

# **NORTH HILLS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**



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## **ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

## **Foreword and Philosophy**

Competitive athletic programs instill discipline, character, and integrity in a way that we cannot in the traditional classroom setting. North Hills Christian School (NHCS) provides an athletic program to help instill these characteristics of Christian godliness in its students. Our school places emphasis upon proper training habits, sportsmanship, and conduct. Self-discipline and self-denial are tempered by our responsibility to recognize the rights of the individual within the objectives of our team. Our hope and expectation is that students, parents, and coaches who participate in the athletic program will exemplify the characteristics of godliness and integrity in all of their interactions with others.

Participation in North Hills Christian School Athletics is a privilege with responsibilities. Team and Athletic Departmental policies are designed to hold its members accountable for their behavior, to protect the School community and property, and to protect the rights of the members of the community to function in an environment conducive to academic pursuits and athletic excellence.

The NHCS athletic program offers more than fifteen interscholastic teams across middle school and high school levels, which are designed to produce well-rounded students. The program emphasizes development of leadership skills, as well as a sense of responsibility, discipline, accountability, and Christian sportsmanship. Athletic programs at NHCS are governed by rules and regulations established by the Southern Piedmont Athletic Conference (SPAA) and the North Carolina Independent School Athletic Association (NCISAA).

## **Athletic Code of Conduct**

### **Attendance**

All athletes are expected to attend every practice and game. If, for any reason someone is unable to attend practice/game, he/she must notify the coach with at least 24 hour notice if possible. Athletes who skip a practice/game will be considered unexcused and could be suspended for their next game per the discretion of their coach. If an absence is excused, a player may dress out for a game, but the coach may choose not to start a player who missed a practice preceding a game. If you are injured, you are expected to attend practice unless you have been excused by your coach. Athletes are expected to communicate thoroughly and frequently with their coaches about attendance issues.

### **Behavior**

Athletes are expected to have a positive attitude both on and off their field of play at all times. Disrespect to coaches, teachers, fans, teammates, parents, officials, and other students will not be tolerated. Poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated. This may include not only words and attitude, but also gestures, verbal language, and body language. Disruptiveness in the classrooms or during practices or games will not be tolerated. Students are expected to well represent NHCS, their families, and Jesus Christ.

### **Consequences**

Depending upon the severity of an infraction, students who break the Athletic Code of Conduct may be subject to a range of penalties. At the discretion of the coach, consequences may include suspension from games or dismissal from the team. Additional consequences may be imposed by the school's administration, including detention, in school suspension, out of school suspension, or dismissal from the enrollment of NHCS.

## General Information

- 1) Athletic Paperwork - All athletes must have on file with the Athletic Department the following forms before any official practice participation begins:
  - a. Athletic Code of Conduct
  - b. Athletic & Activity Liability Waiver
  - c. Athletic Participation & Physical forms
  - d. Student-Athletic & Parent Concussion Information.

Athletic Paperwork Packets are renewed every new school year and valid from July 1 – June 30 of the current athletic school season. NO EXCEPTIONS

- 2) Athletic Insurance – Insurance is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. All athletes must indicate on their participation form how they will be covering a possible injury either through Self-Pay/No Coverage or their own medical insurance which covers the student-athlete.
- 3) Attendance - It is the responsibility of athletes to attend school, practices, and games on a regular basis. With few exceptions, students must be present for a half day of school to participate in a game or practice. Appeals to this policy must be directed to the Athletic Director.
- 4) Dress Code - Athletes should, at all times, follow the NHCS dress code policy outlined in the NHCS Student Handbook. Student athletes represent NHCS, and students are encouraged to consider the principles of modesty and neatness, whether on our campus or at another location.
- 5) Equipment and Uniforms - Once issued, equipment/uniform becomes responsibility of an athlete. If any of these items become damaged or lost, the athlete is held financially responsible for replacement. All payments for lost equipment must be made by the end of their season. Students may not receive report cards or transcripts until these financial obligations have been met. Equipment or practice uniforms purchased by the athlete or their family are the property of that individual and not required to be returned at the end of the season.
- 6) Athletic Committee - The Athletic Committee serves to provide guidance and direction to the overall athletic department. The Committee consists of the athletic committee chair for the Board of Directors, the athletic administration, and other invited members of the NHCS community. In the need for rules enforcement and regulations in the athletic program, the Athletic Committee can appoint a special athletic council. This council will consider any appeal of NHCS's athlete(s) who have been dismissed from an athletic team for violation of rules. This council will consist of the Executive Director, the Athletic Director, and selected members of the coaching staff.

