

# FAITH CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

## Training Champions for Christ

### The 3 D's of Success for Christian Living

**Desire**

*(Psalms 119:174)*

**Discipline & Drive**

*(Proverbs 2:1-9)*

*(Mark 12:30)*

# ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

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## **Mission Statement of Faith Christian Academy**

Faith Christian Academy partners with the church and with Christian families committed to a Christ-centered, biblically-based education for their children, to prepare each student to hold a biblical worldview of life, to excel in academics, to realize their full God-given potential, and to enable children to proclaim Jesus Christ to their culture.

## **Athletic Purpose and Mission Statement**

In support of the FCA mission statement, the Athletic Department will seek to develop young people who strive to be Christ-like in every area of life—Champions for Christ.

## **The Purpose of the FCA Sports Ministry: Training Champions for Christ**

A “Champion for Christ” is a person who has a desire for God (*Psalms 119:174*), is disciplined in knowing God (*Proverbs 2:1-9*), and driven in following God (*Mark 12:30*). These are known as the 3 D’s of Success; which are attributes that are vital to being successful in any area of life. This is especially true in the most important area, our relationship with God, through His Son, Jesus Christ.

**The Mission of the FCA Sports Ministry:** To instill an understanding and provide opportunities for our students to develop the 3 D’s of Success (*Desire, Discipline & Drive*) through athletics with the hope that they will apply them in every area of their lives, and experience the abundant life that Jesus provides (*John 10:10b*).

Athletics are a “classroom” where life’s lessons (discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship etc...) are taught and learned. Through the use of athletics, we are able to worship our Creator by using our minds and bodies in a way that demonstrates our uniqueness (*Gen.1 :27*). The goal of Faith Christian Academy is to compete in a manner, which will glorify God through our thoughts, actions, and attitudes (*Romans 12:1*).

Webster defines a champion as:

1. Warrior; Fighter 2: a militant advocate or defender <a champion of civil rights>3: one that does battle for another's rights or honor <God will raise me up a champion — Sir Walter Scott>4: a winner of first prize or first place in competition; also: one who shows marked superiority <a champion at selling>

A “Champion for Christ” is someone who is trusting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and is committed to Him. He/she is a warrior for the Kingdom of God, a fighter for righteousness, a defender of the faith and pursues a righteous/obedient walk with the Lord.

As champions our goal is to be like Jesus (*Luke 6:40*) in everything we do so that God is glorified and others are blessed. Believers must be exposed to the reality of God’s love through the gospel and the transformed lives of those who are in Christ.

Knowing that we (humans/followers of Christ) are but jars of clay (*2 Cor. 4:7*), we strive and pursue (*1 Tim 6:11*) to live according to God’s righteous/holy standard [His Word/Bible] (*1 Peter 1:15*). When we fail (daily) to live up to God’s standards, we must take responsibility for our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. Therefore, we must confess (*1 John 1:9*), repent, and strive to make it right.

The following attributes are areas that we as “**Champions for Christ**” will strive to develop on an ongoing basis:

- Committed to Jesus as Lord
- Strong in the Word
- Disciplined in all areas of our lives
- Loving
- Respectful
- Trustworthy
- Genuine
- Obedient
- Diligent
- Humble
- Caring
- Servant Leaders
- Fit 4 Life!

### **Philosophy of Athletics at Faith Christian Academy**

Faith Christian Academy has established an athletic department in order to enhance the physical, spiritual, social, and mental development of the student. The athletic department provides many opportunities to teach Biblical truths in discipline, character, and teamwork, as well as developing a lifestyle of serving others. FCA seeks to develop students that see the entire world through a God-centered perspective, which includes the playing field. In accordance with FCA’s mission statement, the athletic world provides a wonderful place to develop positive life skills through a Biblical worldview.

Coaches play a critical role in the lives of their players. As it states in Luke 6:40, when a student is fully trained, he will be like his teacher. In America where athletics is a high priority, the Christian school has an incredible responsibility in training young people to respect authority not only to their coaches, but to the rules established for the game, to the officials calling the game, and to the fans in the stands. Coaches have the responsibility of teaching and instructing their players in attitudes that reflect Christ in all of their activities. The goal of the coaches and players is to model the characteristics of Jesus, who was a servant leader.

In a world where “winning is everything,” Faith Christian Academy faces an even greater challenge in teaching Biblical standards for the pursuit of winning. Attitudes, other-mindedness, and character all last for eternity and are what count in the end – not the win or the loss. At the same time, this does not call Christians to be apathetic on the playing field. On the contrary, Romans 12:1 states that what we do and how we do it is a “spiritual act of worship.” Therefore, students should play hard, honor their teammates, honor their coaches, respect the other teams, and respect the officials as a way of honoring God and pursuing excellence in all that they do.

