



Bethesda Christian School

Athletic Handbook

2017-18

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” Colossians 3:23

Twitter: @BCS_Patriots
Facebook: www.facebook.com/PatriotAthletics
School Website: www.bethesdaschools.org
Athletics Schedules: www.bcs patriots.org

I. GOVERNANCES

- A. The responsibility for overseeing the athletic programs is assigned to the athletic director. Each participant is directly responsible to his/her own coach who is responsible to the athletic director, principal and administrator.
- B. Bethesda Christian Schools are a member of the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) in high school sports. Bethesda Christian Schools are also a member of the Indianapolis Independent School League (IISL) in elementary and junior high sports.

II. PHILOSOPHY & PURPOSE

- Compete in a manner that honors God and reflects positively on the school, team and individual - win or lose
- Help student-athletes to grow physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually
- Develop strong relationships through teamwork and shared experience
- Use athletics to instill life lessons that resonate beyond the court, field or course
- Build and shape discipline and character through adversity encountered as individuals and as a team
- Have fun through participation in sports

III. PROGRAMS OFFERED

A. Elementary (Grades 5 & 6)

Through our elementary programs, we seek to lay a foundation for success by teaching the fundamental skills and techniques student-athletes will need to master as they grow and develop in their chosen sports. For many students at this level, this is their initial step into competitive athletics, so we also emphasize the key concepts of commitment, teamwork and sportsmanship. We believe that every player should be given an equal opportunity to develop their talents and compete for playing time in practice. Because we compete against other schools, our goal is to try to win every game; however, we recognize the importance and confidence-building nature of game experience. This does not mean equal playing time, but coaches are encouraged to ensure that each player has an opportunity to play in every game, whenever possible.

B. Junior High (Grades 7 & 8) and Middle School (Grades 6 – 8)

Through our junior high and middle school sports programs, our goal is to continue to develop and enhance the solid, fundamental skills that are vital to becoming a knowledgeable, capable and successful student-athlete. We strive to create a team-oriented environment where focus, commitment, maximum effort, a Christ-like attitude and resilience are expected and embraced.

C. Junior Varsity / Varsity (Grades 9 – 12)

At the varsity and junior varsity levels, we intend to put our best teams on the court or field, at all times, with the goal and expectation of winning games and competing for championships. Commitment, hard work, discipline, preparation, teamwork and sportsmanship are primary cornerstones of the Christ-centered framework upon which we build our pursuit of excellence. Because our high school student-athletes are among the most visible representatives of our school, we also expect them to win without the scoreboard, both in the classroom and as godly role models in the halls and in the community.

Elementary teams include 5th and 6th grade students while **Junior High** teams include 7th & 8th grade students. **Middle School** teams include students in grades 6-8. **Junior Varsity** and **Varsity** teams are comprised of high school students in grades 9-12.

IV. ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

A. Participation Requirements

Participation in the athletic program at Bethesda Christian Schools is a privilege that is earned, not a right. Therefore, student athletes are held to a higher standard of behavior than the student who does not participate in such activities. Every student-athlete is expected to uphold the school's mission statement and help foster the school's goals and purposes.

The standards that athletes are held to also extend to parents. Parents, as well as coaches and athletes, represent the school to the community. The parent is expected to display Christian sportsmanship that reflects positively on the BCS community. It is important that respect for opponents and officials be shown at all times. The parent is expected to encourage loyalty and dedication to the team and to the coach as well. Attitudes of parents have great impact on the attitudes of athletes. Coaching and parenting can be difficult, but in spite of the challenges we all want the athletic experience to be positive and educational for each student to the greatest extent possible. It is our desire to make this a team effort that benefits the student, family and community. We encourage all parents to volunteer in some way and actively pray for athletes, coaches and the team.

Sports Physicals

All student-athletes (elementary through high school) must have a current, completed IHSAA Athletic Physical Form on file in the BCS Athletic Office prior to being allowed to participate in practice. The physical form can be picked up from the main school office or the BCS Athletic Office. You can also download the form online at www.ihsaa.org. Student-athletes can obtain their physical for the coming year any time after April 1st of the current year, and it will be valid through the following school year.