## **Eligibility**

All students in grades 5 – 12 are eligible for interscholastic athletic participation on some level, provided they meet the following requirements:

- 1) In order to be eligible for athletic competition, a student must be in good academic and behavioral standing and be enrolled as a full time student. All students are eligible for athletic participation at the start of each school year. Athletic Eligibility checkpoints will be held regularly and consistently throughout each athletic season.
  - a. High school student athletes must maintain at least a 2.25 GPA to be eligible for athletic practices and games.
  - b. Middle school students who receive (2) D's or (1) F will be ineligible to participate in practices and games until sufficient improvement has been shown.
  - c. Eligibility may be re-gained throughout the season.
- 2) No player shall have reached his / her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday on or before August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year. Middle school athletes cannot be 15 before August 1<sup>st</sup>.
- 3) Students must have a physical examination report on file with the Athletic Director, as described in the "General Information" section.
- 4) Students will be required to follow the athletic code of conduct as listed at the beginning of this handbook and sign the Athletic Code of Conduct form in the participation forms packet.
- 5) Any additional regulations relative to participation on a specific athletic team shall be approved by the Athletic Director or his / her designee.
- 6) Students must contribute positively to the team, avoiding displays of attitude, disrespect for property or people, infrequent athletic attendance, irresponsibility, or poor self-discipline.
- 7) The Executive Director may revoke eligibility at any time for any reason.

## **Ages of athletes**

The Southern Piedmont Athletic Association (SPAA) conference consists of a high school division and a middle school division. The middle school conference is defined as 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade. Students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, that show the ability to compete at the middle school level, may try-out for the team of their choice with no guarantee of a position on that team. The SPAA high school conference is designed for students in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. The North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association (NCISAA) allows for students in 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade to play at the high school level when necessary. Students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade or below are prohibited to play at the high school level under NCISAA rules.

Elementary athletics, when available, is designed for 3rd-5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

## **Athletic Transportation**

- 1) Students participating in athletic events must ride the school bus to and from the event unless written permission has been obtained from the athlete's parent/guardian the day before the contest to ride with them.
- 2) Athletes must be prompt and avoid delaying departures of the team transportation.
- 3) If transportation arrangements require members of male and female athletic teams to ride together, the specific seating arrangement will be left to the discretion of coaches.

## **Coach and parent behavior**

Because coaches and attendees of sporting events represent NHCS, and because they must set an example for our students, they are expected to exhibit Godly character and behavior. If a parent or coach fails to set a good example for our students, he or she may be asked to discontinue attendance at NHCS' athletic events. Coaches or parents that are ejected from a game by an official or host school administrator will be suspended the following game for a first time offense. Second time offenders will be suspended for the remainder of the season. Third-time offenders will be banned for the remainder of the year with additional restrictions that may be applied depending on the severity of the issue.

## **Respectful Communication with Coaching Staff**

Please direct concerns or comments directly to your head coach. Call to schedule an appointment to talk with the coach. Do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent, player, and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. Give the coach 24 hours before contacting them following a game. Communicate in an honest and respectful manner with the coach and refrain from negative talk with others who are not part of the solution.

If the meeting with your coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, call and set an appointment to meet with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

## **Athletic Seasons and Player Commitment**

The school year consists of three athletic seasons: fall, winter, and spring. Students are prohibited from leaving one athletic team to join another during the current season. The athletic season begins after the first contest for the team has occurred. Students are limited to one sport per season. If a student personally elects to quit during their team's athletic season, they will not be permitted to play a sport in the subsequent season – if this occurs in the spring season, the Athletic Director will determine eligibility for the following fall athletic season.

Students are prohibited from participating in athletic programs for other schools, unless the school does not offer the sport and then must receive written permission from the NHCS Athletic Department and Administration.

