



Cornerstone Academy Athletic Policy

The chief end of every athletic endeavor at Cornerstone Academy is "to glorify God and to enjoy him forever". This simple goal enlightens every aspect of our sports program. Although we always compete to win, our highest goal which overarches our every endeavor, is to please our Heavenly Father in all that we do. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul frequently used athletic competition as a metaphor for the rigors of the Christian life:

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? **Run in such a way as to get the prize.** Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but **we do it to get a crown that will last forever.** Therefore I do not **run** like a man running aimlessly; I do not **fight** like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish **the race** and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me --the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. Acts 20:24

He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. Proverbs 2:7-8

Everything done on the field of competition by Cornerstone athletes, parents, coaches, spectators and all other participants should "testify to the gospel of God's grace". It has been said, "Preach the gospel always, and when necessary, use words." As such, in our athletic pursuits we seek to reflect our gratitude that "the Father has qualified (us) to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light." Colossians 1:12-14. This gratitude should be shown in a love of competition and a pursuit of athletic excellence, in good sportsmanship towards opposing teams, in a respect for the authority of officials, in a willingness to sacrifice individual aspirations for the good of the team, and in a multitude of other ways that bear witness to Christ before the world.

Expectations for Cornerstone Athletes

Cornerstone student athletes are given the high calling of bringing honor to Christ in all that they do while engaged in athletic competition. In a culture which idolizes athletic prowess and accomplishment above the development of Christ-like character, we expect Cornerstone students to seek "the crown of glory that will never fade away" by competing to the best of their ability for the sake of their team; treating opponents with the utmost dignity and good sportsmanship; respecting all the decisions of the coach; treating game officials with the utmost deference and respect. The development of God-given abilities through practice and hard work are strongly encouraged. All student athletes are expected to know and understand the rules of their particular sport. It should be expected that those

students who exhibit greater abilities and work hard to develop those abilities through faithfully attending practices, maintaining a supportive and positive attitude toward other teammates, and showing respect for the decisions of the coaches and officials will likely earn more playing time than others. This is never meant to diminish the contribution of every team member, but is a reflection of the reality that the Creator has distributed talents and abilities differently among his people. Any student failing to maintain a 75% cumulative average or greater in courses taken at Cornerstone Academy will not be allowed to compete. As such, he/she will be suspended from a team and its practices until such time as he/she is reinstated by the Athletic Director. A student whose family is on Financial Probation may not compete in a game.

The coach of a team may suspend a student from competition for behavior which is dishonoring to Christ, disrespectful of authority, deleterious to the reputation of the school, or otherwise harmful to other students. Coach suspensions are subject to the same appeals process outlined in this policy statement below. Athletes should be on time for all of their practice sessions and team meetings. Practices are mandatory for an athlete to participate in the Cornerstone athletic program. A player should not be tardy or absent from a practice or a game without prior communication with his/her coach.

Expectations for Cornerstone Parents

The parents of Cornerstone student athletes are the key to our school establishing a distinctively different, distinctively Christian sports program. Their leadership and example will be watched by our students and coaches, along with the parents, students and coaches of opposing teams. The parents of Cornerstone student athletes are expected to positively encourage athletes from both sides of a competition, to show the utmost respect and gratitude to game officials, and to support the coach in the choices they make. At no time should parents or other Cornerstone spectators engage in any action that would undermine the authority of officials or in any way diminish the dignity of coaches or players on either team. Parents with a complaint against the coaching staff must never air their grievances with other parents or students but are strongly encouraged either to remain quiet or to seek a private one-on-one meeting with the coach using the guidelines of Matthew 18:15-17. If such a meeting is not satisfactory to the parent, he/she may appeal the complaint first to the Athletic Director, second to the Principal, and finally to the Board of Directors.

Expectations for Parent Participation

Cornerstone Academy is committed to operating in partnership with the parents of our students. It is expected that the parents of any Cornerstone student participating in a school sport will participate as well. The only way we can grow our sports programs both in quantity and quality each year is with the support of parents working hard alongside each other to handle the multitude of jobs that need to be done for a team to be successful. All parents who have children participating in a sport will be scheduled to work at some point during the season in one of a variety of capacities. Responsibilities will be clearly laid out early in the season to allow for sufficient planning on their part. The coach and AD will work with parents to provide transportation, where necessary, to practice. It is the responsibility of parents to know where to pick up their students and at what time.

Parental Encouragement

Parents are expected to be supportive of the players, coaches and referees on the field or court before, during and after the actual competitive event. Anytime we participate with our student in athletic competition, it provides excellent opportunities to teach life-long lessons.