Transfers

If a student is transferring to BCS and is entering the 10th-12th grade, or if a student is enrolling at BCS as a 9th grader after attending another school for part of their freshman year, they must complete an IHSAA Athletic Transfer Report, in addition to submitting a current IHSAA physical form. Under the circumstances, the student must be cleared by the IHSAA before he/she can participate in athletics at BCS. This form should be completed at the time the student enrolls or as early as possible after enrollment.

B. Communication

Parents and Athletes should expect communication on the following from their coach:

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations, including rules and policies
- Schedule of team events

Coaches should expect communication on the following from parents and athletes:

- Any concerns that arise during the season.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Specific issues regarding the philosophy and expectations of the coach.

If concerns arise during the season, the guidelines listed below should be followed:

- The athlete should first talk to the coach.
- If not resolved, the parent should contact the coach to discuss the situation. The coach may have additional information from practice and from other contact with the student and the parent may have information about their child unknown by the coach. This discussion should be beneficial to both parents and the coach, keeping the welfare of both the student and the

team in mind. **Please refrain from approaching a coach directly before, during or after a game or practice. Contact the coach and set up a time to talk or meet personally.**

- If the conflict is not resolved, you may contact the athletic director to discuss your concerns.

Items for parents not to discuss with the coach:

- Your child's playing time
- Coaching strategy or play calling.
- Other student-athletes.

Items appropriate to discuss with the coach:

- The treatment of your child.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child, i.e., health, behavioral or academic issues

C. Use of Social Media

- Everything that is posted on a social media website is public information – any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is posted – even if you limit access to your site. Items posted online are a part of your testimony permanently reflecting on you, your family, your school and the Lord.
- What you post may affect your future. Many employers and college admissions officers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including photos, videos, comments, etc.)
- Similar to comments that may be made verbally, in person, Bethesda Christian Schools will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as:
 - Derogatory language or remarks that may harm teammates or coaches; other BCS student athletes, teachers or coaches; and student-athletes, coaches or representatives of other schools, including comments that may be disrespectful to our opponents.
 - Incriminating photos or statements depicting violence; hazing; sexual harassment; full or partial nudity; inappropriate gestures; vandalism; stalking; underage drinking; selling, possessing or using controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behaviors.
 - Creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
 - Indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation—regardless if the violation was unintentional or intentional.
- Disciplinary action may result from any posting deemed inappropriate by the A.D. and school administration, up to and including suspension or removal from the team.

D. Attendance

Attendance at Athletic Events/Practices

The athlete is expected to attend every practice and contest, and to give their full effort, both in practice and competition. The athlete, the athlete's family and the coach must resolve any exceptions to attendance at practices and contests **prior to the absence**. A suspended student is always ineligible for the duration of the suspension. Each player is expected to adhere to all rules and expectations as outlined by their coach.

Attendance at School

Good school attendance is required to remain eligible in sports. Students must be within the absence limits of ten per semester to remain eligible. (*See Student Handbook for specific requirements.*) Student athletes must be in attendance at school by **11:00 AM** to be eligible to

play/practice in any athletic events for that evening, unless properly excused by the administration. This would include doctor appointments, college visits or funerals. Students who leave early due to illness are not permitted to return and participate in practice or contest.

E. Commitment of the Student-Athlete

Being a complete student-athlete requires a higher level of commitment from every participant. The focus has been shifted from pure athletic ability to include academic performance and proper classroom conduct. The bar has been raised in academics and conduct so that the student-athlete must be prepared to be more disciplined on the student side of their education endeavors in order to compete athletically.

Conduct - In the Classroom

A higher standard of conduct has been implemented which means that the student-athlete must appropriately conduct themselves in the classroom being careful to show respect, courtesy and Christ-likeness towards staff, faculty and fellow students and having a desire to follow the rules, policies and procedures as set forth by the Student-Handbook.

