our students into mature and godly men and women who are equipped for service and leadership to the glory of God.

For athletics to serve our students in the best possible way, the school must have a vision for what it wants to accomplish. Without such a vision, we are at risk of succumbing to the default positions often taken by sports advocates: either that competition is only about victories, trophies and championships (and therefore requires much time, practice and money) or it is a tool for building the self-esteem of the students (and therefore must be conducted in such a way that students are shielded from unpleasant outcomes such as humiliating defeats).

A well-run competitive sports program (well-funded, led, and supported) should provide the student- athlete:

- An appreciation for and development of one’s body.
- An ability to handle pressure with confidence and poise.
- A healthy perspective on victory and defeat.
- Knowledge in how to interact with others through team sports.
- Experience in being a leader as well as a follower.
- The will to do one’s best, no matter the circumstance.

- Satisfaction that comes from the exercise of creativity within recreation.
- A sense of belonging to something greater than oneself, be it a team or a community.
- A test of one's ability as well as the encouragement to reach beyond perceived limits.
- The discipline that requires one to set a goal, work toward it and see it to completion.

When we lose sight of the fact that athletics is artificial, we risk misleading our student-athletes. When athletics is "real", too much emphasis is placed on the outcome. The desire for victory can become so great that we lose sight of any benefit our student-athletes may gain in defeat. When athletics is "real", sinful behavior is easily justified. The poor call by a referee or cheating by an opponent may be seen as a wrong that in the name of justice must be addressed, often boorishly. To counter these tendencies, we must train not only the student-athletes but the parents, coaches and administrators in a healthy perspective on competition and give each clear expectations for conduct on the field, court, sideline and stand.

This is not to say that we want our students to enjoy defeat or become passive doormats after every blown call or incident of cheating. Such a response is to replace one set of weaknesses (blown temper, profanity or ugly remark) with another (giving up, quitting or resignation with defeat). Both responses, while typical, are overcome through mature coaching and parenting that seeks to move student-athletes toward strength of spirit, body and mind.

## **ATHLETICS' MISSION**

At Annapolis, we seek to conduct our athletics program in the same way we conduct our academic and arts programming: with excellence. We compete to win and make victory in each contest a goal while also keeping in mind higher goals. ACA athletics helps to fulfill the mission of the school by teaching the Christian way of competing and the Christian way of life as expressed through our core values in athletics:

**Growth and Development:** Athletics at Annapolis believes in incrementally growing and developing our own athletes from within as they move up through our programs. It is a stair step approach with each team building and preparing the individual athlete and team for the next level of competition. There is a recognition that we have not arrived and need to continually be striving to be the best versions of ourselves. There is a nobility in the struggle. Thomas Paine wrote, "That what we achieve too easily we esteem too lightly."

*"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. " Colossians 2:6-7*

*"When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known." I Corinthians 13:10-12*

*"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to*



*perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” II Peter 1:5-8*

**Excellence:** Annapolis strives for excellence - programs that are well managed and well executed with a focus on discipleship - and success - reaching maximum potential both individually and as a team - in all athletic endeavors. Coaches, players and parents, participate in such a way that honors God and conveys a positive witness to those around us. Winning on the scoreboard should be one of our goals, but losing can many times present beneficial learning opportunities if we seek to grow from those lessons.

*Instilling discipline necessary for excellence in athletics.* The program seeks to develop student-athletes' skills, endurance and physical strength through qualified and competent coaching and training programs designed to minimize injuries. Discipline in the form of positive correction, assistance, improvement and prevention is emphasized. Each student-athlete is expected to commit her or himself to practice and conditioning in season and out in order to compete to the best of her or his ability.

*“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.”*

*Col 3:23*

*"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:13-16*

**Character:** ACA seeks to help grow and nurture academically astute students but well-rounded young men and women who demonstrate qualities such as humility and selflessness coupled with confidence and poise. Since Annapolis athletes are representatives of their team, their school, their community and more importantly, God, ACA athletics is committed to developing each individual's character as well as proper perspectives on winning and losing which are consistent with the will of God. We will be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

- *Expecting student-athletes, coaches and parents to act with honor.* Student-athletes, coaches and parents are expected to act honorably toward their opponent, their opponents' supporters, and the game or contest officials, regardless of how the other acts. The program seeks to represent the school community and the cause of Christ well in all its activities. All are expected to act with modesty and graciousness in victory and defeat. All are expected to abide by the letter as well as the spirit of league rules.

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” Gal 5:22-23*

*“Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” Rom 5:3-4*

*“Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules.” II Tim 2:5*

*“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.” I Cor 16:13*

**Commitment:** Success is in reaching maximum potential both individually and as a team. Being a great student and a great athlete is a difficult task, an admirable goal and a worthy accomplishment.

- *Encouraging a balanced approach to sports and life.* The program supports the Christian’s priority of faith and family first as well as the school’s priority of academics over athletics by scheduling practices and games (when under the school’s control and as facilities and coach’s schedules permit) in such a way as to have the least possible disruption on the student’s ability to attend church, be with family and study while also competing with excellence.

