



Heartland Christian School



2023-2024

Athletic Handbook

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*That in all things He might have the
preeminence. Colossians 1:18*

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Introduction

Teaching uncompromising precepts of Christianity, coupled with stellar academic standards, are two of the major priorities at Heartland Christian School (HCS). We believe a co-curricular activities program is also helpful in developing the complete student. We believe the principles and lessons learned in the classroom, at home and through the local church can be put into practice through co-curricular activities. For this reason, HCS provides a co-curricular activities program not only to allow the student to develop and use his or her God-given ability to glorify God, but to help develop students mentally, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and physically.

Mentally – A student is challenged in many ways, including self-discipline, the learning of strategies, both team and individual, and through other mentally stimulating exercises.

Emotionally – A student will learn how to successfully handle stressful situations, how to better cope with winning, losing, and how a Christian controls and deals with competitive and performance-based pressures and his or her feelings.

Socially – The interaction with team members, opponents, coaches, sponsors and spectators helps the student learn how to work with and encourage all those involved. School spirit and team/individual relationships are cultivated through participation in co-curricular activities.

Spiritually – The program encourages strong spiritual character and qualities which will help the student to be a better servant of our Lord. Reliance on the Lord for strength, safety, and guidance, along with the proper motives, are to be done for the glory of God and with the whole heart.

Physically – A Christian's body is a living temple of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, a student can honor God through increasing their discipline with improving their God-given talents.

Goals and Purpose of Christian Athletics

Ecclesiastes 9:10

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all our might.”

1. To progress the Christ-like character, determination, and perseverance in every student, coach, sponsor, and spectator.
2. To share the life-changing story of Jesus Christ with all who we meet.
3. To represent, and faithfully honor, our Lord, family, and school.
4. To promote community and school pride.
5. To provide young students with a chance to enjoy, develop, and participate in activities to enhance God-given talents.
6. To teach principles of personal discipline and the acceptance of discipline.
7. To teach teamwork, cooperation, leadership abilities, responsibility, patience, and respect.
8. To develop self-control, physical strength, coordination, endurance, and a sense of personal worth, confidence, and integrity.
9. To learn to perform difficult tasks under pressure.
10. To beneficially occupy the time and energy of young people.

Philosophy

- The Name of Christ is lifted up in every practice, competition, road trip, tournament, and more. A few specific points:
 - **Atmosphere**-We desire the atmosphere at Heartland games to be friendly, loving, and welcoming, as we invite schools into our home.
 - **Appearance**-We desire our teams and fans to dress in ways honoring to Christ.
 - **Words/Actions**-The words we say and the actions we do, need to be uplifting and encouraging and never disrespectful or demeaning of players, officials, or others.

“Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31

- Cheer on both teams; do not cheer against. Since our ultimate goal is for God’s Name to be glorified, through our best efforts and good attitudes, we celebrate good play by both teams. Ultimately, in competition, we desire to play better than the opponent, but will recognize and honor good play and attitudes on both teams.

“Encourage one another and build each other up, just as you are doing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:11

- Encourage the true art of winning. Winning can take place, even when the game is lost, and losing can take place, even when the game is won. We realize our ultimate goal is to play our best for the glory of God. Our hope is our effort will result in victory, but we do not stake our identity on this. We understand we can win the game but lose our witness “for the cause of Christ”, with poor attitudes. We can also lose the game and gain our witness “for the cause of Christ” with good attitudes. Our goal must be to win the game with maximum effort and ability; and do it in a way which honors the Lord and draws others to Him.

“...giving no cause for offense in anything, so that the ministry will not be discredited.” (2 Corinthians 6:3)

- Send the visiting team home, feeling valued and maintain a reputation above reproach among opponents.

“...Sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.” (Titus 2:8)

Sports Offered

<u>Fall Sports</u>			
Boys Soccer			
Junior High	6 th -8 th Grades	Varsity	9 th -12 th Grades
Girls Volleyball			
Elementary	3 rd -5 th Grades	Junior High	5 th -8 th Grades
Junior Varsity	7 th -11 th Grades	Varsity	8 th -12 th Grades
Cross Country			
Junior High	6 th -8 th Grades	Varsity	9 th -12 th Grades
Disc Golf	7 th -12 th Grades		

Winter Sports

Basketball (Boys and Girls)

Elementary	K5-5 th Grades
Junior High	6 th -8 th Grades
Junior Varsity	8 th -11 th Grades
Varsity	9 th -12 th Grades

Cheerleading

Ponies	K5-5 th Grades
Junior High	6 th -8 th Grades
Varsity	9 th -12 th Grades

Spring Sports

Track (Boys & Girls)

Junior High	6 th -8 th Grades
Varsity	9 th -12 th Grades

Golf (Boys & Girls) 7th-12th Grades

Girls Soccer 6th-12th Grades

Boys Baseball 6th-12th Grades

Boys Flag Football 6th-12th Grades

The above list is based on interest from the previous year. Activities will only be available if there is enough student interest and if a sponsor volunteers to supervise the activity.

