

# **Covenant Academy Student – Athlete Handbook**



*“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”  
I Corinthians 10:31*

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# **Covenant Academy**

4652 Ayers Rd., Macon, Ga. 31210

## **ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

### **Purpose of CA Athletics**

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Covenant Academy involves its student-athletes in interscholastic sports in order to first and foremost, glorify and honor God with the talents and abilities He has given. We also believe athletics is a great tool to build Christian character, teach discipline, and to learn to face adversity and challenges. Student-athletes are to display good sportsmanship and honor the Lord throughout their participation.

### **Participation**

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Participation in athletics is a privilege. This privilege may be lost as a result of improper conduct. The responsibility for choosing each team is left up to the coach and his/her staff. Players as well as parents must recognize the commitment level that will be needed to participate in the school athletic program. A commitment to a team requires time. A student on a school team is agreeing to make the commitment to practice each day throughout the season and to keep absences from practices and games minimal.

### **Character Education and Athletics**

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We expect our student-athletes, parents, and coaches to exemplify the character of Christ as we compete in athletics. In order to accomplish this, there must be a higher level of accountability. Student-athletes have both the privilege and the responsibility of representing our school. These students are always representatives of Christ to those who see them. This increased visibility demands that the students be held to a higher standard of conduct that is glorifying to God, both in school and out of school.

*“That you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world; holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.” (Philippians 2:15 – 16, NKJV)*

## **Character Goals and Expectations**

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The following are some of the character qualities we are seeking to build in our student-athletes through CA athletics. Each is drawn from God's Word. Our goal is to strive for excellence both on and off the court and field by growing in conformity to Christ in very visible and practical ways.

† **Faith**

Show that you know the Lord is in control of every situation and is carrying out His will in your life – even when things don't seem to go your way.

† **Respect for Authority**

Obey and cooperate with your coach; honor the official. Recognize that these individuals are placed in their position of authority by God, and, as such, are owed your respect.

† **Respect for Opposition**

Be courteous. Don't let up on them – they deserve your best effort, regardless of the score. Commend an opponent's excellence. Shake a hand.

† **Humility**

Don't boast; don't act proudly. Show forth the attitude that God is the one who is ultimately responsible for your abilities and successes.

† **Endurance**

Persevere in the face of pressure, hard work, and discouragement. Keep your eyes fixed on the higher goals. Don't quit; don't let up.

† **Intensity**

Give everything you've got at all times. Focus your total attention on the job at hand, and put forth every effort to execute it perfectly. Don't be content with mediocrity; strive for excellence.

† **Enthusiasm**

Carry out each task promptly and eagerly. Enjoy the game!

† **Responsibility**

Be where you need to be when you need to be there. Do what is expected of you even without direct supervision. Choose to work and to make wise decisions on your own initiative.

† **Integrity**

Be honest! Earn a good name as one who is trustworthy. Play by the rules of the game.

- † **Teamwork**  
Don't be selfish. Spur each other on to excellence. Support successes, and don't criticize failures if the best effort has been given. When someone is struggling, stick with him/her. Be a team!
- † **Servanthood**  
Look for ways to serve your teammates, your coach, and your school. Remember Jesus' example.
- † **Self-Control**  
Know yourself. Know how you tend to act under stress. Recognize areas of weakness, and train yourself to respond in a Godly way.

## Affiliations

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Covenant Academy is a member of the GISA for all sports. The school must adhere to all eligibility requirements set forth by this organization.

<http://www.gisa-schools.org>

## Risks of Participation

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It must be understood that there are obvious risks involved in athletic participation. Injuries can occur even when every safety precaution has been taken.

## Sports Offered At Covenant Academy

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Season	Boys	Girls
Fall	Football Cross Country	Cheerleading Softball Cross Country
Winter	Basketball Swimming	Basketball Swimming Cheerleading
Spring	Baseball Track and Field Tennis Golf	Track and Field Tennis Golf

## **Team and School Rules**

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A coach has the right to establish team rules. The pre-approved rules must be communicated to the team. These rules include, but are not limited to, practice attendance, tardiness, and care of uniforms.

The Student-Athlete Handbook applies to all student-athletes and parents in all sports. These rules will be followed.

## **Athletic Department Chain of Command**

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The Athletic Director oversees the entire athletic program. The AD works with the High School Principal to provide a quality program. Each Assistant, B-Team, or C-Team Coach reports to the Head Coach of his or her sport, and all Head Coaches report directly to the Athletic Director.

