



OAK HILL

CLASSICAL SCHOOL

# Athletics Handbook

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## **A WORD FROM THE ADMINISTRATION**

We believe that our school serves the purpose of training not only the mind and the heart, but also the body, for as believers, we understand that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, at the heart of our athletic program lies a desire to see each student put into practice Paul's charge to the Colossians: "And whatever you do, whether in word or in deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." As such, we consider athletics at Oak Hill not extracurricular, a mere add-on, but cocurricular, an integral component of a classical Christian curriculum.

As a classical school, we appreciate our forebears' insistence that athletic training play a central part of one's education. In Ancient Greece, educators trained their students in order to maintain physical fitness and to master various skills. In medieval Europe, entire villages often competed against one another in an array of physical challenges and team competitions. Throughout the ages, athletics has provided participants with a great opportunity for community and fellowship, as well as a demonstration of their God-given talents.

Students who are involved in athletics learn and have the opportunity to practice the virtues of discipline, honor, courage, self-control, servanthood, and unity with others. They also learn how to win graciously and lose with the right perspective. For those of us who have participated in team sports, we remember learning these important virtues on the court or on the field. As we build a program that will glorify God and honor our community, we look forward to seeing coaches, parents, faculty, and spectators encouraging our athletes in the pursuit of wisdom and virtue.

James Cain, Headmaster

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Mission Statement**

Oak Hill Athletics exist to help fulfill the school's mission:

*Oak Hill Classical School provides an education  
that cultivates wisdom, joyful learning, and love for God.*

## **Philosophy**

Oak Hill athletics helps to fulfill the mission of the school by teaching the Christian way of competing and the Christian way of life as expressed through our three core values in athletics:

## **Character**

- “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” Gal 5:22-23
- “Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” Rom 5:3-4
- “Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules.” II Tim 2:5
- “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.” I Cor 16:13

## **Commitment**

- “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” Col 3:23
- “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it a slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.” I Cor 9:24-27
- “He who gathers crops in the summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.” Prov 10:5

## **Community**

- “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” Prov 27:17

- “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interest, but also to the interests of others.” Phillipians 2:3-4

- “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” I John 4:11

The Oak Hill Athletics Department acknowledges the following order of priorities in our school—1) God, 2) family, 3) academics, and 4) athletics. When this order is followed, it gives student-athletes the opportunity to be balanced spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally.

## **Goals and Objectives**

Based on our philosophy, our athletic department and team goals are:

- *Excellence* — discipleship-focused programs that honor God, are well managed, and are well executed;
- *Success* — reaching maximum potential both individually and as a team.

We will emphasize the individual goal of balance in athletics and studies to all of our students. Being a great student and a great athlete is a difficult task, an admirable goal and a worthy accomplishment.

It is our desire that our athletic community—coaches, players and parents—participate in such a way that honors God and conveys a positive witness to those around us. We will be modest in victory and gracious in defeat. Winning on the scoreboard should be one of our goals, but losing can many times present beneficial learning opportunities.

## **Team-Level Philosophy**

We recognize the normal stages of a child’s development and provide appropriate opportunities in athletics:

**School of Grammar** athletic programs (3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade) encourage participation and experimentation and establish a love for the game. The fundamentals of the game will be strongly emphasized. Tryouts are for the purpose of team placement based on skill and ability. Cuts are highly discouraged but permissible if based on facility or resource issues. Coaches will do their best to provide equal playing time. Grammar athletics will work to develop skills and technique as well as introduce the concept and critical need of “teamwork”. And finally, athletics at this stage provides first time excitement of wearing Oak Hill school colors in sports.

**School of Logic** athletic programs (6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grades) strive to deepen a love for the game, continue to develop fundamental skills, and help athletes begin to understand and execute more advanced level strategies and schemes. Try-outs are for the purpose of team

placement based on skill and ability. Cuts are discouraged but permissible if based on facility or resource issues. Playing time is at the coach's discretion.

**School of Rhetoric** athletic programs (9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades) strive to be the best they can be with a focus on excellence in execution. Players are put in positions to get the most out of their athletic talent, cultivate leadership skills and understand "team-first" responsibility. Each head coach will put the collective efforts of the team ahead of individual achievement and will take knowledge, ability to execute, attitude, conduct and safety into consideration when it comes to playing time. Athletes should not assume that they are guaranteed a spot on a varsity team simply because they participated on the same team in previous years.

Creation and size of teams is determined by many factors including but not limited to the number of participants interested in a sport, facility availability, safety and coaching resources. Whatever we do we want to do it well. Decisions will be made on a season-by-season, team-by-team basis if we cannot provide a healthy experience for all parties involved.

