

ATHLETIC



HANDBOOK

SPORTING CONDUCT

The administration of CVCA is committed to the practice of good sportsmanship and ethical behavior in all of our interscholastic competition. To be successful, it is critical that **everyone:** coaches, student athletes, students, band members, parents, and others consistently behave in a manner that is respectful and reflective of the values of good sportsmanship. Failure on the part of just one can undermine the efforts of everyone else.

Interscholastic competition provides an excellent venue for character development, school spirit, discipline, team work, perseverance, adherence to rules and structure, commitment, humility, patience, and so much more. Unfortunately, it also provides a venue for arrogance, selfishness, unkindness, harshness, false pride, jealousy, and sometimes rage; and it can happen in a Christian community. This ought not to be!

Here at CVCA, we strive to participate in the development of **biblically wise** young men and women. But what does biblical wisdom look like? In James 3:13 we read this:

*“Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his **good behavior** his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom”.*
(emphasis added)

Isn't it interesting that biblical wisdom is equated to good behavior?

Let us strive together to make the experience of CVCA athletics memorable for all of the right reasons!

Mike Bova
Headmaster

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

"Doing Our Best As We Strive For Excellence!"

Philosophy

The Philosophy and approach to athletics at Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy flows naturally from the school's mission statement, "Educating and Cultivating Servants for Christ." The purpose and intent of our sports programs at CVCA is to bring glory to God through our participation and involvement in athletics. Our goal is to develop within those who participate in athletics the character traits of Jesus Christ; producing positive Christian men and women who honor the Lord both on and off the field.

CVCA embraces the belief that the student athlete comes first; winning is secondary. When winning is kept in the right perspective, our student athletes are allowed to develop without fear of failure. They learn to understand the value of praise, as well as that of constructive criticism. Winning must be accomplished while competing in a Christ - honoring sense of fair play and good sportsmanship. Athletics challenges student athletes to grow in their spiritual journey.

The principles and lessons learned in the classroom, at home, and through the local church, can be put into practice through athletics. Character is shaped through athletic competition and will carry over into all other areas of life. We desire for our athletes to grow spiritually by teaching them to think and act like Christ in the competitive arena and to model Godly character through their words, their attitudes, and their deeds.

Our goal is for students to leave with a greater understanding of their God-given purpose, who they are in Christ, and how they can serve others. It is our desire that every athlete, coach, and parent enjoy the total experience of athletics at CVCA.

Our ultimate goal is that the world will see Christ in us as we compete and that we would know "victory beyond competition".

Our Commitment to Excellence

Participation in CVCA athletics prepares a person for the Christian life in a society based on competition and excellence. Our athletes who commit themselves to excellence and learn to deal with success and failure on the playing field will carry this ability with them throughout their lives. An objective of our athletic program is the development of Christian character traits through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is intended to develop excellence in each athlete physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially and in so doing, bringing that young person closer to God.

Physically - athletics provides our athletes with the opportunity to develop to their full potential, including the ability to go beyond the limits of normal endurance.

Emotionally - our athletes learn to control themselves under pressure. In a single contest, the athlete may need to deal with elation, frustration, anger, and fear. He or she must learn to win gracefully and to bounce back in the face of defeat.

Intellectually - our athletes develop and exercise their minds as they learn and use the rules, strategies, and plays of the game. They develop mental toughness when they learn that their bodies can withstand considerable punishment.

Finally, our athletes develop **socially**. They learn to submit to authority as they interact with the coaching staff, officials and operate under the regulations of the game. Through team play they learn cooperation, communication and loyalty as the team strives toward a common goal. Our coaches are committed to the development of a program that is not only competitive, but also one that will glorify Jesus Christ and be a positive experience for all who participate.

Role Model Coaches

Developing each student athlete spiritually, so that the Holy Spirit controls and directs his or her mind and body in every athletic endeavor, is a key objective of the CVCA athletic program.

“May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1Thessalonians 5:23).

Within that philosophical framework, all of our coaches desire to train, disciple, and encourage student athletes to perform athletically to the maximum of his or her potential in order to honor and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Spiritually, the athletes will be challenged to learn what it takes to be Christians in an increasingly secular world. Emotionally, the athletes will have the opportunity to be mentored by different coaches so life-to-life mentoring occurs. Through the process of “Coaching the Heart” the athlete will be nurtured in an environment where they are encouraged to grow into leaders for Christ on and off the playing field. Athletic competition often can serve as a microcosm of life, providing learning situations that occur in athletic competition, which mirror life experiences. Coaches hope to build within each student-athlete eternal biblical principles and values, so that he or she might conform to Christ’s image and demonstrate His character.

