

# **Athletic Department Policies and Procedures**

## **Athletic Department Mission Statement**

The Athletic Department's mission is to coordinate and provide extra-curricular sports activities including competitive and noncompetitive experiences as an extension of the ministry of Champion Christian School. As such, it is the mission of the department to develop sports programs that are distinctly Christian in nature and are consistent with the goals and philosophies of Champion Christian School. Its focus is on developing programs that encourage the development of athletics as it relates to lifelong sports skills, the promotion of teamwork, Godly perspective on competition, winning and losing, authority, and working together. It is the goal of the Athletic Department to provide programs for all ages of students involved with Champion Christian School and to offer a variety of activities that allows for varied student interest.

## **Christian Integration**

Coaches will on a regular basis integrate Christian principals in the context of practice, games and pre/post competition debriefings. This would include discussions of appropriate responses to authority, understanding how to deal with competitions in a supportive, as apposed to antagonistic, manner, and respecting host and visiting teams and facilities in a way that would honor Christ.

## **Body Conditioning**

We encourage students to develop healthy perspectives about body conditioning as is appropriate. Coaches will encourage students to view their bodies as being a temple unto the Lord (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

**Integrity** In the context of tough competition, it is difficult at times to maintain integrity. The secular view point or world view would allow us to believe that it is the official's job or a scorekeeper's job to make decisions and not our job. For example, we see a scorekeeper put two runs for our team, mistakenly instead of one, it is easy to overlook that and say it is not our job. However, in the context of integrity, it is our job to step up and do what is right. We would expect coaches to model and implement this with students in terms of encouraging students to take responsibility to do what is right, regardless of the consequences to the game. However, in this context it is important to maintain the balance that it is not the job of athletes to make ultimate official decisions at athletic events.

**Competitiveness** It is fun to compete! Competition can be a healthy challenge of ourselves against others. This is probably the area that is most difficult for a Christian school. We have a desire to see our student athletes excel and push themselves to excellence and to be able to win when the opportunity occurs. Certainly competitiveness is not a non-biblical response, but there are responses that are spurred by intense competition that it is the responsibility of coaches and authority to manage. The first of these is the degradation of the other team. It is easy for us to build ourselves up by putting the other team down. From our understanding of a Christian world view, any demeaning of the other team in any way is an inappropriate response to competition. We should always be encouraging of the other team, regardless of whether we win or lose. There should be a sense of valuing who they are and their giftedness, regardless of how that

compares to our giftedness

### **Scheduling of Practices and Events**

Our coaches will work with the athletic director and administration of the Center, submitting proposed practices and game schedules to ensure that those activities are not conflicting with any other Champion Christian School event. Games and practices should be scheduled as much in advance as possible, preferably through the end of the season, to facilitate planning and activities in the school. It is the final decision of the athletic director in consultation with Champion Christian School administration members to approve all sports schedules including practices, games, league participation and tournament participation.

### **Gym and Field Usage**

Coaches will work together on scheduling with the athletic director to ensure that all practice times in gyms and athletic fields are coordinated in a timely fashion. Any discrepancy in coordinating will be settled by the athletic director. Coaches are responsible to record on the appropriate forms and follow the appropriate procedures for team use of fields. These will be used to track payment and costs for facilities.

### **Academic standards**

Students' permission to participate in athletics is a privilege, not a right at Champion Christian. Students must maintain appropriate grade point averages in order to participate in sports. Students on academic or behavioral probation will not be permitted to participate in practices or events, and must maintain appropriate grades and course work in order to participate in those activities after being removed from such disciplinary measures. Coaches will coordinate with building principals and head teachers to manage this process. In the process, coaches must be supportive of school administrative decisions, both in actions taken, and in maintaining appropriate attitude towards school officials. This would be true even though it may significantly affect a teams ability to compete or practice.

### **Uniforms**

Coaches will work with managers to inventory, care for and ensure that students appropriately care for, and return by the end of the season all equipment assigned to them This will begin with making sure that appropriate dispensing procedures are followed by the managers in the initial parts of the season. Students and families are responsible for paying for uniforms that are not returned or that are inappropriately handled or maintained. In the context of uniforms, practice equipment, or in purchasing, coaches will, when at all possible, utilize school colors, maroon and slate.

### **Insurance**

At the end of each practice session, game, or at any other activity requiring insurance, coaches will assure that any required insurance forms are completed accurately and turned in immediately to the designated official.

### **The Differences between Secular Athletics and Christian based Athletics**

Many athletic departments talk about inappropriate use of athletics in the lives of students.

