



OAK HILL

CLASSICAL SCHOOL

Athletics Handbook

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A WORD FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

We believe that our school serves the purpose of training not only the mind and the heart, but also the body. As believers, we understand how we live in our bodies forms part of our worship. We follow the One Who is the Incarnation. Consequently, at the heart of our athletic program lies a desire to see each student put into practice Paul's charge to the Colossians: "And whatever you do, whether in word or in deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." As such, we consider athletics at Oak Hill not extracurricular, a mere add-on, but cocurricular, an integral component of a classical Christian curriculum.

As a classical school, we appreciate our forebears' insistence that athletic training play a central part of one's education. In Ancient Greece, educators trained their students in order to maintain physical fitness and to master various skills. In medieval Europe, entire villages often competed against one another in an array of physical challenges and team competitions. Throughout the ages, athletics has provided participants with a great opportunity for community and fellowship, as well as a demonstration of their God-given talents.

Athletics provide our students with opportunities for character formation and the practice of virtues, such as, discipline, honor, courage, self-control, sacrifice, and unity with others. They also learn how to win graciously and lose with the right perspective. For those of us who have participated in team sports, we remember learning these important virtues on the court or on the field. As we build a program that will glorify God and honor our community, we look forward to seeing coaches, parents, faculty, and spectators encouraging our athletes in the pursuit of wisdom and virtue.

Derek Monjure, Interim Head of School

INTRODUCTION

Mission Statement

Oak Hill Athletics exist to help fulfill the school's mission:

*Oak Hill Classical School provides an education
that cultivates wisdom, joyful learning, and love for God and others.*

Philosophy

The athletic programs offered to the students by Oak Hill Classical School are designed and implemented with the belief that student athletes should develop physically, socially, mentally and emotionally. Oak Hill Classical School believes that the sports offered through the athletic program aid student athletes in their physical, social, mental and emotional development. Recognizing athletics as a vital part of the classical, Christian education experience, the athletic program exists to provide opportunity for all students to develop responsibility, self-reliance, and self-esteem. Thus, the success of any athletic program is measured, not only by well-coached athletes performing optimally (not only by athletic success), but also by the degree to which sportsmanship and leadership goals are nurtured and realized. Oak Hill seeks to continuously reinforce the values of Christ-like behavior through the athletic program. This includes good sportsmanship, self-discipline, personal commitment, team pride, enthusiasm, loyalty and school spirit.

The vision and goals of Oak Hill Classical School require coaching of the highest quality, and the coach's primary role is that of a teacher. All upper school coaches (just to use our terminology) serve as a role model for the student athletes while teaching them the knowledge of the sport as well as developing and inspiring the students.

Oak Hill Athletics desires to foster wholesome relationships among participants, spectators, schools and communities within and outside of our district. The primary method for building these relationships is through cooperative and competitive athletic competition.

Oak Hill Athletics desires to be set apart from other schools (both Christian and non-Christian) in their operations. God created our human bodies and by developing our God-given talents and abilities, athletics should bring glory to our Heavenly Father. We believe that athletics allow us as coaches, athletes, and supporters to bring glory to God. The distinctives that are discussed below are meant to give a Christian perspective to athletics and to help direct us toward Christ-like behavior and attitudes. These distinctives are drawn from God's Word and, therefore, may be different from "the world's" viewpoint. It is vital that each Christian athlete, coach, and supporter be willing to submit, make changes, grow and mature so that God will be pleased. Sometimes this change is difficult due to past experiences, ingrown patterns, respected examples and simple tradition ("I coach the way I was coached"), yet these need to be brought under the scrutiny of God's Word to determine if they are pleasing to Him (Leviticus 20:23, Romans 12:1-2).

Distinctive #1:***Elevate the reputation of Jesus Christ.***

A team establishes many goals, none of which should be greater than bringing glory to our Lord and Savior. As a Christian school, we should be obviously different in our attitudes and actions. We are called by our Lord to be a “city on a hill” in an athletic contest. Granted, we will suffer some setbacks in this high goal, yet we need to continually encourage our athletes and coaches to pursue the elevation of Christ’s reputation. Realistically, some athletes are not in a position to make this commitment. However, those athletes should be coached to submit to the coaches’ rules for conduct which does not allow for negative, unsportsmanlike behavior.

Distinctive #2:***Athletics is part of the whole person, not a separate part.***

Oak Hill holds to the scriptural teaching that what is morally correct in one area applies in all areas. When the “fruit of the Spirit” is discussed in Galatians 5:22-23, no mention is made to indicate these traits are only applicable in some areas of our lives. Learning how to develop this fruit in all areas of our lives is part of the process of sanctification. Actions on the field or court are an indication of the true person, and will hold our student athletes to a standard that honors God, rather than excuse them because an athlete may be under stress or have a “competitive nature.” A practical application could be that our language on the field or court should be the same as that in the pew, living room, or classroom.

