

ATHLETICS AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Athletic Program Mission Statement

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 4:10-11)

ECA athletics are considered to be an extension of the classroom and are used to educate the student-athlete and enhance his or her God-given talents. Student-athletes are considered ambassadors for Jesus Christ and representatives of ECA and will be held accountable for that role (2 Corinthians 5:20). The goal is to train these athletes to perform to the best of their God-given ability while displaying a Christ-like character (Colossians 3:23). Athletes, coaches, and administrators will strive for excellence on and off the playing field while maintaining a spirit of self-control, discipline, respect and perseverance (1 Corinthians 9:24). Competing on an interscholastic team is a privilege and not an automatic right.

Each student-athlete will be held accountable for actions on and off the court. The following is a list of Biblical principles that must be practiced by ECA student-athletes. Through athletic participation at ECA, it is the goal that these qualities will become increasingly evident in each student’s life:

- Desire to serve and give all glory to the Lord (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- Positive attitude (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
- Respect for authority: coaches and officials (Romans 13:1-5, Hebrews 13:7, 1 Peter 5:5)
- Self-control (Galatians 5:22, Titus 2:1-8, James 3:1-12)
- Discipline (2 Timothy 1:7, Hebrews 6:12, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
- Teachability (Proverbs 10:13-14)
- Desire for excellence (Colossians 3:23, 1 Corinthians. 9:24-27)
- Teamwork (Romans 12:3-5)

This list is not all-inclusive, but failure to adhere to these principles or the standards put forth by the coach may lead to suspension from the team.

All athletic policies are reviewed and approved by the Athletic Director.

Athletic Forms

All forms required for interscholastic team participation are available in the school office. A separate form must be filled out for each student-athlete, completed and returned before the first practice.

Parental Permission Slip

Parents of student-athletes must complete and return a permission form before the first practice. One permission form may be signed for multiple sports for one student-athlete. This form must be on file in the office before the student may participate in try-outs, practice, or contests.

Emergency Information Form

It is extremely important to have an updated emergency form on file at all times. In the case of injuries or emergencies, the emergency form may be the only guide to getting a student athlete the proper medical care. A new form does not need to be filled out for each sport; however, if information changes, the form should be updated as soon as possible.

Physical Examination Form

CHSAA and CSAL require a current physical examination form to be on file with the school for any student participating in interscholastic activities. No student will be allowed to participate in a sport until the physical examination form has been turned in to the office. A physician must sign the form.

Note: All forms must be turned in before the student may begin practice.

Expectations of Athletes

School Attendance

- Students absent from school for the entire day are ineligible to practice or participate in athletic events on that day.
- Students must be in attendance for a minimum of one half of the school day to participate in any athletic activity or event, including practice.
- Exceptions will be made **only** for medical appointments or a similar need and then only when prior approval has been obtained from the administration.
- It is the student's responsibility to contact his/her teachers in advance to 1) obtain all assignments and 2) to make arrangements for any quizzes or tests missed because of the absence. All assignments are to be completed and turned in by the next class time after the absence.

Standards for Participation

Athletic participation is a privilege and a responsibility. Athletes are constantly in the spotlight and are held to the same standards expected of every ECA student. Below is a list of standards that each athlete is required to follow in the classroom or on the field. Failure to follow these standards may result in dismissal from the team.

- Respect for opponents and other athletes
- Mentoring and nurturing younger players (hazing and bullying of any sort will not be tolerated)
- Respect for facilities (Luke 12:48)
- Attitude (Philippians 2:3-5, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
- Strong work ethic (Colossians 3:23, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
- Self-discipline and self-control (Galatians 5:22, 2 Timothy 1:7, James 3:1-12)
- Attentive and willing to be coached (Proverbs 10:13-14, Romans 13:1-5)
- Athletic skills
- Academics: Please see Co-Curricular Activities, Academic Policies on Eligibility, page 48.

God has blessed everyone with individual talents, and the ECA athletic department encourages the use and development of those talents. ECA coaches work hard to place athletes on a team that will best suit their talents and help them develop and improve. At the Elementary and Junior High levels, coaches will not dismiss athletes based on athletic skill. At the High School level, there may be a tryout for team participation. Athletes will not be dismissed solely because of athletic ability, but it may be a factor with the other standards listed above.

Note: Coaches and administrators reserve the right to suspend or dismiss an athlete at any time during

the season for failure to follow the standards listed above.

Expectations of Coaches

Bench Coaching

The expectations placed on ECA student-athletes are similar to those expectations placed on ECA coaches. ECA coaches are held to high levels of accountability. ECA coaches are required to maintain a professional and Christ-like attitude at all times. They are to be exemplary role models to the athletes, parents, fans, and other schools. These standards must not be compromised even in the heat of a game.

Team Devotions

Coaches are responsible for incorporating the Word of God into their sport. Coaches will hold regular team devotions to communicate that everything done is to be honoring to the Savior because He gives the unique talents and abilities. ECA coaches are committed to this top priority.

Team Management

Coaches are expected to manage their teams in a manner that is organized, enthusiastic, caring and, above all else, honoring to God. The coach is responsible for all aspects of the team (equipment, uniforms, practice plans, supervision of athletes, devotions, etc.). Coaches strive to make ECA athletics the best it can possibly be.

Expectations of Parents and Fans

Sportsmanship

CHSAA and CSAL are concerned with the decline of sportsmanship among their athletes, coaches, and spectators. At ECA, sportsmanship is taken very seriously, but probably not for the same reasons as the public schools. Christians are called to glorify the Lord in everything they do (1 Corinthians 10:31) and that includes attitudes and behaviors during an athletic contest.

Behavior as a Spectator

ECA students are expected to behave in a godly manner before, during, and after an athletic contest, and the same is expected of the parents and spectators. To encourage everyone at ECA athletic contests, the following list offers several suggestions:

- Spectators are at a contest to support and encourage the team and to enjoy the skill and competition.
- School athletics are learning experiences for students. Mistakes will be made. Praise the student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as athletes and students.
- Learn the rules of the game to understand and appreciate why certain situations occur.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, and spectators. Treat them as guests.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to promote the student-athlete and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
- Recognize and show appreciation for outstanding play by either team.
- Use only those cheers that promote and uplift the teams involved.
- Be a positive role model through actions and by censuring those nearby whose behavior is inappropriate.

Hazing Policy

Hazing is defined as any act, physical, mental, emotional, or psychological, which subjects another person, voluntarily or involuntarily, to anything that may abuse, mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass, or intimidate him or her or which may in any fashion compromise his or her inherent dignity as a person. In keeping with its commitment to provide for a community rooted in Christian ideals, ECA unconditionally opposes any situation that will, as a result, produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule. Freedom from the humiliation and danger of hazing is guaranteed to every member of the ECA community.