

FAITH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



This document contains the guidelines, principles, and expectations involved in
Faith Christian School's Athletic Program.

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK Updated 2025

To the Parents and Student-Athletes:

Welcome to the 2025-2026 athletic season at Faith Christian School. You are now part of the Faith Christian Warriors Athletic Program. This document is prepared in order that you may better understand the philosophy, goals, and guidelines by which Faith Christian School operates its co-curricular athletic program.

Athletics, rightly understood as an integral part of education, compliments our greater mission at Faith Christian. Lessons of commitment, teamwork, tenacity, and overcoming adversity are advanced on our courts and fields. It is in the midst of struggle that our student-athletes experience great life lessons. These lessons go beyond wins and losses. They shape each athlete as he/she develops a mind for truth, a heart for Christ, and a will to serve.

Along the way, our programs also provide wonderful opportunities to strengthen the larger Faith Christian School community. 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 Faith Christian School Athletic Program, as well as some of the more important guidelines and regulations required by the school and governing leagues. Although it is intended to be comprehensive in nature, inevitably there will be situations that occur that are not outlined in this handbook. Having a common understanding of the expectations and perimeters that govern athletics will assist in significantly reducing confusion and provide understanding when issues arise.

As part of the process for each student-athlete to register for participation, we call you to read this handbook thoroughly with your student-athlete(s).

For His Glory-

India M. Delp
Athletic Director

Peter Baur
Head of School

Dear Faith Christian School Student-Athlete and Parents,

Students desiring to represent Faith Christian School through athletics must meet the following guidelines before he/she may participate and/or compete.

1. Student must be a current student enrolled in a minimum of four (4) classes at Faith Christian School. For a student to train when school is not in session (i.e., summer), a contract for enrollment for the Fall Semester must be on file.
2. Online registration must be completed prior to participation in any school sponsored sport.
3. Homeschool students-not taking classes at FCS-will be admitted to FCS teams when teams are not fully rostered with FCs student-athletes. See homeschool policy below for more detail.

Items required include, but are not limited to:

- a) A current medical release form (sports physical) must be on file. (Example: VHSL Medical Release Form)
- b) Sports Participation Fee must be paid by each player for each sport played. (\$125-175 per sport-unless otherwise noted)
- c) Any parent/guardian wishing to serve as a driver to transport student-athletes and/or coaches or support staff to game(s) or practice(s) is required to have a current, valid driver's license and vehicle insurance.
- d) The Parent & Student Acknowledgement form must be read and authorized.

Homeschool Student Policy:

In order for a Homeschooled student to participate on an FCS Sports team the following items need to be completed:

- Fill out an application for admission to FCS athletic team
- Interview with the AD and other members of administration. Athletic Handbook, Code of Conduct, and other information would be presented that ensures that the incoming student is aware of the goals of FCS athletics and how to best assimilate within our program. Both parents and athletes must sign and agree on the FCS Sports Participation Contract to abide by these documents. Each player/family would be subject to the same rules and consequences as outlined by the handbook as tuition paying students.
- Documentation of birth certificate and current course work

- A minimum of four credit hours of schoolwork must be present during each sports season in which the prospective athlete participates (In compliance with VACA)
- At least one parent would need to sign the Covenant agreement of Faith Christian School
- A Hold Harmless form signed by both parents
- An up to date VHSL Physical from
- Payment of the Homeschool Sports Registration Fee and Family Account Set up through BOUND

Homeschool Student Participation Policy:

Homeschool students are able to be added to FCS teams once the above criteria have been met. Homeschool students will be added to teams based on spots available per team. The number of spots available will be outlined below per sport. The number of spots available for homeschoolers will be determined after current FCS students have committed to teams and there is an up to date roster. Homeschool students who wish to be a part of FCS athletic teams in which the roster is full will be put on a waitlist for that team. If spots open up on a waitlisted team the AD will call back families on the waitlist. Homeschool families that have been with us before and proven to be an asset to our team and community will be given first priority, in addition to families that fit our model/community the best.

The Athletic Director has the ability to offer an additional season(s) of playing time to homeschool athletes who have proven that they benefit the team and our school community as a whole even if the below number quotas are met the following year. This will be a year to year/athlete to athlete decision that will be made in conjunction with the Head of School.

Cross-Country:

Homeschool students will NOT be allowed to join Cross Country teams as this limits our opportunities to run in various meets.

Soccer:

Soccer teams are considered FULL when the roster consists of 15 student-athletes. No more than 4 homeschool players would be allowed per team based on VACA rules.

Volleyball:

Volleyball teams are considered FULL when the roster consists of 9 student-athletes. No more than 3 homeschool players would be allowed per team based on VACA rules.

Basketball:

Basketball teams are considered FULL when the roster consists of 8 student-athletes. No more than 3 homeschool players would be allowed per team based on VACA rules.