Athletics should be an avenue in the Christian school where Christ can be reflected in actions and attitudes. Faith Christian Academy seeks to have an athletic program that will promote servant leadership in every sport and activity, so that sports are an enhancement of the child’s educational experience. As in all things we are to pursue excellence because “excellence honors God.” Students, coaches, parents, and faculty members should pursue excellence both on and off the court as a way of honoring God.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Faith Christian Academy athletic program not to discriminate against players or coaches on the basis of race, color, sex, or national/ethnic origins.

## Membership

Faith Christian Academy is a member of Virginia Association of Christian Athletics (VACA).

## Athletic Fees

FCA students and homeschool players will be assessed a fee of \$100.00 per Middle School sport and \$125 for any Varsity or JV sport in which he/she chooses to participate. There are no discounts for multiple children in one family. The athletic fee will be reduced by \$25 for each additional sport played during the same school year. The sports fees include the cost of gas for transportation. The sports fee must be paid in the secondary office within the first week of practice in order for the player to be eligible to play. These fees help offset the cost of referees. All athletic fees go directly to the athletic budget.

## The Program

The Athletic Programs at Faith Christian Academy include team sports for young men and women in grades 5 through 12. The season is congruent with the school year and includes games played at the Academy as well as games played in the facilities of the opposition. The following chart provides the basic information for each sport.

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Season</b>
Volleyball	Girls	Middle School – 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	Fall
Volleyball	Girls	JV/Varsity – 8 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Fall
Soccer	Boys and Girls	Middle School – 5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	Fall / Spring
Soccer	Boys and Girls	Varsity – 8 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Fall / Spring
Cross Country	Boys and Girls	Middle School & JV	Fall
Basketball	Girls	Middle School – 5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	Winter
Basketball	Girls	Varsity – 8 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Winter
Basketball	Boys	Middle School – 5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	Winter
Basketball	Boys	JV 8 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup>	Winter
Basketball	Boys	Varsity A – 9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Winter
Cheerleading	Girls	6 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> Grades	Winter
Softball	Girls	Varsity – 7 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Spring
Baseball	Boys	Varsity – 7 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Spring
Golf	Boys and Girls	Varsity – 5 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Spring

*Other sports may be added based upon interest of the students enrolled.*

Seasons are defined according to the customary schedules and parameters of conferences and teams at the same level of competition.

In accordance with the VACA conference, age limits are in place for middle school, junior varsity and varsity levels. A middle school player (5<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grade) must be ten years of age by Sept. 30 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to compete and may not have

reached the age of fifteen by Sept. 30 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to participate.

A junior varsity player (10th and below) must be twelve years of age by Sept. 30 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to compete and may not have reached the age of seventeen by Sept. 30 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to participate.

A varsity player (12th and below) must be thirteen years of age by Sept. 30 of the academic/school year in which he/she wishes to compete. For varsity play the player may not have reached the age of 19 by August 1 of the academic/school year of competition.

Students in eighth grade may be placed on either the Middle School or Varsity team as is congruent with the athlete's demonstrated ability. Consideration will be given to the potential for playing time, the potential for skill development, and the emotional maturity of the athlete. Parents of the eighth grader in question will be consulted in the decision making process and will be invited to discuss the pros and cons of team placement with the coaches. Team placement will not dictate playing time.

### **Volleyball**

The Middle School season shall consist of up to twenty games over a period of ten weeks following a preparation period of one to two weeks. The Varsity season shall consist of up to twenty games over a period of ten weeks following a preparation period of one to two weeks. Try-outs for both teams may be held at the same time. The season may include one tournament in addition to the conference placement tournament.

### **Soccer**

The Middle School season shall consist of up to fourteen games over a period of ten weeks following a preparation period of one to two weeks. The Varsity season shall consist of up to eighteen games over a period of ten weeks following a preparation period of one to two weeks. The Varsity season may include one invitational tournament and a conference tournament as is appropriate for the proficiency of the team. Try-outs are held prior to the start of the season and will be announced to the student body. Joint practice sessions may be held when necessary.

### **Basketball**

The Middle School season shall consist of up to twenty games over a period of fifteen weeks following a preparation period of one to two weeks. Try-outs are held in conjunction with those for the varsity teams. Practices will be scheduled such that both boys and girls teams are afforded court time equitably. Unless games hosted in the FCA gym dictate otherwise, practice times will be scheduled between 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. Practice sessions will include both on-court and off-court activity. The season may include one invitational tournament in addition to the tournament hosted by FCA.