Conduct - On the Court or Field

Athletes must show the proper respect for the authority of BCS coaches. Bethesda student-athletes are expected to arrive at practices and contests with focused minds and coachable spirits.

A strong, capable opponent will bring out the best in us and show us our areas of weakness. Officials and opponents must be treated with the same respect and dignity that we would want to receive.

Expect that some calls will not go our way--it is these games that become defining moments for our character development. We must stay cool and focus on the bigger picture, not letting circumstances distract us from our ultimate goal.

Participants in the athletic program must die to self, giving up individual accomplishments to gain team victories.

If any player is removed from a contest for unsportsmanlike behavior, he/she will not be allowed to play in the next contest nor allowed to dress and sit with the team during the contest. A second occurrence will result in removal from the team, pending a hearing with the Administration.

Conduct – In the Locker Room

Locker and team rooms are to be left clean after each practice session or game. There will be no horseplay in the locker or team rooms at any time. All personal items are the responsibility of the individual athlete. Valuables should be kept locked in lockers at all times. BCS will not be held responsible for valuables left in the locker or team rooms at any time.

F. Eligibility Policies

Because participation in extra-curricular activities is viewed as a privilege, participants are required to meet the standard for eligibility in academic and behavioral areas (see below). All students may participate during pre-season tryouts. Students who are behaviorally ineligible may not practice nor participate in competitions or performances during the ineligibility period. Academically ineligible students may participate in practices with the permission of the coach. They may not participate in interschool athletic events until their eligibility is restored.

Academic Eligibility

Jr High and High School:

Grades will be checked at the midpoint and the end of each quarter marking period.

If a student falls below the 2.00 mark at the mid-point of the grading period, the student will be placed on "watch" for two weeks. During the two-week "watch" period, a student may or may not play/practice/participate at the discretion of the coach or sponsor. Staff members, coaches, club sponsors, parents will work together to develop a plan to assist the student in raising their GPA. If, after the two week "watch" period, the student is able to achieve the 2.00 mark, he/she will remain eligible for all activities. If the student is unable to meet the 2.00 standard, the academic improvement team will continue to work to assist the student, who will become ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities until the end of the grading period at which time grades are checked again.

If a student's grade average is below a 2.00 at the end of the quarter (grading period) the student will be placed on "watch for two weeks with the same procedure followed with the "watch" at the mid-point of the grading period. The only exception to this would be the student who has been ineligible the last portion of the preceding grading period. That student would have two weeks of the new grading period to bring his work up to a 2.00 so that he/she could become eligible.

Please note that the end of fourth quarter grades will determine fall eligibility. Summer school work will be taken into consideration.

Elementary:

Students must maintain a "C" average in each subject area on a weekly basis to be eligible for extra-curricular activities. The student can return to participation at the next determined break if the grade is improved. Any teacher may contact a parent if they believe outside activities are negatively impacting classroom performance. The Athletic Director and Principal may make individual exceptions if special circumstances warrant.

At Bethesda, we provide an Education-Based Athletic Program. This means that we put top priority on academic accomplishments as academics is the purpose behind our athletics, and our academics come before everything else, including athletics.

Behavioral Eligibility

Like academic eligibility, behavior eligibility is based on a higher standard of behavior for extra-curricular participants and includes behavior both on and off-campus. A BCS student-athlete is considered a Patriot, 365 days-a-year, 7 days-a-week and 24 hours-a-day, so inappropriate actions off campus could also impact a student's athletic eligibility. **Please see the Student Handbook under *Student Conduct* for guidelines.**

Special Provisions

Penalties (suspensions administered by Bethesda Christian School or the IHSA) that are unable to be completed during the current season or school year will carry over to the next season or school year.

G. Injury Situations

Injured athletes will be tended to by the coach if it is a normal first aid procedure. If the injury appears more serious, the parents will be contacted. Parents are primarily responsible for the medical treatment of their child. Coaches must fill out an injury report and turn it in to the athletic director.