Archery: This does not apply to archery as it is an individual club sport

Golf:

Golf teams are considered FULL when the roster consists of 4 for MS and 6 for Varsity. No more than 2 homeschool golfers would be allowed per team based on VACA rules.

Other Items of Note in Relation to FCS Homeschool Sports Policy:

- FCS will not recruit athletes based on athletic skill only. FCS will begin consideration of homeschool athletes after a family has been referred to our athletic programs through another FCS family or one of our FCS coaches.
- Homeschooled athletes are not guaranteed a spot year to year; it is on a case by case and year by year basis.
- Conversations in regards to playing time will be discussed by AD, coaches, and as needed parents before the start of each athletic season in which homeschooled athletes will be participating to ensure that this is a positive experience for all involved.

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ATHLETIC PROGRAM PROFILE

Athletic Mascot: Warrior

School Colors: Purple, Red, White

League Participation: Virginia Association of Christian Athletics (VACA) for grades 5-12
National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) for grades 4-12

Sports:

Fall Sports

Boys Varsity Soccer
Boys MS Soccer
Girls Varsity Volleyball
Girls JV Volleyball
Girls MS Volleyball
Boys Varsity Cross Country
Boys MS Cross Country
Girls Varsity Cross Country
Girls MS Cross Country

Winter Sports

Boys Varsity Basketball
Boys MS Basketball
Girls Varsity Basketball
Girls MS Basketball
Boys Varsity Archery
Boys MS Archery
Boys Elementary Archery
Girls Varsity Archery
Girls MS Archery
Girls Elementary Archery

Spring Sports

Girls MS Soccer
Co-Ed Varsity Golf
Co-Ed MS Golf
Girls Varsity Golf
Girls MS Golf
Boys Varsity Club Volleyball
Boys MS Club Volleyball
Girls Varsity Soccer

Contact Information:

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ATHLETIC PROGRAM

PURPOSE

The Faith Christian Athletic Department exists to help fulfill the mission of the school:

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Faith Christian School is to provide a Christ-centered classical education of academic excellence, spiritual depth, and moral integrity which will prepare students for godly participation in their society and promote loyalty to God and country.

VISION STATEMENT

A Mind for Truth – A Heart for Christ – A Will to Serve

CORE VALUES

1. Centered on Christ: We are centered on Jesus Christ, the author and sustainer of life.

Therefore: We acknowledge that Christ is preeminent (Col 1:18) and worthy of all glory, honor, and praise.

2. Committed to Classical Approach: We value exceptional teaching which engages students using great materials and discussing great ideas.

3. Connected as a Learning Community: We affirm that we are called to serve and encourage one another in a relationally-connected learning community unified by Christ.

Therefore: We value engaging the life of the mind, nurturing the heart, and developing the whole child. We provide enriching co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that afford opportunities to strengthen the body, soul, and mind through participation, cooperation, leadership, competition, and hard work.

PHILOSOPHY

Faith Christian athletics helps to fulfill the mission of the school by developing character, cultivating integrity, and modeling Christ-honoring behavior in competition and life as expressed through our three core values in athletics:

1. Character

- “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.” *Galatians 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.” *Romans 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 Timothy 2:5*
- “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.” *I Corinthians 16:13*

2. Commitment

- “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” *Colossians 3:23*
- “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 Corinthians 9:24-27*
- “He who gathers crops in the summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.” *Proverbs 10:5*

3. Community

- “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” *Proverbs 27:17*
- “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interest, but also to the interests of others.” *Philippians 2:3-4*
- “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” *I John 4:11*

The Faith Christian Athletic Department acknowledges the following order of priorities in our school – 1) God, 2) family, 3) academics, and 4) athletics. When this order is followed, it gives student-athletes the opportunity to be balanced spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally.

GOALS

Based on our philosophy, our athletic department and team goals are:

- *Excellence* - programs focused on discipleship that honor God and are well-managed and well-executed.
- *Success* - reaching maximum potential both individually and as a team.

It is our desire that our athletic community – coaches, players, and parents – participate in such a way that honors our Lord Jesus Christ and conveys a positive witness to those around us. We will be modest in victory and gracious in defeat. Winning on the scoreboard is one of our goals, but we recognize that losing often presents beneficial learning opportunities for future trials.

TEAM LEVEL PHILOSOPHY

We recognize the normal stages of a child's development and provide appropriate opportunities in athletics:

Lower School athletic programs (4th - 5th grade) promote a love for sports, develop foundational skills, and build disciplines that promote self-confidence, commitment, and teamwork. All who join will participate fully. Training and competition are used to enhance motor skill development and sportsmanship in a fun and exciting environment.

Middle School athletic programs (6th - 8th grade) encourage participation, experimentation, and establish a love for the game. The fundamentals of the game will be strongly emphasized with continued development striving to 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 training effectiveness or facility/resource issues. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach.