These discussions can be held from a variety of different viewpoints. Many secular agencies talk about inappropriate competition, aggressiveness, and those kind of contexts as it relates to sports. Although these discussions prove helpful in the lives of students, they don't provide an objective basis for determining how to make difficult practical decisions that occur when we are involved athletics. At Champion Christian School adults involved in sports must address the following issues:

**1. An over emphasis placed on sports out of the context of real life.**

For example, most people, other than by developing lifetime sports, will not play competitive sports beyond high school, and at very latest college years. Helping students develop appropriate expectations that relate to high school and college, then lifetime sports is a tough challenge. This is true often because sports play such a significant role in the lives of children and because of this, students begin to over emphasize their value in their lives. This needs to be kept in balance.

**2. Developing unrealistic and unhealthy self-esteem issues relating to sports.**

One of the potential problems with competitive sports is that students who are good athletes can begin to believe that that will make them successful people. It is important that students learn that they can be good at sports, and perhaps be out of balance in other areas of life. The other emphasis is that students who don't excel in sports may develop a perspective that they are somehow less valuable because they do not excel in this arena. These issues need to be carefully balanced in the context of life situations.

**3. Winning and losing appropriately.**

Often students develop a perspective on life that winning really is the most important thing, when winning in reality is only something that happens at certain times in our lives. Losing is a reality of life that needs to be handled and kept in the appropriate context.

**4. Competitiveness can be healthy, but can become unhealthy when it degrades others.**

It is clear that students can become over-competitive. At CCS, this would be whenever the goal of winning or doing well begins to take priority over other values in the lives of the athletes. Some measures of indication of over-competitiveness would be how we view ourselves and others in terms of creations of God. Another is if anger begins to manifest itself in a game or if competitiveness has a "good guy, bad guy" mentality that causes us to see ourselves as good guys and the other team as bad guys, and we would demean, degrade or otherwise begin to view the other team as an enemy rather than a fellow competitor. If anything begins to happen on the court or playing field that would dishonor Christ or each other, then changes need to be made. Also, negative responses from others are an unfortunate consequence of competition at times. We certainly do not play in a perfect world or with perfect teams. Many teams we play espouse Christian values but others may not. It is not appropriate to return evil for evil, but to return evil with good. The scriptures talk about this being an appropriate response to negative responses in competition. Although it is very difficult to do, it would be appropriate for coaches, students and athletes to encourage each other to smile in the face of scorn and to encourage in the face of obvious attempts to intimidate. It is appropriate to compete fully and intently which means guidelines about aggressiveness on the court and field must be followed as they are being played out by league officials and referees. Although this would never justify hurting other players or demeaning them, it would cause us to rise to challenges of aggressiveness and physicalness on court, within the appropriate confines of the other procedures. These are difficult guideline to develop and enforce. We believe that coaches have that ability to make those judgement calls.

**5. Aggressiveness.**

As defined earlier, this probably is the most difficult attribute in which to define appropriate lines of communication between athletes. To be fully aggressive and yet positively confrontational is difficult. Aggressiveness also relates to our ability to perform to our potential. At times our students and athletes and coaches are too hard on themselves, becoming too critical of our inability to perform at the top level. It is in these contexts that issues of grace need to be administered, never a critical spirit, but one of encouragement to do better the next time, to work harder and to take honestly and evaluation. It is appropriate for students to develop self-esteem and understanding who Christ has made them to be as healthy individuals. This is true in spite of the winning or losing nature of the team.

#### **6. Relationships to authority.**

Often officials or hosts of competitions are placed in a very negative light by athletes if the calls for decisions do not go the ways they perceive it should have gone. In our culture today it is not uncommon for people to express strong feelings, yell at officials, make remarks or to otherwise voice negativity around those issues. Again, it is important that students learn to respect the authorities over them (Romans 13:1) regardless of what viewpoint they or the team may have about the decisions they make. No student or coach, will make any types of negative comments, looks, or gestures toward any authorities. Should that happen athletes will be given a warning and then removed from the game on the second offense by the coach. The Athletic Director will discipline coaches who cannot model this respectful behavior, by warning coaches and working with them. If the behavior persists, they will be removed from their position.

#### **7. Focus on the physical preparedness for athletics.**

This is a very appropriate goal, but it can get out of balance both in terms of the amount of time spent as compared to the rest of the students life, and also in area of assessing physical growth and development in ways that bring negativity to other areas of development and being a well-rounded person.

