

ATHLETICS



MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The Heritage Christian Middle School Athletic Handbook is a reference guide for coaches, student athletes and parents, concerning the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Heritage Christian Middle School.

The coach of an athletic team reports to the Athletic Director and is primarily responsible for the compliance by his/her team members to the rules, regulations, and policies governing athletics at Heritage Christian Middle School. The Middle School Athletic Director will administer these rules and regulations as they relate to inter-team and inter-coach relationships.

Sound reasoning, good judgment, and adherence to the school's core values will be the standard by which situations outside these stated rules and regulations are determined and evaluated.

Interscholastic athletics is a voluntary program. Students are not obligated to participate, thus, participation in middle school athletics is a privilege and not a right. Accompanying this privilege is the responsibility to adhere to standards established for the middle school athletic program. This privilege may be revoked if the athlete fails or refuses to comply with these rules.

It should be carefully noted that the policies and procedures detailed in this handbook are reflective of official action by the Heritage Board of Directors and Administration. As such, all policies will be followed as written.

Thank you for your participation in our athletic program. May God bless you as you use your God-given athletic abilities to serve Him in this integral part of school life.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Heritage Christian School Athletic Department is to **glorify God** through the **discipleship of student athletes** and **pursuit of excellence in athletics** with the Bible as the foundation and Jesus Christ as our focus.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT CORE VALUES

1. Christ
2. Responsibility
3. Integrity
4. Trust
5. Teamwork
6. Enthusiasm
7. Respect



Our Coaches

The coach is the “living curriculum” for the student athlete. Coaches at Heritage Christian School are the most significant components of the athletic program. They are both teachers and active participants at the same time. They have the responsibility to model Christ-like behaviors and attitudes at all times.

In order to be an effective coach and role model, HCS coaches must also be thoroughly knowledgeable in their sport, capable of detailed preparation, able to motivate athletes, able to make adjustments during competition, and work effectively under the authority of the Middle School Athletic Director and the Middle School Administration. Our coaches take seriously the opportunity they have to mold young lives for Christ.

Our Parents

Parents of student athletes have a responsibility to both their child and to the team. Without strong parental support the student athlete will not be able to achieve his/her greatest potential and/or the team may suffer. It is important that parents provide positive reinforcement and understand their role as being part of the team. Parents, as well as players, should be supportive and encourage coaches and teammates at all times.

Parents are not coaches and learning to trust coaches is a key step to learning the value of the life lesson experiences athletics provides. It is also important that parents honor the Lord when attending athletic events. In order for HCS’s athletic program to be successful, coaches, student athletes, and parents must make a firm commitment to glorify God at all times.

Our Athletes

Heritage Christian athletes should be diligent in preparation, give 100% at all times, demonstrate personal discipline, be respectful in all situations, maintain self-control, show humility, and aggressively pursue excellence regardless of the score, opponent, time, referee, or situation. The ultimate and final responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the student athlete, for it is the student athlete who is accountable to his/her parents, coach, and the Lord.

Our Teams

Our teams should in all things strive to:

1. Glorify God
2. Play Hard
3. Have Fun

Our Athletic Department

Is committed to:

1. Discipleship of our coaches and student athletes
2. Outreach to opposing teams and fans and to the larger community outside of Heritage



3. Preparation of student athletes for both competition and life with Christ as our model
4. Stewardship of our resources
5. Pursuit of athletic excellence

PHILOSOPHY

Heritage Christian School Athletics is founded on the teaching and principles of God's Word. Biblical principles and the corresponding philosophies may differ substantially from schools with other philosophies. Such differences, however, do not necessitate unworkable relationships. Instead, our philosophy of athletics should provide an opportunity for others outside the Heritage community to visualize actions and principles that are quite unique in today's society. The Heritage Christian School athletic program is a wonderful opportunity to minister to the non-Christian community through exemplary actions, Christ-like attitudes, and a high level of individual and team athletic skill. The challenge for our athletes, parents, and coaches is to adhere to the Colossians 3:17 mandate, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

The priorities of athletic participants, established by the Heritage Christian School Board of Directors, the CEO, Middle School Principal and Athletic Director are based on the mission of the school. The priorities are:

1. All participants must honor the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and seek to glorify God in word and deed.
2. The Lord's Holy Name and reputation of His collective agent, Heritage Christian School, must be preserved and protected at all cost.
3. The spiritual, psychological, and physical well-being of the individual athlete must take precedence over any individual or team athletic accomplishment. Athletics at Heritage Christian School is one primary means of accomplishing the school's mission. Spiritually, this mission seeks to glorify God through the discipleship of students, the pursuit of excellence and outreach to opposing athletes and fans.
4. Athletic excellence and accompanying awards should be taught and established as appropriate goals for any athlete or team.

The hierarchal order of the preceding priorities is extremely significant.



ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT EXPECTATIONS, PRACTICES & POLICIES

Eligibility for Interscholastic Participation

All student athletes at Heritage Christian School must be exemplary members of the student body. Therefore, standards of academic achievement have been adopted in order for student athletes to establish and maintain eligibility.