We will inevitably have referees who make calls with which we do not agree or perhaps our student may not get as much playing time in a game as he/she feels is deserved. As parents we must learn to seize the opportunity which these incidents afford, capitalizing on them as teachable moments and opportunities to implement Christian principles.

Countenance and Game Display

It is important to remember that your student represents the name of Cornerstone Academy anytime he/she is in a school sports uniform. In the same manner, parents sitting on the sidelines, also represent Cornerstone Academy, and more importantly, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our students and coaches, as well as the parents, students and coaches of opposing teams will witness the behavior of Cornerstone parents. To that end we ask that you agree to the following:

- I will encourage my child to have a good attitude and do his or her very best at all times, whether at a practice or in a game.
- I will be supportive of the coach and assistant coach in all of their decisions.
- At no time will I engage in any action that would undermine the authority of officials or in any way diminish the dignity of players or coaches from either team.
- If I at anytime believe that either a coach, the AD or another parent has wronged me or my student, I will follow the grievance policy noted above.

Expectations for Cornerstone Coaches

The coaches of every athletic team officially sanctioned by the school must agree with Cornerstone Academy's Athletic Philosophy and with the school's Statement of Faith. Although the objective of competition is always to win, the more important overarching goal is to compete in a manner that brings honor to the name of Christ. Coaches are expected to use the opportunity of competition to draw the attention of the student to the more important "crown that will last forever", the prize of competing in a manner that pleases our Heavenly Father. Cornerstone coaches are strongly encouraged to allow all team members playing time throughout the season. However, it should be expected that those students who exhibit greater abilities and work hard to develop those abilities through faithfully attending practices, maintaining a supportive and positive attitude toward other teammates, and showing respect for the decisions of the coaches and officials will likely earn more playing time from coaches than other team members. Coaches should welcome the opportunity to communicate with students and parents about the criteria for gaining more playing time.

Vision for Cornerstone Coaches

Cornerstone Academy expects coaches to love their athletes and to work hard for them in practice and game preparation, strategic improvement, and where appropriate, college recruiting exposure. Coaches are expected to treat parents with respect and to represent Christ's character towards opposing coaches, opposing athletes, and game officials.

The Coach's Role

Cornerstone Academy's philosophy of athletics holds that the Head Varsity coach has primary responsibility over his/her sports program, assistant coaches in that sport are subordinate to them. Subordinate coaches take their strategic direction and lead from the Head Varsity Coach in their sport. Each coach, including Varsity, is directly accountable to the Athletic Director and ultimately to the principal of the school. The Junior Varsity coach is under the direction of the Varsity Head Coach as it relates to program approach, strategy, and player selection for both teams. This includes oversight of tryouts and the

evaluation of players (including which team each player will play on and any mid-season changes), development of program strategies, encouragement/ training of all coaches and players in the program, and handling of minor team discipline problems. Assistant coaches are responsible for assisting the Head Coach of the respective sport and report directly to them.

The coach of each Cornerstone team is the individual given the broad responsibility of developing the character and athletic skills of each athlete on the team. Coaches should not make winning their only goal, either stated or regularly implied by their actions. They are to serve the parents by providing an environment of discipline and opportunity for the athletes to grow in character and to experience quality competition. Coaches at each level are challenged to abide by the policy on playing time spelled out in this handbook. There is room for interpretation by the coach, but each coach must understand the objectives and be willing to explain to any parent their decision-making process. Obviously, parents who ask to discuss playing time with a coach are expected to do so in a Christ-like spirit of appeal and self-control seeking to give the coach the benefit of the doubt. If they are not satisfied, they may request a meeting with the Athletic Director. Further appeals are detailed in this policy statement.

Team Rosters and Cutting Players

In the sports where the number of players on a team has limitations, player cuts are to be handled individually by the Head Coach with sensitivity and compassion. Cutting players will be avoided if at all possible, especially in JV sports. If a cut is necessary, it should be communicated in a private meeting with the coach (no posted lists). Coaches should be prepared to give specific reasons to the athlete for their conclusions, to discuss strengths along with needed areas for improvement, and to indicate that athlete's status with regard to the team and program (including alternative ways the student may be able to participate). Each team will hold competitive tryouts after which a final team roster will be established by the coach. Once team rosters have been established, no distinction will be made or allowed between students who attend Cornerstone and those who do not. In other words, playing time will be subject solely to the discretion of the team's coach and reflective of an athlete's skill, work ethic and attitude.