# **Policies**

## **General Policies**

### **Sportsmanship**

During home contests, we serve as hosts to the visiting team, its students and spectators. They are our guests, and they should be treated accordingly. At away contests, we are expected to act as invited guests. We will treat the home school's personnel and facilities with care and respect.

As participants and spectators, we want to cheer for our team, not against the opponent, being modest in victory and gracious in defeat. Additionally, we will regard the rules of the game as an agreement, the spirit and letter of which we should not break. Players play the game, coaches coach the game... no official has ever "lost" a game for a team. Much like we do not readily credit an official for a win, we will not blame an official for a loss. Officials will be treated with respect and we will accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official.

Any member of the Oak Hill community who is a participant or spectator at an event, who uses profanity, engages in inappropriate behaviors such as fighting or similar misconduct will be dismissed from the event and is subject to disciplinary action by the school.

### **Scheduling**

The athletic department does its best to schedule games and practices well in advance of the season. Because we cannot control league changes or changes made by an opponent when we travel to their home court/field, changes to schedules will inevitably occur. Additionally, since a majority of our coaches are part-time, there will most likely be a few changes throughout the season due to their work schedules.

### **Transportation And Travel**

All athletes must travel in designated vehicles to and from practices and games. The following exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and require a signed parental waiver, for student-athletes who:

1. Drive themselves, by themselves or with siblings only;
2. Drive themselves and no more than one other student-athlete who is not a sibling to the driver (this exception requires parental approval from both sets of parents of the student-athletes); or
3. Ride with an adult that is not the student-athlete's parent.

### **Severe/Inclement Weather**

Any changes to published schedules due to bad weather will be updated on our website as soon as an affirmative decision can be made. If lightning is present during an outdoor event, all parties must be moved indoors. The event can only be resumed if 30 minutes have passed since the last visual evidence of lightening. For outdoor practices, heat and

humidity are closely monitored. Where possible, practices will be scheduled in the coolest times of the day. Practices will not be held outside in a heat index of 110 or above.

### **Fundraising**

Oak Hill Athletics will raise funds annually through the booster club—through sponsored events, concessions at games and from individual gifts. Requests for funds must meet two specific objectives. The first is to provide financial assistance to those athletes who cannot afford the fees required for team sports. The second objective is to provide enhancements to our team sports programs such as new uniforms, equipment, technology and supplies. These enhancements can often generate unexpected needs that extend beyond our operating budget.

### **Substance Abuse**

The school vigorously opposes student use, possession, or distribution of tobacco or alcohol in any form, on campus or off campus. Violation subjects a student-athlete to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the coaching staff and administration. Penalties may include multiple-day suspension, permanent removal from the team, or expulsion from school. Students are not permitted to use, possess, purchase or distribute illegal drugs, including athletic performance enhancement drugs. Violation subjects the person(s) involved to disciplinary action and may lead to the involvement of local law enforcement. Athletic performance enhancing drugs are detrimental to the health of the student and are never an acceptable alternative to hard work.

### **Gambling**

Gambling is not tolerated. Violation subjects the person(s) involved to disciplinary action.

### **Hazing**

Hazing is defined as subjecting someone to an indignity, fright, abuse or threat and is not tolerated. Violation subjects the person(s) to disciplinary action.

### **Lost And Found**

Coaches require athletes to be good stewards of all personal articles, equipment and facilities. Should an item be lost or misplaced, it may turn up in the school's lost and found areas, located in the school office.

### **Academic Eligibility**

Students must have an average of 70 or higher in each class to sign up for any athletic program. If the student's grades fall below these requirements, they will be ineligible to participate in practices or games until the grade requirements have been met. Once the requirements have been met, it is the student's responsibility to request reinstatement from the headmaster.

A student who misses school due to athletic competition is responsible for keeping up with his or her schoolwork. Any work that is due during a period that the student will miss

should be turned in before the class period. Any tests that the student will miss should be taken ahead of time if possible.

Otherwise, the student is responsible for working out an arrangement with the teacher ahead of time for making up the test. Under no circumstances should a student fail to talk with a teacher whose class he or she will miss at least a day ahead of time.

## Participation

### General Requisites

Each Oak Hill student-athlete desiring to participate in Oak Hill athletics must have the following completed and signed documents on file in the athletic office before the first day of participation in any given sport:

- Acknowledgement of Athletic Handbook (on the last page of this book)
- Physical Examination
- Medical Release/Liability waiver
- Copy of Insurance Card

If all forms have not been turned in before the first scheduled day of participation, the student-athlete may not join the team. All of the aforementioned documents can be found on the Oak Hill web site or in hard copy form from the school office.

In addition to the above required documentation, a student-athlete must not have any outstanding athletic fee payments or outstanding uniform/equipment items.