*“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it a slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.” I Cor 9:24-27*

*“He who gathers crops in the summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.” Prov 10:5*

**Community:** Our programs focus on discipleship and living out a sincere faith in learning how to love our neighbors. Our teams aim to build strong bonds of Christian unity not just with the athletes on the teams but with the families and fans that support the program.

- *Providing training for Kingdom service.* Through mature and godly coaches, the program seeks to challenge student-athletes to train and compete in such a way as to develop qualities of perseverance, strength, compassion, boldness, and humility with an eye toward serving the Kingdom of Christ as godly men and women. In team sports, this includes taking an “others first” approach.

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” Prov 27:17*

*“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers... let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” I John 3:16, 18*

*“Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” I John 4:11*

## **ATHLETIC CULTURE**

If the Bible is the ultimate source of truth, then what does Biblical Truth say about all aspects of sports for athletes, coaches and fans? First, all are created in God’s image-teammates, opponents, fans for both teams, and coaches. Second, everything we do must line up to the character to our Lord Jesus Christ. Last, we cannot operate under a long standing sports culture by looking to

what is common practice around us. Annapolis takes pride in being a counter cultural athletic program. Biblical truth informs our practice with how we handle winning, losing, adversity, conflict, and sports traditions.

Heidelberg Catechism answer number eighty-six says “Because Christ, having redeemed us by His blood, also renews us by His Holy Spirit after His own image, that with our whole life we show ourselves thankful to God for His blessing, and that He be glorified through us; then also, that we ourselves may be assured of our faith by the fruits thereof; and by our godly walk win also others to Christ.” This gives us an outline of how we to live all of our life, including athletics. First, we are to live a life of thankfulness that glorifies God through us. Second, our faith should be shown in fruits of godliness that win others to Christ. This is the summary of how coaches, athletes, families, and fans should be living out the ACA sports culture.

### **TRIVIUM OF ATHLETICS**

We recognize the normal stages of a child’s development and provide appropriate opportunities in athletics. We also look to balance church, home, and school by incrementally increasing the time commitment as students and families are more able to manage this increase in responsibilities:

**Grammar School athletic programs** (3rd -6th grade) encourage participation and experimentation and establish a love for the game. The fundamentals of the game will be strongly emphasized. Tryouts are for the purpose of team placement based on skill and ability. Cuts are highly discouraged but permissible if based on facility or resource issues. Coaches will do their best to provide equal playing time. Grammar athletics will work to develop skills and techniques as well as introduce the concept and critical need of “teamwork”. And finally, athletics at this stage provides the first time excitement of wearing ACA school colors in sports.

**Grammar sports time commitment**– a max of a three days a week commitment with two practices and one game or two games and one practice. Practice length for all sports is 1 hour 30 minutes. Practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays depending on league scheduling. No teams will have mandatory practices over school holidays.

**Logic School athletic programs** (6th, 7th-8th grade) strive to further a love for the game, continue to develop fundamental skills, and help athletes begin to understand and execute more advanced level strategies and schemes. Try-outs are for the purpose of team placement based on skill and ability. Cuts are discouraged but permissible if based on facility or resource issues.

**Logic School time commitments** – a max of a four day a week commitment with two practices and two games or three practices and one game. Practice length for all sports will be no more than two hours. . Practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays depending on league scheduling. No teams will have mandatory practices over school holidays with one exception - if a game is scheduled on the day immediately following a Monday holiday, practice can be held on Monday evening. Playing a game after several days off can become a safety/health issue for the kids.

**Rhetoric athletic programs** (9th-12th grades) strive to be the best they can be with a focus on excellence in execution. Players are put in positions to get the most out of their athletic talent, cultivate leadership skills and understand “team-first” responsibility. Each head coach will put the collective efforts of the team ahead of individual achievement and will take knowledge, ability to execute, attitude, conduct and safety into consideration when it comes to playing time. Athletes should not assume that they are guaranteed a spot on a varsity team simply because they participated on the same team in previous years.

**Rhetoric School time commitments** – a max of five to six day a week commitment. Practice length for all sports will not exceed 2.5 hours per day. Strength training is not counted as practice time. No games will be held on Sundays. Practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays and across some school holidays depending on the sport and season. No games will be played during mid-year or final exams.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **MULTIPLE SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES**

We encourage athletes to be well rounded, multi-sport athletes, participating in different activities and athletics. Different sports challenge athletes in different ways, and the skills developed through the training methods used in one sport will often help the athlete in another sport.

The athletic department will always encourage athletes to compete in multiple sports. This makes the overall program stronger. Coaches will not discourage any athlete from competing in multiple sports. In season sports will always take precedence. Athletes are not required to practice with a sport that is not in season if it interferes with an in season sport that they are participating in.

We recognize that it is in the nature of a small school that students will be involved in multiple activities both athletic and non-athletic alike. The athletic department will always encourage athletes to compete in multiple activities. This makes the overall school stronger. Additionally, the disciplines and work ethic required in fine and performing arts is similar to those in athletics. Coaches will not discourage any athlete from competing in multiple activities. This aids us in keeping our focus on student’s academic performance as being a students’ first priority.