Questions or concerns about a specific team should be first addressed to your son's/daughter's coach. If your questions are not sufficiently addressed, feel free to make an appointment with the Athletic Director.

Parents are strongly encouraged to support the decisions of the coach. While you may not agree with every decision of a coach, how and when you express your feelings may have a negative effect on your child and on the team. The time immediately following a contest is an emotional time, so please refrain from approaching a coach with issues at that time. A good standard to follow is "right time, right place, and right spirit."

## **Tryouts for Teams**

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All coaches may hold try-outs for teams. Some will make cuts based on team size. When coaches make cuts or determine whether the student is a Varsity, B-Team, or C-Team player, please understand that this is very hard to do. Student-athletes will be observed in skills and drills, and possibly scrimmage situations. The coach will then choose those student-athletes based on ability, commitment, character, attitude, and team needs.

In order to build a strong program with the facilities and size of coaching staff of CA, we must maintain teams with numbers we can train and play. A student should always feel free to talk to the coach about why he/she did not make a team so that the student can improve for next year.

CA coaches strive to put God first and seek His guidance as we make decisions concerning our students.

## **Practice Policy**

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It is understood that an important aspect of athletics is practice. Teams may practice every day after school. Wednesdays are only until 5:15, and early morning practices can be from 6:00 am -7:30 am. Occasionally, teams may also practice during holidays.

**NO TEAMS MAY PRACTICE ON SUNDAYS!**

Coaches will hand out practice schedules at the beginning of the season. Please note that sometimes changes will have to be made.

Coaches spend a tremendous amount of time away from their families during the season. Forcing a coach to wait for parents long after a practice is finished is unfair to the coach. It is imperative that student-athletes are picked up promptly at the end of practices and games.

## **Hazing/Peer Harassment Policy**

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Hazing or peer harassment that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in affiliation with any team will not be tolerated. All student-athletes must be given the opportunity to compete without the threat of any type of abuse. Coaches have a responsibility to maintain a safe and positive environment for all student-athletes. Students are encouraged to notify coaches or other school personnel if there are any instances of hazing or harassment.

## **Attendance Guidelines**

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A student must be present for half the school day in order to participate in a game on that day. Exception will be made for medical or dental appointments. Please bring a note to school from your doctor when you have an appointment.

## **Academic Eligibility**

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Logic and Rhetoric school students are required to maintain **at least a 2.0 grade point average** during any two consecutive quarters. This guideline is intended to provide additional motivation to students whose academic achievements are not up to their capability. If implementation of this guideline would be counterproductive to this end, the Logic and Rhetoric school principal in consultation with the headmaster may decide not to place a student on probation. A written record explaining this

decision will be signed by the principal and the headmaster and placed in the student's file.

Grade point averages for each Logic and Rhetoric school student will be calculated at the end of each quarter. *Elective courses and independent study courses are included in the G.P.A. calculation.*

If a student's G.P.A. is below 2.0 (i.e. a "C" average), that student will be placed on academic probation during the following quarter. A parent-teacher conference will be arranged at this time.

If at the end of the next quarter the student's G.P.A. (for the quarter) has not risen to at least a 2.0, that student may be expelled.

Students who are ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities includes those who are on academic probation as well as any student failing to pass five courses (including electives) in the previous semester.

## **Athletic Physicals**

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Every student-athlete must have a completed physical on file before beginning practice. Be sure that one parent signs the completed physical form before turning it in to the office.

Physical forms will be available on the website or in the Upper School.

## **Uniforms**

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Student-athletes will be issued team uniforms. The uniforms are the property of Covenant Academy. The uniforms are to be worn for the athletic contest only, not for practice or casual wear.

Care will be taken when laundering the uniforms. Wash in cold water and hang to dry. ***Do not put uniforms in the dryer!*** Uniforms that are lost or damaged or that have unusual wear need to be replaced by the student-athlete.

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## **Travel**

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All student-athletes will travel with the team to away games. Coaches may allow student-athletes to ride home with their parents, but the Coach must be aware of this. No student-athlete may ride home with another family unless written or direct verbal permission has been given to the coach prior to the game. Exceptions may be made for local games.

Coaches will provide parents with expected arrival times for away games. It is expected that parents will respect the coaches' time and be prompt in picking up their children after home and away games.

## **Sportsmanship Standards**

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The Apostle Paul stated in I Corinthians 10:31, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Athletics can be used to develop many positive qualities in student-athletes, parents, and spectators. We must maintain a Christ-like testimony while in the midst of competition. The following guidelines have been developed to help us maintain a Godly walk and testimony.