## **Uniforms and Dress Policies**

1. Uniforms may be worn only during athletic competitions/games unless otherwise designated by the Athletic Director.
2. Game uniforms and practice uniforms shall not be worn during gym class for any reason.
3. Athletic team uniforms must be worn as designed. Specific permission for alterations, necessary for proper fitting, must be requested and is only granted by the Athletic Director.
4. For practices only, students may wear appropriate athletic wear for their sport (shorts, athletic pants, and t-shirts or school jerseys). Shorts can be no shorter than fingertip length when the athlete is standing straight up, with arms at their sides. No biker shorts or Spandex, unless covered by shorts that meet the fingertip requirement.
5. Whenever provided, athletes shall be required to wear specific practice clothing provided for their team.
6. Athletes are required to wear shirts at all times.
7. Athletes in athletic dress are prohibited from any other areas of campus other than the locker room, and practice/competition areas, unless they are under supervision of a coach.
8. Students must meet all grooming requirements outlined in the NHCS student handbook.
9. Athletes must wear proper attire to school on game days. Boys must wear a dress shirt and pants, no jeans; girls should wear dresses, skirts, or slacks, (no jeans), with a dress blouse. Athletes may wear school approved warm ups or team t-shirt ONLY if the ENTIRE team has the proper attire. Elementary students will remain in school uniform.

## **Practice Expectations and Policies**

- 1) Attendance at all athletic practice is expected.
- 2) All of the student's personal appointments should be scheduled around and not conflict with NHCS athletic practices and games.
- 3) Students are expected to also attend practice in its entirety. Students arriving late or leaving early for unapproved reasons may see a loss in playing time or other consequences deemed appropriate by the coaching staff.
- 4) For most sports, practice will be held for 1-2 hours in duration Monday-Friday with the exception of Wednesdays. Only High School sports may hold practice on Wednesday's but must dismiss no later than 5:00pm. All teams may offer optional Saturday practices.

- 5) NHCS does not expect sick or injured students to practice, but students should not miss practice due to minor ailments, especially without permission from their Coach. Injured players who are able to attend school are expected to attend practice, though they will not be asked to play. If situations arise that cause attendance to be impossible, the player involved is expected to clear this personally with their coach. At the discretion of the coach and Athletic Director, practice may be held on days when school is not in session, provided the conference guidelines permit these practices. Practices over Christmas and Easter break will be deemed optional.
- 6) Athletes may not use hallway lockers after school is out of session. The high school hallway, beyond NHCS' water fountain, is off limits after school, unless the athlete is attending a team study hall or received permission to enter from their coach.
- 7) Students who remain on campus after school for a practice that does not start immediately after school are required to report to a study hall at an established location within ten minutes of the last school bell. Students that do not have a study hall available must report to after school care at the parent's expense.
- 8) All athletes must be completely dressed and ready to begin practice promptly at the scheduled time. If the practice facility is being used by another team, athletes shall take care to not disrupt practice session on going.
- 9) Standard of conduct for practice sessions shall be consistent with those of NHCS, with specific emphasis on the following:
  - A) All language used shall be of a nature that presents a positive Christian testimony. Foul language of any nature is unacceptable and must be reported to the coach, Athletic Director or Executive Director.
  - B) Athletes must not participate in criticism or derogatory comments about their teammates, coaches, or practice team personnel.
  - C) Hazing of any kind will not be tolerated under any circumstance. Any evidence or knowledge of hazing must be reported to the coach and Athletic Director immediately. Reports of hazing will be kept confidential.
- 10) All athletic teams will have closed practices, enabling us to speed up practices, eliminate distractions, and make practices more effective. Parents may drop off their child up to 20 minutes before practice to allow time to change and warm-up, unless previous arrangements have been made. Parents may not enter a practice facility until after the designated time for the conclusion of practice.

## **Athletic Contests and Games**

- 1) The Athletic Director in collaboration with the coaches will schedule games for NHCS athletic teams. Normally, only two contests will be scheduled per week for each sport with a third date scheduled when necessary. No more than three games will be scheduled in a given week, except in cases where games are made up due to cancellations or inclement weather. In these cases, the fourth game may be played on Saturdays. Special exemptions will also be made for tournament play. The Athletic Director will publish schedules as soon as they are available. Schedules will be posted on the athletic department website: [www.northhillseagles.com](http://www.northhillseagles.com).
- 2) Athletes shall take all books and supplies that must be taken home with them to away games. Students are not permitted to return to their lockers after returning from a contest. Students that would like to work on homework while at away games should notify the coach. In most cases, away facilities are equipped in a manner that an area can be used to complete homework.
- 3) Teams from time to time will travel to away contests in uniform. Team members shall change into uniforms just prior to leaving school. When changing is necessary, students must do so.
- 4) Every attempt will be made to determine an estimated time of return from away contests to allow parents to be available to arrange for students' transportation home. Cell phones may be used after school hours.
- 5) After most away games, teams will stop for a meal at the cost of the athlete. Proper arrangements must be made to ensure the player has money for a meal.
- 11) Any student remaining after school for an athletic contest that does not begin immediately after school must make specific arrangements to be supervised or must report to after school care at the parent's expense.