Upper School athletic programs (9th - 12th grades) strive to be the best they can be with a focus on excellence in team dynamics and 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. 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. In all that we do we want to do it with excellence and integrity. Try-outs are for the purpose of team placement based on skill and ability. Cuts are permissible and based on player ability and character, team dynamic, facility, or resource issues. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach.

MULTIPLE SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

We encourage athletes to be well rounded, participating in different activities both athletically and otherwise, especially early in their athletic careers. 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.

Regarding multiple sport participation: student-athletes may not participate in multiple team sports at the same time, without special authorization by the athletic director and both coaches. Student-athletes may, however, participate in a lifetime sport (cross country, golf, tennis) and a team sport at the same time if agreed upon by coaches of both sports. Good, open communication between the student-athlete, his/her parents, and the two coaches involved are tantamount in the event of scheduling conflicts. Standard priorities for participation will call the student-athlete to train with the team sport at regularly scheduled

times unless the lifetime sport is competing. In the event of both sports competing at the same time, the athlete is to compete with the team sport.

Regarding multiple activity participation: student-athletes may participate in a non-athletic department (i.e. fine arts, mock trial, etc.) program and on an athletic team at the same time if the Athletic Director and leadership from both activities give permission to do so. Leadership from both activities will work closely together to minimize conflict, however, reserve the right to require, on rare occasion, sole commitment to their activity. Where there is dual commitment and schedule conflict, there must be a declared priority and agreements made between student, parents, team or department leadership, and athletic director before the season begins, articulating how the student will divide his/her time between the activities.

Regarding participation in “open gym” or “open training” for an off-season FCS sport: student-athletes currently participating in a sport may participate in such training at the discretion, limitations, and pleasure of the in-season coach.

COMPETITION

Competition Policy

Participation in team and individual sports athletic competition will be segregated by age/grade divisions and by gender/sex delineation, described under the Student-Athletes, Eligibility section of the Athletic Handbook and the Faith Christian School Board Policy Manual (page 6).

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. Part of being Christ-like hosts include not just what we do and say in person, but in how we conduct ourselves online. Just as student-athletes are expected to not put down or make derogatory remarks about opposing teams and fans in person, this also includes not participating in these behaviors online. Student-athletes of FCS will not demean or degrade student-athletes/coaches/fans from opposing team online or in group texts/chats. Evidence of such behavior is grounds for dismissal from the team.

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, parents and fans cheer... Much like we do not readily credit an official for a win, we will not blame an official for a loss. Officials are the highest level of authority on the field/court of competition and to the honor of our Lord, they will be treated with respect

and we will accept the final decision of any official. Any member of the Faith Christian 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 weather related issues, league changes, or changes made by an opponent, 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 following exceptions will be considered for student-athletes in good standing with the completed and submitted Permission to Drive form:

1. Drive themselves, by themselves, to local off-campus practice location.
2. Ride with their parent or sibling (who is a legal driver).
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 (www.fcsvaathletics.com) and through our notification system (BOUND) 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 lightning. For outdoor practices, heat and humidity are closely monitored.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The school vigorously opposes student use, possession, or distribution of tobacco, e-cigarettes (vapor cigarettes), 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 school administration. Penalties for violation of this standard 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.

ENERGY DRINKS

Athletes are prohibited from consuming energy drinks prior to and/or during participation in practices and/or competition. Currently there is no regulatory control over energy drinks, thus their content and purity cannot be ensured. This may lead to adverse side-effects, potentially harmful interactions with prescription medications (particularly stimulant medications used to treat ADHD). Energy drinks should not be used for hydration nor consumed by athletes who are dehydrated. Violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary actions by the coach or school administration. Examples of energy drinks would include products such as Monster, Red Bull, NOS, 5 Hour Energy, Amp, etc.

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. This applies to both hazing actions that are in person and online (aka- cyberbullying).

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 one of the lower or upper level lost and found boxes – please check with the front office and maintenance staff for assistance.

In the event assigned team equipment, uniforms, or training attire are lost or damaged, the student-athlete is responsible for compensating the school for the replacement of the lost or damaged item. Grades and transcripts may be held until the items are returned or compensation is made.

REQUISITES FOR PARTICIPATION

Each Faith Christian student-athlete desiring to participate in Faith Christian 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:

- A completed Student Enrollment contract (required prior to participation in any school sanctioned training, practice, tournament, open gym/field times, etc.)
- Acknowledgement of and Agreement with the Athletic Handbook
- Current Physical Examination (A VHSL medical release or similar form may be acquired online at the school website)
- Athletic Participation Fee (A student-athlete's participation)

The student-athlete cannot participate with the team unless all forms and fees have been turned in. All of the aforementioned documents can be found on the Faith Christian School website or a copy may be acquired by contacting the Athletic Department.
www.fcsvaathletics.com

STUDENT-ATHLETES

CODE OF CONDUCT

Becoming a Faith Christian student-athlete is a student's choice and thereby a privilege. Student-athletes shall conduct themselves in a way that exhibits integrity and affords honor to the Lord Jesus Christ, their families, Faith Christian School, their team, their sport, and themselves. A Faith Christian student-athlete reflects the mission and identity of the school, whether on campus or off. Student-athletes are expected to behave, at all times, whether on campus, off campus, or online, with consideration for others in word and deed abiding by the school's stated rules and guidelines.