1. Academics – Heritage Christian School academic standards are high. These standards acknowledge that academic achievement takes precedence over athletic participation. Therefore, HCS academic standards have been established at levels higher than those required in most schools. These standards, as well as specific eligibility/ineligibility information, are as follows:
 - a. Each student athlete will be assigned a letter grade (see Heritage Christian School Handbook) as an evaluation for each class taken. Grades in all classes will count and will be weighted equally. Additionally, online classes must be approved and a grade must be recorded for the class.
 - b. Each student athlete is assumed to be eligible for athletic participation until a declaration of ineligibility is made by the Middle School Principal or his agent, the Athletic Director.
 - c. For the purpose of academic ineligibility declaration, a student's quarterly grades and semester grades will be the sole basis of consideration. Progress reports can help a student regain eligibility but may not be used to declare ineligibility.
 - d. **Any failing grade ("F") (at quarter or semester) or a quarterly composite of less than 2.0 will render a student athlete ineligible or placed on probation.**
 - e. Once a student athlete is declared ineligible due to academic shortcomings, the period of ineligibility will last until the next formal, written student academic evaluation (i.e., midterm grades) occurs. At that time, the entire academic record of the ineligible athlete will be re-evaluated. The academic criteria applicable for the quarterly grading periods (no "F's" and a minimum grade point average of 2.0) will also be the standard of re-evaluation at the time of the midterm update. After the grades have been re-computed for the midterm update, any ineligible student regaining eligibility status (no "F's" and a minimum grade point average of 2.0) will be immediately allowed to compete as a team member. If, however, an ineligible student athlete does not re-establish eligibility at the time of the midterm update, that student athlete will be dropped from the team. Furthermore, if a student athlete is declared ineligible at a quarterly grading period, regains eligibility at the time of the midterm update, and subsequently is declared ineligible at the next quarterly grading period, that student athlete may be dropped from the team. In other words, any time a student athlete is ineligible twice during the same athletic season (defined as the time tryouts are held until the last interscholastic contest is completed), that student athlete will be dropped from the team.



- f. In the event a student athlete has met all academic standards but drops significantly in academic performance during a time period when he/she is in no immediate danger of being declared ineligible, the coach has the authority to institute measures of accountability to help the student athlete get back on track.
 - g. The appeal procedure relative to any academic problems/policies is similar to the one addressing athletic eligibility decisions. Decisions may be appealed by approaching the coach first, and if appropriate the Middle School Athletic Director.
 2. Conduct – Each student athlete is expected to conduct his/her life in accordance with the standards and principles set forth in God's Word. This includes adhering to all appropriate HCS standards of student conduct. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct could affect participation in athletic activities. It is also expected that student-athletes will conduct themselves at, during or after practices and contests in ways that would glorify the Lord in all that they do or say.
 3. Trying Out for a Team if Ineligible – A student athlete who is ineligible for athletic participation at the time team tryouts are held will be allowed to try out for the team. It should be clearly understood, however, that the possibility of that student athlete not regaining eligibility status at the time of the progress report update and the probability that the student athlete will miss some interscholastic competition and, therefore, perhaps adversely affect team performance and team accomplishment, will be a major consideration on behalf of the coaching staff when selecting team members.
 4. Remaining on a Team After Being Declared Ineligible – It is entirely possible that a student athlete will be eligible when trying out for a team, will make the team, and will become ineligible after making the team, either before or after the season has started. If this occurs, the student athlete will, of course, be ineligible for the prescribed period of time. If this student athlete fails to re-establish eligibility at the completion of the first period of ineligibility (progress report update), the student athlete may be dropped from the team.
 5. Practicing with the Team if Ineligible – Generally speaking, ineligible student athletes should be spending time correcting situations that rendered them ineligible. Therefore, it would be advised for student athletes not to be practicing with the team on a regular basis, and an ineligible student cannot accompany the teams to interscholastic contests. There are times, however, when coaches need these student athletes at practice for the sake of team continuity. The discretion of the coach, with the concurrence of the Athletic Director, will dictate the necessity and frequency of the attendance of a student athlete at practice. At no time will an ineligible student athlete be permitted to miss school to practice or accompany his/her team on an athletic trip.



6. Suspension from School – A disciplinary action severe enough to warrant student suspension will eliminate the student athlete from all participation in interscholastic sports for the duration of the suspension. Therefore, any suspension, whether in-school or out-of-school will render a student athlete ineligible to attend practice or any interscholastic contest. After serving the suspension, further disciplinary action will be assessed according to the Student Athlete code of conduct

Participation Fees

Participation fees are essential to help fund the cost of interscholastic athletics; transportation to athletic events, game officials, tournament entry fees and supplementary equipment and supplies. Fees will be collected on a two-tiered structure with the fee structure listed below.

TIER 1- \$ 175.00

Swimming and Diving (Boys and Girls)
Football
Lacrosse (Boys and Girls)

TIER 2- \$ 125.00

Baseball
Basketball (Boys and Girls)
Cheerleading
Cross Country (Boys and Girls)
Soccer (Boys and Girls)
Softball & Tennis (Boys and Girls)
Track & Field (Boys and Girls)
Volleyball

Participation fees are not a guarantee of playing time on a team. This fee is not assessed if an athlete does not make the team. All of the conditions of being a team member apply as if the fee did not exist. Playing time is based solely on the coach's discretion and assessment of a student's athletic ability and game situations.

Athletic Training & Sports Performance

Athletic Trainers

Heritage Christian School through partnership with St. Vincent's Sports Performance provides two on-site certified athletic trainers. The trainers are available to all athletes and usually arrive by 2:00 pm Monday – Friday. If your student athlete becomes injured during practice or competition, please make sure that a trainer is aware of the injury right away. It is highly encouraged that student athletes see the athletic trainers about an injury before seeing a physician.

Strength and Conditioning

The partnership with St. Vincent Sports Performance also includes an on-site strength and conditioning coach. The strength & conditioning coach will be on campus from 8:00



am to 5:30 pm and works with our middle school student athletes during strength and conditioning classes.