Sports activities at HCS should build pride among the participants and support the student body. Parents should be valued as partners in this process of co-curricular activities education. All activities within an individual program should exemplify the school's commitment to a Christ-like witness and reflect the school's co-curricular activity policies, procedures, and philosophy.

Elementary/Middle School (K5-8th grade)

At the Elementary level, our desire is to provide quality instruction by beginning the early development of the students' talents. This instruction is fulfilled through teaching fundamental skills, developing character traits such as persistence, dependability, dedication, self-control, and teamwork. At this level, the emphasis is the active participation of each student for the glory of God.

High School (9th-12th grade)

At the high school level our desire is to provide quality instruction and coaching to further develop and refine the students' skills and talents for the glory of God. This instruction is fulfilled through teaching fundamental and advanced skills, developing and demonstrating character traits such as persistence, dependability, dedication, self-control, and teamwork. The participation time during performances/competitions is at the discretion of the head coach/sponsor.

Competing for the Kingdom 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

It is apparent in Christian schools across America, we are failing to be set apart in the world of athletics. Instead, we are settling for being like the world. 1 Corinthians 9 tells us to strive for the crowns that last forever, not the temporal earthly crown. It appears we have compartmentalized life and think God's Word applies only to some areas of life, and not to

others. God's Word applies to all of life, and it definitely must apply to how we compete in the world of athletics.

In the current state of athletics, we are losing the game in the following areas.

Money

- Matthew 6:24 We can't serve God and money
- 1 Timothy 6:10 The love of it is the root of all evil
- 2 Timothy 3:2 Men will be lovers of money

Character/Conduct

- 1 Corinthians 11:1 Follow example of Christ
- Titus 2:7 Set example by doing good
- Proverbs 10:23 Fool finds pleasure in wrong
- Philippians 1:27 Live life worthy of Him
- Colossians 1:10 Live life worthy of Him

Lack of self-control

Here is a quote by Les Steckel, which speaks to the issue of not enough self-control in sports.

"I believe Christianity should be a central theme. Quite frankly, I believe our sports world is out of control. I believe it is out of bounds. Sportsmanship is disappearing and there is more showmanship."

Lack of love

- 1 Corinthians 16:14 Do everything in love
- 1 Thessalonians 3:12 Love
- 1 Peter 1:22 Love your brothers

Negative behaviors and thought processes

- Psalm 106:35 "But they mingled with the nations, and adopted their customs."
- Romans 2:24 "As it is written, God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

Unsaved officials hate doing Christian school games! Are we blowing our testimony for a blown call?

There must be a standard by which we conform to and our lives are ruled by. That standard is The Word of God. Scripture must be the Authority! "Are we in the Word enough or are we in the world too much?"

- 2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is inspired
- 2 Timothy 2:15 Study to show thyself approved
- Hebrews 5:14 Exercise to discern good from evil
- Colossians 3:23 Do with all heart for God

Our standard is in opposition to the world's. We will be different, and the world will wonder what we are doing. Life on this earth is brief and our focus must be on Christ.

“We must not become so obsessed with teaching the skills to produce winning teams that we lose sight of our real responsibilities, to provide a learning environment wherein important lifetime values can be taught and learned.” National Federation of State High School Associations, 1986

“An overzealous interest in athletics can cause the program to be steered away from its educational objectives and made a matter of entertainment.” Dr. John Churdar

Is the athletic program viewed as entertainment or does it serve an educational objective?

- Does the program focus on character and give opportunity to live a holy life? I Peter 1:15-16.
- Do we take advantage of opportunity to fellowship with other athletes?
- Is the athletic program viewed as “just athletics” and separated from anything spiritual?

“I thought this was about kids playing sports...all kids want to do is play ball.”

KC Star article about kids and religion in sports.

Do we view other teams as our enemies?

- 1 Peter 3:8-9
- Proverbs 24:17
- Why not pray and fellowship before and after?
- Are fans welcomed or do we compete against them?
- Proverbs-A good name is more desirable than great riches.

Do we teach students to play for external rewards?

- How much emphasis is given to the end of year awards banquet?
- What is meant by “MVP”?
- “Do all to glory of God” ...Spiritual standing is more important than season standings.
- Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish desire...
- Do we foster pride or humility?

Do we follow the worlds lead or do they follow ours?

- Pre-game music
- Cheerleaders
- Treatment of officials and visiting teams
- Attitudes
- Many other examples

Do we teach students to respect authority when we trash talk officials?

- It is no wonder student-athletes question their parents and their teachers. They see it modeled by adults around them every day.
- We are not fighting for students. Let them learn respect and self-control...especially when things don't go their way! Don't lose it for them!

Do we get as passionate about the Kingdom of God as we do a missed call?

- Would the Lord overturn tables of our hearts? We are His temple and we have brought in the world.