The CVCA Athlete

We believe all CVCA athletes should be diligent in preparation, relentless in effort, disciplined by nature, respectful in actions, self-controlled with words, humble in spirit, and aggressive in pursuit of excellence, without regard to the score, opponent, time or referee. As Christian athletes display these characteristics, good things usually happen: teams are successful, players are motivated, fans are supportive and enthusiastic, parents are proud, prospective athletes want to participate, and very often non-believers are drawn to Christ. Each student athlete is expected to strive for excellence in their academic endeavors while participating in the CVCA athletic program. As a CVCA student athlete, you are also expected to strive to positively exemplify five core character values and to do your best to represent Christ, your teammates, and yourself by:

- respecting opponents, officials, teammates, yourself and the game.
- taking responsibility for your actions in all areas of your life.
- having the integrity to stand by your word.
- provide servant leadership where you serve others while striving to be a personal and team leader.
- represent CVCA in a Christ honoring and respectful manner, understanding that student-athletes are highly visible CVCA representatives to the student body and the community.

As a student-athlete at CVCA you should only participate in activities that have a positive reflection on Christ, family, team and school. You should not do anything that would violate team guidelines or breach CVCA’s Student Handbook. In addition, each coach and each team will develop expectations unique to their respective programs.

EXPECTATIONS OF ATHLETES

Each student athlete is expected to:

Be Responsible - Be at practice; try to limit appointments, vacations or other family events that may cause you to miss valuable time; be on time; keep your grades up; turn in your homework; be an example in the classroom, hallways, and outside CVCA.

Be Respectful - Speak to teammates, coaches, parents, and officials with kind words and respect; dress modestly and appropriately.

Be Honest - Speak the truth in love; avoid gossip or listening to gossip; keep your speech clean and pure.

Be Loyal - Believe the best about your teammates and coaches; keep team issues within the team.

Work Hard - Be diligent to take advantage of every opportunity to improve; push and encourage your teammates.

Play Smart - Know your plays and assignments; take care of your body by eating right, staying hydrated and getting plenty of rest; stay away from activities and habits that may harm your body and/or jeopardize your athletic career.

Team Before Yourself - Always consider others more important than yourself; encourage your teammates faithfully.

Be Coach-able - Respond with a “Yes, Coach” or “Yes, ma’am/sir”, not with an excuse.

Accept Your Role - Be willing to sacrifice personal goals for the good of the team; give your best to the role your coach assigns to you; trust that the coaches have your best interest in mind, as well as the team’s.

Handle Success and Failure - Always keep your head up; be humble in your accomplishments, and be strong and gracious in your defeats.

Be a Competitor and Have a Winning Attitude - Always strive to improve; seek excellence in all facets of life.

Keep Your Eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith!

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2(NIV)

Expectations of the CVCA Parent

The parents of CVCA student athletes are the key to our school establishing a distinctly different, distinctly Christ-honoring sports program. As your child participates in the CVCA athletic program they will experience some very rewarding moments. It is also important to remember that there will be times when adversity and disappointment inevitably occur. At all times the leadership and example of our parents will be watched by our students, and coaches, along with the parents, students, and coaches of opposing teams. The parents of CVCA student athletes are expected to:

Be Supportive of Coaches – In front of your child, be supportive and positive of the coaches' decisions. If you have problems with what the coach is doing, it is best to talk directly with the coach.

Teach Respect for Authority – There will be times when you disagree with a coach or official but always remember they are trying their best and are trying to be fair. Let your conduct always model Christ and show good sportsmanship by being positive.

Let the Coach Do The Coaching – When your child is on the field or court, let the coach do the coaching. Shouting instruction or criticism may hinder the overall experience of the student-athlete. You can teach life skills that athletics and activities bring to the forefront.

Model Good Sportsmanship at Games – When cheering for a CVCA team, only cheer for the Royals. There is **NEVER** any reason to cheer against or “taunt” the other team. (Example: In basketball, chanting “air-ball” or screaming while the opponent is on the free-throw line, in baseball, making noise while an opponent is at bat.) Never question or “boo” an official about a call. Negative comments and gestures of displeasure toward any coach, visiting team, or officials, only undermine the efforts of all involved. Always treat the visiting school as guests before, during, and after games. Realize that the word Christian means “Christ-like”. We as Christians are always testimonies, whether good or bad. CVCA wants to portray a good testimony always, but especially to the schools we compete against. Every visitor, opponent, and official is a partner in Christ or a potential partner in Christ. Cheer for the Royals to play hard and to play to win, but with an attitude of Christian sportsmanship. Long after the score is forgotten, our behavior will be remembered and is a reflection upon the entire ministry that is CVCA.