The Varsity season shall consist of up to thirty games over a period of seventeen weeks following a preparation period of two to three weeks. The season may include up to four local and out of state invitational tournaments in addition to a conference-ranking tournament. The combined tournaments will not require team members to be absent from school more than ten

days during any one quarter and no more than ten days during a semester. The total number of out of state tournaments will be determined by the Athletic Director in collaboration with the Administrator. The decision will be based on the best interest of the student, the potential of the team, the available funding, and the potential for positive public relationships for the school.

Try-outs are held in conjunction with those for the Middle School teams. Joint practice sessions may be held when necessary. Practice schedules will be arranged such that girls and boys teams are afforded court time equitably. To accommodate the needs of Middle School athletes, varsity practice will be scheduled from 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Varsity athletes will be allowed to leave school at 3:00 p.m. and return to school for practice. Varsity athletes who do not leave school at 3:00 p.m. will participate in a structured study hall under the supervision of the coach or designated adult leader. It is imperative that students attend study hall to complete academic assignments or complete them at home during this period of time.

### **Cheerleading**

Cheerleading is offered for girls in the 6th-12th grades. Based upon the number of interested girls the squads may consist of a Middle School Squad and a JV/Varsity Squad. Cheerleading will take place during Basketball Season with practice starting in Mid-October or earlier if the coach deems this necessary. The girls will cheer for approximately 12-14 home games plus tournament games.

### **Girls' Softball**

One softball team will be fielded for students in middle and high school. The season shall consist of up to twenty games over a period of twelve weeks following a preparation period of one to two weeks. The season may include one invitational tournament and a conference tournament as is appropriate for the proficiency of the team.

### **Boys' Baseball**

One baseball team will be fielded for students in middle and high school. The season shall consist of up to twenty games over a period of twelve weeks following a preparation period of one to two weeks. The season may include one invitational tournament and a conference tournament as is appropriate for the proficiency of the team.

### **Golf**

Golf is offered to athletes in grades 5 – 12 who are interested in learning the basics of golf. Players must have their own golf clubs in order to participate on the team. Golf tournaments will be determined annually based upon the interest of the schools in the conference.

### **Practice Sessions**

Practice sessions are held after school on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 3:00 until 9:00 and Wednesday from 3:00 – 4:30 with specific session times being dependent on the number of teams participating in a given season. Every effort will be made to allow younger teams priority for earlier practices, to provide reasonable amounts of court or field time for each group, and to maintain a consistent practice schedule. It should be noted, however, that the scheduling of games for multiple teams and the limited court and field space may necessitate flexibility in practice sessions. Each practice session includes team preparation, devotions, skill

practice, game simulations, and travel to and from practice fields. The AD will publish and distribute a written practice schedule no later than Friday for the upcoming week. Schedules and Athletic Updates are e-mailed out weekly (Thursday or Friday).

**Each team member is expected to attend each practice session unless the appropriate coach approves the absence.** Excused absences may include illness or an unforeseen emergency. *After-school detentions, shopping trips, uncompleted homework, or social activities are not considered an excused absence.* Practice sessions scheduled during official school holidays are not mandatory. However, athletes who are in town and are not involved in family gatherings are expected to attend scheduled practices. Students who have an excused absence during a game week will be ineligible for the starting line up of the following competition. Students who have an unexcused absence during a game week will be ineligible to play but MUST dress out and sit with the team. Students who accumulate three unexcused absences during a season will be dismissed from the team. Each team member is expected to participate fully during the practice sessions. The athlete is expected to complete the conditioning exercises with a positive attitude, to follow the coaches' directions explicitly, to put good effort into the drills, and to apply the instructions given to the practice games. Athletes are expected to discuss personal skill goals and team goals with the coach following practice sessions. Because the team's achievement is dependent on the effort and skills of each individual, athletes are encouraged to workout and drill between practice sessions. Coaches may work with individual athletes to develop a plan of preparation and skill development.

### **Eligibility for Tryouts and Participation**

In order to participate on an F.C.A. team, a student must reach and maintain eligibility requirements in the areas of age, grades, and conduct. A participant must not have reached his/her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday prior to September 1, or the current school year in order to be eligible. The student's academic status in each area is checked prior to try-outs for each sport. The student's record of conduct will be assessed prior to try-outs.

The Administrator will verify the academic eligibility prior to each season at the request of the Athletic Director. Once the academic eligibility is confirmed, the Athletic Director will verify that each prospective athlete has met all other eligibility requirements prior to participation in any tryout or practice. The Athletic Director will then notify the athlete.