Leadership from both activities will work closely together to minimize conflict, however, reserve the right to require, on rare occasions, sole commitment to their activity due the higher priority level (priority levels 1-3) and role (e.g. starter/lead vs non-starter/secondary). Where there is dual commitment and schedule conflict, there must be a declared priority and agreements made between students, parents and team or department leadership before the seasons begin as to how the student will divide his/her time between the activities. The decision to participate in multiple activities should ultimately be decided by the parents and students.

Priority	Athletics	Performing Arts
1	State Championship	Performance
2	Playoffs	Tech Week
3	Regular Season Games	Dress Rehearsals
4	Practice	Rehearsals
5	Pre-Season	Try-Outs

Athletics sponsored by the school take precedent over any non-school sponsored activity (e.g. club sports).

#### **ANNUAL ATHLETIC MEETING**

Each year the Annapolis Athletics Program will hold an all sports meeting to discuss policy changes and updates and to convey points of interest regarding the mission and execution of the athletics program. This meeting will be held prior to each sport season. Attendance by all athletes and parents is highly encouraged. The Annual Athletics Meeting is for all current student-athletes in grades 6-11 and parents.

#### **MUSIC**

All music associated with the athletic program and all sports will be Christian. This includes weight room, practice, locker room, pregame, and warm-ups. In addition, music played in vehicles traveling to and from contests.

#### **SUB-VARSITY and Logic “B” TEAMS**

Creation and size of teams is determined by many factors including but not limited to the number of participants interested in a sport, facility availability, safety and coaching resources. Whatever we do we want to do it well. Decisions will be made on a season-by-season, team-by-team basis in order to offer the most healthy experience for all parties involved.

#### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

During home contests, we serve as hosts to the visiting team, its students and spectators. They are our guests, and they should be treated accordingly. At away contests, we are expected to act as invited guests. We will treat the home school’s personnel and facilities with care and respect. As participants and spectators, we want to cheer for our team, not against the opponent, being modest in victory and gracious in defeat. Additionally, we will regard the rules of the game as an agreement, the spirit and letter of which we should not evade or break. Players play the game, coaches coach the game... no official has ever “lost” a game for a team. Much like we do not

readily credit an official for a win, we will not blame an official for a loss. Officials will be treated with respect, noting that they are in authority during a game, and we will accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official.

Any member of the ACA community who is a participant or spectator at an event, who uses profanity, engages in inappropriate behaviors such as fighting or similar misconduct will be dismissed from the event and is subject to disciplinary action by the school and may lose privileges to attend games.

## **SCHEDULING**

The athletic department does its best to schedule games and practices well in advance of the season (at least six months for region matches and two months for non-league matches). We do not want league changes or changes made by an opponent to be a growing trend, so we will seek to keep these changes to a minimum seeking a two week window for any potential changes from our opponents so that we can communicate the change appropriately to our constituents. Since we know that problems do arise forcing scheduling changes (severe weather, etc), there will be some allowance, however if this is a growing problem with a particular opponent, we will not schedule that particular opponent for the subsequent athletic season.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL**

### **Drivers**

Parents or approved competent adult drivers in safe vehicles with proper restraint provisions will transport all student-athletes. All drivers must have a current driver's license and automobile insurance on file in the ACA office.

Student-athletes may ride home from an athletic event with parents. They must have written permission or verbal communication with the AD in order to ride home with someone other than their parent. It is permissible to write a single note granting permission to cover an entire season for riding home with another parent.

Students will not be allowed to drive themselves or other students to away games outside of city limits. Students may drive themselves to and from away games in city limits, home games or in a case where the game is off campus, yet local, but considered our home field, course, or court. Students are not permitted to drive other students to and from a school sponsored event.

### **Class Dismissal**

The Athletic Director, not coaches, will establish the time that the student-athletes will be released from class for participation in games held on school days.

**Travel Etiquette**

All athletes will travel in an assigned uniform (assigned by coach). At minimum, ACA gear will be worn on travel days.

Athletes are strongly discouraged from wearing headphones or texting during travel.

**SEVERE/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Parents will be notified as soon as possible of changes to the practice or game schedule due to inclement weather.

If lightning is present during an outdoor event, all parties must be moved indoors. The event can only be resumed if 30 minutes has passed since the last visual evidence of lightning. For outdoor practices, heat and humidity are closely monitored. Where possible, practices will be scheduled in the coolest times of the day. Practices will not be held outside in a heat index of 110°F or above.

**FUNDRAISING & VOLUNTEERING**

ACA Athletics raises funds annually through concessions, gate fees at games, from summer camps, individual gifts, and other potential fundraisers such as bake sales, car washes, etc. Requests for funds are to meet specific objectives: to provide enhancements to our team sports programs, such as new uniforms, equipment, technology, supplies, to pay coaches compensations, and to pay for tournament fees and official fees.