ELIGIBILITY

Age/Grade Levels

For Elementary School participation (5th grade to 4th grade), a student-athlete must be nine (9) years of age by August 1 in the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to compete and not have reached the age of eleven (11) by August 1 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to participate.

For Middle School participation (8th grade to 6th grade), a student-athlete must be eleven (11) years of age by August 1 in the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to compete and not have reached the age of fifteen (15) by August 1 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to participate.

For Junior Varsity participation (10th grade to 7th grade), a student-athlete must be twelve (12) years of age by August 1 in the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to compete and not have reached the age of seventeen (17) by August 1 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to participate.

For Varsity participation (12th grade to 8th grade), a student-athlete must be thirteen (13) years of age by August 1 in the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to compete and not have reached the age of nineteen (19) by August 1 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to participate.

Gender/Sex Division

Participation on a co-ed competitive sports team is not permitted, regardless of association, league, or tournament guidelines. We hold to the distinction between male and female, as defined by the Faith Christian School Board Policy Manual. Participation on teams is limited to the gender/sex specific divisions, i.e., boys soccer, girls basketball, etc.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Each student must maintain a passing grade (C- or better) in **each** class to participate in Co-Curricular groups or activities; including athletic teams, music and drama (not applicable to classes involving these disciplines). Grades will be reviewed each reporting period (Mid-Term and Quarter) unless a teacher, a parent, the athletic director, or administration deems it necessary to review more frequently. If a student's grade report shows a failing grade, that student will meet with the Head of Divisions, to evaluate the current situation and formulate a plan to reestablish a passing grade. At the next grade report, if the student reports a failing grade in the same class(es), the Head of Divisions will meet with the student, parents, and any/all of the following; teacher, club representative, and athletic director, to determine if academic probation should be enacted. Academic probation will mean removal from participation in any and all co-curricular activities through the next grading period. A student on academic probation will not be permitted to participate in training, practice, performances, or competition with the purpose of affording the student additional time and assistance to focus his/her efforts on academic needs.

HOMEWORK PASS

It is the expectation of the Athletic Department that student-athletes manage their academic responsibilities throughout their athletic season. Management of time and resources is critical to maintaining excellence in the classroom and on the court, course, or field. To that end, student-athletes are to turn in all homework assignments when due, regardless of their training or competition schedules. Likewise, it is the responsibility of each student-athlete to actively communicate his/her sports schedule and any potential conflict or hardship that may arise due to their participation.

When a competition is scheduled during an active school week, which takes the team away for more than six (6) hours and beyond 10:00pm, the Athletic Department will notify all teachers well in advance, to afford them the opportunity to provide accommodations. In the event competition, travel, or other unforeseen circumstances that bring about uncontrollable delays, the Head of Divisions will be notified as soon as possible, to then inform all affected teachers.

SLEEPING IN

Over sleeping and/or sleeping-in (without a legitimate excuse*) after a student-athlete has competed in competition the evening before is unacceptable. To do so, violates the principles

established as an FCS athlete. Such action disrespects the teachers who are working to cooperate with athletic activities, as well as their fellow players who honored their responsibility to be in class on time. Student-athletes who are absent from morning classes following participation in athletic competition the previous day (without an approved, legitimate excuse*) may be ineligible to compete in the next scheduled team competition. An approved, legitimate excuse in missing class after an athletic event the prior day may include issues such as (1) illness requiring doctor's note or (2) medical/dental appointment previously scheduled or as a result of injury/emergency or (3) prior approved absence unrelated to athletic participation. Early and/or timely communication with the Athletic Director or Head of Middle/Upper School is required.

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, post-season forms completed, etc.
2. *In good academic and moral standing* - Student-athletes may not participate in practices or games if they are currently on academic probation or under disciplinary action warranting abstention from athletic participation.
3. *Practice and Game attendance* – Student-athletes must attend *a minimum of five of their class periods (or all class periods on an Early Dismissal schedule)* to be eligible to participate in team competition the same day. Exceptions may be granted by the Head of Divisions and Athletic Director. Exceptions may include absence due to a school event (field trip, college visit, etc.), family emergency, slight illness causing student to miss a morning class, or pre-arranged appointment (which should be communicated in advance).