H. Letter Awards

A letter and/or chevron is awarded participants in a varsity sport. Receiving a letter is considered

an honor and privilege. If a letter winner betrays his or her responsibility by not living up to the policies outlined in this handbook, he or she may be asked to forfeit his or her right to receive the letter. A varsity letter winner receives an actual letter for their first earned award and a chevron for all subsequent letter awards. All sub-varsity participants will receive a certificate of participation.

Awards Programs

The athletic awards program is a team event and all student-athletes and coaches for that season are expected to be in attendance. ***Girls should wear a nice skirt and blouse or a dress which would meet school regulations. Boys must wear a pair of slacks, a nice dress shirt and a tie (casual or dress shoes only).***

I. Quitting a Sport

A primary goal of any athlete should be to finish what they have started; however, should a student decide to drop out of a sport during the season, the athlete should meet with the coach personally to share and discuss their reasons for leaving the team. Every opportunity should be explored to resolve conflicts or address concerns prior the student-athlete's departure from the team. All uniforms and school equipment must be turned in and the student's sports fee will be forfeited. Quitting a sport after the start of official practices for that sport may also impact a student's opportunity to play another sport during the school year.

J. Concessions / Gate Duties

Parents can help make the athletic experience a positive one by being supportive of the team and by assisting with concessions and/or gate duties for sporting events. Sign-ups will take place prior to the start of the season. Parents are responsible for working assigned times or finding their own replacements. **Failure to show up for your assigned time slot will result in a \$35 fee.** You are responsible for your game even if the weather causes a change in the schedule. .

K. Practices

All practices will be concluded by 5:30 PM on Wednesdays, and no practices or athletic events in-season or off-season will be held on Sundays. The possibility does exist for IHSAA tournaments to be played on a Wednesday night.

Ten practices are required before a student can participate in an athletic contest at the high school level. (No pre-season practice requirements for elementary or junior high students.) High school athletes may not miss more than four consecutive practices without making up practices before playing in the next athletic contest. If a student misses five-ten practices (no matter the reason illness, injury, suspension, etc.) they must make up four practices before they can participate in an athletic contest. If a student misses more than ten consecutive practices they must make up six practices before competing in an athletic contest.

All students who are absent for five consecutive days or who are physically unable to practice for five consecutive days due to illness or injury must present to the principal a statement from a physician that they are again physically fit to participate in interschool athletics.

L. Scheduling Conflict Policy

In scheduling athletic events and other school activities, every attempt will be made to avoid conflicts. Scheduling conflicts, however, will occur from time to time. In the event of such a conflict, the coaches and/or sponsors affected will meet to determine what is best for both the school and the individual student. The student will be informed of the decision in advance. If the coaches and/or sponsors are unable to reach an agreement, the principal and the athletic director will make the decision.

M. Sports Fees

Each student athlete must have paid his/her sports fee before he/she is allowed to participate in an athletic event. Sports fees will be handled through FACTS. If you are not on FACTS a check may be written to BCS in the amount of your child's sports fee (please refer to the last page for that amount). Student athletes will remain ineligible to participate in athletic events (not including practices) until the fee has been paid.

N. Sportsmanship

Fans and student athletes of Bethesda Christian School are expected to abide by rules and standards set forth by BCS at home athletic events and host schools at away athletic events.

As a fan and/or student athlete you will be expected to show respect to all athletes, coaches and faculty members. Show respect to those in charge of game operation including the following: referees, clock/scoreboard keeper, statisticians, emcee, security, etc.

Disorderly conduct from fans and/or student athletes that is inappropriate in word or deed or that interrupts or negatively impacts the operation of an athletic contest is unacceptable and may result in ejection from school grounds for the rest of the day. Future disciplinary actions such as suspension from participation in athletic events for student athletes or suspension of the right to attend athletic events for fans may also be taken. (See also **Conduct - On the Court or Field**).