All families with children in athletics are required to volunteer and these volunteer hours are in addition to the school mandated minimum volunteer hours. Parent or family volunteers are essential in the success of the ACA Athletic Program. Volunteers are needed for a variety of jobs: set-up or tear down of equipment, judging lines, chain gang, concessions, gate, scorebook, scoreboard, stats, photography, or providing water/snacks for athletes. Without volunteer help, games cannot be run efficiently.

**PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

If a student-athlete violates any policy or procedure laid out in the Athletic Handbook or the Parent Student Handbook, he/she could be put on a probationary period. The length of the probationary period will be decided upon by the Principal alongside the Athletic Director. During that probationary period, the student-athlete may not be able to participate in organized sporting activities.

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The school vigorously opposes student use, possession, or distribution of tobacco or alcohol in any form, on campus or off campus. Violation subjects a student-athlete to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the administration. Penalties could include multiple-day suspension, permanent removal from the team, or expulsion from school. Students are not permitted to use, possess, purchase or distribute illegal drugs, including athletic performance enhancement drugs. Violation subjects the person(s) involved to disciplinary action and may lead to the involvement of local law enforcement. Athletic performance enhancing drugs are detrimental to the health of the student and are never an acceptable alternative to hard work.

## **GAMBLING**

Gambling is not tolerated. Violation subjects the person(s) involved to disciplinary action.

## **HAZING**

Hazing is defined as subjecting someone to an indignity, fright, abuse or threat and is not tolerated. Violation subjects the person(s) to disciplinary action, likely including suspension and/or potential expulsion from further participation in athletics for a minimum of one academic year.

## **SEASONS**

Cross country - Last week in July through Mid October (State Meet)  
Football - Last week in July through mid November (state tournament)  
Volleyball - Early August through mid/late October (state tournament)  
Basketball - Mid-October through mid/late February (state tournament)  
Soccer - February through early May

## **MORATORIUM**

There is a 5 day moratorium in December (includes Christmas) where no practice or competitions are allowed. There is a second moratorium during May, which includes review week prior to finals week and finals week.

## **REQUISITES FOR PARTICIPATION**

Each ACA student-athlete desiring to participate in ACA athletics must have the following



completed and signed documents on file in the athletic office before the first day of participation in any given sport:

- Acknowledgement of Athletic Handbook
- Physical Examination
- Code of Conduct (within Athletic Handbook)
- Player Expectations (team specific)
- Waiver of Liability
- Proof of Payment for Athletic Fees

Participation is prohibited until all forms are submitted and all fees are paid in full. All of the aforementioned documents can be found in ACA's main office. In addition to the above required documentation and fees, a student-athlete must not possess any outstanding uniform/equipment items. **IMPORTANT** – No student-athlete will be allowed to participate in the next season if either fees or uniforms have not been turned in. Also, if a student is not a currently enrolled student at ACA, they may not participate in practices or competitions.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS**

### **CODE of CONDUCT**

Being an ACA athlete is a student's choice and thereby a privilege. Student-athletes shall conduct themselves in a way that brings positive recognition to God, Annapolis Christian Academy, their team, their sport and themselves. An ACA student-athlete reflects the mission and identity of the school, no matter where he/she is. Student-athletes are expected to behave at all times with consideration for others in thought, word, and deed and student-athletes must abide by the school's stated rules and any others stipulated by athletic department staff members. Student-athletes are considered leaders in the ACA community and should always conduct themselves as such.

Student-athletes on the court or field are held to the same academic and character standards that are found in the formal classroom at Annapolis. Student-athletes are to glorify God through their abilities and attitudes, as well as through their relationships with their teammates, coaches, officials, and spectators.

Male athletes are to balance the behavior of a gentleman off the field with the art of intense competition on the field. They are trained to consciously prepare themselves, through athletic rigor, for becoming fighting men of God in their future vocations. Older males students are to model godly masculinity to younger boys and to be living examples of the Gospel. Female athletes are challenged to embrace biblical femininity, balancing a gentle and quiet spirit with the spirit to compete. Likewise, they are to embrace the difference between feminine strength and masculine strength. Older females are to model godly femininity to younger girls and to be living examples of the Gospel. They too are trained to consciously prepare themselves, through athletic rigor, for becoming godly women of stamina in their future callings.

### **LOCKER ROOMS**

Locker rooms must be maintained and cared for by the student-athletes. Coaches will work with their teams to maintain and care for the locker room spaces. The following are mandatory locker room expectations:

- The doors should not be tampered with in a way to keep them from locking or closing all the way
- No horseplay is allowed in the locker room, i.e. pushing, shoving, wrestling, or throwing of objects
- Language and actions should seek to be in line with the discipline and expectations of young Christ-followers

- Access to the locker room is limited to before school and after school. Outside of normal scholastic team use the locker room is off limits during the school day unless used for PE classes
- Coaches will take a weekly sweep of the locker rooms. Unclaimed clothing will be turned in to the lost and found or discarded.
- Locker preference is given first to sports in season
- Failure to adhere to these expectations could result in individual or team disciplinary actions.