*Students who desire to participate on an athletic team must:*

1. be enrolled as a full time student or meet the qualifications as listed under home schooling.
2. have an approved, current athletic physical (Virginia State Athletic Physical Form) on file in the Athletic Director's office prior to the first practice. (Physical forms can be obtained in the Main Office or online at [www.fcavirginia.com](http://www.fcavirginia.com)). Physical examination is required each school year after May 31 of the preceding school year and is good through June 30th of the current school year.
3. notify the Athletic Director or coach that he/she is interested in trying out for the team.
4. demonstrate academic eligibility:
  - a. The student must not have accumulated three or more academic penalty points in the preceding report period. A point scale of D=1 point and F= 2 points will be used

to determine ineligibility. Students with a total of 3 or more points at the time of a “Progress Report” or Report Card will be notified (along with their parents) that the student is on “academic probation.” During academic probation, the athlete will not be allowed to practice or participate in games. Such students will have two weeks to raise their grades. At the end of the two weeks, the student may practice and play if they met the eligibility requirements. Eligibility/Academic probation is determined on the day that the Progress Reports go home. If a game is scheduled that day the student may not participate in the game if determined ineligible. Students who do not improve their academic status within the two-week time will be declared ineligible until the next Report Card or Progress Report. Students on probation may not travel with the team. If the student’s Report Card (or Progress Report) indicates the requirements have been satisfied the student will be removed from ineligibility.

- b. A grade of I, Incomplete, must be completed if the points are in jeopardy of producing ineligibility.
  - c. Grades from all courses taken are considered in the calculation of eligibility.
  - d. Fourth quarter grades from previous years will be used to determine eligibility for fall activities.
  - e. Summer school grades may be considered for fall eligibility as soon as official records of summer school grades are received.
5. have demonstrated commitment to the teams or squads on which he/she has participated in the past.
  6. submit a signed Parent and Student Agreement.
  7. submit proof of medical insurance. (FCA does not carry student accident insurance.)
    - a. Optional student accident insurance may be purchased.
    - b. Permission form with the listed Insurance company must be signed and turned in to the Main Office.

***Students who are selected for a team must maintain eligibility in order to practice or participate in games by:***

1. exhibiting a positive overall attitude and/or behavior.
  - a. Athletes must adhere and respect policies published by individual coaches.
  - b. Athletes are subject to authoritative positions including all officials and school personnel from FCA or an opposing team.
  - c. An athlete may be removed from a team or placed on probation if a coach, Athletic Director, or Administrator determines that an athlete is not exhibiting a proper attitude and/or behavior.
  - d. Because improper action or words toward authority shows poor character and testimony, any athlete demonstrating this type of behavior will be removed from the game by the coach.
  - e. In the event of a major or repeated infractions, the coach will initiate a conference with the athlete and his parents to specify the expectations and timeline for the changes to occur. If these expectations are not met, dismissal from the team will occur.
2. by maintaining proper class attendance.
  - a. Athletes are expected to arrive at school on time.

- b. Students who leave school due to illness may not return to practice or participate in a game on that day.
  - c. Students who have early dismissals from school may only participate in practices and games if the early dismissal is for a doctor's appointment or court appearance. The Administrator and/or Athletic Director must approve all other reasons.
  - d. Athletes must be in attendance at least half a day in order to participate in a game.
  - e. Athletes may not miss more than 10 school days for sports related activities.
3. maintain academic eligibility.
- a. Each athlete is responsible for work missed due to athletic absences. Before leaving school early for a game, it is the athlete's responsibility to hand in homework, to find out what he will miss in class, and what is due upon return.
  - b. Missed assignments and tests must be completed upon return to class.
  - c. Ineligible students may not travel to away games.
4. take care of uniforms and equipment.
- a. Athletes are expected to take care of uniforms and wash them regularly.
  - b. Uniforms must be returned cleaned/washed/dry cleaned and in good condition at the end of the season.
  - c. If uniforms are lost or not returned, students/parents will be assessed a fee for the purchase of a new uniform. If damaged, a fee will be assessed.
  - d. Equipment is to be put away daily – the entire team should assist with gym clean up.
  - e. Athletes are encouraged to pick up trash in or around the locker room, the field of play, the team bench, spectator areas or other areas designated by the coach or athletic director.
  - f. Athletes must wear proper shoes for each field or court.
  - g. Athletes must refrain from hanging on or pulling down basketball rims, goal posts, or nets.
  - h. An athlete may not be in the gym or on the playing fields unless proper supervision is present and appropriate permission for the facility has been granted.
  - i. Bookbags may not be left in the hallway, bathrooms, or by the doors – bookbags are to be taken to each locker room.
  - j. FCA and its staff are not responsible for valuables left in the locker room.
  - k. A combination lock should be used during the practice sessions.
5. have appropriate conduct at all times.
- a. Athletes are to conduct themselves in a way that honors our Lord and Savior.
  - b. Athletes are to seek to be servant leaders by looking out for the interest of others in all areas.
  - c. Athletes are expected to be encouragers of their teammates and others.