## **Parent Commitment**

Each individual athletic team will be required to staff every home game through the dedicated volunteer efforts of the team families. Scheduling notices will be sent out in advance by the team's commissioner to allow parents the ability to adjust their schedules accordingly. Parents have the option to switch dates with another family but must coordinate that on their own and communicate any changes to their team commissioner a week prior to the contest date.



## **Athletic Awards**

- 1) Letters and pins will be awarded to Varsity team members (7th-12th grades) who achieve NHCS' established criteria. Only high school students can earn letters.
- 2) Individuals recognized as managers of athletic teams who are recommended by their coach of that sport shall be eligible for a letter and/or pin for that sport.
- 3) The basic criteria for eligibility for a letter/pin award shall be participation in any part of 80% of all contests and being on this team at season's end. Individuals who do not meet this criterion may be recommended for an award (by their coach), provided they participate in a minimum of 50% of the sport's contests.
- 4) Each coach will be allowed to present a team Most Valuable Player award. Coaches may also present sport specific awards after conferring with the Athletic Director for eligibility.

One of the top varsity individual athletic awards that may be given is the EAGLE award, which is awarded only if a worthwhile recipient is recommended by their head coach. In addition, to be eligible a student-athlete must have attended 2+ years at NHCS, be a multi-sport participant, and maintained high NHCS academic & disciplinary standards. The EAGLE award recognizes the Senior athlete best demonstrating the following characteristics, which are sought after by coaches and are readily recognized by teammates:

Enthusiasm for the game

Attitude that is consistently positive

Guts - tough when going gets tough

Leadership by example on and off the field

Encourager to all student-athletes

## **Contest attendance costs**

Gate fees are required for all home athletic contests and established by the SPAA conference for the middle school and high school levels. Fees to home games will not be collected from NHCS students, coaches, NHCS faculty and staff members, clock keepers, scorebook keepers, concession or gate workers, referees and umpires. Children 5 & under are free. The fees are as follows:

- 1) Tickets for high school contests: Adults \$5.00; non-NHCS minors cost \$3.00.
- 2) Tickets for middle school contests: Adults \$3.00; non-NHCS minors cost \$1.00. Ticket prices for any Elementary athletic contest will be based on the Middle School price levels.
- 3) For all levels of play, ticket ages are as follows: Children the age of 5 years and younger are free. Children ages 6-17 will follow the student rate. NHCS alumni currently enrolled at a college or university will be given the student rate. All other individuals will be charged the full adult price.

## **Substance Abuse**

NHCS is concerned about the damaging effects of alcohol and other drugs on the physical, mental, social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual well-being of our student-athletes. The use, misuse, and abuse of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) are recognized by NHCS to be a major deterrent to performance, health, and wellness in general.

The unauthorized use of any National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) banned substance, or the illegal use, misuse, or abuse of alcohol and other drugs, is expressly prohibited by NHCS. Violation of the program's AOD Policies may lead to suspension or dismissal from the program.

## **Bullying/Hazing**

NHCS believes that any group organization (composed of students, faculty, staff, and/or visitors) has the responsibility to create an environment in which all activities are pursued in a sound and productive manner.

NHCS defines bullying/hazing as, "any activity or action which subtly, flagrantly, recklessly, or deliberately demeans, embarrasses, threatens, invites ridicule, or draws inappropriate or negative attention to a member, affiliate, and/or group, and/or an attitude which implies one member/affiliate is superior to another or that membership in the group must be earned through personal services or meaningless activities." Furthermore, the definition also includes any actions that result in the impairment of academic performance.

NHCS unconditionally opposes any form of bullying/hazing. Any violation of this should be reported immediately to the Head Coach and/or the Director of Athletics. Any team member or affiliate who is in violation of this policy may be subject to suspension or dismissal from the program.