O. Stewardship

Bethesda Christian School has been blessed with outstanding facilities. Many representatives of other schools who visit BCS for athletic contests share with us how fortunate we are to have the facilities and property that we have. BCS does not employ a large maintenance or facilities staff, and the outside cleaning and lawn services retained by the school do not typically clean the gyms or maintain ball fields, so the responsibility of keeping our facilities well-maintained must be a shared one. It is **our** (BCS staff, coaches, students & parents) responsibility to ensure that the facilities are left in good shape after a practice or athletic contest. As a Christian school, where stewardship is a key tenet of our faith in and service to the Lord, it needs to be the cultural norm at Bethesda that everyone plays a role and takes part in picking up trash, chairs and other equipment after a contest or practice.

P. Transportation

All high school level teams are expected to ride the bus to athletic events, unless otherwise notified and approved by the coach and athletic director. The bus will stay at the game site and will provide transportation back to the school for student-athletes.

Elementary and Middle School student-athletes are required to ride the bus to the game. Many times, depending on the sport, elementary and middle school teams will be dropped off at the game site, but will need to ride home with their parents or another adult, who has been designated by their parents. Elementary and Middle School parents will be asked to complete the **BCS Transportation Release Form** for each sports season.

Bus Behavior

Proper behavior on the bus is a necessity for student safety. Bus guidelines are as follows:

- Stay in your seat at all times and do not distract other drivers with inappropriate actions or gestures
- Keep hands, arms, and head inside the windows...and to yourself!
- Talk quietly, so other students are not disturbed and so the driver is not distracted
- Obey the driver and coaches/sponsors on the bus
- Be on time! The bus will not wait on you if you are late and BCS will not provide alternate transportation should you miss the bus.
- Do not throw anything out the windows

Q. Uniforms

- Machine wash cold with mild detergent (no bleach)
- Hang dry or tumble dry low
- Do not dry clean
- Athletes, and their parents, are responsible for avoiding color fading and properly maintaining the uniform issued to them

Dates of Use for Team Uniform

- Athletes will be issued a uniform by their particular coach before the first contest of their season
- The complete uniform must be turned in **within one week** after the final contest of the season or as directed by the head coach
- The uniform will be turned in to the athlete's head coach or athletic director.
- Any missing or damaged uniform pieces will be directly billed to the athlete for replacement
- Athletes are responsible for the uniform that was issued to them. It is the athlete's responsibility to communicate any changes or requests for changes in uniform with their coach. Failure to do so may result in having to pay for lost/stolen or damaged uniforms.

Use of Team Uniforms

- The only acceptable times for a team uniform to be worn are during school athletic contests or team picture events, **unless directed by coach.**
- **Athletes will not wear the team uniform for physical education classes, sports practices or school.**
- Uniform requests for senior pictures should be made to the athletic office.

R. Use of Athletic Facilities

- In-season sports have priority for the use of athletic facilities
- All events and facility usage must be submitted for approval from the A.D.
- Coaches do not have authorization to schedule, rent, loan or otherwise provide BCS facilities to others
- Students are not permitted to use any facility without direct supervision from a school employee and permission from the head coach
- Outdoor facilities are restricted from use after dark. Lighting systems are not to be turned on without prior approval.
- Facilities, including the weight room, are not to be used by students or someone not affiliated with BCS without direct supervision by authorized personnel.
- Any damage to facilities or equipment should be reported to the head coach and A.D. as soon as possible.
- All equipment and facilities will be handled with respect.
- No street shoes or black-soled shoes should be on the gym floor.
- All equipment should be returned to the proper storage area after use.
- Uniforms are to receive proper care. Any damage or loss of uniform is the responsibility of the athlete to whom it was issued.

S. Weather

- **Heat** – BCS uses the IHSA Heat Index Chart – to determine whether to hold outdoor practices during the hotter months of the year. The index uses a combination of actual temperature and humidity to assign heat-related threat categories. Those categories are as follows:
 - **Caution (Heat Index 80-90)** – Outdoor practice is allowed. Coaches are instructed to give frequent water and rest breaks. Practice times also can be adjusted to avoid hotter temperatures.
 - **Extreme Caution (H.I. 91-105)** – Outdoor practice is allowed. Coaches are instructed to scale down practice plans. Practice is limited to 1 hour outside with breaks every 10-15 minutes. Students should be encouraged to find shade and drink liquids during

breaks. Students should weigh in prior to and after practice. If more than 3 lbs. are lost during practice, the student is losing too much fluid and may face physical repercussions.