“The Holy Spirit, prayer, godliness, Scriptural ministry, and making disciples for the Lord Jesus Christ have all taken a back seat to the god of sports which has successfully ensnared and enslaved many churches and Christian schools.”

- Do we deter from family time when we have 3-hour practices or games every night of the week?

Do we glorify the creation rather than the Creator?

- Romans 1:25

“Sports exalts man’s strengths and ability as the essential qualities for popularity and success. Godly, spiritual values and standards are eclipsed in the glorification of man.” Temple Times

The school

- Judges 2:10-The school will not allow non-Christian ideas to take over. It is our goal to have a purely Christian, strong program.
- James 4:4-The school will assure the athletic department will not model the world and will be holy and set apart.
- 2 Corinthians 6:3-Put no stumbling block in way so ministry is discredited. Would others think we are Christian? Would they want to be a Christian, based on what they see in us?

The coach

- Proverbs 10:19-Words are many, sin is not...
- Acts 20:24-Testify to gospel of Christ.
- John 2:17-Zeal for things of God, Prov. 19:2-Zeal without Knowledge, Rom. 10:2-Can have zeal for God and still not be right, Rom. 12:11-Zeal, but under the Holy Spirit’s guidance for serving the Lord.
- 2 Peter 2:13-Submit to authority-if we don’t...players won’t!
- 2 Samuel 19:7-Encourage players
- 2 Timothy 4:2-Patience and careful instruction

“The coach is to teach and to lead and to mentor and to model strong moral values.” Les Steckel, FCA

The student-athlete

- 1 John 2:9-Don’t hate your brother
- Proverbs 24:17-Don’t gloat when enemy falls
- Ephesians 4:29-Watch our language
- Romans 13:1-Submit to authority
- 2 Timothy 4:5- Self-control, keep head in all situations
- Mark 12:3-Love
- Proverbs 22:1-Have a good name
- John 13:35-Love
- Proverbs 16:18-Pride before a fall
- Philippians 2:3-4-Not selfish or conceited

- 1 Thessalonians 2:4- Please God, not men
- 2 Thessalonians 3:13- Never tire of doing right
- Play hard...but help them up-we many times knock them down and puff up like “we da man”
- No emotions toward officials

“No amount of ability is of the slightest avail without honor.” Andrew Carnegie

The fans

- Proverbs 10:19-Words are many, sin not absent
- 1 Peter 2:13-Submit to authority
- Proverbs 25:28-Self-control
- Titus 2:12-Say no to worldly passions and have self-control
- 1 Thessalonians 5:8-Self-control
- Titus 1:16-Claim to know him but actions deny
- Philippians 1:27-Conduct self in manner worthy of Christ

Closing thoughts

- 2 Thessalonians 3:13-Never tire of doing what is right.
- Mark 14:61-Jesus was accused of something He did not do; yet He remained silent. Sometimes we need to remain silent. Christ would have been labeled a coward or wimp for remaining quiet. We must play for Him and let Him worry about the outcome.
- 1 Timothy 4:8 “For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both this life and the life to come.” Athletics can serve a good purpose. However, we must remember, teaching character and Christ-likeness will impact a student for life. A temporary athletic event will pass. We can only be as successful as our training. If an athlete doesn’t train properly, they will not win. If we do not train our children up in Christ, they will not be successful for Him.
- 1 Corinthians 9:24-27-We participate to receive an eternal crown, not a temporal, earthly crown. The athletic programs of Christian schools must have their focus on the eternal rewards of athletics, not the temporal, fading, earthly rewards.
- Galatians 5-Fruit of Spirit
- 2 Corinthians 5:9-Please Him in every way
- 2 Corinthians 4:18- Fix eyes on unseen, seen is temporary, unseen is eternal!
- We can be Christ-like champions if, and when, we get lost in Him and win.

HCS Guidelines for Coaches and Sponsors

Athletics is an excellent means to help student-athletes grow both physically and spiritually (2 Timothy 4:8). However, the very competitive nature of athletics can bring out the worst of human will and emotions. Therefore, it is important coaches use athletics as a training ground to produce student-athletes who grow in their athletic ability; but more importantly, learn to submit to the power of the Holy Spirit and allow Him to control their will, thoughts, and emotions. Athletics can help develop such Christ-like character qualities as self-control, perseverance, patience, diligence, love, respect, humility, kindness, patience, obedience, and integrity. As these qualities increase in the life of HCS student-athletes, they will be able to grow in Christ and be used by Him (2 Peter 1:5-8).

Athletics also offer the opportunity for an effective witness of the transforming power of Christ in the lives of believers to the community (Acts 20:24). When non-Christian student-athletes, other students, and fans see the Christian behavior and attitude expressed by HCS coaches, student-athletes, students, and fans, this behavior will be in sharp contrast to the behavior of the world and can lead others to Christ (2 Peter 2:12). This will bring proper attention to Christ and witness to His power. HCS athletics seeks to be set apart for Christ in its purpose, its conduct, its character, its efforts, and its excellence.