### **For the Coach...**

1. Exemplify Godly character, behavior, and leadership at all times.
2. Respect the integrity and personality of the individual student-athletes.
3. Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and spirit.
4. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
5. Respect the integrity, judgment, and authority of the officials. Show respect to the officials.

### **For the Student-Athletes...**

1. Accept the responsibility of representing Covenant Academy.
2. Treat opponents and teammates with self-control and respect.
3. Avoid actions and words that demean or taunt opponents.
4. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
5. Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials.
6. Shake hands with the opponents after the game.

### **For the Spectators...**

1. Remember that you are at an athletic contest involving school students. They are not adults or professionals.

2. Show respect for opposing players, coaches, spectators, and cheerleaders.
3. Respect the integrity, judgment, and authority of the officials.
4. Avoid personal contact with the officials.
5. Avoid booing, taunting, and sarcastic and personal comments directed at the opposing players and referees.
6. Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.

## **Parent/Coach Relationship**

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Both parenting and coaching are difficult tasks. Parents and coaches must have an understanding of the expectations and philosophies of one another. Clear communication is important.

### *Communication you will expect from the coach:*

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for team members
3. Locations and times of all games and practices
4. Approximate return times for all away games
5. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning

### *Communication coaches expect from parents:*

1. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
2. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

### *Appropriate issues to discuss with a coach:*

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

### *Issues NOT appropriate to discuss with a coach:*

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

## **Athletic Awards**

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Each student-athlete on the team will receive a certificate of participation. Only varsity athletes are eligible to earn a letter. Special awards will be given out at the awards programs.

### **Criteria for Earning a Varsity Letter ...**

- ✓ Varsity Football – Play in at least 40% of total quarters
- ✓ Varsity Cross-Country – Finish in teams top 7 in 40% of all meets
- ✓ Varsity Cheerleading – Each will receive a letter upon the completion of a season
- ✓ Varsity Softball – Play in at least 40% of total innings
- ✓ Varsity Basketball – Play in at least 40% of total quarters
- ✓ Varsity Swimming – Place in at least 30% of total meets
- ✓ Varsity Baseball – Play in at least 40% of total innings
- ✓ Varsity Golf – Play in at least 40% of total matches
- ✓ Varsity Tennis – Play in at least 40% of total matches
- ✓ Varsity Track – Place in at least 30% of total meets

### **Exceptions to the Athletic Letter Policy ...**

1. A senior in good team standing who has not received a letter in that sport may be granted a letter.
2. A student who is injured while participating in his/her sport and cannot compete in a sufficient number of games to earn a letter may be awarded a letter if the coach feels the athlete would have earned the letter had he or she not been injured.
3. Failure to attend a conference or state tournament event for any unexcused reason will result in the loss of letter.

There will be one athletic award nights this year: Spring

Football, Softball, Cross Country

Basketball, Cheerleading

Baseball, Track and Field, Tennis, Swimming

## **Letter Jackets**

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Student-athletes may earn a varsity letter by participating on a Varsity team for an entire season and being in good standing with the Coach for that season. If your son or daughter

earned a varsity letter in a sport, then he or she may purchase a letter jacket. We ask that all patches, along with names and nicknames, be approved by the Athletic Director before the order is placed. **CA Coaches will provide the wording for all team patches earned.**

## **NCAA Clearinghouse**

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If you are a prospective student-athlete at a Division I or II college or university, you have certain responsibilities to attend to before you may participate. For all parents and student-athletes who are interested in participating in college athletics, you will need to schedule an appointment with the Athletic Director.

### **Student-Athlete Code of Conduct**

#### **Speech:**

*Proverbs 16:23* "The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips." NKJV

1. **Choose your words and your timing wisely.** Questionable language or "slang" words will not be tolerated. The student-athlete will never engage in any language that can be termed "trash talking" or profanity.
2. **The student-athlete will address the coaches and officials with respect.** The student-athlete will address the coach as "Coach" or "Mr., Miss, or Mrs." And will take concerns or complaints directly to him or her.
3. **Never criticize the officials or coaches.** Coaches and officials represent the authority figure. Obedience to authority is not optional and is not predicated on whether or not you agree with it. All authority is God-given, and disobedience to authority is disobedience to God.

#### **Relationships:**

*John 15:12* "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."  
(NKJV)

1. **Develop good relationships and a good rapport with teammates and coaches.** God has placed you in this situation for a purpose. You have an opportunity to develop life-long friendships. If sports becomes all about you, you need not participate.
2. **Develop relationships and good rapport with classmates.** Do not attempt to set yourself up on a pedestal.
3. **Develop relationships and good rapport with students from other schools.** Never miss an opportunity to share Jesus Christ with others.