Distinctive #3:***A person’s personhood and performance should not be linked together.***

The Bible instructs us not to place our worth in circumstances, but in the position we have in Christ. Our self worth is not to be determined by a win-loss record. An athlete may perform poorly, yet s/he needs to be confirmed that s/he is still worthwhile, valuable, loved and accepted. This is God’s example to us; in that, “while we were still sinners” He loved us and sent His Son to die for us. Therefore, success is not determined by our finish in league or win-loss record, but rather by the characteristics and qualities our athletes are claiming for themselves in Christ.

Distinctive #4:***Allow God to grant victory or defeat.***

The Oak Hill athletic program does not equate victory in battle as proof of God’s blessing or approval. The Bible has numerous accounts of God’s people suffering, dying, losing, and enduring hardships and persecutions. We must be willing to endure any situation God chooses for us and accept it as part of His omnipotence and plan. God is more concerned with the process of attaining success than the success itself, with playing to the best of our abilities rather than the final score. It is clear in Scripture that obedience, hard work, and patience does not always result in victory; at least not in this world (Genesis 37-50). A relevant quote from The Sanctification of the Sport by Hoffman states, “Recognize that if a sport is to be a sport at all, the objective of winning must not be de-emphasized. The spoilsport who does not try to win is worse than a cheat. At the same time, however, we must be careful not to delude ourselves into thinking that God in any way cares about the outcome. Those who feel that God especially cherishes winners or that somehow a win glorifies Him more than a loss, have theologically reduced God to a spectator who sits on the sidelines caught up in the surprises of the contest. Our emphasis in this area is two-fold: prepare to win and play to win; then allow God to exercise His will.”

Distinctive #5:

As authorities established by God, umpires and officials receive our honor and respect.

All authority comes from God (1 Peter 2:13). Often times human authorities make human mistakes which have a negative impact on us. Our response to this injustice is of great importance to God. Which is more important: my rights or God's reputation? 1 Peter 2:1a states, "For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God." Are we willing to accept injustice, which is common to all men, in a way that would further the cause of Christ? Do our teams learn from the coaches not to blame referees and umpires, nor to complain about field conditions as instructed in Philippians 2:14?

Distinctive #6:

Athletics is a vehicle to educate the whole person.

Our God has created many vehicles which are intended to teach us about life. Drama, music, academics, and athletics are a few. We need to provide an environment through which God's truths can be effectively communicated. In athletics, one experiences all human emotions from joy to sorrow, pride to humility, camaraderie to loneliness. These experiences provide opportunities for godly Christian coaches to come alongside and impart God's truths about how these situations should be handled. For the Christian, this opportunity extends further than just the physical and emotional needs and rewards. The Christian coach and athlete recognize spiritual needs and are therefore able to bring their whole being into submission to Christ.

To conclude, much could be said to further amplify these Biblical distinctions. This brief account is intended for thought and discussion and to communicate clearly to our athletes these distinctives. Our parents and supporters are a vital part in the success or failure of our programs, and therefore need to understand and support the Christian Distinctives of our athletic program. May God be glorified through our involvement and direction into His athletic programs at Oak Hill Classical School.

Middle school level: (The emphasis of athletics at the MS level is on cultivating student interest, skill development, proper technique, and learning the rules of the particular sport more so than winning. It is vital for participants to have fun and enjoy their experience to encourage future participation in the junior varsity and varsity programs. Playing time will be emphasized to expose the participants to game situations which will further develop skills and knowledge of the sport.)

Middle school coaches should:

1. Play as many players as you can. (However, this does not mean equal playing time) Athletic development requires play time, even if it costs you a win. That gangly, uncoordinated, player who doesn't play well now might grow up to be a successful player if s/he is given the right experience. Play time during end of season tournaments will vary and be at the discretion of the coach.
2. Emphasize the fundamentals of the game, even if that means fewer wins for their record.
3. Foster an environment of teamwork, unity, and encouragement.
4. Develop characteristics such as hard work, commitment, integrity, and respect for authority.

Varsity level coaches should:

1. Understand the level of sacrifice that is made by families at OHCS for their child to play a sport, and consider this when deciding playing time for athletes.
2. Know the sport and inspire the athletes to work hard in practice and in games.
3. Foster an environment of teamwork, unity, and encouragement.
4. Develop characteristics such as hard work, commitment, integrity, and respect for authority.
5. Prepare to win and play to win, but emphasize attitude, integrity, and work ethic above the win.

General conduct requirements:

1. Ephesians 4:29 tells us that we should "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those that hear." To this end our teams will not "boo", hiss, scream, or do anything else to unfairly distract or hinder an opponent.
2. Our players will accept the official's call as the only proper response. Only the captain may respectfully ask for an explanation of the call, and this only in case of questions regarding rules, not judgment calls.
3. Cheating is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
4. Sports should be played according to the written rules to the best of the players abilities.
5. Play for the glory of God, not for personal glory.
6. Speaking ill of or making rude gestures toward other schools, coaches, players, cheerleaders, facilities, or officials will not be tolerated.

Policies

General Policies

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 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 and we will accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official.