Impact Testing

Due to the number of head injuries and concussions that occur throughout schools each year, Heritage Christian School Impact tests all current student athletes entering 7th, 9th and 11th grade. Any new student athlete enrolling at HCS will be Impact tested no matter the grade level. The initial Impact test is administered by our certified athletic trainers. All athletes and their parents must read and sign concussion acknowledgement forms according to the Department of Education, IHSAA, and Indiana law. **If a concussion occurs, the student athlete must be evaluated by an Impact certified physician for further evaluation before being allowed to return to practice or competition.** Once the athlete is released for play by the same Impact certified physician, a “return to play” protocol will be administered by our athletic trainer. The “return to play” protocol is a 5-day progression to safely return athletes to practice or completion. **An athlete may not be cleared to return to play by a physician who is a family member.**

Parent Portal

The Parent Portal is where parents of student athletes will be able to find all the basic information you may need regarding participating in athletics while at Heritage Christian. The portal is accessed through [HCS Connect](#) by clicking on the “Athletics” tab on the main page after logging in to HCS Connect. The information contained in the Parent Portal includes:

- HCS Athletic Department Policies
 - Discipline Policy
 - Code of Conduct
 - Concussion procedures
 - Digital signature
 - Athletic Training policies
- Physicals
 - Information on requirements for sports physicals.
 - A current printable IHSAA physical form.
 - Link to upload completed physical.
- General HCS Athletics Information
 - High School & Middle School Student Athlete Handbooks
 - New Family Guide
 - IHSAA Transfer procedures and information
 - NCAA links
 - NAIA links
- Parent Resources
 - Sportsmanship expectations
- IHSAA Resources
- St. Vincent Sports Performance (SVSP) Information



Physical Form & Parental Consent- Online Forms

1. For a student to be allowed to try out for a team or practice with a team, he/she must have a current Physical form on file in the Athletic office prior to the first practice of each year. You can acquire an IHSA Physical form in the Athletic office or on the athletic department website under forms. Physicals for Middle School athletics are good for one calendar year from the date signed by the attending physician.
2. For a student to be allowed to participate on any team, he/she and their parent/guardian must have **signed electronically through the Parent Portal** the following forms: **Parent Code of Conduct and Consent & Release Form, Student Athlete Code of Conduct Form, Concussion Acknowledgement Form, Consent for Athletic Training Services Form, and the Anti-Hazing/Anti-Bullying Policy**, thus agreeing to abide by the terms of the Heritage Christian School athletic code.
3. There may be other forms required for participation on a team: a **Player Pack/Participation Fee Form, an Impact Testing Form, and/or an updated Contact Information Form** may be requested along with the other forms. These will be provided by the coach and/or athletic department.

Transportation

1. Middle School teams may receive one-way transportation to away contests via one of our school buses, a Heritage Christian School activity bus, or a chartered bus, as determined by the coach and the athletic director. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their athletes have a ride home from away contests.
2. Students will be released to their parents after an away contest with verbal consent by the coach. Students may be released to another adult only with written consent from their parent. (Verbal consent may be taken into consideration in emergency situations.)
3. At no time should students ride with a student driver without written consent of their parent (Verbal consent may be taken into consideration in emergency situations.)
4. Coaches are responsible to stay with student athletes until all students have been picked up whether at home or away events.

STUDENT ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

All middle school student athletes will adhere to the following code of conduct. A violation can result in suspension or expulsion from an athletic team.

As an expression of Heritage Christian School's mission, the Middle School discipline policy is intended to support the discipleship process for students, and to serve as a reflection of Jesus Christ and as an extension of the home. As such, the primary



purpose of the discipline process is to produce growth in students while maintaining an environment of learning and order, providing a support to parents, and reflecting Scriptural principles of conduct and influence. In keeping with this purpose, the Scriptural principles that provide the foundation for the discipline policy are as follows:

- The responsibility of parents for the education of their children (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)
- Submission to authority (I Peter 2:13-17)
- The principle of reaping and sowing (Galatians 6:7-8)
- Confrontation, restoration, and separation (Matthew 18:15-17)

Under the guidelines of these Scriptural principles, the goal of Heritage Christian Middle School through the disciplinary process is to:

- Provide an environment of order and respect that promotes an atmosphere conducive to learning
- Apply necessary and appropriate consequences for choices
- Keep lines of communication open with parents by communicating disciplinary outcomes
- Guide in the restoration of relationships with Jesus Christ and with Heritage Christian School, its employees, and its students
- Use relational influence to produce spiritual growth, correction, and right choices
- Do so in a context that seeks the best interest of both the involved parties and the student body as a whole
- When possible, involve the spiritual authority and influence of a family's church affiliation

The conduct of participants in athletics at Heritage Christian, in or out of school, year round, shall be as follows:

1. Not to reflect discredit upon our school, teammates, coaches or Jesus Christ, and,
2. Not to create a disruptive influence on the disciplinary, moral or educational environment in our school. Any such misconduct violating these principles shall be subject to disciplinary measures above and beyond the Middle School code of conduct.

The Athletic Director shall enforce all rules and regulations as described in the Code of Conduct for athletes. The Code will be enforced by the coach of each sport during the year. Please see the complete Athletic Code of Conduct for detailed information regarding enforcement, procedure and appeal.

Student athletes are expected to demonstrate the following behaviors and characteristics:

- Integrity in the keeping of one's word, speaking the truth, carrying out responsibility and respecting authority
- Respect for self, Heritage Christian School, coaches, officials, fans and the property of others



- Courtesy extended in all relationships – athlete to athlete or athlete to coach, stewardship of the property, supplies, and equipment of Heritage Christian School, as well as wise stewardship of personal items
- Reconciliation through Biblical and appropriate repentance and forgiveness when offenses have been committed or received

Student athletes are expected to refrain from the following behaviors and characteristics:

- Tardiness to practices or competitions
- Careless and/or reckless behavior
- The inappropriate use of cellular phones, cameras and other electronic devices
- Inappropriate public displays of romantic affection (i.e. holding hands, kissing, excessive hugging)
- Profanity and vulgar or offensive speech and/or gestures
- Inappropriate use of social networks or media outlets (ie: Facebook, twitter, blogs, Instagram, snapchat, etc...)
- Dishonesty in any form, including lying, theft, or cheating
- Gambling
- Rebellious or disrespectful attitude
- Flagrant disrespect and disobedience
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information, including the distribution of sexually suggestive material via cell phones, cameras computers, or “sexting” of any kind. The Heritage Christian School definition of sexting is the act of sending, receiving or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, photos or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital or electronic devices.
- Harassment or bullying in any form, both physical and/or sexual in nature. Sexual harassment includes all acts of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, which are unsolicited, unwelcome, inappropriate, and/or demeaning, which interfere with an individual’s performance, or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive atmosphere. Physical harassment includes threats or intimidation of any nature, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct which creates a hostile, offensive, or fearful environment. Examples of threats or intimidation include, but are not limited to, provoking a fight, fighting, bullying, acts that inflict injury or damage, and/or acts intended to control by fear and/or intimidation. (see bullying policy)
- Hazing in any form (please see specific area on hazing policy)
- The use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medication. Violations of this policy may also result in random drug testing, per Heritage Christian procedures, at the expense of the student. (please see specific reference to consequences below)
- Immoral sexual conduct
- Use or possession of weapons and/or dangerous items on school premises or at any athletic event (i.e., guns, knives, explosive devices, etc.)