Parents and student-athletes must recognize that absences from practices will hinder skill development and physical conditioning as well as jeopardize team unity. Time missed from 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 student-athletes 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). Coaches will communicate team guidelines and standards concerning absences from training and competition, including discipline and/or dismissal from the team.

EVALUATIONS

Tryouts allow coaches to place like-skilled players together, which aids in each player's development. Evaluations can be one day to five days or more, depending on the sport and level.

Important – a roster spot secured one year does not guarantee a place on the team the following year.

PLAYING UP

Upper Division (Varsity or JV) coaches who desire to utilize lower division (MS or JV) athletes in games may only do so under these controlled conditions:

1. The upper division coach, the lower division coach, and the athletic director agree to the reasoning, the safety, and benefit to both the MS or JV player and the upper division.
2. The lower division player must meet all requirements to play at the JV or Varsity level.
3. A lower division player may play no more than 2 quarters or one half of any upper division competition. (three of a five game set for varsity volleyball)
4. The upper division coach will extend the invitation to the lower division coach, to bring a player up to play in a specific upper division game. The lower division coach will then present the invitation to the player (and/or parents) to accept. The lower division coach will never be bypassed in the process.
5. This is a game-by-game situation as the lower division player is only a "guest player" for a upper division game with the intent of increasing learning and skill development, and enhancing his/her transition to upper division play.
6. No lower division player will be recognized as a full upper division player.

The same philosophy applies to practices. Lower division players are not to forgo their practice to attend an upper division practice. However, following the same protocol between coaches and AD, if an upper division practice is being held when there is no lower division team conflict, it would be acceptable for an upper division coach to request a player to attend training. If a lower division player has been approved to play as an upper division "guest player", he/she will be afforded the opportunity to train with the upper division team prior to the scheduled game.

In all cases, the parents of a lower division player have final word on allowing their student-athlete to train or play with the upper division team on an invitational basis. If the parent(s) of a lower division player rejects the invitation, that decision will be honored.

TIME COMMITMENTS

Middle School sports (6th – 8th grades) – typically four-day a week commitment with two practices and two games or three practices and one game. Practice length for all sports should not exceed 2 hours. No team related events will be held on Wednesdays or Sundays (except

cross country meets, which can be held on Wednesdays when necessary). Occasionally practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays. Weather related schedule changes may make it necessary to hold more than two games in a week. No games or practices will be played during the days of Exam Week from Reading Day through regularly scheduled exams.

Junior Varsity sports (10th grade – 7th grade) – typically four-day a week commitment with two practices and two games or three practices and one game. Practice length for all sports should not exceed 2 ½ hours. No team-related events will be held on Wednesdays or Sundays (except cross country meets, which can be held on Wednesdays when necessary). Practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays and across some school holidays depending on the sport and season. With occasional Saturday practices a varsity team may periodically require five days of practice in a week, though this will not be the norm. No games or practices will be played during the days of Exam Week from Reading Day through regularly scheduled exams.

Varsity sports (8th – 12th grades) – typically four-day a week commitment with two practices and two games or three practices and one game. Practice length for all sports should not exceed 2 ½ hours. No team-related events will be held on Wednesdays or Sundays (except cross country meets, which can be held on Wednesdays when necessary). Practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays and across some school holidays depending on the sport and season. With occasional Saturday practices a varsity team may periodically require five days of practice in a week, though this will not be the norm. No games or practices will be played during the days of Exam Week from Reading Day through regularly scheduled exams.

DEPARTURE FROM TEAM

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

1. Leaving a team – season-ending injury, poor health status, family situation, or academic reasons may lead to permissible departure from the team only after being discussed between parents, the head coach, and athletic director. Unexpected situations arise that may make it detrimental to the team and/or player to remain on the team. Early and consistent communication with the coach and/or athletic director is necessary to determine the best course of action without penalty to the player or the team.

For a player to abandon/quit their team without appropriate communication with the head coach and/or athletic director may be deemed abandonment and result in officially being dismissed from their team and therefore disciplinary actions (see #2 below).

2. 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 varsity letter or letter of

recognition in the sport (for a 9th-12th grader) and may not be eligible to play in the following season's sport.

INJURIES

There is a distinction between being "hurt" (having a sensation of pain) and being "injured" (sustaining damage, such as a tear, severe sprain, concussion). An injury requires immediate and proper treatment to restore the body and return the player to optimal performance. In the event of a suspected injury:

1. Notify your coach.
2. Contact (leave a message if after-hours) your primary care physician.
 - a) State that your son/daughter is an in-sport athlete at Faith Christian School.
 - b) State the symptoms and specific area of suspected injury.
 - c) Ask if he/she can be seen right away and leave return contact information.
3. If emergency medical care is needed, please act immediately.
 - a) Lewis Gale Medical Center – Cave Spring ER: 2706 Ogden Rd., (540) 772-2890
4. Notify the Athletic Director (540) 915-2802, who will follow up with the treating physician and/or therapist.