Help Your Children Learn Through Failure – The way your child handles failure can help them face the certainty of disappointment that life will throw at them in the future. The worst time for you as a parent to give advice is immediately after a disappointment. Encourage and support them as they cope with their disappointment.

Be Mindful Of Your Role As A Role Model – Take a good honest look at your attitude, actions and reactions in the athletic arena. The loudest thing your child will hear is not what you say but what they see you do.

Show Unconditional Love – The most important thing: show your child you love them and are proud of them, win or lose.

The Bottom Line

If we are to be the people our loving God intends for us to be, we must not separate athletics from our calling as Christians. Coaches must coach, players must play, and fans must cheer as Christians. Among many things, this means that we will respect authority, our opponents, and each other. Athletics can be an act of worship and a celebration of God's gifts to us. The CVCA Athletic Department is committed to developing Christ-like character among our student athletes, encouraging them to develop their God-given athletic abilities to their maximum potential and equipping them for their real test: life as a follower of Christ.

Communication Guidelines

Clear communication between parents and coaches will facilitate a positive athletic experience for our athletes. Listed below are a number of steps to enhance parent/coach communication. It is important to remember that the first link in the communication network is the one established between the coach and student. Encourage your child to exercise the opportunity to speak directly with his/her coach about any topic and preferably before a parent/coach conversation is scheduled.

Communication you should expect from your child's coach:

1. A clear understanding and explanation of the Philosophy of CVCA Athletics, which is to develop the athlete in their walk with Christ.
2. Evaluation of your child's strength/weaknesses in that sport.
3. Recommendations for improvement of sport skills.
4. Location and times of all practices and games.
5. Explanation of CVCA athletic rules and procedures.
6. Team requirements (special equipment, fees, etc.).
7. Procedures if your child is injured in practice or an event.
8. Discipline that results in denying your child a participation opportunity.

Communication Coaches expect from parents:

1. Concerns that are expressed directly to the coach.
2. Specific health concerns dealing with your child.
3. Notification of any practice or game schedule conflicts well in advance.
4. Specific questions regarding CVCA athletics and or parent expectations.
5. Parents will be asked to fill out a questionnaire (available on our website) to evaluate the season at its conclusion.

Appropriate issues to discuss with coaches:

1. The mental and physical treatment of your child.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

Issues NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches:

1. Playing Time
2. Individual Position Assignments
3. Team Strategy
4. Play Calling
5. Other Student-Athletes

Procedures to follow when you discuss a concern with a coach:

1. Contact the coach by school phone or email to set up appointment.
2. Describe your areas of concern.
3. Limit your discussion to your own child's issues. Do not discuss issues pertaining other athletes or parents unless they specifically involve your child.
4. You may NOT confront a coach before or after a game or practice. These may be emotional moments.

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the athletic director to discuss the situation.

2. At this meeting the appropriate next steps can be determined.

**ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION
And
TRAINING REGULATIONS**

The Athletic Department of CVCA has established the following rules for the betterment of the individual and the team. The athletes abiding by these guidelines will unite toward a respective team goal and elevate the respect our programs will receive.

A. PARTICIPATION REGULATIONS – All students interested in participation in any athletic program at CVCA must meet the following requirements:

1. The student must have an OHSAA athletic physical completed and on file in the athletic office within the previous 12 months before he/she can practice or play. (CVCA provides physicals at the end of spring each school year at a nominal cost.)
2. The student must meet the academic standards for eligibility of both CVCA and the OHSAA. (See page 18 in this handbook).
3. The student must participate in and meet the requirements of the coach during team tryouts.
4. Submit the Athletic Fee of \$125 by the deadline established by the Athletic Department.
5. Be willing to adhere to all CVCA policies and guidelines.

B. TRAINING REGULATIONS:

1. **SUBSTANCE ABUSE GUIDELINES** –

- a. All athletes will refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages, using tobacco products, and involvement in illegal behavior.
- b. All athletes shall refrain from using recreational drugs (i.e. marijuana, cocaine, hallucinogenics) or medication solely for performance-enhancing purposes (i.e. steroids).
- c. In order to minimize health and safety risks to student athletes, maintain ethical standards and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend or permit the use of food supplements.

If an athlete violates this rule, he/she will be notified and will be removed from participation in a minimum of 20% of the total team schedule and up to removal from the team based on the discretion of the coach. A second offense will result in removal from the team.