**IMPORTANT**—No student-athlete will be allowed to go to their next sport if either fees or uniforms have not been turned in.

### Additional Requisites

Participating in athletics is a privilege and is contingent on the following:

1) *Clearance from Previous Sport* – Student-athletes must be cleared from their prior sport before they can begin competing in a new sport. This includes, but is not limited to, being current on athletic fees, uniform and/or equipment was in good condition and checked in, post-season forms completed, etc.

2) *Good academic and moral standing* - Student-athletes may not participate in practices or games if they have failed to achieve the minimum academic requirement or are suspended from school.

3) *Practice and Game attendance* – Student-athletes must attend at least 3 consecutive academic periods the day of a practice or game in order to play. The only exception to this rule is if the absence is caused due to a school event (field trip, college visit, etc.). Parents and student-athletes need to recognize that absences from practices will hinder skill

development and physical conditioning as well as jeopardize team unity. Time missed from a sport team practice will influence an athlete's performance and often his/her position with the team. When a personal or social event conflicts with a practice or game, we expect students to honor their commitment to the athletic program and their teammates. When a family event causes the student-athlete to be absent from a practice, the situation should be communicated to the coach at the earliest possible moment, preferably at the beginning of the season and not the same day of the conflict (this does not include family emergencies which are unpredictable and managed differently).

## **Parents**

Without a doubt, parents are the most influential models for young athletes. From a parent's conduct to the place sports plays in the family order of life priorities, parents make the biggest impact on a young person's athletic experience. Not only are parents influential, they are critical to the success of our athletic programs. The athletic department needs parents to come alongside all sport's teams to serve in one or more of a variety of volunteer positions throughout the year. Team moms, travel coordinators, drivers, overnight chaperones, statisticians, videographers, concessions, admissions, field/gym preparation or close down are just a few of the opportunities that provide much needed help and good community time between parents. Serving the athletic department also sets a good example for our student-athletes.

The guidelines that follow are an attempt to provide a foundation for our joint effort to guide your sons and daughters through the challenging yet wonderful experience of high school sports.

### **Presence At Games, Practices Or Tryouts**

The coach's classroom is the court or field, usually with undefined walls, making it easy for parents to naturally move close to the action. Parents should be interested, supportive observers from a distance. The coach needs room to be able to instruct and the player to perform without distraction from the stands. Distraction only yields poor results. Cheer them on, yes! Coach or yell at them, no! It is important to student-athletes that, if possible, parents are present at games, both home and away. A parent's attendance tells the child that he/she cares and that they want to share in the joys and frustrations which are a part of competition. It also gives parents an opportunity to develop a bond with their child and other parents, and to observe the progress made throughout the season.

Practices and tryouts, which are considered valuable instructional and evaluation time, are closed to all non-team or program personnel, unless previously approved by the Head Coach. Invited guests are expected to refrain from disrupting tryout or practice sessions, and from interacting with players and/or coaches.

### **Perspective -Why Kids Play The Game**

Most young people participate in sports for the following reasons: to have fun, to develop that natural desire to play, to make new friends or be with their friends, to be part of a team, and to compete. "To win" or "to be a champion" is often not at the top of the list. Athletes must hear from parents and coaches that it is the process of competing that counts. Too much emphasis on winning and losing puts the value of sports out of context.

### **Coach As Leader**

Each coach is prayerfully and thoughtfully considered, recruited, interviewed and hired and therefore has the authority over our children in each given sport. Parents and student-athletes must trust that coaches try to make the best decisions for the team as well as the individuals that make up the team. Coaches are with the team on a daily basis in

practice and in competition, evaluating character and performance, and therefore will make judgment decisions based on what they feel is in the best interest of the team. Playing time, players' positions, and strategy should be left to the discretion of the coach. Parents should help their child understand that being a team member means accepting the coach's decisions even when he or she does not agree with them.

It is also important to remember that neither coaches nor parents are infallible evaluators of talent, nor are either perfect play-callers. A team does not function well with non-coaches trying to coach. Parents should not place a child in a tough spot of having to decide who they are going to listen to, their coach, or their parent. Yielding to authority is a biblical lesson that our children will learn from for years to come.

### **Communication - Internal**

In general, please observe the communication guidelines elaborated in the Student/Parent Handbook. Additional guidelines are below.

Direct communication between the coach and players is very important, and is usually the best way for any questions to be answered or conflicts to be worked through. Inevitably, there will be times when a meeting between a parent and coach is warranted. Please call or e-mail the coach to arrange a convenient time for a phone conversation or meeting. Try to exercise the 24-hour rule—wait 24 hours before placing that call or sending that email. Too often our emotions get the best of us. And remember, before or after practices or games is never an appropriate time to approach a coach. Coaches will be happy to meet with you, but it may be a few days before a convenient time can be arranged.