Injured athletes are expected to attend practices and games unless treatment or rehabilitation prevents. It is the player's responsibility to maintain communication with the coach.

STUDENT DRIVING

Student-Athletes who currently hold a valid driver's license are eligible to drive their personal vehicle to "away" games within the Roanoke Valley. Approval to do so must be validated by properly completing the *Permission to Drive* form. Parent, coach, and school administration must approve and sign form before the student-athlete is permitted to drive to away games. Students given permission to drive may have no other person in the vehicle (excluding siblings). If the student desires to drive anywhere other than directly to the "away" game site and return directly to his/her home, permission must be given by his/her parent and coach. The *Permission to Drive* form is only valid during the season of the sport.

STEWARDSHIP

All student-athletes are expected to be good stewards of all equipment, facilities, and uniforms entrusted to them. Locker rooms and training rooms are expected to be clean and orderly at all times. Where applicable, student-athletes should secure their belongings in their personal bag or use lockers to store their personal items. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

ATHLETIC UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE

Student-athletes are issued team uniforms and apparel, and they are expected to take great care of these items. If any apparel is lost or damaged and cannot be found or restored, by the prescribed apparel return date (date prescribed for FCS team apparel must be returned) another apparel piece may be issued, however replacement cost of the lost or damaged item must be paid for by the student-athlete or his/her parent/guardian. Replacement costs are dependent upon current market price and production costs. The Athletic Director will determine final replacement cost and communicate replacement costs to the family.

Student-athletes are limited on wearing any team apparel during school hours, unless approved by school administration through the school's current dress code policies.

LETTERING POLICY

Varsity Letters are earned for significant contributions to a varsity team either in playing time or servant-leadership. Being on a varsity roster does not mean that a varsity letter will be earned. Student-athletes in grades 8-12 can earn a varsity letter in a sport under these qualifications:

1. *Playing/Participation Time* – varies by sport as agreed upon by the varsity head coach and athletic director. These requirements will be communicated to athletes and their parents at the beginning of each sport season, typically participation in competition for more than half the season is a minimal requirement, *OR*
2. *Servant-Leadership* – for those team members who do not meet the minimum playing time requirement, they may qualify for a varsity letter by servant-leadership through demonstrating commitment, positive attitude, and enthusiasm and serving the team in a significant way throughout the season, as decided by the head coach and athletic director.
3. *Completion of season* – a team member must complete the season on the team's roster. If a player quits a team or is dismissed from a team, he or she will not qualify for a varsity letter. If an injury or season-ending injury impacts the minimum playing/participation time qualification, then it is up to the discretion of the varsity head coach and athletic director to determine whether the playing/participation time qualification would have been met based on to-date contribution at the time of the injury.

Letter jackets may not be purchased prior to a student-athlete earning his/her first varsity letter, regardless of season in which they earned it. The athletic department keeps on-file a list of student-athletes that qualify for varsity letters and it will notify student-athletes and their parents within one week of the end of the sport season in which he/she participates who has qualified for a varsity letter.

PERFORMANCE TRAINING

We cannot have successful athletic programs without a strong commitment to strength and speed training. Upper level student-athletes are expected to work hard on improving strength and speed throughout the school year, whether they are in or out of season. Varsity head

coaches will provide both voluntary and/or mandatory opportunities to student-athletes to train in the gym and on the fields throughout the year.

OFF-SEASON EXPECTATIONS

Student-athletes are expected to give the in-season sport in which they are participating first priority, including all training, nutrition, conditioning protocols established by their coach. As many of our student-athletes compete in multiple sports, participation in organized out-of-season training is permitted under the following guidelines: 1) Any organized training for another sport during the season in which an athlete is participating (such as an open gym/field or league) must be cleared in advance with the current in-season head coach. 2) Participation must not conflict with any pre- or in-season activities. 3) The coach of the in-season sport permits participation at his/her prerogative.

GYM FLOOR POLICIES

Only non-marking soled shoes are allowed on the gym floor at any time. The floor will be well maintained and conditioned for athletic use, and student-athletes are expected to help in keeping the floor and gym in the best possible condition. Student-athletes will be allowed to use the floor at times of scheduled practices and before games as warm-ups are directed by coaching personnel. Students must have authorized supervision to use the gym.

PARENTS

Parents are the most influential models for young athletes. Parents play an important part in how a student-athlete perceives sports; from a parent's conduct to the place sports plays in the family order of life priorities. Not only are parents influential, they are critical to the success of Faith Christian's athletic program. The athletic department needs parents to partner with us and serve in one or more of a variety of volunteer positions throughout the year. Drivers, chaperones, statisticians, videographers, concessions, admissions, field/gym preparation, or close down operation 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.