It is a privilege to represent our school and our Lord participating in interscholastic athletics. We are different at HCS, in that, our number one priority is to glorify God in everything we do. This is a tremendous responsibility, one that our student athletes should recognize at all times.

All student athletes shall adhere to the Athletic Code of Conduct as fully detailed in the Athletic Handbook. Any violation or misconduct shall be subject to the disciplinary measures contained herein, above and beyond those rendered by the appropriate Middle School authority. It should be noted that the Athletic Code of Conduct both includes and is in addition to the Middle School Code of Conduct.

DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The following sets forth the Athletic Department policy regarding athlete misconduct and corresponding athletic disciplinary measures:

Individual Team Rules

Each Head Coach will furnish his/her athletes with specific rules and/or regulations that apply to that team. Individual team rules and discipline may go beyond those listed in this handbook, but cannot be of a lesser standard. The Athletic Director must approve these individual team rules.

Enforcement of the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct

The Middle School Athletic Director is responsible for the overall enforcement of policy as described in the Athletic Code of Conduct. All rules and regulations regarding behavior and/or training as outlined in IHSAA guidelines are applicable. Each Head Coach is directly responsible for the enforcement of said policy for their team during the year, in connection with the Athletic Director.

All athletes and parents/guardians are required to sign the acknowledgement, consent and disclosure documents stating that they understand the policies and disciplinary measures set forth in the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct. A new Student-Athlete Code of Conduct form must be signed each year and is in force at all times.

Procedure

Violations of the Student-Athlete (and Middle School) Code of Conduct should be brought to the attention of the appropriate authority. The review of the violation will be made by the appropriate authority (Coach, Middle School Athletic Director or Middle School Administration). The appropriate authority will then meet with the player (and coach when appropriate) to determine and communicate appropriate disciplinary action per the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct.

Disciplinary action taken as set forth in the Athletic Code of Conduct will not be grounds for appeal. In the event that a parent feels the Athletic Director has not followed due process as stated in the Athletic Code of Conduct, the parent may submit to the Superintendent, in writing, an explanation of the factors they believe were not properly followed by the Athletic Director.



Multiple Violations

In the event of multiple violations of different types of offenses, the Athletic Director will consider facts and circumstances in administering the appropriate disciplinary action.

Awards

Determination of the impact, if any, on various awards and recognition will be made by the Athletic Director, in consultation with the respective coach.

Athletic Disciplinary Actions		
Please note that the Athletic disciplinary actions below are in addition to the “Middle School Code of Conduct Discipline Procedures.”		
Types of Violations	Occurrence	Disciplinary Action
TYPE “A1” OFFENSES		
Possession, distribution, use or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medications Immoral sexual conduct. Possession/distribution of pornographic materials, sexting Inappropriate use of cellphones, cameras or other devices resulting in invasion of privacy or sharing of sexually explicit materials Felonies, Misdemeanors, Thefts	1st	33-50% of the contests for that season, carried over to the next sports season, if necessary
	2nd	Suspended from athletics for 365 days.
Lower percentage not to go below 33% with approved service project. Carryover will be determined by the Athletic Director.		
TYPE “A2” OFFENSES		
Harassment or bullying in any form, physically, mentally, and/or sexually in nature. Hazing in any form. Careless/reckless behavior resulting in property or physical damage.	1st	25-50% of the contests for that season, carried over to the next sports season, if necessary.
	2nd	Suspended from athletics for 365 days.
Lower percentage not to go below 33% with approved service project. Carryover will be determined by the Athletic Director.		
TYPE “B” OFFENSES		
Careless/reckless behavior. Inappropriate displays of affection. Profane or vulgar speech/gestures. Dishonesty in any form including lying, theft, or cheating. The use and/or possession of tobacco including e-cigarettes. School suspensions not addressed in specific categories.	1st	10-25% of the contests for that season, carried over to the next sports season, if necessary. Lower percentage not to go below 10% with approved service project.
	2nd	Minimum 25% of the contests for that season. Service project opportunities are not an option for 2nd type “B” offenses.
	3rd	Suspended from athletics for 365 days.
Carryover will be determined by the Athletic Director		

***See Addendum for full code of conduct and discipline procedures.



Anti-Hazing Policy

Hazing in any form is neither tolerated nor consistent with any spiritual, educational or athletic goal at Heritage Christian School.

“Hazing” refers to any activity expected of someone joining a student organization that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate.

Hazing activities generally considered: physically abusive, hazardous, and/or sexually violating. The specific behaviors or activities within these categories vary widely among participants, groups and settings. Typical hazing practices would include: personal servitude; sleep deprivation; restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling; swearing; insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such substances on one’s skin; brandings; physical beatings; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault.

Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school is considered hazing.

Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or Heritage Christian School policies or regulations is considered hazing.