Practices and Practice Schedules

1. All practice schedules will be made available to the athletes by the coach or AD. Whenever possible, practice sites will remain constant; however, any changes will be announced by the coach or Athletic Director.
2. The coach and AD will work with parents to provide transportation, where necessary, to practice. It is the responsibility of parents to know where to pick up their student and at what time.
3. Athletes should be on time for all of their practice sessions and team meetings. Practices are mandatory for an athlete to participate in the Cornerstone athletic program. A player should not be tardy or absent from a practice or a game without prior communication with his/her coach. Un-excused absences from a practice will be handled by the individual coach. Punishment may range from extra conditioning in practice, reduced playing time, suspension, or removal, depending upon the athlete, circumstances, and frequency of absences.
4. Additional rules established by the coach may apply as long as they are consistent with the Cornerstone School goal and vision.

Pre-Season Parent Meetings

There will be a parent and player information meeting for the team in the pre-season. This will afford the player's parents the opportunity to get to know each other, the coach, and the support staff. This will also provide the administration, AD, and coach an opportunity to communicate any special rules or guidelines he/she may have for the team, tryout formats, and anticipated expenses for the parents in that sport.

Playing Time Policy

1. Junior Varsity Level – Each JV coach understands that they have a developmental role with their athletes. He/she must choose a player mixture wisely to insure that each player on the team is developing with appropriate playing time experience. This will differ, at times significantly, but playing time is a priority at this level for all the athletes.
2. Varsity Level – The coach will choose a starting team for each game, and play the best players. This will be done on the basis of ability, attitude, performance in practices, and performances in games. There are no guarantees for equal “minutes” or requirements for such on the Varsity coach, only that he/she be sensitive to the players' desires to play, and game situations which would allow the maximum number of athletes to play. Athletes must know that “success” is in no way synonymous with playing time only, but success is contributing to the team's benefit with the abilities God has given them.

Games Expectations

The coach, with the help of the AD, will be responsible for all home game preparations (field, court, balls, etc.). He/she should assign players specific duties in order to accomplish this. Games are excellent evaluative times. Coaches should lead the team immediately after every game in a brief evaluation of team performance and begin the next practice with a more detailed examination. Player input should be encouraged.

Athletic Discipline and Conduct Requirements

The discipline of an athletic team is the responsibility first of the coach, then the Athletic Director, and finally, where it relates to school policy, the Principal. Respect for authority and peers is critical. Praise from coaches should be frequent, personal, and public. Whenever possible, correction should be done privately and quietly, one-on-one. When the coach makes an expectation clear, he/she must be careful to observe and to hold the players accountable. The student handbook should be used to guide in areas of discipline, especially when the circumstances are not closely related to the sport and its pressures. Serious problems with respect and/or self-control will result in actions that are particular to the sport. Any formal discipline should be reported to the AD as soon as possible. At the discretion of the coach and/or AD, unsportsmanlike conduct (profanity, insubordination, or any action detrimental to school and/or team) may result in immediate removal from a game and an automatic suspension from sports for one week and/or one game.

Cornerstone Academy 2009/2010 Extra-curricular Contract

Purpose

- Cornerstone Academy exists to assist parents in providing a biblical-worldview education for their students. This is done through a rigorous classical educational curriculum and a school culture that is centered on Christian values and mores.
- Cornerstone Academy offers extra-curricular activities to students to broaden their experiences and to aid in their physical and emotional development. Extra-curricular activities are in addition to curricular activities.
- Cornerstone Academy encourages parents and students to participate in all extra-curricular activities they deem beneficial. Parent-student decisions to participate are to be made in full recognition that the benefits come with challenges.

Commitments

- Cornerstone Academy will provide and manage the extra-curricular activity described in the Addendum. The Addendum describes the physical, financial, time, and energy requirements of the activity. Read the Addendum carefully before signing this Contract.
- Because of the time and energy demands of the activity, by signing below, parents and students agree that balancing these demands with academic requirements may necessitate tradeoffs for the student. Parents and students are to discuss this issue with both the extra-curricular leaders and academic teachers to fully recognize the challenges.
- Students participating in extra-curricular activities are required to maintain a minimum academic grade point average (GPA) of 2.5. The Headmaster and Athletic Director are jointly responsible for monitoring GPA levels. Both will intervene at any indication that academic performance is in question with the objective of encouraging and supporting the student's improved performance. If GPA moves below 2.5, progressive interventions will range from:
 1. Counseling and arranging additional study times,
 2. Suspension from practices if GPA is below 2.5 on a Progress Report,
 3. Suspension from all extra-curricular activities if GPA is below 2.5 on a Report Card.
 4. GPA's will be reviewed periodically by the Headmaster and Athletic Director with the aim of reinstatement when both agree academic performance is satisfactory.

This Contract applies to the sport noted in the Addendum only.

Student _____

Date _____

Parent _____

Date _____

Athletic Director _____

Date _____