### **CELLPHONES and SMARTWATCHES**

Cell phone and Smartwatch use guidelines: (1) must be Christ-honoring, and align with ACA's standards of conduct; (2) except in the case of an emergency, shall not be used in private spaces, including but not limited to, bathrooms and locker rooms; (3) taking or posting pictures or video from any private spaces it strictly forbidden.

Violation of this policy is a serious offense. Coaches will confiscate cell phones. Failure to adhere to these expectations could result in individual disciplinary actions.

### **AGE/GRADE ELIGIBILITY**

As a general rule, eighth grade students are not eligible to participate on high school teams.

Exception: In rare occasions, eighth grade students may participate on a High School team only when players are needed to complete a varsity team and that player possesses skills and maturity to handle varsity participation. If there's a need due to low numbers, all eligible players may have an evaluation period to see if they possess the skill to play on a High School team. Player movement will ultimately be decided by the Athletic Director at the discretion of the parent and approved by the Solar principal. 8th grade athletes will not be allowed to join a varsity team until the varsity season has been completed (track being the only exception if there are low numbers on the varsity team).

6th graders may participate on a Logic team only when players are needed and with their parent permission.

A student-athlete must be less than 19 years of age on September 1<sup>st</sup> in order to participate in any ACA athletic events.

### **ABSENCES**

A student who misses school due to athletic competition is responsible for keeping up with his or her schoolwork per our Planned Absence Policy in the ACA Warrior Handbook. Any work that is due during a period that the student will miss should be turned in before the class period. Any

tests that the student will miss should be taken ahead of time if possible. Otherwise, the student is responsible for working out an arrangement with the teacher ahead of time for making up the test. Under no circumstances should a student fail to talk with a teacher whose class he or she will miss at least a day ahead of time.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible initially, a student must not be on academic probation from the previous year.

A student-athlete who receives an **overall course grade** lower than a 70 in at least one subject matter during a scheduled reporting period will be ineligible for athletic contests until the student earns a 70 overall course grade in all subjects. In addition, grades will be monitored regularly by the Athletic Director to prevent any student from falling too far behind.

Eligibility checks will be mid-quarter, quarter and at semester. Students with a failing grade at mid-quarter will be ineligible a full week from the date of the eligibility check. Students with a failing grade at the end of quarters or semester will be ineligible for two weeks from date of the eligibility check.

An athlete who is failing a class during a reporting period is still required to attend all practices and all home games, provided that neither are during school hours. The athlete, however, is unable to dress out for the athletic contests. If an athlete must attend a tutoring session for a failing class, then the athlete and their parents must make this arrangement with the coach.

## **PARTICIPATION**

Participating in athletics is a privilege and is contingent on the following:

1) *Clearance from Previous Sport* – Student-athletes must be cleared from their prior sport before they can begin competing in a new sport. This includes, but is not limited to, being current on athletic fees, uniform and/or equipment was in good condition and checked in, postseason forms completed, etc.

2) *In good academic and moral standing* - Student-athletes may not participate in practices or games if they have failed to achieve the minimum academic requirement or are suspended from school.

3) *Practice and Game attendance* – Student-athletes must attend at least 3 consecutive academic periods the day of a practice, game or any other athletic event in order to participate. The only exception to this rule is if the absence is caused due to a school event (field trip, college visit,

etc.). Parents and student-athletes need to recognize that absences from practices will hinder skill development and physical conditioning as well as jeopardize team unity. Time missed from a sport team practice will influence an athlete's performance and often his/her position with the team. When a personal or social event conflicts with a practice or game, we expect students to honor their commitment to the athletic program and their teammates. When a family event causes the student-athlete to be absent from a practice, the situation should be communicated to the coach at least two weeks in advance, preferably at the beginning of the season and not the same day of the conflict (this does not include family emergencies which are unpredictable and managed differently). An athlete who misses a practice or game with an excused absence will not start in the next scheduled competition if they miss the practice before the game, an athlete with an unexcused absence will not compete in the next scheduled game. An excused absence could be any of the following: death in the family or illness resulting in a fever greater than 100 degrees or vomiting. Any excuses not listed above must result in the approval of the Athletic Director.

Students will not be permitted to play for a sports team if they miss the first week of scheduled practice. Some extenuating circumstances may be considered, i.e. late enrollment. If a team's season continues into post-season competition and overlaps with the next sport's season, then the athlete must report to the practice of the second sport the Monday after the last competition of the first sport.

Important – a roster spot on any one team in a previous year does not guarantee the same spot on the same team in the current year. For example, a junior basketball player who earned a varsity spot last year as a sophomore is not guaranteed to make the varsity basketball roster in his senior year.

Withdrawn ACA students may not participate on ACA sports' teams for two semesters unless issued permission by ACA Administration. Each situation will be decided upon on a case by case basis.

### **PART-TIME STUDENT/HOMESCHOOL PARTICIPATION**

Participants in extracurricular activities must be enrolled as students at the school and taking a minimum of three academic classes (it will be four classes for the 24-25 school year and possibly be phased out for the 25-26 school year). At least two of the classes must be a core class (Math, Science, History, Literature) or Bible. The other class cannot be a study hall and full time students will take precedent on electives that have size limits.