Hazing in any form will not be tolerated at Heritage Christian School and will result in disciplinary actions. There may be other disciplinary consequences as well administered by the Coach, Athletic Department, Middle School Principal, Superintendent and/or the Board of Directors.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The administration, faculty and staff of Heritage Christian School believe that all people are created in the image of God, and so have intrinsic worth, value and dignity. We believe we have a responsibility to provide a respectful, safe and healthy school environment and an obligation to promote mutual respect and acceptance for our students. We recognize that love and respect are the foundation for our relationship with God and others, and that Scripture establishes the standard of how we demonstrate love and respect toward all students. Therefore, we will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety and dignity of any student. Bullying is never acceptable and is strictly prohibited. Such conduct is contrary to the behavior, values and principles taught by our Savior and are disruptive to the educational process. The State of Indiana defines bullying as any overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student



with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

- (1) places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
- (2) has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
- (3) has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
- (4) has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school. (*Indiana Code 20-33-8-0.2; HCS will continue to update the policy as revised by the IDOE, 6/2013*)

Heritage Christian School will not tolerate any behavior that is considered bullying, intimidation, or harassment of another student(s). Such behavior includes, but is not limited to;

Physical- direct physical contact including pushing, hitting, shoving, biting, hair-pulling, scratching, spitting, tripping, damaging or stealing victims' property, locking person in room, mean faces, rude gestures, initiating or forcing inappropriate touching

Verbal assaults-name calling, put downs, racist remarks, teasing, threats, spreading rumors, sending inappropriate (violent, sexual, malicious, etc.) notes or pictures in any medium, (cell phone, internet, etc.)

Social- ostracism, exclusion, ignoring, being unfriendly, alienating, social isolation, rumor spreading, damaging someone's reputation

Psychological- acts that instill a sense of fear or anxiety, aggressive or menacing gestures

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be enforced in accordance to HCS Code of Conduct guidelines, which state;

"It is the expectation of the administration that students adhere to the HCS Code of Conduct (and the HCS Anti-Bullying policy) at all times. It is therefore also understood that violations of the Code of Conduct both inside and outside of school, including breaks from school, may be addressed as a disciplinary concern by the administration. Students are specifically considered to be under school jurisdiction at any time at which they are under the direct supervision of Heritage Christian School and its employees, including when riding a school bus or attending a school function or activity. "

Students who choose to initiate and/or participate in bullying activities of any kind will be subject to intervention and/or disciplinary action. Consequences can include loss of



designated school privileges and opportunities, suspension, expulsion or legal action by the police and/or courts.

Procedures to be followed for Suspected or Reported Bullying Behavior:

- Staff, student or parent reports the incident and suspected behavior immediately to a school staff member who will ensure that the incident is reported to the appropriate school administrator
- Appropriate school personnel will immediately investigate the incident and follow the established guidelines for investigation, intervention and notification of parents of all parties
- Bring resolution to the incident in a timely manner and inform all parties involved as to findings and action to be taken.

Locker Room Policy

Just as participating in interscholastic athletics at HCS is a privilege, so too is the use of all athletic facilities and equipment. Great care should be taken to be respectful of all facilities, equipment and resources that the Lord has provided.

Any misconduct or disrespect involving athletic facilities or equipment will be considered an “Other Code of Conduct Violation” and will be considered a Type “B” offense as set forth in the Athletic Disciplinary Actions section of the Athletic Handbook. As such, a 1st offense will result in the student athlete not being allowed to participate in 10% of the contests for that season, carried over to the next sports season, if necessary.

In order to promote a safe, respectful environment as it relates specifically to the use of locker rooms, it is our policy that a coach must be present in the locker room immediately prior to, during (if appropriate) and after all athletic practices and contests.

Coaches are responsible for distributing school issued locks to student athletes. Furthermore, coaches are responsible for providing the Athletic Department a list of all athletes, assigned locker numbers, lock numbers and combinations. Lastly, coaches are responsible for collecting the locks at the conclusion of the season.

The Athletic Department reserves the right to open any student athlete’s locker for due cause. In addition, the Athletic Department reserves the right to charge any offending student athlete reimbursement for any abuse of athletic facilities and equipment that may result in financial loss.

Attendance at Practices and Games

Each member of a Heritage Christian School Athletic team must assume the responsibilities associated with such a position. The athlete has an ethical obligation to the team and the school. This obligation includes regular attendance at practices and athletic contests. Commitment to Heritage teams should come before any club or outside team. If a practice or competition is missed due to outside commitments, there will be consequences for missing the Heritage practice or competition.



It is possible, of course, that emergency situations may arise (e.g., illness, death in a family, etc.) that render it impossible for an athlete to attend a practice session or an athletic contest. Absences should be few and far between and arranged with the coach as early as possible.

Our middle school athletic teams will not have mandatory practices when school is not in session (i.e. in-service days, holiday vacations, etc.), nor will they practice on days when school is in session for only half the day.

Each team member must practice a minimum of ten (10) separate days prior to the first contest. If they are moving from one season to the next within the same school year a team member must practice a minimum of five (5) times.

If a student athlete misses five (5) to ten (10) consecutive days of practice/contests, he/she is required to participate in four (4) practices before returning to contest play. If a student athlete misses more than ten (10) consecutive days of practices/contests, he/she is required to participate in six (6) practices before returning to contest play.

Absences from practice sessions or athletic contests will be handled in the following manner:

ABSENCE FROM PRACTICE	
Excused absence	No action
Unexcused absence – 1 st Offense	Conference with coach and discipline of athlete
Unexcused absence – 2 nd Offense	Suspension from the next interscholastic contest
Unexcused absence – 3 rd Offense	Dismissal from team (athlete forfeits all awards)

ABSENCE FROM ATHLETIC CONTEST	
Excused absence	No action
Unexcused absence – 1 st Offense	Suspension from next two interscholastic contests
Unexcused absence – 2 nd Offense	Dismissal from team (athlete forfeits all awards)

Attendance at School

A student athlete must attend school on the days of an athletic practice and contest in order to participate in that practice or contest. Some specific circumstances are as follows:

1. Students who are absent from part of the school day and are granted a non-illness related excused absence (e.g., a dental appointment) will be allowed to participate in the practice or contest that day.
2. Student athletes (6-8) must attend at least five class periods of the day unless it is due to an excused absence. A student athlete may not participate in practices or games if they did not attend the five periods. (Lunch and 9th period do not count toward the five periods.)