Coaches are responsible to God for maintaining a positive Christian witness in, and through, the athletic contests. Coaches have the great responsibility to instruct, train, and guide each student-athlete in a given sport and in Christian character. Luke 6:40 says “everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.” It is with this in mind that HCS coaches follow these guidelines in order to set a godly example which will benefit each student-athlete for eternity.

Coaches Expectations of Conduct and Responsibilities ***Expectations of Conduct***

The COACH will themselves be active participants in FBC, Belton or an approved local church and seek to continually grow in the knowledge of Christ. Coaches will be in agreement with the FBC, Belton Confession of Faith, and sign a commitment to follow and uphold the confession in their lives.

The COACH will set a godly example through prayer and weekly devotions with their team. Coaches will also have nightly devotions with their team at all tournaments requiring an overnight stay.

The COACH will constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with the student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct. They will set an example of professionalism in dress and appearance.

The COACH will set an example for student-athletes in speech and conduct (Colossians 4:6).

The COACH will promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.

The COACH will be thoroughly acquainted with the contest rules and be responsible for their interpretation to team members. The spirit and letter of rules should be regarded as mutual agreements. The coach will not try to seek advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules (2 Timothy 2:6).

The COACH will actively use his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship of the spectators, working closely with cheerleaders, booster clubs, and administration.

CONTEST OFFICIALS will have the respect and support of the COACH. The coach will not indulge in conduct which will incite players and spectators against the officials. The coach will “work with” the officials, not “work over” the officials. Coaches are not to inappropriately question the officials (I Peter 2:13).

Before and after contests, RIVAL COACHES and TEAMS should meet and exchange greetings and build relationships. Pre-game or post-game activities or prayer are appropriate actions.

The COACH will be positive and encourage his/her team, spurring them on to victory (2 Samuel 19:7).

IT IS UNETHICAL for COACHES to scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/or state high school athletic associations.

The COACH will build relationships with student-athletes, parents, colleagues and opposing teams to enable them to work together and fellowship together in Christ.

The COACH will treat players, parents, officials, and opposing teams with the respect and love shown by Christ (John 15:12). They are to be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

The COACH will maintain an atmosphere of order and discipline. Coaches are the leaders and must require the proper attitude from each student-athlete. There should be no taunting or mistreatment of opposing teams from any HCS team.

The COACH will continue to grow in the knowledge of their specific sport so they can pass on this knowledge to his/her student-athletes.

The COACH will be a good STEWARD of the ministry he/she has been given, in order to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the student-athlete. The purpose of the COACH will be to cause student- athletes to act and think like Jesus Christ.

Coaches Responsibilities

It is important all coaches follow the same standards, guidelines, and responsibilities to ensure we all can better represent our school, athletic teams, families, and Jesus Christ. The following is a list of responsibilities all HCS coaches must perform.

- Turn in team rosters to the Athletic Director during the first week of practice
- Turn in team goals and rules to the Athletic Director for approval prior to the first distribution
- Provide the Athletic Director a copy of practice schedules, game schedules, and any information to be sent home, for review and approval
- Hand out a copy of the team rules and schedules to each member of the team
- Maintain open communication between the student-athletes, parents, assistant coaches, and Athletic Director
- Keep inventory of equipment

- Enforce all disciplinary actions with athletes in direct violation of the team rules. The Athletic Director may discipline a coach due to any violations against school rules and policy
- Inform the student-athletes, parents, assistant coaches, and Athletic Director of a practice schedule changes or cancellations (Game cancellations will be handled by the school). Any mandatory practice additions must have at least 1 weeks notice.
- Keep track of lettering requirements for each member of the team (Players must participate in ½ of each game/event in order to be eligible)
- Pray with and perform regular devotions with the athletic teams
- Coordinate and/or be present at all special functions associated with the team including pep rallies, awards ceremonies, etc.
- Continue to build excitement for sports through interaction with elementary and secondary students
- Ensure all team members have safely left the facilities after each practice, game, or trip
- Inform the Athletic Director of any equipment or needs for the sports program.

Player's Expectation of Conduct and Responsibility

Player's ability evaluation:

A certain amount of subjectivity is always involved in evaluating players. Coaches try to look objectively at statistics, participation, conditioning, and intensity. However, playing time is finally determined by our style of play and the coach's judgment. Attendance is mandatory to all scheduled practices in order to be considered for the team. Cuts will be made at the coach's discretion.

What the coach will look for:

1. Extra effort in practice.
2. Intensity.
3. Ability to perform under pressure.
4. Unselfishness. The player who just wants to help the team, and who is not concerned about personal glory.
5. Team Unity. Kindness and support for other players. Not running the mouth in practice.
6. Humility. Encouraging and lifting up other players.
7. Avoiding gossip. Not spreading rumors or attempting to hurt other members of the team.
8. Leadership, on and off the court, including local church involvement and academics. This also includes what boys say about girls and vice-versa. Please do not be inappropriate!
9. 100% effort in the game.
10. Following the team philosophy. No matter how spectacular a play may be, if it's not done as the coach says, a player may sit on the bench.