Students enrolled as homeschooled may participate in our extracurricular program when spots are available to complete a team. Available spots will be offered to enrolled students first. Homeschool participants pay an additional fee per sport/activity. Parents of homeschooled students enrolling as non-students in our sports program must sign an agreement with the school's statement of faith and agreement that students must abide by ACA's standards of conduct while participating in our extracurricular programs. Homeschooled students must also provide proof of

age and academic eligibility as well as turn grades in according to deadlines. A tryout and/or off-season evaluation period may be required for those wishing to join varsity teams. All homeschooled students must be approved by the Athletic Director and Solar Principal before being offered a spot on a varsity team.

## **VOLUNTEER HOURS**

Each student-athlete is required to donate two hours of volunteer time, each school year, to an athletic department event, such as taking tickets at a game of their choosing or selling concessions. Donating hours to the athletic department should allow the student-athlete to understand how much work, time, and preparation goes into each event helping them to become more appreciative of all the hard work that is done for them when their team is competing. With the volunteer hours we would hope that the student-athletes would form a sense of ownership and pride of not only their own sports teams but of all ACA sports teams.

## **DEPARTURE FROM A TEAM**

There are three types of departure from a team. Please note no athletic fee refunds will be given for any departure.

1) *Leaving a team* – season ending injury, poor health status, family emergency or academic performance all may lead to permissible departure from the team only after being discussed between parents, the head coach and Athletic Director. A student-athlete may still be eligible for a varsity letter in this circumstance, and he/she will still be eligible for his/her next season sport.

2) *Quitting a team* – regardless of reason, any player quitting a sport after he has started the sport will not be eligible to participate in the next sport of his choice. Ninth through twelfth graders will not earn a letter in that sport. The only exception to this rule is if the student-athlete and head coach have clearly communicated up front that a quit might be in play. As an example, if the Head Coach has agreed to let a student-athlete try a sport out for a week to see if he'd like to play it and the student-athlete then quits within the agreed upon time, that would not render him ineligible for the next season's sport.

3) *Being dismissed from a team* – regardless of reason, any player who is dismissed from a team for conduct, rules infractions or disciplinary reasons will not earn a letter in the sport (for a 9th-12th grader) or be eligible to play in the following season sport.

## **INJURIES**

Injured athletes must be seen by a certified athletic trainer or doctor for evaluation before being released for participation, and no treatment and/or rehabilitation program will be discontinued until authorized by the same athletic trainer or doctor originally visited. Injured athletes, regardless of grade, are still required to attend practice unless treating and/or rehabilitating an injury, or as approved by the Head Coach. Athletes missing a practice or a game for rehabilitation must first get permission from their coach. It is the player's responsibility to communicate with the coach regarding their injury.

## **STEWARDSHIP**

All student-athletes are expected to be good stewards of all equipment, facilities and uniforms entrusted to them. Locker rooms, weight room and training room are expected to be clean and orderly at all times. Student-athletes should use assigned lockers to store their uniform, equipment and personal items. Personal items should be stored in locked lockers at all times. Practice gyms and game gyms must be kept orderly. All coaches and athletes are required to dispose of any and all waste after games and practices.

## **ATHLETIC UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE**

Student-athletes are issued team uniforms and are expected to take great care of the uniforms. If a student-athlete is missing a uniform or uniform-piece the day of a game, another uniform will not be issued, no exceptions. If a uniform is lost and cannot be found, another uniform will be issued out (if available) once the lost uniform has been paid for in full. Damaged uniform pieces will need to be replaced at the expense of the student-athlete. The replacement cost of each uniform piece varies by sport. All uniforms must be returned to Head Coach in acceptable condition and cleaned the Wednesday following the last game. School records could be withheld if athletic fees or athletic uniforms /equipment are outstanding.

Dress attire will either be a shirt and tie for gentlemen or ACA polo, for ladies dress will either be white button down ACA blouse or ACA polo. All practice gear at all times should be ACA athletic apparel, or appointed by the Head Coach and/or Athletic Director.

Uniforms issued to an athlete, should remain with that athlete for the remainder of the season. Athletes should not loan out any articles of their uniform to other athletes or friends.

Compression shorts or spandex should always be worn under uniforms and/or practice shorts. No tank tops or cut off shirts are permitted for practice. Shorts should be of modest length and fit.

## **LETTERING POLICY**

A student may not purchase or wear an Annapolis Christian Academy letterman's jacket to any school function unless they have both earned the right to wear the jacket and adorned the jacket in accordance with this policy:

- Letterman jackets are a privilege for students in grades 9-12 who have earned at least one pin; they may also be worn as Annapolis outerwear.
- In the first year a student earns a letter, they will receive a pin for that sport or activity. At this time, students will get to choose whether or not to purchase a letterman jacket (and purchase any earned letters).
- A pin may be added each year for students lettering multiple years.
- If the sports league recognizes a particular accomplishment (e.g., athlete of the year), a student may attach the official sports league patch to the sleeves.
- Students who are on probation, suspension, or serious disciplinary action will not be eligible for a letter for that season.