## **Equipment**

Faith Christian Academy supplies an official school uniform worn by each student athlete in each sport. The uniform consists of a shirt and trunks/pants. Some teams are also issued warm-up garments. The uniform pieces will be inspected prior to being given to student athletes. Any flaws will be noted by the coach and the player. Once issued to the athlete, the uniform is the athlete's responsibility. When the uniform is returned to the department, the uniform will be inspected by the coach and the player once again. The user must replace uniform pieces that are lost or damaged.

The cleaning of the uniform will be the responsibility of the athlete. If individuals wish to take pictures in uniform during an off season, the uniform may be checked out from the Athletic Office and must be returned immediately following the portrait session. The uniform must be clean when returned.

## **Team Membership**

Membership on a Faith Christian Academy Athletic Team is a privilege **NOT** a right. When an athlete decides to try out for a team, he is accepting responsibility for his academic performance, his attitude, and the promotion of the team. A position on a team will be earned through positive testimony, a strong work ethic, skill proficiency, and a commitment to personal improvement. Team members are to represent Faith Christian Academy at all times. Having a position on a team in no way implies a guarantee for playing time during a particular game.

Young athletes that show potential will be given a position on a team as a means of helping him/her mature and develop skill. A younger student should maintain an attitude of willingness to work and learn appreciation for any contest opportunity given, and acknowledge that with hard work their opportunity to play may come later. Many top athletes spent good, solid developmental time working with a team without taking the field or court during competitive play. The athlete who desires additional playing time should work cooperatively with the coach to generate a plan to earn more time. Parents must refrain from pressuring coaches concerning playing time or verbalizing to athletes their personal desires to see the athlete compete. A parent who wishes to check on the progress of his student-athlete with the coach should schedule an appointment separate from practice or game time. Parents and teammates are expected to encourage and support each team member and coach through success and failure. Encouragement in the form of supportive cheers, post game congratulations, and notes of support help coaches and team members through the ups and downs of a competitive season.

Members of each team must maintain personal health insurance while participating in practice and competition.

Team members are encouraged to refrain from seeking or holding employment during the season of participation in order to prevent scheduling conflict. Parents are encouraged to schedule dental and medical appointments such that routine visits are completed out of season. Appointments should not be scheduled on game days.

Team members who choose to quit or are dismissed from the team (academic ineligibility, conduct, etc.) at any time during the season or during tournament play will forfeit certificates and/or any other award(s).

## **Classroom Conduct**

A team member must maintain the approval of the faculty. Students who have difficulty with classroom conduct will be required to participate in practice sessions but will be required to sit on the bench during competition until the problem is corrected. An athlete who fails to correct the problem in two weeks may be dismissed from the team at the discretion of the coach and the Athletic Director.

Students who earn an after school detention must report to detention immediately after school. **After the detention is served, athletes may or may not participate in practice but must report to practice.** Practice will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

Students who are held after class due to tardiness may participate in the afternoon practice at the discretion of the coach. However, it should be noted that habitual tardiness will not be tolerated.

## **Game Protocol**

### **Game Day Dress**

On the day of a game each team member must dress up for school. Female athletes are required to wear clothes in compliance with normal school dress code. Male athletes are required to wear clothes in compliance with normal school dress code (coach may choose another standard of dress with the approval of the Athletic Director). When specified by the coach, the team may wear the uniform jersey or top in lieu of a dress shirt or blouse on game day, during a tournament, or on team spirit day. This privilege will be earned by the team and coordinated by the coach.

The dress code established for pre-game attire will be followed for post game attire for both home and away games. Shirts must be tucked in at all times including between tournament games, when wearing the warm-up suit, when going to games, and when leaving games.

The athlete is to maintain this dress standard until time to put on his uniform. An athlete who does not dress appropriately will forfeit the privilege of starting and or playing for the day or for the next competition.

### **Game Conduct**

Faith Christian Academy athletes are expected to maintain the highest standards of sportsmanship and testimony prior to, during, and following a competitive event. Players are to refrain from taunting members of the opposing team, from arguing with officials, from using profanity or negative nonverbal language, and from responding to spectators. Athletes who compromise their testimonies or the testimony of the team will be removed from the game. An athlete who receives a technical foul for misconduct will be removed from the game for no less than one period (total time of one full period). The total length of time will be determined by the coach in accordance with the intensity of the infraction. An athlete who is ejected from a game based on repeated misconduct will be suspended from the remainder of that contest and the subsequent contests. The athlete will have a meeting with the coach and the Athletic Director prior to being allowed to return to a competition as a representative of the team. A second incident requires a conference between the coach, the Athletic Director, the athlete, and the parents. A conduct agreement will be formulated prior to the athlete's return to the team. A third incident results in dismissal from the team.