Training Rules:

1. Get plenty of rest.

2. Eat healthy - avoid junk food. Eat lots of pasta, rice, and grains. Lentils and fruits, as well as vegetables, are great. Avoid fatty foods. Avoid drinking carbonated soft drinks during the program's season, this includes, during practice and immediately before or after a game.
3. Study hard - you must be passing all classes to play. The coach will be informed of all deficiency slips.
4. Do not miss practice unless absolutely necessary.
5. Be sure to have a personal devotion and quiet time each day. NOTE: If a child is struggling in a class (failing) and the teacher feels there is a real effort to learn, we will consider an academic sport probation that gives the athlete time to correct the problem.

Game Rules:

1. We play to win, but not at all costs.
1. We play physical sports, but we do not intentionally hurt people or seek to get even. We never forget that we are Christians, and we maintain our testimony on the court. A bad attitude will put a player on the bench, or even off the team. (Receiving a red card or a technical/intentional foul is not acceptable and will result in the immediate loss of playing time for the remainder of the games on the day they receive the infraction and the next day of games).
2. Always treat coaches, opposing players, and officials with respect. Only the coach and the team captain may question an official.
3. When the coach speaks to you, do not jerk away or show a bad attitude. You will be benched if you have a bad attitude (our coaches have permission to use loud voices to shout instructions during games).
4. Always congratulate the other team. Be kind and gracious.
5. At the end of each game, we have a team meeting. You do not talk to parents, friends, or change clothes until dismissed. You may not leave before this meeting without your coach's permission.
6. Do not talk to spectators during the game or warm-ups, including parents. Parents who interfere between coaches and players will be asked to withdraw their children from the program.
7. Be dressed and ready 30 minutes before all home games.
8. If a student is absent the day of the game, he/she may not participate that evening, except by permission of the school administrator.
9. The student must be in school the entire day to participate. Absences such as doctor's appointments (etc.) are the only exceptions. *Note: Any exceptions must be approved by the principal.

Parent Expectations

Behavior during games and practices

- Please do not yell negative remarks at any coaches, players, opposing players, or referees during games.
- Please be positive - the kids are under enough pressure as it is. Remember, we all represent the Lord Jesus. Yell loud and have fun, but think about what impression some emotional behavior may suggest to observers and visitors.
- Please remember that we have loud coaches and quiet coaches. Each coach is different. All of our coaches have been carefully enlisted and really do care about the players and parents. Feel free to talk to them, but please respect their time and feelings. It is important to make appointments ahead of time. These people sacrifice a great deal of time to help the students. Please take the time to express your appreciation. Remember that coaches will yell, it does not mean they are angry.
- Parents are not allowed on the gym floor during practice. Parents may watch from the upper track. Parents may not coach their children during a practice. If this is done, the parent will be asked to stop. Failure to stop will result in an invitation to leave the gym.

Additional Information

- During the sports seasons, nearly all games are scheduled for Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays. Occasionally, we will schedule Monday games and have tournament play on Saturdays.
- During games with required overnight accommodations, Parents who are not school-approved chaperones will not be permitted in the athletes' rooms.
- Any practices or games scheduled during breaks should be a priority for players to attend. However, we understand that there are times when players will not be able to attend because of family commitments. Parents must notify the coach of these absences at least 3 weeks in advance (preferably at the beginning of the season for out of town trips).
- Please consult with the coach before you use the sport or the team to punish your child. Your punishment could do more harm than good. The coach must have some room to use discipline. Thank you!

HCS Eligibility Policies and Procedures for Co-Curricular Activities

Missing practices/games/events

It is the desire of HCS for students to make a commitment to their team to be at all practices/games/events, whenever possible. HCS also recognizes issues arise which may prevent a student from meeting this requirement. The following procedure should take place to ensure proper communication regarding a missed practice/game/event.

1. The Head Coach/Sponsor should be contacted immediately to be notified a student will be missing a practice/game/event. If possible, this should be done prior to the event so the coach/sponsor can make proper adjustments, as to not affect the remainder of the students involved.
2. The Head Coach or Sponsor has the discretion to approve or not approve a missed practice/game/event. The consequences will be executed, as necessary, by the coach.
3. Each activity will more clearly define their expectations in writing at the beginning of their activity season.

Penalties and suspension from games will be assessed for the following:

2. Being overly aggressive toward teammates or opponents
3. Players receiving a red card or technical/intentional fouls will not play for the remainder of the games on the day they receive the infraction and the next day of games.
4. Using inappropriate language, both at practice and/or games
5. Inappropriate behavior (see school handbook)
6. Un-excused absence from school the day of the game or the day after a game.
 - a. Any classes missed the day of a game may result in game suspension for that date
 - b. Any classes missed the day after a game may result in a game suspension for the next game.
 - c. All suspensions will be determined by school administrators
7. A consistently bad attitude by the player and /or parents toward other players or the coach.