3. Any unexcused absence from school, regardless if it is only for a partial day, will render an athlete unable to participate in the day's events. This would include in-school suspension or skipping class.

Handling Problems/Solving Disputes

All disputes at Heritage Christian School, including those related to athletic matters, should be handled in a Biblical manner. In particular, Heritage Christian School encourages application of the "Matthew 18 Principle" when handling a problem/settling a dispute. This principle, in summary form, encourages the offended party to go directly to the one with whom he/she has a problem (e.g., student athlete should talk to the coach at an appropriate time prior to parental involvement and prior to going directly to the Athletic Director.)

If the situation is not resolved, the offended is encouraged to seek a solution by speaking to the next person in authority. In simple terms, an athlete should approach the coach first, and if unresolved, the athlete, parent and coach should meet next, then the Middle School Athletic Director. If the athlete and parent do not feel that proper process was followed, they may take the matter to the Heritage Christian School CEO by providing their concerns in writing.

It is absolutely necessary that this chain-of-command be followed specifically. If not, the upper level authorities will direct the offended party to solve the problem at the appropriate level.

No Quit Policy

If a student athlete is selected for a position on one of the Heritage athletic teams, it is important that he/she makes a firm commitment to that team. Therefore, quitting a team after being selected is strongly discouraged. If any student athlete quits a team after the first contest, that student athlete is prohibited from trying out for another Heritage Christian School team or extracurricular activity during the same season. *The student will be obligated to pay for any player pack items that were ordered, and at least 50% of the participation fee.* Furthermore, quitting a team in one season will impact a student's ability to participate in a sport the following season. A student athlete also will not be allowed to work out or practice with the next season's sport, until the team that they quit has finished their season.

Playing Time Policy

While it is true that our coaches and administrative personnel believe it to be important to broaden the experience of Heritage Christian School athletes, and that broadening is enhanced by playing time, it is also an important goal of the Heritage Christian School athletic program to strive toward excellence. Therefore, no minimum per game playing time provisions or minimum numbers of athletic meets in which athletes must compete are established at the Middle School level. Playing time decisions are left up to the individual coaches, but providing meaningful playing time is encouraged.



Starting a Season Late

A student may start a season late if the reasons are acceptable to the coach and the Athletic Director. If a cut has been made the student must go through a three-day try out period. If the student is determined to be good enough they may be added to the team. No one may be cut to make room for this student. The student must have a minimum of ten (10) practices including the tryouts before he/she can participate in a contest. If they are moving from one season to the next within the same school year a team member must practice a minimum of five (5) times. The ten practices are also required when joining a team late that did not have a cut.

If a student transfers to Heritage Christian School once a season has already begun, they will be considered as a new student with new opportunities and will be permitted to try out for a team.

Multiple Sport Policy

To fully accomplish the mission statement of Heritage Christian School athletics we, the coaches and athletic administrators, must encourage all of our student athletes to participate in multiple sports. A multiple sport athlete has two to three times the opportunity to develop Christian friendships, Christian character, competitive experience, and reap the benefits of cross training, etc. than a single sport athlete.

If a student athlete approaches a coach or athletic administrator about his/her thoughts on the pros and cons of being a multiple sport athlete, it is our job to carefully give the student athlete an objective evaluation of his/her options. Never should a coach discourage participation in other sports. Coaches should share as much information with the student athlete as possible to help him/her make the best informed decision he/she can make.

SAFETY

Accidents/Injuries

Athletic trainers are on campus for nearly all practice sessions and all home games. If an accident or injury occurs, the athlete will be evaluated by our trainer. The coach may be required to submit a written accident report to the Athletic Department within 24 hours. If the injury is serious the coach will call emergency services and the parent(s). All coaches are trained and tested on the Athletic Department Emergency Action Plans annually before the start of their season in the event of an injury or other emergency requires their immediate action.

All injuries should be treated with caution and handled with care. The parents will be contacted in the event of severe or significant injuries and consulted with in any decisions made in regard to treatment and rehabilitation. Heritage Christian School has two athletic trainers to help with the care and rehabilitation of injures. The athletic trainers will recommend doctors and/or treatments to care for the student, but the final treatment decision rests with the parents.



Coaches treat any acknowledged condition in the confidential manner with which the information is related by the parent or guardian. If an athlete misses practice on the request of a physician, the athlete should have a note of clearance before returning to practice. Please note that according to IHSAA rules, if an athlete misses more than six consecutive practices/games, they must have four practices before they are allowed to compete again. If they miss more than ten, they then must have six practices. While Middle School athletics is not governed by the IHSAA we do follow their recommended guidelines.

Bad Weather

Lightning, severe storms, hot and cold extremes: The Athletic Directors in consultation with the coach, trainer and officials (during contests), will make decisions based on the IHSAA guidelines for student athlete safety. On the day of games, decisions are made by the host school as close to team departure time as possible.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Schedules

The scheduling of all athletic events and practices is determined by the Athletic Director in cooperation with each coach. The coach may issue a schedule to the students and parents as soon as possible in each season. If practice is understood to be every day, there may not be a printed practice schedule issued. Athletic contests are rarely scheduled on Wednesdays and all practices will end by 5:30 on Wednesdays. Athletic practices may be scheduled on Saturdays, but there will never be any practice on Sunday.

Team Pictures

A professional photographer (Lifetouch) will take team and individual pictures early in each season. These pictures are purchased by the students or parents and must be pre-paid online or may be purchase after the student athlete receives the proofs two to three weeks after pictures are taken. Any problems or mistakes with the orders should be reported to the Athletic Department immediately.

School Equipment

1. Students are responsible for all equipment issued to them. Athletic uniforms are supplied for the sole purpose of athletic participation. This equipment is not to be used for any other purpose.
2. When the season is over, all equipment and uniforms are to be returned to the coach who will keep inventory of all items issued to the team. The coach will then submit the end-of-season inventory list to the Athletic Director in a timely manner following the season.
3. The parent is responsible for the dollar replacement cost of any lost or damaged school issued equipment or uniforms.