PRESENCE AT GAMES, PRACTICES, OR TRYOUTS

It is important to provide guidelines and a foundation for our joint effort to guide your sons and daughters through the challenging yet wonderful experience of school sports. 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 instruct the player without distraction from the stands.

Distraction only yields poor results. Cheer them on, during games, yes! Coach or yell at them, no! It is important to student-athletes to see parents present at games, if possible, at both home and away competition. 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 and provide teachable moments for lasting growth and impact. It also gives parents an opportunity to develop a bond with their child and other parents.

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.

COACH AS LEADER

Each coach is prayerfully and thoughtfully considered, recruited, interviewed and hired and therefore is trusted with authority over our student-athletes 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 believe is in the best interest of the team. Playing time, player positions, and strategy are 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.

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 their child in a position of having to decide who they are going to listen to; their coach or their parent. Parents who rightly model behavior under authority will provide a biblical lesson that will impact their children for years to come.

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 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 athletic director, coach, and parent can meet together to resolve the issue.

If issues cannot be resolved after meeting with the athletic director, then a meeting involving the Head of Upper School, along with the director of athletics, coach and parent should take place. Any unresolved or escalated issues should then be taken to the Head of School.

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 is 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, the conference office, or post negative comments on social media to voice complaints over athletic contests, opposing players, coaches or fans, or officials. All concerns and/or opinions should be communicated directly with Faith Christian's athletic director.

FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Anticipated expenses for student-athlete families would include the sports participation fee along with any additional equipment, garments, or footwear needed in order to appropriately participate (i.e., shorts, socks, cleats, etc.). Additional support cost will involve parents providing transportation for team members to away games and some practices. Additional expenses may be incurred when a team commits to play in a tournament or competes in post-season play. The athletic fee for each athlete must be paid before participation may begin. In the event a student is not selected (cut) or does not continue to play following pre-season training, the athletic fee will be refunded through our BOUND system minus the processing fee.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE POLICIES

As a service to families, FCS will provide Faith Zone for lower school athletes and Study Tables to MS/US students at no charge while the student-athlete is awaiting a practice, game, or athletic banquet to start. This will be provided at no charge to families. If the student-athlete requires care AFTER the practice time/event if over, the family would be charged for any after care services utilized. See the Faith Zone registration sheet for fees. Any parent intending to utilize either study tables or Faith Zone will need to fill out all registration paperwork beforehand. If a coach cannot pick up athletes by 4:30, the athletes would then attend Faith Zone until the Coach is present to check them out for practice. In the event that a game/practice is cancelled the DAY OF, families of athletes would not be charged for that day. If the cancellation/change was communicated the day before or earlier by either the coach or athletic administration, the family would be charged the daily rate for participation in after school care.

COACHES

Successful athletic programs start with quality coaches. We believe coaches are one of the most significant components to the athletic program, therefore we 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 and skilled in the art and science of 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, Faith Christian 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 we participate – VACA.

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, practice, or event until all student-athletes have left the premises, or have made prior arrangements with parents for a secure departure.

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
- "Open Gym/Field" is an optional training session. 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.

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.

CONCUSSION POLICY AND PROTOCOL

The following information is a guideline to follow during the assessment and management of sports-related mild traumatic brain injury (concussions). These guidelines are based on the latest information regarding concussion management including those from the American Academy of Pediatrics. These same guidelines are being recommended by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the National Federation of High School sports (NFHS), and the Virginia Independent School Athletic Association (VISAA).

The policy will enable the sports medicine staff (including EMT, Emergency, or other medical treatment professionals) to have a written document available for reference when explaining the appropriate action regarding concussion management, including referral policies, and the return to play (RTP) guidelines, to student-athletes, parents, coaches, and other appropriate school personnel. These procedures, in general consultation with a physician, are to be followed when dealing with an athlete that is suspected to have a head injury. It is the goal of the sports medicine staff to minimize and prevent further injury to the brain, such as second impact syndrome, while allowing student-athletes to RTP in the healthiest and safest manner.

Concussions can occur in any sports and adolescents are more susceptible than adults, since their brains are still in development. We continually monitor prevention and care guidelines, and will update our approaches as new research become available.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

The definition of a concussion continues to evolve as more knowledge is gained. It is a complex process affecting the brain due to direct or indirect forces to the head. The disturbance of brain function occurs from changes in the metabolic/chemical processes of the brain rather than a structural injury such as a "bruise". A concussion may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, or neck or elsewhere on the body with a force transmitted to the head. When an athlete shows symptoms or behaviors consistent with the symptoms below, a concussion must be suspected.

Any student-athlete, with a suspected concussion or ANY related signs or symptoms are reported or observed after receiving a mechanism that has the potential to cause a head injury, must be removed from all athletic participation, practice or competition. The student-athlete will be withheld from the competition or practice and not returned to activity for the remainder of that day and until evaluated by a healthcare provider trained in the evaluation and

management of concussions. The Head of Divisions will be notified of the injury as school work and classroom participation may be reduced or stopped during treatment and recovery.