Medical Eligibility Requirements

1. The Student Agreement and Parent Permission Forms, located in the Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation packet. must be signed and turned in before the first game or event of the season.
2. The Pre-Participation Physical Examination Form and History Form, along with a medical physical, must be obtained and be on file before any student may participate in any sport. Physicals need to be updated every two years.
3. When an injury occurs and medical treatment is necessary, your insurance is the primary carrier and the HCS is the secondary.
4. A doctor's release must be presented before the athlete may continue in a sport after an injury.

Meetings/Discussion with Coaches/Sponsors/Administration

There are situations which may require a conference between the coach/sponsor and the parent. These are encouraged, and all parties involved should follow the Matthew 18 Principle. It is important both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern. These are the recommendations/guidelines to confront issues in a Christ-like manner.

1. Wait 24 hours before setting up the conference or engaging in the issue of concern.
2. Contact the coach to set up the conference and inform them of the conflict needing to be addressed. The coach will listen and help in any way he/she can. Parents are free to ask coaches any question; coaches reserve the right to not discuss playing time, game decisions, and strategy.
3. If conflict cannot be resolved, then a conference may be set up with the Athletic Director, and the principal will be invited to the meeting at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

Please do not use e-mail as a means of communication to address conflict. Face-to-face meetings or phone calls are the approved methods to resolve conflict.

Quitting an activity

In the event that a student is unable to fulfill their commitment to an activity for the duration of the time required, the following process must take place, or the student will not be allowed to participate in other activities at HCS.

1. The **student** must notify his/her coach/sponsor directly they are quitting.
2. The **student** must give reason to the coach/sponsor about why they are quitting.

The student may or may not be allowed to participate in other activities. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

Transportation

HCS will provide transportation to sporting events for all varsity teams, and JH when available. There are times that parents may be asked to help transport students to games. All parents transporting students for the school must submit a valid drivers license and copy of your current insurance card to the Business Office. If transportation by the school is not available, parents/guardians are responsible to transport their child to and from competitions. The following policy will be followed to ensure the safety of students:

1. Students may not ride with other students (except for siblings) unless prior permission is authorized by the Activities Director.
2. Direct written communication through the InstaTeam app with the head coach must take place if the student is going to ride with anyone other than the student's parents prior to leaving for the event.
 - a. A parent may directly give the Head Coach written permission for their student to ride home with another parent. Once direct permission is given by a parent, HCS is not responsible for that student.
 - b. A parent may put in writing to the head coach and Athletic Director stating their child will be allowed to ride with another parent at any time during the entire season.

Competition Dress

Game days are special events and for these special activities, students will be required to dress accordingly. Participants are to be examples to their peers and, as representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ and HCS, a neat and well-dressed appearance is asked of all students. A dress code will be set by the coach/sponsor and required of all participants for each event/activity. All HCS students must be in proper school dress code when attending home games, away games, and off-campus trips/events. On the day of an activity/event the student must come to school with the appropriate dress. If a student comes to school dressed inappropriately, he or she will have consequences from the coach/administration and may not be allowed to participate in the game. If an HCS student attends an event and does not meet HCS school dress code they will be asked to leave or change clothes.

HCS Academic Eligibility and MSHSAA Eligibility Standards

Below are the MSHSAA academic requirements. Note it does NOT require a specific GPA. MSHSAA eligibility only requires “passing” 80% of the courses taken. In our schedule this would be 7 out of 8 courses. HCS will require 2.0 GPA and no “D-F” grades, in addition to passing 80% of courses.

The 1st grade check will be at Progress Reports of 1st Quarter and then again at the end of the quarter. The same procedure will be followed for each quarter of the year. The same “probationary period” would apply to student-athletes and activities students.

Our standard is a higher standard than MSHSAA requires, (no GPA minimum). However, it would allow our students who may be challenged in a particular class or discipline, (math, science, etc.) and who otherwise have good grades, to still be able to represent our school. It would not “punish” our students for having one bad grade, by taking away a big part of why they enjoy school.

If a student fall below 2.0 GPA at quarter grade check, they will be placed on Academic Probation. They will remain on probation until their GPA is above 2.0. If they are under 2.0 in a semester, they will miss the entire second semester of all sports and/or activities.

Grade or class problems should be discussed with the Athletic Director, not the coach of a sport. We understand that some students struggle in certain areas and may also have learning disabilities. Please talk with the Athletic Director before removing your child from a sport. HCS is ready to work with you.

Academic Eligibility

Students must maintain a C in each class. Any student who falls below a C will be placed on academic probation. Students may not participate in athletics during academic probation. To regain eligibility, the students must work out an academic plan with the teacher and administration. Once the teacher and the administration approve the plan, the student may participate as long as the plan is working. If the students does not meet that academic plan, then he or she will miss all activities until further notice. Grades will be checked twice a month on the 15th and 30th to evaluate each athlete’s eligibility.