- Uniform budget will be allocated and reviewed by the Athletic Director according to a rotation schedule.

Team Fundraising Projects

All team fundraising projects must be presented to and approved by the Middle School Athletic Director and the FROC Committee. Forms are available from the Athletic Director. Completed forms must be submitted to the Institutional Advancement Department for approval. **Only after the project has been approved is the team allowed to go ahead with the fundraiser.**

Extracurricular Conflicts

If a conflict arises involving an athletic contest and an event related to another school activity, the coach and teacher/sponsor will discuss whether accommodations can be made to allow the student to participate in both events. If an agreement is not reached in this manner, the student and parent(s) will decide how best to proceed in the best interest of the student. Teachers and coaches may assign alternative work/tasks in place of the missed event. No additional or punitive penalties may be assessed beyond the loss of benefits (e.g., grades, participation) inherent in the event itself. It is understood that contests will take priority over practices.

Scholastic Athletic Offerings

The interscholastic sports currently being offered at the Middle School level at Heritage Christian School are:

Fall	Winter	Spring
Coed Cross Country (6-8)	Boys' Basketball (7-8)	Boys' Baseball (7-8)
Boys' Soccer (6-8)	Girls' Basketball (7-8)	Boys' Lacrosse (7-8)
Girls' Soccer (6-8)	Coed Swim/Diving (6-8)	Coed Track/Field (6-8)
Coed Tennis (6-8)	Cheerleading (7-8)	Girls' Lacrosse (6-8)
Boys' Football (7-8)		Girls' Softball (6-8)
Girls' Volleyball (6-8)		
Cheerleading (7-8)		

COMMUNICATION

General Information

The best resource for information is our Athletics Website (www.hcsathletics.net). Each sport has a dedicated page with links to direct communication from the coach, schedules, required forms, and even photos.

Cancellations

It is necessary, at times, to cancel games and practices at the last minute due to inclement weather. Please do not call the school on these days! We will update cancellations on the athletics twitter ([@HCS_Athletics](https://twitter.com/HCS_Athletics)) and blog pages continually as cancellations are made and information comes in. If it is a home event that we have scheduled, the Middle School Athletic Director will try to make the cancellation decision



by 2:30 pm if at all possible. If it is an away event, the opponent school Athletic Director makes the cancellation decision. As soon as we receive that information the website and twitter will be updated. The cancellation will be announced immediately from the respective school office and students will be allowed to call their parents at that time to make arrangements for pick up. The most up-to-date information on cancellations and schedule changes can be found on the Heritage Christian Athletics Blog (<http://hcsathleticnews.blogspot.com/>), or our Twitter feed.

Twitter

You can get up to date scores and athletic information by following the athletic department [@HCS_Athletics](#).

Weekly Bulletin/Athletics Homepage

The HCS Weekly Bulletin and the Athletics homepage will provide you with information about upcoming athletic events, news, and other athletic department related activities.

OTHER INFORMATION

Parent Meetings

Parent Pre-Season Meetings – All parents of student athletes are required to attend a pre-season meeting with the coaching staff of that sport. The meeting shall be held before the first contest. Parents will be informed of all rules for their sport as well as the rules of Heritage Christian School.

Parent responsibilities for each team:

Along with the necessary financial costs, parents should be aware of the necessary service/costs associated with athletic participation in their athlete's sport. This participation which is required of all parents includes, but is not limited to, the following: team devotions/prayer, concession sales, transportation, basic clean-up assistance at home contests, special events/tournaments, and others as directed or requested by that team's coach.

At your parent meeting the coach will have sign-up lists available. For the success of each team, it is imperative that parents sign up for at least one area.

1. Discipleship
2. Outreach
3. Administrative
 - a. Concessions
 - b. Scorekeeper
 - c. Field/Gym tear down after games
4. Excellence
 - a. Fundraising, etc.



ADDENDUM - Middle School Conduct and Discipline

As an expression of Heritage Christian School's mission, the middle school discipline policy is intended to support the discipleship process for students, and to serve as a reflection of Jesus Christ and as an extension of the home. As such, the primary purpose of the discipline process is to produce growth in students while maintaining an environment of learning and order, providing a support to parents, and reflecting Scriptural principles of conduct and influence. In keeping with this purpose, the Scriptural principles that provide the foundation for the discipline policy are as follows:

- The responsibility of parents for the education of their children (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)
- Submission to authority (I Peter 2:13-17)
- The principle of reaping and sowing (Galatians 6:7-8)
- Confrontation, restoration, and separation (Matthew 18:15-17)

Under the guidelines of these Scriptural principles, the goal of Heritage Christian Middle School through the disciplinary process is to:

- Work alongside of parents within the process of discipline
- When possible, involve the spiritual authority and influence of a family's church affiliation
- Provide an environment of order and respect that promotes an atmosphere conducive to learning
- Apply necessary and appropriate consequences for choices
- Guide in the restoration of relationships with Jesus Christ and with Heritage Christian School, its employees, and its students
- Use relational influence to produce spiritual growth, correction, and right choices
- Do so in a context that seeks the best interest of both the involved parties and the student body as a whole

Code of Conduct

In order to best fulfill the goals of the discipline process, Heritage Christian Middle School has established a Code of Conduct that defines expected student behavior, and establishes the procedure and process for addressing disciplinary matters. Please be aware that student conduct and behavior outside of Heritage Christian School can affect a student's standing at HCS as well as the reputation of HCS, therefore it is the expectation of the administration that students adhere to the code of conduct at all times. It is therefore also understood that violations of the code of conduct both inside and outside of school, including breaks from school, may be addressed as a disciplinary concern by the administration. Students are specifically considered to be under school jurisdiction at any time at which they are under the direct supervision of Heritage Christian School and its employees, including when riding a school bus or attending a school function or activity.