Hazing

Hazing is any act or coercing of another, including the victim, to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and are prohibited at all times. No administrator, faculty member or other employee of the school shall encourage, permit, condone or tolerate any hazing activities. No student, including leaders of student organizations, may plan, encourage or engage in any hazing.

Administrators, faculty members and all other school employees are particularly alert to possible conditions, circumstances or events which might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, involved students are informed by the discovering school employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and are required to end all hazing activities immediately. All hazing incidents are reported immediately to the Headmaster.

Administrators, faculty members, other employees and students who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and many be liable for civil and criminal penalties in compliance with Ohio law.

2. **PRACTICE AND GAME ATTENDANCE** –

- a. Attendance at all scheduled games and practices is required. This is to maintain continuity on the team and to teach commitment and responsibility.
- b. Excused absences will be determined by each coach. Disciplinary action for violation of this rule will be determined by the coach which could include missing game time.
- c. Teams may be scheduling 1-2 days off within the season. Families should use these days for family needs or events so as not to miss scheduled team activities.
- d. Practices scheduled over vacation periods, although important, are not mandatory and are not subject to team discipline. (One's position on the team could be affected, however.)

3. **TEAM GUIDELINES** – The coach will determine team rules and distribute them in writing. Athletes are responsible to abide by these rules.

- a. **Tryouts** – All coaches of teams at CVCA will allow for a period of time to reasonably evaluate all individuals trying out for a team. The tryout period must occur after the start date established by the OHSAA.
- b. **Sunday Policy** –The policy of Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy states that its athletic teams shall hold no practice sessions or schedule activities on Sundays. This time is special to worship our God and Creator and to spend time with family.
- c. **Music Policy** - Music played before or during athletic events will be played by the CVCA Pep Band or will be CD's that are approved by the CVCA Athletic Administration. Headsets to be used while traveling to contest and in locker rooms before contest is up to the discretion of the Coach.
- d. **Cell/Camera Policy** – These devices are not permitted for use in locker-rooms or restrooms (both on and off campus.)
- e. **Handbook Policy** – All CVCA Athletic Policies are superseded by the CVCA Student Handbook.

4. **SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS/ DETENTIONS** – Students who are suspended from school are ineligible for competition on the day of their suspension. Students who serve detention will be eligible on these days when their assigned time is complete. The coach reserves the right to discipline an athlete with habitual incidents of disciplinary problems.

5. **EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS** – All that belongs to CVCA is from God and really belongs to Him. Appropriate care of equipment and uniforms are important to be able to be good stewards of what has been given us. Athletes will be held financially responsible for any damages to equipment or facilities and for damaged or lost uniforms. Athletes who do not return uniforms in a timely manner at the conclusion of a season may be subject to a late fee charge.

6. **QUITTING OR NOT COMPLETING SEASON** –

- a. An athlete who has been removed for disciplinary reasons or does not finish the season in good standing with the team or coach:
 1. forfeits his/her awards or honors
 2. cannot participate in another sport until the first sports season is complete.

A season ends with the last scheduled game for Jr. High and JV teams and with elimination from the OHSAA Tournament for Varsity teams. The beginning of a season is defined by the playing of the first contest.

- 7. TWO-SPORT ATHLETE** - When a student/athlete wishes to participate in two sports during the same season, the following guidelines will govern his/her time:
- The student/athlete must designate which sport is his/her primary sport. It would be preferred that the primary sport be the team sport when the two sports are an individual vs. team sport.
 - When a conflict arises, the student athlete will go to the activity of his/her primary sport.
 - This guideline would not apply to out of season activity in one sport.
- 8. TIME OFF BETWEEN SEASONS** – When one season ends, a student/athlete is given up to one week off before starting the next season. The first season ends when their team is eliminated from the OHSAA Tournament, or at lower levels, after their last scheduled game.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to away contests or practice sessions shall be by Board owned or rented vehicles whenever possible. Private transportation will be used only after approval has been received from the athletic director and the headmaster. All athletes are required to ride school provided transportation to away games or away practices. Athletes may be excused if transported by parent or guardian with permission of the coach.

Parents will be asked to sign consent forms to allow students to ride home from contests with the parent of a teammate.

Conduct of the athletes on the bus is the responsibility of the coach. Therefore, the coach will need to ride on the bus and observe the following guidelines:

- Only participants are to ride on the bus. Any exception to this will require approval of the A.D.
- The aisle must be clear at all times.
- All persons riding the bus must remain sitting upright in their seats.
- The bus must be clean at the end of the trip.
- Nothing is to be thrown out or extended out the windows
- All student/athletes shall submit to the authority of the driver and conduct themselves in a courteous manner.