School Attendance

The student must attend school for the entire day in order to participate in practice or games/events. If there is an activity/event scheduled for Saturday, a student’s attendance for Friday will determine if they are eligible or not. (Example: if a student is absent on Friday, they will not participate in activities on Saturday) If the student is absent the following reasons will be accepted as valid exceptions:

- Valid medical or dental appointment (must have the doctor’s note)
- School sponsored field trip or academic-related event
- Family-related emergency (must be **pre-approved** by HCS principal or athletic director)

Stewardship

Each participant is expected to show the utmost respect and care for both HCS and any host’s property and facilities. Cleanliness of all facilities is to be maintained. All equipment is to be

used only for its intended purpose. Uniforms and equipment distributed to the students are to be properly cared for and returned to the sponsor/coach in acceptable condition.

Make-up work when absent due to participating in a co-curricular activity

When students who are involved in co-curricular activities will be missing class time to participate in a school sponsored event, they are responsible for getting their missed work from teachers, in advance and completing it in the same time frame as all other students. Co-curricular students will not be given extra time to complete assignments. Late assignments will be at the discretion of the class's policy for late work.

Student-athlete Health and Safety

It is the desire of the HCS Athletic Program to ensure student-athletes are competing in the safest environment possible and all coaches are properly trained to assist in the utmost care for each student-athlete. All HCS coaches are First Aid, CPR, and AED certified. There is an AED located in the main hallway of the school and in the gymnasium.

Student-athlete Injury

If a student-athlete is injured during practice or games (related to HCS) and he/she is going to be seen by a Doctor/Urgent Care/Emergency Room, the Coach must immediately contact the Athletic Director. If the parent makes the decision to take the student-athlete after the event, the parent must contact the Athletic Director and the Head Coach. The Head Coach must fill out an accident report and e-mail the report to Tamra Atcheson (tatcheson@hfministries.org) and Cullan Fritts (cfritts@hfministries.org). This will ensure the proper protocol is being followed and the school's insurance may assist the injured student-athlete.

Concussion Training

Each student-athlete, Coach, and parent is required to watch the MSHSAA concussion education video. It can be found at the link below:

https://www.mshsaa.org/Resources/UploadedFiles/TrainingVideos/RulesMeeting636046978211909636/presentation_html5.html

Concussion Protocol

If a student-athlete is taken to the Doctor and diagnosed with a concussion the Athletic Director and School Administration must be notified immediately. They will follow the concussion protocol (while working with the student-athlete's doctor) and will notify Coaches and teachers of the process which must take place for proper recovery of the student-athlete. Student-athletes may not participate in practice unless the Head Coach has received a verbal confirmation directly from the Athletic Director.

Care of Equipment and Uniforms

Equipment and uniforms will be issued to student-athletes at the beginning of each season. Records will be kept to track any equipment or uniform pieces issued by the school to a student-

athlete. Student-athletes will be required to return all issued items at the conclusion of the season.

Equipment NOT Provided by HCS

Volleyball

- Knee pads
- Shoes

Soccer

- Shin guards
- Soccer Socks (must go over shin guards)
- Shoes

Cheerleading

- Shoes

Basketball

- Shoes

Report any defects in your uniform immediately.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Do not exchange or loan any issued equipment or uniform pieces which have been checked out to you. You are responsible for what the school issues, if a trade is warranted, the Athletic Director **MUST** approve and make documentation of the exchange.
2. Any loss of equipment or uniforms should be reported to the Coach immediately, do not wait until the end of the season.
3. **When washing uniforms, be sure to wash all uniforms with like colors in COLD water and hang them to dry.**
4. All uniform pieces need to be washed before they are returned at the end of the season.
5. Uniform pieces must be turned in prior to the deadline set by the Activities Director. Uniforms not turned in by the deadline will be considered lost and a finance charge may be assessed.

A student-athlete will be required to supply the finances (approx. \$200) to replace any equipment or uniform pieces not returned at the end of a season. If uniforms or equipment have been damaged, there will also be a financial requirement to replace the item.

Guidelines for Selection of Athletic Team Members

The makeup of each individual team is at the discretion of the Head Coach. The Head Coach will communicate team selections with the Athletic Director prior to announcing final team selections with the student-athletes.

Dealing with players who are cut from a team

K5-8th Grade

For these student-athletes, we encourage a no-cut policy. However, cuts will be made, when numbers exceed the allotted amount for a particular team. If there are a considerable number of student-athletes desiring to play, HCS will *consider* a second team. For sports requiring two

teams, Coaches and the Athletic Director will hold an evaluation period and then divide the teams at the Coach's discretion.

Playing Time for Athletics

Determining how much playing time each student-athlete *earns* is at the discretion of the Head Coach. Playing time is a privilege and should be *earned*. Below are some general goals for which we strive.