Students are expected to demonstrate the following behaviors and characteristics:



- Integrity in the keeping of one's word, speaking the truth, doing one's own work, carrying out responsibility (doing assignments adequately and on time) and respecting authority
- Respect for self, Heritage Christian School and its employees and students, and the property of others
- Courtesy extended in all relationships – student to student or student to teacher/staff
- Stewardship of the property, supplies, and equipment of Heritage Christian School, as well as wise stewardship of personal items
- Preparation for class and readiness to learn
- Reconciliation through Biblical and appropriate repentance and forgiveness when offenses have been committed or received

Students are expected to refrain from the following behaviors and characteristics:

- Tardiness to class
- Failure to conform to the expected dress code
- Careless and/or reckless behavior (i.e., throwing objects, running in halls, driving recklessly, etc.)
- Disruptive behavior that impedes the educational process
- The use of cellular phones and other electronic devices during school hours
- Inappropriate public displays of romantic affection (i.e. holding hands, kissing, excessive hugging)
- Profanity and vulgar or offensive speech and/or gestures
- Dishonesty in any form, including lying, theft, cheating, and plagiarism (Note: indication of cheating on any assignment will result in zero for the assignment; this guideline applies to the person copying, as well as, to the person knowingly supplying the material to be copied)
- Gambling
- Rebellious or disrespectful attitude
- Flagrant disrespect and disobedience
- Skipping class, leaving campus without permission, or truancy
- Vandalism, including that which would be directed toward the personal property of school employees
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information, including the distribution of sexually suggestive material via cell phones and computers, or “sexting.” The Heritage Christian School definition of sexting is the act of sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, photos, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital or electronic device. Students engaged in such activities are subject to state laws and school discipline. The school considers sending, sharing, possessing, or even viewing pictures, text messages, or e-mails that contain a sexual message or image a violation of this policy, a violation that will result in school discipline up to and including expulsion and the notification of local law enforcement. Students are required to immediately report any such activities to a teacher or a school administrator.



- Harassment in any form, both physical and/or sexual in nature. Sexual harassment includes all acts of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, which are unsolicited, unwelcome, inappropriate, and/or demeaning, which interfere with an individual's performance, or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive atmosphere. Physical harassment includes threats or intimidation of any nature, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct which creates a hostile, offensive, or fearful environment. Examples of threats or intimidation include, but are not limited to, provoking a fight, fighting, acts that inflict injury or damage, and/or acts intended to control by fear and/or intimidation.
- Bullying in any form, both physical and or verbal in nature. "A person is considered to have been bullied when he or she has been exposed repeatedly over a period of time, with intent to harm, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons."
- The use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medication. Violations of this policy may also result in random drug testing, per Heritage Christian procedures, at the expense of the student.
- Immoral sexual conduct
- Use or possession of weapons and/or dangerous items (i.e., guns, knives, explosive devices, etc.)

Discipline Procedures

Most disciplinary issues are managed by the teacher in the classroom, and the process can involve any of the following, separately or in combination as appropriate:

- Personal conference with the teacher
- Notification by teacher of behavior problems to parents by telephone, e-mail or written communication
- Student Conference with the Assistant Principal/Principal resulting in conduct Detention.
 - Detentions are scheduled during lunch/activity time on Thursdays.
 - An In-school suspension will be assigned for the fourth (4) detention received per quarter and for each subsequent detention in that quarter.
- A parent-teacher-student or parent-teacher-principal conference

More extreme or persistent cases of misconduct will be managed by the administration and treated with one or more of the following measures:

- Conference with the principal and/or teacher
- Probation, combined with appropriate application of consequences relevant to the offense
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Withdrawal, temporary, until restitution and restoration can be confirmed via visible student behavior and pastoral counsel and recommendation; reinstatement on probation
- Withdrawal, permanent
- Expulsion



- The following violations of the Code of Conduct will result in an automatic suspension from school, pending a more thorough investigation of the matter, and may result in withdrawal or expulsion. In addition, any code of conduct violation that also potentially involves a criminal offense or a violation of state laws (i.e. use of illegal substances, distribution of stolen goods or pornographic materials, sexting, possession of weapons on school premises, vandalism, truancy, etc.) may require Heritage Christian School to involve law enforcement officials.
- In keeping with the school's responsibility to prove a safe learning environment for all students, we have established a policy regarding the issue of "sexting". The Heritage Christian School definition of sexting is the act of sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, photos, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital or electronic device. Students engaged in such activities are subject to state laws and school discipline. The school considers sending, sharing, possessing, or even viewing pictures, text messages, or e-mails that contain a sexual message or image a violation of this policy, a violation that will result in school discipline up to and including expulsion and the notification of local law enforcement. Students are required to immediately report any such activities to a teacher or a school administrator.
- The use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medication
- Immoral sexual conduct
- Possession of weapons and/or dangerous items on school premises
- Repeated dishonesty
- Flagrant disrespect and disobedience
- Leaving campus without permission
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information
- Harassment in any form, both physical and/or sexual in nature
- Continued willful disobedience, misconduct, disrespect

A student may be suspended for a period of one to ten days at the discretion of the principals. All assignments or tests missed during the period of suspension must be completed. All missed assignments will receive a 50% reduction in grade, and test/quiz grades will be reduced by 10%. Students may not practice or participate in athletic events for the duration of the suspension, nor may they be involved in extracurricular activities during that time. Any other corresponding participation consequence will be determined according to Athletic and/or Fine Arts policy. In addition, students may not attend school activities on the day(s) of suspension. Students may be expelled from school after other disciplinary procedures have failed or when major moral or social offenses have been committed. Expulsion decisions will be made in conjunction with the principal and superintendent.

In the event that a parent feels the administration has not followed due process during the suspension and/or expulsion proceedings, the parent may submit to the Superintendent in writing an explanation of the factors which they believe have not been duly considered and/or those procedures which were not properly followed by the



school administration. If the parents are not satisfied with the response of the Superintendent, they may then submit an appeal in writing to the Board of Directors recounting their appeal to the Superintendent and their reasons why they believe the response of the Superintendent was inadequate.