A meeting with the coach is an opportunity to exchange information and respectfully discuss any concerns or questions that you may have. Hopefully the meeting will promote better understanding and communication, but the meeting should not be viewed as an opportunity to convince the coach that your child should be playing more, playing a different position, or that the coach should be employing a different strategy. After the meeting, just as before the meeting, your support of the team and the coach is expected. If there is a significant issue that you believe requires additional discussion, then the Athletics Director, coach, and parent can meet together to resolve the issue.

If issues cannot be resolved after meeting with the Director of Athletics, then a meeting involving the Headmaster, coach and parent should take place.

### **Communication - External**

All press releases must be approved by the Athletic Director or his/her appointed contact person within the athletic department (calling in box scores to the local newspaper is not considered a press release and should be the responsibility of the Head Coach or his/her appointed contact person). Please do not damage the relationship our school has with media outlets by harassing them for lack of press coverage of our athletic events.

Parents should never contact opposing schools, officials or the league offices to voice complaints over athletic contests, opposing players, coaches or fans, or officials. All concerns and/or opinions should be communicated directly with Oak Hill's Director of Athletics.

### **Financial Expectations**

Expenses for athletic programs fall into two categories – hard costs and soft costs. Hard costs include the athletic fee for the sport and any additional equipment, garments or shoes that the student-athlete may want in order to participate. For some larger team sports, travel costs may be a hard expense as well. Athletic fees are due within two weeks after receiving an invoice from accounting. Soft costs are non-mandatory costs and include things like post-game meals, end-of-season coach's gifts, yard-signs, post-game celebrations and possible overnight travel.

## **COACHES**

Successful athletic programs start with quality coaches. We believe coaches are one of the most significant components to the athletic program and therefore seek to hire Christian role models who are committed to fulfilling the mission of the school, desire to disciple our student-athletes and serve their families, and who are knowledgeable in their sport.

School athletics are an integral part of each student's overall education and development and coaches shall assist each student-athlete toward developing his or her full potential. Mentoring, development, care and safety of our student-athletes are the most important responsibilities of our coaches.

### **Code Of Conduct**

Because the behavior of a team can reflect the coach's own manner, attitudes, temperament and approach to athletics, coaches shall conduct themselves in a way, both on and off the court, that brings positive recognition to God, Oak Hill Classical School, their team, their sport and themselves. Instruction and correction, while demanding and critical, should be positive. Coaches should never embarrass or demean student-athletes. The same high standards of preparation, organization, dedication, hard work, self-discipline, sacrifice and Godly behavior that coaches expect of players should be the same that is expected of coaches. Coaches shall model good sportsmanship and respectful attitudes toward officials and opposing teams in victory and defeat.

All coaches are expected to know the rules of the game and the rules/policies of the leagues in which Oak Hill participates.

### **Time Commitments**

Coaches are expected to attend all scheduled events (practices and games). Coaches should arrive to practices and games early enough to set up equipment and the facility, and to greet their team. Coaches should not leave the facility of a game or event until all student-athletes have left the premises, or have made prior arrangements with parents.

Coaches shall abide the practice time requirements outlined above in this handbook. Clarification on some nomenclature and definitions:

- "Service Projects" are not considered practices or games and can be conducted on a limited basis outside of the maximum number of events a student-athlete can attend on a weekly basis
- "Optional Practices" means no team drills or team building activities will be conducted. Coaches must reinforce that these types of practices are not mandatory and no penalties will be levied to individuals who cannot make the optional practices.

### **Training**

All new coaches will go through "Oak Hill Coaching 101", a program covering the essential elements of our school, our school's culture, and how to be a successful coach at Oak Hill.

All coaches will be provided with opportunities for growth via clinics, workshops, seminars, and coaching books and videos.

### **Communication**

Coaches must communicate with student-athletes and parents on a regular basis. Coaches must communicate to parents at the start of the season the expected commitment to the team and the anticipated practice and game schedule, and the communication must be in writing. Weekly communication from the Head Coach to parents is also a minimum requirement.

### **Program Development**

Varsity Head Coaches are the Program Directors for their respective sport. Program Directors, in partnership with the Director of Athletics, oversee all teams and all levels in their sport. This provides a firm foundation for program development. The coach will strive to motivate and assist athletes, both in-season and out-of-season, to achieve their full potential as players.

# PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received, read and understand the Oak Hill Athletic Handbook and I agree to abide by its rules and guidelines.

Please PRINT Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Student-Athlete

Grade

Please SIGN:

\_\_\_\_\_

Student-Athlete

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent 1

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent 2

Date

Please return to the front desk. Acknowledgement must be turned in before the first practice.