### **Athletic Letters**

In order to letter in athletics, students must meet the following criteria:

- Play on a varsity team.
- For team sports, start at least once; for individual sports, place at a TCAL state meet Or coaches discretion based on substantial playing time, contributions to the team, and servant leadership.
- Team Managers – A student must manage three seasons (any sport) in order to be eligible for a team manager patch. In order to letter after managing one season, the following conditions must be met:
  - Attend all varsity games
  - Serve the needs of the team as outlined by the head coach
  - Attend all practices requested by the head coach

### **WEIGHT ROOM POLICIES**

Athletes are not permitted in the weight room without proper staff supervision. Male and female athletes are not to train simultaneously in the weight room unless they are supervised by their particular coach or athletic director. Practice attire and athletic shoes must be worn at all times. No athlete should lift alone and all lifts should be accompanied by a spotter. Focus is critical so no horseplay, socializing or laziness will be tolerated. When finished, all weights must be racked and areas cleaned.

### **STRENGTH AND SPEED TRAINING**

We cannot have successful athletic programs without a strong commitment to strength and speed training. High school student-athletes are expected to work hard on improving strength and speed



throughout the school year, whether they are in or out of season. Program Directors (Varsity Head Coaches) will, in accordance with league rules, provide both voluntary and/or mandatory opportunities to student-athletes to train in the weight room, gym, and on the fields throughout the year.

### **OUT-OF-SEASON EXPECTATIONS**

During the school year, student-athletes are expected to give the in-season sport in which they are participating first priority, and are not expected to train for another school sport during that time period. Any organized training for another sport during the season in which an athlete is participating (such as an open facility or league) should be cleared with the current in-season head coach. Regardless of in-season versus out-of-season status, an emphasis will be placed on strength and speed training, both of which will be required of all 9th-12th grade student-athletes throughout the school year. During the summer, all 9th-12th grade athletes are expected to work on and develop their athletic abilities. Understanding that family and personal time take first priority during the summer, there are various opportunities for student-athletes to train when they can. If a student-athlete is in town and not committed to a family activity, it is assumed that he/she will be engaged in some sort of personal strength and speed development program.

### **PARENT EXPECTATIONS**

Without a doubt, parents are the most influential models for young athletes. Not only are parents influential, they are critical to the success of our athletic programs. The athletic department needs parents to come alongside all sports teams to serve in one or more of a variety of volunteer positions throughout the year. Team moms, travel coordinators, drivers, overnight chaperones, statisticians, videographers, concessions, admissions, field/gym preparation or close down are just a few of the opportunities that provide much needed help and good community time between parents. Serving the athletic department also sets a good example for our student-athletes. The guidelines that follow are an attempt to provide a foundation for our joint effort to guide your sons and daughters through the challenging yet wonderful experience of high school sports.

### **PRESENCE AT GAMES OR PRACTICES**

It is important to student-athletes that, if possible, parents are present at games, both home and away.

Practices are considered valuable instructional and evaluation time, are closed to all non-team or program personnel, unless previously approved by the Head Coach. Invited guests are expected to refrain from disrupting tryout or practice sessions, and from interacting with players and/or coaches.

It is imperative that in all arenas ACA's parents and fans display Godly character. Parents should leave the coaching to the Coaches and assume the role of cheerleader and motivator. We want our athletes focused on the game and their Coaches' feedback during a game. Under no circumstances should a parent/spectator make disparaging comments to the officials, coaches, players, or the opposing team. We ask that everyone representing ACA do so in a way that is pleasing to the Lord.

## **PERSPECTIVE – WHY KIDS PLAY THE GAME**

Most young people participate in sports for the following reasons: to have fun, to develop that natural desire to play, to make new friends or be with their friends, to be part of a team, and to compete. "To win" or "to be a champion" is often not at the top of the list. Athletes must hear from parents and coaches that it is the process of competing that counts. Too much emphasis on winning and losing puts the value of sports out of context.

## **COACH AS LEADER**

Each coach is prayerfully and thoughtfully considered, recruited, interviewed and hired and therefore has the authority over our children in each given sport. Parents and student-athletes must trust that coaches try to make the best decisions for the team as well as the individuals that make up the team. Coaches are with the team on a daily basis in practice and in competition, evaluating character and performance, and therefore will make judgment decisions based on what they feel is in the best interest of the team. Playing time, players' positions, and strategy should be left to the discretion of the coach. Parents should help their child understand that being a team member means accepting the coach's decisions even when he or she does not agree with them. It is also important to remember that neither coaches nor parents are infallible evaluators of talent, nor are either perfect play-callers. A team does not function well with non-coaches trying to coach. Parents should not place a child in a tough spot of having to decide who they are going to listen to, their coach, or their parent. Yielding to authority is a biblical lesson that our children will learn from for years to come. The coach's classroom is the court or field, usually with undefined walls, making it easy for parents to naturally move close to the action. Parents should be interested, supportive observers from a distance. The coach needs room to be able to instruct and the player to perform without distraction from the stands. Distraction only yields poor results. Cheer them on, yes! But don't coach or yell at them.