**The coach is the authority in the team structure. Athletes are expected to treat the coach with respect, to obey in Christ, and to submit to the coach's authority. The coach is to represent the team's position on the playing field or court and, all disputes are to be**

**handled by the coach.** Issues between an athlete and a coach should be handled away from a practice period or contest. Appointments can be made with the coach through the Athletic Director's office. In accordance with Matthew 18, disputes should be handled by the coach and the athlete first. If resolution is not achieved, the coach, athlete, and Athletic Director will work together on the issue. If additional assistance is needed, the parent may work with the coach, the athlete, and the Athletic Director. Decisions made in this forum will represent the official position of the Athletic Department. Appeals can be carried to the school Administrator.

Athletes are expected to extend the hand of Christian fellowship to members of the opposing team at the completion of an event and are encouraged to look for opportunities to minister to members of the visiting team.

### **Attendance**

Athletes are expected to report to home games at least sixty minutes prior to the scheduled beginning of the game. If two home games are scheduled, athletes staying after school to participate in the second game should report to the gym and sit in the designated team area until time to move into the locker room. Athletes should complete homework and academic assignments while waiting for competition.

The athlete makes a commitment to the team when he joins the team and is responsible to fulfill this commitment by being at all team practices and contests that are scheduled. If problems such as illness, death in the family, or unforeseen emergencies occur, the athlete needs to communicate with the coach as early as possible.

If there are scheduled contests during school hours, after school, or on Saturdays, the team members are expected to attend. If a contest is scheduled during an official school vacation period, the team member is expected to attend unless the family is traveling out of town. Regardless of when the event is scheduled, absence from practice or contest without prior notification given to the coach is never excused. Loss of playing time is the consequence for an unexcused absence.

## **Game Logistics**

### **Home Games**

Athletes are required to make personal arrangements for transportation to home games. Athletes are required to report to the gym a minimum of sixty minutes prior to a home game. Upon entering the campus, athletes should report to the area designated by the coach and remain there until further directed. When leaving a home game, an athlete must check out with the coach.

### **Away Games**

Athletes are expected to arrive at the departure point fifteen minutes prior to the designated departure time. Athletes are responsible for bringing the designated uniform, shoes, and personal supplies to the departure point. Athletes may not go into the school to pick up forgotten items nor should items be left in the school while athletes travel.

Athletes will be assigned to a travel group by the coach and will remain with that group until returning to the departure point. The athlete must provide a written statement to the coach

indicating when a parent will be at the contest to provide transportation from the game or when a parent has made arrangements for alternate transportation from the contest. Athletes are not allowed to transport other athletes to away games. Students who are on academic probation or under disciplinary action are not permitted to attend/participate in away games.

### **Drivers**

Any individual who functions as a designated driver for an athletic event agrees to abide by the guidelines described in the Faith Christian Academy Parent Handbook.

The driver must:

1. be a parent or grandparent who is at least 25 years of age or Athletic Director approved.
2. require all passengers, along with the driver, to wear seat belts.
3. have a valid Virginia driver's license and display to the school sponsor when requested. The license must be appropriate for the vehicle being driven.
4. acquire a current DMV report from the DMV office and turned into the FCA office.
5. be willing to submit to the guidelines established for transportation.
6. refrain from using tobacco products while on a school-sponsored trip.
7. be free from any impairment that might hinder accurate judgment (this includes, but is not limited to such items as allergy medication, etc.).
8. have a current, state-inspected vehicle.
9. have the vehicle properly maintained.
10. have minimum, state-required automotive insurance.
11. let no student occupy a seat that is equipped with a passenger-side air bag.
12. maintain a speed that is regulated according to posted limits and road and weather conditions.

The driver is expected to:

1. Pray with the athletes for safety before each trip.
2. Ensure that seat belts are fastened.
3. Allow only Christian or classical music or books on tape when transporting students.
4. The driver is expected to limit the number of students in his/her car based upon the properly functioning number of seat belts.
5. The driver will not permit any improper language or topics, nor encourage anything that might violate the philosophy or policies of Faith Christian Academy.
6. report any accident immediately to the Administrator.