Elementary/Junior High Teams

Instruction and active participation are our primary concern, and it is our goal every student-athlete participates in every contest, as long as they are regularly attending practices and abiding by team rules. Coaches are expected to play all eligible student-athlete in each game. However, this does not mean every student-athlete will receive equal amounts of playing time.

Junior Varsity Teams

Concepts of competition and role-playing within a team setting enter in more and may result in some student-athletes not playing in some contests. This is a stage in our athletic program to continue to develop student-athletes. This level is more competitive and will result in some student-athletes not playing in some contests. Ultimately, playing time is at the discretion of the Head Coach.

Varsity Teams

A student-athlete's skills, talents, attitude, work-ethic, attendance, and overall performance before, during, and after the athletic event, will be taken into consideration when deciding the amount of playing time. At the High School level, athletics are much more competitive, and this will result in some student-athletes not playing in some contests. Ultimately, playing time is at the discretion of the Head Coach.

Athletic Organizations and Conferences

HCS is a member of the MOKAN Athletic conference for both the Junior High and Varsity levels of competition.

HCS is also a member of the MCSAA athletic competition for all Varsity level sports. As well as an affiliate member of MSHSAA for specific Varsity level sports.

HCS is also a member of the NCSAA athletic organization.

■ Athletic Awards and Recognition

Awards will be given in a variety of areas for each sport. Special recognition will be awarded to the 9th-12th grade student-athletes of each team, who have distinguished themselves. Players should be recognized for the following achievements: Varsity Letter Winners, Captain Awards, Career Record Holders prior to their senior year, Season Record Holders, and any "firsts" for the program (i.e., 1st District win). A Season Banquet will be held to honor athletes who participated in that season. Coaches may give awards at their own discretion.

HCS Record Board

HCS will keep a record board in each sport, to record both individual and team achievements. This recognition will give motivation to current and future student-athletes, Coaches, and fans of HCS and make the current and future student body and constituency aware of the history and traditions of HCS. Coaches are required to track, at a minimum, the statistics given by the Athletic Director for each sport. Coaches are required to submit an electronic copy of the statistics for their team prior to their year-end evaluation.

Receiving a Letter

Varsity student-athletes must participate in 50% of all games/matches/sets played for the season at the Varsity level to receive a letter. Letters will be given at the end-of-the-season awards night.

Athletic Awards

At the end of the high school athletic year, an award will be given out to distinguish a female student-athlete-of-the-year and a male student-athlete-of-the-year. This award is chosen by an overall consensus of Coaches from each sport. Requirements for this award are outlined in the nomination form. Seniors who are currently Career Record Holders in any area of their sport will also be recognized. The Work Ethic Award will be given to both a male and a female senior who meets the requirements outlined on the nomination form. Any team or individual student-athlete who accomplishes a “first” for their program (i.e., First District Win) will also be recognized.

HCS Academic Student-athlete

Student-athletes will be recognized for their outstanding academic performance, if they meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Lettered in at least one varsity sport during the school year
- ✓ Earned a 3.7 GPA, or above, for the entire school year
- ✓ Student’s attendance record is 95% or better for the school year (including both excused and unexcused absences)

HCS ATHLETIC STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

I, _____, as a student participating in Heartland Christian athletic activities, do agree to abide by the following rules and standards of conduct presented in the Athletic Handbook. I realize athletic involvement is a privilege, not a right, and carries with it responsibilities. I further acknowledge there will be consequences for misconduct or not fulfilling my commitment.

I understand the goals and philosophy of athletic activities at Heartland Christian, and I agree to do my best to grow spiritually through my experiences and represent Christ and my school well at all times. _____ (Initials)

I will do my part to keep my contact information current, keep my parents' information current, and be sure to stay informed of all information on School. _____ (Initials)

I have read and agree to the Code of Conduct for all students involved with HCS activities. I agree to represent Christ well and conduct myself in a manner in which others can see Christ in me. _____ (Initials)

I understand HCS is a member of MSHSAA, and as a participant under MSHSAA, I agree to uphold HCS and MSHSAA standards and policies. I agree to immediately self-report any policies which are broken, to the Athletic Director. (This is for 9th-12th students) _____ (Initials)

I have read through the following policies and procedures and will follow them during my participation in HCS activities:

Missing practices/games/events _____ (Initials)

Meetings/Discussion with Coaches/Sponsors/Administration _____ (Initials)

Quitting an activity _____ (Initials)

Supervision _____ (Initials)

Transportation _____ (Initials)

Competition Dress _____ (Initials)

HCS Academic Eligibility _____ (Initials)

School attendance _____ (Initials)

Stewardship _____ (Initials)

Make-up work _____ (Initials)

By signing below, I, the student, and we, the parents/guardians, agree to the above stated responsibilities. We agree to partner with the HCS Athletic Department to guide ourselves (parent and student), in the activities participated in, to the best of our ability.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____