COGNITIVE REST

Limiting visual and mental stimulation (TV viewing, video games, and testing) is recommended during this period. Mental and physical exertion should be avoided until concussion symptoms have cleared. Premature mental or physical exertion may lead to a more severe and prolonged post-concussion period. Therefore, the athlete should not study, play video games, do computer work or phone texting until his or her symptoms are resolved. As recovery proceeds, gradual increase of cognitive activity may be added. When 1-2 hours of studying can be done without symptoms developing, the athlete may return to school for short periods gradually increasing until a full day of school is tolerated without return of symptoms. Once the athlete is able to complete a full day of schoolwork, without PE or other exertion, the athlete is ready to begin the graduated return to play protocol.

PHYSICAL REST

After a concussion, all athletes should be withheld from physical exertion until they are non-symptomatic at rest (showing no symptoms from neuropsychological or cognitive testing). Before returning to any physical activity, the athlete must be cleared for progression by the medical care team.

GRANTED RETURN TO PLAY

When the player is symptom-free and able to resume activity, a prescribed sequence of steps must be followed. With this stepwise progression, the athlete will only continue to proceed to the next level if asymptomatic at the current level.

Once the athlete successfully completes each step, the athlete will be cleared to play without restrictions provided no symptoms return. This requires documentation of progression and must be signed off by appropriate medical personnel.

GUIDELINE AND PROTOCOL RESOURCES

If you suspect your son/daughter has sustained a concussion or injury during participation in an FCS sporting event:

1. Notify your coach
2. Contact your doctor's office at (leave a message if after-hours).
 - a. State that your son/daughter is an in-sport athlete at Faith Christian School.
 - b. State the symptoms and specific area of suspected injury.
 - c. Ask if he/she can be seen right away and leave return contact information
3. If emergency medical care is needed, please act immediately.

- a. Lewis Gale Medical Center – Cave Spring ER: 2706 Ogden Rd., (540) 772-2890
4. Notify the Athletic Director (540) 915-2802, who will follow up with the doctor.

NOTE: Dr. Bolin supports Faith Christian School Athletics and whose background includes training concussion treatment, non-operative orthopedics, and biomechanics, currently serves as the head team physician at Radford University, the medical director of the Roanoke College Athletic Training Education program, and an associate professor at VCOM. He is the owner/director of Performance Medicine of SW Virginia, located at 1215 Corporate Circle SW, Suite 201, Roanoke, VA.

Please note-all of the above information as stated in the Athletic Handbook is in addition to our FCS Student Handbook and Code of Conduct.

FAITH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
2025-2026 PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received, read and understand the 2025-2026 Faith Christian School Athletic Handbook and agree to abide by its rules and guidelines.

Please PRINT Name:

Student-Athlete

Grade

Please SIGN:

Student-Athlete

Date

Parent

Date

Parent

Date

Official Use Only

Date Received: _____ Received By: _____

STUDENT-ATHLETE ACCIDENT REPORT

Note: A copy of each student-athlete's school emergency form will be kept by each head coach during the season in the event of an incident or emergency.

Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____

School _____ DOB _____

Date of Accident _____ Month _____ Day _____ Year _____ Time _____

Date Report Filed _____

Place of Accident _____

Cause of Accident _____

Nature of Injury _____

Under Whose Supervision _____

Were Parents Contacted _____ By Whom? _____ Time _____

Was the Injured Seen by a Doctor? _____ Name & Date _____

The Accident Occurred (Check One) _____ En route to school

_____ During a game or contest

_____ During a practice

_____ Other: _____

Was the Injured offered EMT help and an Ambulance? _____ Yes _____ No

Did the Injured (Parent or Guardian) agree to have EMT or Ambulance help? _____ Yes _____ No

Person Making This Report _____

Signature of Coach _____

Signature of Adult Witness _____

Insurance Report Filed? _____ Date _____

Comments: _____

**STUDENT-ATHLETE PERMISSION TO DRIVE
RELEASE TO DRIVE TO ATHLETIC EVENTS**

All of the following must be completed:

1. I have my coach's permission.

2. I have provided the school with a copy of my driver's license and current "proof of insurance."

3. I agree to travel only to the event location/s approved by my coach.

4. My vehicle is in good working order.

5. In case of emergency, I will notify the appropriate authorities (911) first. I will then contact my parents, my coach, and the athletic director (540-915-2802).

*This form must be completed and submitted to the athletic department in advance and is valid only during the season of the sport indicated. A separate form must be completed for each FCS Student Passenger.

Student's Name (printed): _____

Sport: _____ Season: _____

Coach's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

FCS Administrator: _____ Date: _____