- **Danger (H.I. 106-129)** – No outdoor practices allowed. Practice can be moved inside, if appropriate facilities are available, or the practice will be canceled.
- **Extreme Danger (H.I. 130 or higher)** – No outdoor practices allowed. Practice can be moved inside, if appropriate facilities are available, or the practice will be canceled.
- **Lightning** – Outdoor activities will be suspended with athletes sent into the school until the lightning subsides. Practice or a contest may resume after the officials or coach issues an all clear. Games are delayed 30 minutes from each lightning strike.
- **Tornado Watch** – If before a practice or contest, events will be canceled unless there is an all clear two hours before the scheduled starting time. If during a practice or contest, events will be suspended and athletes will be released to leave with parents.
- **Tornado Warning** – Suspend the contest or practice at the sound of the warning siren. Take cover in the nearest building on the east and north sides if at an outdoor facility, or in the designated areas in the school if indoors. Practice or a contest may resume following the discontinuation of the warning.
- **Snow Storm** – Practice or contest may be held at the discretion of the principal or athletic director. Absences from practice or contest under these conditions will be excused. In the event of a snow day, sub-varsity teams **will not** have practice. Varsity teams may practice with the approval of the athletic director or principal.

Evening high school events **are not** automatically cancelled when school is cancelled. Event cancellations are updated on the website as soon as possible. Every effort will be made to make up a cancelled or postponed event.

T. Weight Room Policy

BCS's weight room has been set up to allow students and faculty the opportunity to improve their lifestyle through strength and fitness training. To ensure safety for all participants, the following rules will be enforced:

- Athletic teams will always have first priority.
- Coaches who allow players to use the weight room other than the specific hours must be present to supervise those student-athletes.

The BCS Athletic Handbook's purpose is to provide guidelines and information for all parties involved. The Athletic Handbook cannot possibly address every specific circumstance. Every situation is unique in the people involved, surrounding circumstances and the resulting consequences. Should an unaddressed issue arrive, the Athletic Director and administration has the authority to make changes and/or corrections as needed.

Student Athlete/Parent Consent and Acknowledgement Form

I, _____, being a member of the Bethesda Christian Schools Athletic Program have read in detail and agree to abide by the policies, guidelines and expectations set forth in the Bethesda Christian Schools Athletic Handbook. I understand that it is a privilege to participate in athletics at Bethesda Christian Schools and commit to doing my best to represent my God, teammates, family, school and self in a manner consistent with the philosophy set forth in this handbook.

Student Athlete's Signature

Date

I/We, _____, being the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the above Bethesda Christian Schools student athlete agree to abide by the policies, guidelines and expectations set forth in the Bethesda Christian Schools Athletic Handbook. I/We understand that it is a privilege to be involved with our student athlete and their teams and contests and commit to doing my/our best to represent my/our God, family, school and self in a manner consistent with the philosophy set forth in this handbook.

Please check the appropriate space for sports fees payment. **This will apply to all sport seasons.**

I authorize payment from my next FACTS Payment

I will pay by check/cash prior to first game.

Parents' Signature

Date

****This form must be signed and returned to the Athletic Director's office before a student athlete can participate in his/her first contest.**

Sports Fees 2016-17

JV/Varsity Sports - \$110*

JH & Elementary Sports - \$75

JV/Varsity Cheerleading - \$75

JH Cheerleading - \$50

Elementary Cheerleading - \$25

*Sports such as golf will be a higher amount.

For Office Use Only:

Sport _____ Fee _____ Facts _____ Check No. _____

Sport _____ Fee _____ Facts _____ Check No. _____

Sport _____ Fee _____ Facts _____ Check No. _____

Sport _____ Fee _____ Facts _____ Check No. _____