SCHOLAR/ATHLETE AWARD

At the end of the school year, the Athletic Department will award a certificate to those athletes who distinguished themselves in academics. This will be called the Scholar Athlete Award and will go to all athletes with a GPA of 3.5 or better for the year.

ROYAL SERVANT AWARD

This award is given to a male and/or female senior who has met the following criteria:

- Has lettered in at least four varsity seasons.
- Demonstrates servant-like qualities which include giving of one's self, doing what is right without being told, obedience, faithfulness, responsibility and a spiritual leader.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Senior High athletes will receive a **VARSITY** letter based on the following criteria:

1. Soccer – athlete must play in at least half of the number of halves of scheduled games.
2. Volleyball – athlete must play in at least half of the number of scheduled games.
3. Basketball – athlete must play in at least half of the number of quarters of scheduled games.
4. Track and Field – athlete must meet one of four lettering standards set by the coach.
5. Baseball – athlete must play in 1/3 of total innings played per season.
6. Golf – athlete must play in ½ of the scheduled meets.
7. Football – athlete must play in at least half of the number of halves of scheduled games.
8. Softball – athlete must compete in 1/3 of the total innings played per season.
9. Tennis – athlete must play in ½ of the scheduled matches.
10. Wrestling – athlete must play in ½ of the scheduled meets.
11. Swimming – athlete must meet coach's requirement.
12. Cheerleading – athlete must participate during the season in 75% of required activities.
13. Ice Hockey – athlete must participate in ½ of the scheduled periods.
14. Cross Country – participate in ½ of scheduled contests.

A service letter may be awarded to a participant after three years of participation in the same sport, or by special recommendation of the head coach and approval of the Athletic Director. In all cases, the coach's discretion is the final determining factor.

****Freshman and junior varsity athletes who successfully complete the season will receive a certificate representing their participation in that sport.***

Award given each year of lettering is as follows:

1. First year letter – CVCA letter with appropriate sport pin. Numeral of graduating year. If athlete letters in another sport, he/she will only receive the sport pin.
2. Second year letter –key chain/service bar
3. Third year letter – school emblem plaque/service bar.
4. Fourth year letter – school design afghan/service bar.

Trophies are awarded at the end of the season to recognize athletes from each team who have distinguished themselves. The coach will select the title of each award and the process of selection. Examples of awards are: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved, Best Offense/Defense, Mighty in Spirit, and other character awards (dependable, intensity, etc.).

An Awards Assembly will be held at the completion of each season for all teams. Attendance is expected since this is the final time for coaches and athletes to be together.

ELIGIBILITY

As members of the Ohio High School Athletic Association, each high school student is required to enroll in and pass 2½ credit hours of course work in the previous marking period. A marking period at CVCA is for nine weeks. The fourth quarter grades will determine eligibility for fall sports. Summer school grades cannot be substituted for regular year grades.

The OHSAA Eligibility publication available on-line: <http://ohsaa.org/eligibility/EligibilityGuide.pdf>

The following standards are in addition to the OHSAA guidelines:

1. A student must have a quarter average of 1.6 or above to participate in athletics.
2. Any student with a quarter average below 1.2 cannot participate in athletics for the marking period.
3. Any student-athlete with a quarter average between 1.20 and 1.59 will have their grades monitored every 2 weeks for the remainder of the grading period with the potential of losing playing privileges.
4. Any student with a quarter average between 1.20 and 1.59 can participate on a limited basis according to the following criteria:
 - a. The parents do not oppose the student's continued participation in athletics.
 - b. Athletes are placed on a two-week probationary period. During this time, they cannot participate in athletic contests, but should practice. After two weeks, if the athlete's quarter average is 1.6 or better, he/she is reinstated for two weeks. Every two weeks, there will be a grade check to determine eligibility. If the athlete has 2 consecutive 2 week grade checks where the quarter average is below 1.6, the athlete will be ineligible for the remainder of the grading period.
5. At the start of every quarter there will be a grade check to determine eligibility based on the previous quarter's grades.

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Athletes are required to be in attendance for 50% plus 1 period of the regularly scheduled classes that day to be eligible for any participation in an interscholastic athletic event. The following reasons will be accepted as valid exceptions:

1. Valid medical or dental appointment.
2. Observance of religious holiday.
3. School sponsored field trip or academic related experience.
4. Family related emergency.

This policy interpreted into our current schedule means an athlete must be in school by the end of third period and remain until the end of ninth period or begin first period and remain until the end of sixth period.