### **Unity:**

*I Corinthians 12:12* "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." (NKJV)

1. **Develop unity within your team.** "It is amazing what can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit." John Wooden
2. **Develop unity with our school family.** God has called each one of us to this school. Each of us has different responsibilities, abilities, and roles. Never be jealous or envious of someone else's role. Be busy fulfilling your role.
3. **Develop unity within the Kingdom.** We must establish our philosophy with other schools in order for our ultimate purpose to be met – to further the Kingdom of God. It will take other Christian schools being successful. Pray for them as you pray for Covenant Academy.

### **Motives:**

*I Corinthians 10:31* "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (NKJV)

1. **Be motivated by the love of God.** Live for Him, because He gave His life for us.
2. **Strive for victory in order to glorify God.** Athletics is simply a means to an end and not an end unto itself. "Perfection is what you are striving for, but perfection is an impossibility. However, striving for perfection is not an impossibility." John Wooden

3. **Demonstrate Christ in our lives by abiding by the rules of the game in letter and spirit.** Tactics that promote unfair “gamesmanship” will not be tolerated.
4. **Be committed to excellence.** Be committed to excellence in all areas: faith, practice, academics, and game preparation. “Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.” *Proverbs 16:3*
5. **Play and act like a CHAMPION!**

## **Behavior:**

*1 John 2:6 “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” (NKJV)*

1. **The student-athlete will maintain a good reputation.** The student-athlete’s character will be in good standing with the administration, faculty, and staff. The student-athlete will refrain from the use of profanity, suggestive or threatening language or innuendos. The student-athlete will not be under the influence of, possess, or sell alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. The student-athlete will not be involved in any immoral sexual activity or be in possession of any pornography or illicit pictures or literature.
2. **The student-athlete will meet all eligibility requirements.**
3. **The student-athlete will know and understand all requirements.** The student-athlete will know all of the expectations of his/her team and will follow them both in action and in spirit.
4. **The student-athlete will show respect for all coaches, trainers, and all staff personnel.** This includes the game plans, methods, and philosophies.
5. **The student-athlete will show respect for his/her teammates.** The student-athlete will respect the seriousness of his/her commitment by attending all practices, meeting, and games as prescribed at the beginning of the season and by working together to accomplish a common goal. Help to hold your teammates accountable for their actions.
6. **The student-athlete will maintain a high standard of appearance.** He/she will adhere to the strictest interpretations of the school dress code and the team dress and uniform code while at school and on any school trip.
7. **The student-athlete will demonstrate Christ-like character.** Both in and out of the arena, the student-athlete will show respect in speech and in

actions for game officials, opponents, and all those associated with our opponents.

8. **The student-athlete will never engage in fighting.** The student-athlete will maintain self-control at all times. Unsportsmanlike conduct, penalties, and technical fouls will not be tolerated and will be penalized. Penalties include, but are not limited to, suspension or dismissal from the team.
9. **The student-athlete will know and understand our philosophy.** The student-athlete will respect the eternal effects of his/her speech and actions as he/she represents him/herself, his/her family, his/her church, and ultimately the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

*I have read and understand the Student-Athlete's Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its principles and guidelines at Covenant Academy sporting events. I fully understand that I may not participate without a signed copy of the document on file in the athletic office.*

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*Print Student Name*

*Student Signature*

*Date*

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

### **Speech:**

*Proverbs 16:23 "The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips."  
(NKJV)*

1. **Choose your words and timing wisely.** Questionable language or "slang" words will not be tolerated. Anything negative or insulting must be avoided.
2. **Be positive and encouraging.** Lift your student and others up. Let them know that they are important. Let them know the importance of being a member of a team.
3. **Never criticize the officials or coaches.** Coaches and officials are representatives of authority. This is a great opportunity to teach your child how to respect a person in authority. All authority is God-given, and disobedience to authority is disobedience to God. Insist that your child address the coaches and officials with respect.
4. **Never speak negatively around the students or other parents about:**

- a. **The School** – Negativity can be contagious. Instead, create an atmosphere of gratitude.
  - b. **Other Students or Parents** – Speak to parents only about your students and their students. Speak to other students only in an encouraging manner. The only time another student’s or parent’s name will be mentioned in is a genuine complimentary manner.
  - c. **Officials and Coaches** – Students easily pick up on an adult’s attitude toward an official or coach. In order to promote respect for authority, refrain from voicing negative opinions concerning coaches and officials around students.
5. **Never criticize your child’s teammates.** Remember to teach your child team attitude.
  6. **Always resolve differences with your coaches out of sight and earshot of students and other parents.** Call to set an appointment to speak with the coach privately. Pray about what you will say and what is motivating your discussion.