### **Post Game Transportation**

Students must check out with the coach before leaving the gym after a home or away game. After an away game an athlete must return to FCA with the coach or designated driver with whom he traveled to the game unless he has received specific permission from the coach. In order to obtain permission, the coach must have a written request from the parent. If an athlete wishes to ride home from a home or away game with an individual other than his parents he must provide a written statement from his parents giving him permission to do so. The permission slip

must designate the specific date for which the permission is granted. The permissions slip will be filed in the Athletic Office until the end of the season.

NOTE: If a carpool arrangement is made for after school practices the Athletic Office must be notified of the arrangements in writing.

## **Bus Travel**

When teams travel by bus, it is the team's responsibility to clean the bus and remove all trash. When exiting the bus, all windows should be closed and players must exit through the front passenger door.

Boys and girls are to be assigned separate sections of the vehicle when traveling after dark. An athlete is to follow the same guidelines for school travel – no radios, CD players, televisions, DVD players, ipods, or other such gear are not permitted. Cell phones may be used at designated times, which will be determined by the coach.

When a team is at a restaurant or rest area, the athlete must maintain a voice level, which is appropriate and respectful and again model a servant leadership attitude toward others. Students should leave the area cleaner than how they found it.

## **Parent Support**

### **Sportsmanship**

Please remember your actions and words are a reflection upon our Lord, our school, and our families. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29)*

### **Support**

The public support of the coaches at FCA is most important. Do not talk derogatorily about coaches. Negative comments will erode authority and respect and eventually hurt our program.

### **Promptness**

Be prompt in picking up athletes after practices and games.

### **Confer with Coaches**

Talk with the coach and Athletic Director before taking athletics away from your son/daughter for discipline reasons. The team is counting on him/her and the decision affects more than one person.

### **Disagreements**

If your son/daughter has a disagreement with the coach, please send him/her back to the coach to work it out. If it cannot be worked out, then you as the parent should set up a meeting with the coach to work it out. If the problem still cannot be worked out, please bring the concern to the Athletic Director. We are to use the Matthew 18 model for settling all disagreements. *Moreover, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained a brother. If he will not hear you, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. (Matthew 18:15)*

**Meeting:** At least one parent should attend the pre-season athletic meeting prior to their child participating in a sport.

**Cheer:** Cheer and cheer loudly. Let the entire team hear your support! Be positive. Be enthusiastic. **Be LOUD!**

## **Coaching**

### **Line of Authority**

Coaches function under the authority of the Athletic Director. Any difficulties, reports, or needs should be communicated to the Athletic Director in writing following a private conference between the coach and the Athletic Director.

The Athletic Director will schedule each game and will be responsible for cancellation decisions and school notifications or changes in the schedule. Coaches will be responsible for notifying team members of changes in time, day, or location of contests.

Coaches should make arrangements for a pre-game conference and a post-game briefing for each event. The coach is responsible for announcing the time for these processing sessions prior to each event. Coaches should communicate with parents at the beginning of the season and describe his/her plans for event routines and traditions.

Coaches are to be treated with respect by players and parents. The coach has authority over the player during the pre-game period, the game, and the debriefing period following the game. Parents are asked to honor this position of authority and allow the coach to direct the activity of the team members. If there is an element of disagreement, the parent is expected to make an appointment to privately discuss it with the coach at a time the coach is not directly responsible for the team activity. If the situation is not resolved, the parent is expected to discuss the matter with the coach in the Athletic Director's presence. If at all possible, the adults in the situation should seek resolution or consensus before involving the player in the discussion.

Parents needing assistance should contact the Athletic Director during the normal school day to make appointments. Conferences must be scheduled with the coach and will not take place immediately before or after a game. Unless an athlete has been physically injured or is in danger, parents should refrain from calling coaches or the Athletic Director at home.

Parents should prayerfully consider motive and intent prior to addressing an issue with a coach. As people, coaches are fallible and are going to make mistakes. In most circumstances issues can be resolved between the athlete and the coach without additional input. This opportunity and process is important for the social maturity of the athlete and for the bond that is needed for a successful relationship between the coach and the athlete. Parents should listen to the athlete's questions and encourage the athlete to approach the coach in a respectful manner at an appropriate time. Parents should use the ups and downs of the competitive season to teach diligence, perseverance, respect, and team spirit.

## **Dress**

Coaches are expected to dress in a manner congruent with the team prior to each event. At all times the coach should be conscience of his role as a representative of the Academy.

## **Conduct**

Coaches are expected to display a positive Christian testimony at all times. Disagreements with officials should be handled without displays of anger or inappropriate language. Any difficulties should be reported to the Athletic Director immediately following the event.