Any member of the Oak Hill 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.

Scheduling

The athletic department does its best to schedule games and practices well in advance of the season. Because we cannot control league changes or changes made by an opponent when we travel to their home court/field, changes to schedules will inevitably occur. Additionally, since a majority of our coaches are part-time, there will most likely be a few changes throughout the season due to their work schedules.

Transportation And Travel

All athletes must travel in designated vehicles to and from practices and games. The school van and bus will be used for games/meets when available and appropriate. The following exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and require a signed parental waiver, for student-athletes who:

1. Drive themselves, by themselves or with siblings only;
2. Drive themselves and no more than one other student-athlete who is not a sibling to the driver (this exception requires parental approval from both sets of parents of the student-athletes); or
3. Ride with an adult that is not the student-athlete's parent.

Severe/Inclement Weather

Any changes to published schedules due to bad weather will be updated on our website as soon as an affirmative decision can be made. If lightning is present during an outdoor event, all parties must be moved indoors. The event can only be resumed if 30 minutes have passed since the last visual evidence of lightening. 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 or above.

Fundraising

Oak Hill Athletics will raise funds annually through the Gryphon Flight Team—through sponsored events, concessions at games and from individual gifts. Requests for funds must meet two specific objectives. The first is to provide financial assistance to those athletes who cannot afford the fees required for team sports. The second objective is to provide enhancements to our team sports programs such as new uniforms, equipment, technology and supplies. These enhancements can often generate unexpected needs that extend beyond our operating budget.

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 coaching staff and administration. Penalties may 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.

Lost And Found

Coaches require athletes to be good stewards of all personal articles, equipment and facilities. Should an item be lost or misplaced, it may turn up in the school's lost and found areas, located in the school office.

Academic Eligibility

Every athlete must maintain a 70 average in every subject and/or class in order to be eligible to compete. The athletic director will check grades every Friday beginning the 3rd Friday of a new quarter. If below 70, then the athlete will be on a one-week probation. They will still be allowed to practice and compete in the probationary period. If by that following Friday, the grade is not passing, the athlete cannot practice or compete until the student and teacher notify the AD that the grade has been pulled up to passing.

A student who misses school due to athletic competition is responsible for keeping up with his or her schoolwork. 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.

Participation

General Requisites

Each Oak Hill student-athlete desiring to participate in Oak Hill 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 (on the last page of this book)
- Physical Examination
- Medical Release/Liability waiver

If all forms have not been turned in before the first scheduled day of participation, the student-athlete may not join the team. All of the aforementioned documents can be found on the Oak Hill web site or in hard copy form from the school office.

In addition to the above required documentation, a student-athlete must not have any outstanding athletic fee payments or outstanding uniform/equipment items.

IMPORTANT—No student-athlete will be allowed to go to their next sport if either fees or uniforms have not been turned in.

Additional Requisites

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, post-season forms completed, etc.

2) *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 half of the school day of a practice or game in order to play. 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 the earliest possible moment, 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).

Parents

Without a doubt, parents are the most influential models for young athletes. From a parent's conduct to the place sports plays in the family order of life priorities, parents make the biggest impact on a young person's athletic experience. Not only are parents influential, they are critical to the success of our athletic programs. The athletic department needs parents to come alongside all sport's 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, Practices Or Tryouts

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! Coach or yell at them, no! It is important to student-athletes that, if possible, parents are present at games, both home and away. A parent's attendance tells the child that he/she cares and that they want to share in the joys and frustrations which are a part of competition. It also gives parents an opportunity to develop a bond with their child and other parents, and to observe the progress made throughout the season.

Practices and tryouts, which 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.

Communication – Internal

In general, please observe the communication guidelines elaborated in the Student/Parent Handbook. Additional guidelines are below.

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 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, 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, then the Athletics Director, coach, and parent can meet together to resolve the issue.

If issues cannot be resolved after meeting with the Director of Athletics, then a meeting involving the Headmaster, coach and parent should take place.

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 offices to voice complaints over athletic contests, opposing players, coaches or fans, or officials. All concerns and/or opinions should be communicated directly with Oak Hill's Director of Athletics.

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 within one week of receiving an email from the athletic director. Soft costs are non-mandatory costs and include things like post-game meals, end-of-season coach's gifts, yard-signs, post-game celebrations and possible overnight travel.

Coaches

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, Oak Hill Classical School, 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 Oak Hill participates.

Communication

Coaches must communicate with student-athletes and parents on a regular basis. 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 to parents is also a minimum requirement.

Program Development

Varsity Head Coaches are the Program Directors for their respective sport. Program Directors, in partnership with the Director of Athletics, oversee 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.

PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received, read and understand the Oak Hill Athletic Handbook and I agree to abide by its rules and guidelines.

Please PRINT Name:

Student-Athlete

Grade

Please SIGN:

Student-Athlete

Date

Parent 1

Date

Parent 2

Date

Please return to the front desk. Acknowledgement must be turned in before the first practice.