## **Relationships:**

*John 15:12 “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” (NKJV)*

1. **Develop relationships and a good rapport with team and coaches.** God has placed you in this situation for a purpose. You have an opportunity to minister and be an encouragement to others. If sports becomes all about you and your student, you need not participate.
2. **Develop relationships and a good rapport with other parents.** You will need their prayers and support as much as they will need yours.
3. **Develop relationships and a good rapport with parents from other schools.** Never miss an opportunity to share Jesus Christ with others. Promote your school and your students. The relationships you develop are a reflection of our entire ministry.
4. **Develop relationships with the coaches.** Get to know the coaches. Pray for them. Communicate with them with an open heart and mind. Be open, honest, and use gentle words.

## Unity:

*1 Corinthians 12:12* "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." (NKJV)

1. **Develop unity within our school family.** God has called each one of us to this school. Each of us has different roles and abilities. Never be jealous or envious of someone else's role. Be busy fulfilling your role. Your example of being a unified school body is a valuable lesson for your students to learn.
2. **Develop unity within the Kingdom.** We must establish our philosophy with other schools in order for our ultimate purpose to be met – to further the Kingdom of God. It will take other Christian schools being successful. Pray for them as you pray for Covenant Academy.

## Motives:

*1 Corinthians 10:31* "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (NKJV)

1. **Be motivated by the love of God.** Live for Him, because He gave His life for us.
2. **Strive for victory as a tool to teach your students.** Teach them that athletics is a means to an end and not an end unto itself. "*Perfection is what you are striving for, but perfection is an impossibility. However, striving for perfection is not an impossibility.*" John Wooden
3. **Teach your students to abide by the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.** Tactics that promote unfair "gamesmanship" will not be tolerated.
4. **Use your child's experience as a chance to be involved in his or her life.** Your relationship with your child as an adult will last longer than your relationship with him/her in your home. If you want a relationship with him/her as an adult, you need to begin building that relationship *now*. Athletics affords you that opportunity.

## Behavior:

*1 John 2:6* "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked." (NKJV)

1. **Maintain class and character.** You are setting the example for your children. Realize that your every action reflects upon you, your family, FCFA, and ultimately your Lord.
2. **Always insist that your children follow instructions.** Coaches must depend on a player's ability to follow orders immediately and without question. Questions will be raised at the appropriate time, such as practice or after a game.
3. **Always dress appropriately.** Modest attire that does not attract attention to you and away from your child will be worn. Even in warm weather events, a Christ-like appearance must be maintained.
4. **Be an example and a guard.** Set the standard high for behavior and appearance, and do not be afraid to speak to those who are indifferent to our ultimate purpose.
5. **Work with the officials...don't work the officials.** Badgering an official to persuade a call our way comes with too high a price – our testimony and our ability to influence others for Jesus Christ. There is never a time at any contest where a parent is afforded an opportunity to say anything to an official other than "Thank You." Without these men and women, and their willingness to officiate, no one is playing ball.
6. **Remain in the stands.** Never attempt to approach the field, court, bench area, press box, score table, or the officials before, during, or after a ballgame. Socially visiting with the coach briefly after a game is encouraged.
7. **Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.** Coaches, students, parents, and spectators will need to be strong in this area. Shake hands with our visitors before and after the game.
8. **Recognize the success of your opponent.** Compliment the good play of students from the other school.
9. **Teach your children that they have a special purpose from God.** It is their responsibility to accept God's purpose for them. Do not compare or contrast them to others. This limits their ability to fulfill their own unique potential and purpose.
10. **Have fun, touch lives, and be yourself.** You have the opportunity to be a positive influence, like no one else may be able to, in the lives of your children and their peers. Games, plays, and officials will be forgotten, but your behavior and attitude will stay with your children forever.

*Note: Conduct detrimental to the testimony of the school will result in removal from the athletic arena.*

*I have read and understand the Parent's Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its principles and guidelines at all CA sporting events. I fully understand that I may not participate without a signed copy of this document of file in the athletic office.*

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*Parent or Guardian's Name*

*Student Name*

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*Parent or Guardian's Signature*

*Date*