## **COMMUNICATION – INTERNAL**

Direct communication between the coach and players is very important, and is usually the best way for any questions to be answered or conflicts to be worked through. Inevitably, there will be times when a meeting between a parent and coach is warranted. Please call or e-mail the coach

and the Athletic Director to arrange a convenient time for a phone conversation or meeting. Try to exercise the 24-hour rule – wait 24 hours before placing that call or sending that email. Too often our emotions get the best of us. And remember, before or after practices or games is never an appropriate time to approach a coach. Coaches will be happy to meet with you with the Athletic Director present, but it may be a few days before a convenient time can be arranged. A meeting with the coach is an opportunity to exchange information and respectfully discuss any concerns or questions that you may have. Hopefully the meeting will promote better understanding and communication, but the meeting should not be viewed as an opportunity to convince the coach that your child should be playing more, playing a different position, or that the coach should be employing a different strategy. After the meeting, just as before the meeting, your support of the team and the coach is expected. If there is a significant issue that you believe requires additional discussion or cannot be resolved, then a meeting involving the SoLaR Principal, along with the Athletic Director, coach and parent should take place. Any unresolved or escalated issues should then be taken to the Annapolis School Board.

#### **COMMUNICATION – EXTERNAL**

All press releases must be approved by the Athletic Director or his/her appointed contact person within the athletic department (calling in box scores to the local newspaper is not considered a press release and should be the responsibility of the Head Coach or his/her appointed contact person). Please do not damage the relationship our school has with media outlets by harassing them for lack of press coverage of our athletic events. Parents should never contact opposing schools, officials or the league office to voice complaints over athletic contests, opposing players, coaches or fans, or officials. All concerns and/or opinions should be communicated directly with ACA Athletic Director.

#### **FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS**

Expenses for athletic programs fall into two categories – hard costs and soft costs. Hard costs include the athletic fee for the sport and any additional equipment, garments or shoes that the student-athlete may want in order to participate. For some larger team sports, travel costs may be a hard expense as well. Athletic fees are due the first day of official practice. Soft costs are non-mandatory costs and include things like snacks/meals for players, end-of-season coaches gifts, yard-signs, post-game celebrations and possible overnight travel.

## **COACHES' EXPECTATIONS**

Successful athletic programs start with quality coaches. We believe coaches are one of the most significant components to the athletic program and therefore seek to hire Christian role models who are committed to fulfilling the mission of the school, desire to disciple our student-athletes and serve their families, and who are knowledgeable in their sport. School athletics are an integral part of each student's overall education and development and coaches shall assist each student-athlete toward developing his or her full potential. Mentoring, development, care and safety of our student-athletes are the most important responsibilities of our coaches.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Because the behavior of a team can reflect the coach's own manner, attitudes, temperament and approach to athletics, coaches shall conduct themselves in a way, both on and off the court, that brings positive recognition to God, Annapolis Christian Academy, their team, their sport and themselves. Instruction and correction, while demanding and critical, should be positive. Coaches should never embarrass or demean student-athletes. The same high standards of preparation, organization, dedication, hard work, self-discipline, sacrifice and Godly behavior that coaches expect of players should be the same that is expected of coaches. Coaches shall model good sportsmanship and respectful attitudes toward officials and opposing teams in victory and defeat. All coaches are expected to know the rules of the game and the rules/policies of the leagues in which we participate – TCAL and the Catholic Diocese of Corpus Christi – Parochial League.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Coaches must communicate with student-athletes and parents on a regular basis as well as the Athletic Director. Coaches must communicate to parents at the start of the season the expected commitment to the team and the anticipated practice and game schedule, and the communication must be in writing. Weekly communication from the Head Coach and/or Athletic Director to parents is also a minimum requirement.

### **TIME COMMITMENTS**

Coaches are expected to attend all scheduled events (practices and games). Coaches should arrive to practices and games early enough to set up equipment and the facility, and to greet their team. Coaches should not leave the facility of a game or event until all student-athletes have left the premises, or have made prior arrangements with parents.

Clarification on some nomenclature and definitions:

- “Walk Throughs” are considered practices
- “Service Projects” are not considered practices or games and can be conducted on a limited basis outside of the maximum number of events a student-athlete can attend on a weekly basis
- “Optional Practices” and “Open gym” means no team drills or team building activities will be conducted. Coaches must reinforce that these types of practices are not mandatory and no penalties will be levied to individuals who cannot make the optional practices.

## **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

Varsity Head Coaches are the Program Directors for their respective sport. Program Directors, in partnership with the Director of Athletics, oversees all teams and all levels in their sport. This provides a firm foundation for program development. The coach will strive to motivate and assist athletes, both in- season and out-of-season, to achieve their full potential as players.

## **SUPERVISION**

Athletes are under the direct supervision of the coach until they leave campus or a contest. Supervision includes locker rooms, weight room, gym, field, and any other location that the team is at.

**PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have received, read, and understood the Athletic Handbook for the 2022-2023 school year, and I agree to abide by its rules and guidelines.

Please PRINT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student-Athlete

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date