## **Discipline**

Coaches are expected to maintain control of the team at all times. Athletes are to be respectful, obedient, and manifest a positive testimony. Athletes who have violated these standards are not to be allowed to play or to participate. Incidences of misconduct need to be reported to the Athletic Director immediately.

Athletes are expected to maintain a positive testimony in the classroom and in the school community at all times. Discipline issues that result in after school detentions and therefore, missed practice, will impact playing time. Suspensions from school that result in missed practice will be considered an unexcused absence and will impact playing time. Additionally, suspension from school will be considered a breach of testimony and a violation of the criteria for a position as team captain.

## **Earning an Athletic Letter**

### **Lettering**

Athletic letters may be earned in varsity sports. Letters may be earned at any grade level by a varsity player who plays 50% or more and abides by practice guidelines.

50% of the quarters in basketball

50% of the halves in soccer

50% of the games in volleyball

50% of the innings in baseball and softball

A letter will be awarded for the first sport in which the athlete meets the criteria for the award. A pin will be awarded for each sport for which the athlete meets the criteria. In the following years, a bar will be awarded to the athlete who earns subsequent letters. The decisions concerning game time are the responsibility of the coach. Any unexcused absence also counts as one of the three unexcused absences that may result in dismissal from a team.

## **Homeschool Students**

Faith Christian Academy is grateful for the relationship with homeschool families and encourages homeschool families to participate in the sports teams at the school. All guidelines outlined in this handbook must be supported and adhered to in order for any athlete to participate. Homeschool families must support the philosophy of the school.

The VACA Conference has instituted a new policy requiring schools that allow homeschool participation that the student “enrolls” at the school. At this time, FCA will not be charging an enrollment fee; however, parents must give evidence that their child is enrolled or taking four academic subjects for the current school year in order to participate in the athletic program at

Faith Christian Academy. Homeschool families will need to complete the enrollment form and verify the classes for the current school year. The homeschool form can be obtained in the secondary office.

Homeschool students will be assessed a fee of \$150.00 per sport which includes the cost of gasoline for the transportation.

No student who has been dismissed from another school for disciplinary or academic reasons will be permitted to play in the first year of homeschooling. Homeschool students are expected to comply with all dress code requirements and any other requirements as outlined in the school handbook.

### **Scholarships**

Faith Christian Academy will not provide any monetary athletic scholarships. However, students who wish to attend FCA may apply for tuition assistance. Scholarships will only be given to need based families and will be based on the availability of monies for scholarships. All athletes must meet admission requirements.

## **PARENTAL AGREEMENT AND PERMISSION**

I, the undersigned, have read and accept the rules and regulations which govern my child while he/she represents Faith Christian Academy as an athlete.

I, have prayed with my child concerning this decision and our commitment to the time requirements and expectations for participation in this extra-curricular program.

I will inform the coach of any physical disability or ailment that affects the safety of my child or the safety of others.

I will be a positive role model for my child and for the witness of others by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all the players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game and practice.

I will not engage in any unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent by booing, taunting, refusing to shake hands or using unacceptable language or gestures.

I will model respect to my child by not talking about the coach in his/her presence so that I might teach respect for all authority.

I will respect all teams that visit the campus of Faith Christian Academy and will treat others with respect regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, or ability.

I will ensure that my child is in attendance at all practices and games. In the event that my child cannot attend a practice or game, I will notify the coach prior to the event.

I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches of the team.

I agree that if I fail to abide by the rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action which could include warnings, suspensions from games, removal from the team, or other disciplinary actions.

I agree to uphold the rules and regulations and to cooperate with the Coach and Athletic Director in the fulfillment of the purposes and policies of the athletic department and the Academy. I understand that playing time is totally at the discretion of the coach. I agree to follow the Matthew 18 principle in attempting to resolve concerns. In addition, I will show my support for my child and FCA athletics by displaying Christ-honoring conduct towards officials and coaches, and in game situations. I further understand that not complying with these guidelines may jeopardize my child's opportunity to remain on an FCA athletic team.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sport

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## STUDENT AGREEMENT

I have prayed and have sought the Lord's direction on my decision and commitment to the athletic program.

I will be responsible for my studies first and seek to give my all in classes so as to be a role model to other students and so that I might support my team. I recognize that my academics are my first priority.

I have considered carefully the rules and regulations, which govern Faith Christian Academy athletes. I agree that I will abide by these rules and regulations as listed above and in the Athletic Handbook and Parent-Student Handbook.

I promise to uphold the high standards of Faith Christian Academy in such a manner that will be a credit to my school, myself, my family, and my God. I also realize that I will be subject to the counsel and consequences prescribed in this document and in the team specific documentation published by the coach if I choose to violate the letter or the spirit of this contract.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sport

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date