### **How does a Christian World View play out in Athletics at Champion Christian School?**

Each of these area identified above are areas of concern for all athletic programs, regardless if they are Christian or Secular. The question becomes what world view or model do we use to bring answers and guidelines to these areas of development and concern. Obviously from Champion Christian School's perspective we have to be based in a distinctly Christian world view. Generally the difference between a Christian world view and a secular world view would be how we approach the specific values or realities involved in a situation. In a secular world view each coach or league or authority would have the right to determine what they think is best for their students. There is no objective truth, there is only truth that can be determined by the coach. A Christian world view would believe that truth comes from God, and that there are relevant truths in the Bible that relate to the things that our athletes are dealing with. It is from these truths that we would begin to develop the above mentioned policies and procedures that would guide and direct our coaches with the athletic department. We want Christ to be able to shape students' character in ways that would honor God. The two most challenging issues that affect athletics when attempting to deal with Christian values is the understanding of authority and teamwork. A general discussion of the biblical principles that are involved in Champion Christian's Athletic Department are below.

#### **1. Authority.**

A secular world view would see, again, truth being somewhat relative and authority being somewhat relative in our lives. Therefore it becomes the job of each coach and athlete to weigh

in to determine whether the referee or league host, or home team was being fair, and if not to fight for what they believe to be fairness. As you can see this model leaves lots of room for interpretation and no real objective truth with which we can come away with answers.

In developing a Christian world view with authority in sports we need to look first to what the Bible says. The Bible talks about authorities, including fallible people, who are placed above us, and are ultimately are placed their by God. It is therefore not the job of the athlete (or the coach while on the field) to determine whether the authority should be placed above us, or how they are doing their job. It is our job of athletes and coaches to submit to those proper authorities. Submission means the acceptance of their rulings and procedures. CCS believes that it is appropriate to ask questions about rulings for clarification or to bring up appropriately alternative view points, but it would not be appropriate to position ourselves to fight for our viewpoint, yell or otherwise hassle officials, or in any way indicate displeasure with their calls.

There is an appropriate place for evaluation of league authorities or referees such as, in adult planning meetings outside of the playing field. There coaches could express to the athletic department their concerns about league officials or referees in the context and confines of private administrative meetings but never indirectly or directly to students, student athletes, or parents. It would be our expectation that coaches would model submission of authorities for students and for parents. When hearing complaints about league officials and referees from others (parents, crowds, etc.) we believe it is our job to submit and to communicate support for their calls and to continue to work on making the process better. It is never appropriate to yell at a ref, accuse a ref for inappropriate activity, or to otherwise disrespect them. We would expect the same respect for authority in students towards their coaches and coaches toward their peers.

It is imperative for coaches, upon accepting a position at CCS, to be willing to expect students to respect their position, their decisions, whether they like their decisions or not, and in that context enforce that based on practice time or playing time. If a coach feels that a student is being disrespectful it is their responsibility to talk to the athletic director about appropriate discipline measures. Coaches should handle minor disrespectful behavior just as they would handle any other infraction by a student administering loss of practice time the first two incidences. If it happens more often, students need to be addressed by the athletic director.

Once again it is expected that in real life athletic competition, questioning of calls by authorities is going to happen. How we respond to that is what makes the difference.

## **2. Team work.**

In the context of a Christian community, it is important that students learn that working together is really submitting ourselves to serve others. It means that we subject ourselves to the benefit of the greater good. Paul talks about the sacrificing of who we are in the context of serving Christ and serving others within the context that it is appropriate. However, when standards become inappropriate, teamwork is not the ultimate goal. It is important in the Christian context of athletics that when an individual student on the team is being inappropriate or acting in a character that is not good for the team or does not reflect Christian values or values of Champion Christian, that a teammate should in a supportive manner, encourage that student in an accountable way. For instance, it is not appropriate teamwork to encourage a teammate to hit back a student who has been hit on the court. A secular model would encourage us to cheer everybody on for the good of the team, but a Christian model would encourage us to submit ourselves to one another for the good of the team. Leadership in this context, becomes servant leadership, example that Christ followed which includes the laying down of his life for our sake.

It takes character and courage for students to exhibit that kind of leadership on a court or a field of play.

### **Summary**

All of these issues are difficult to do what is right - living out a Christian world view isn't easy. CCS is a distinctly Christian school and therefore, we strive to honor Christ. Many of our experiences in athletic programs as coaches have been in secular environments. Although very good, they were probably operated from a Secular World View. It is important that we not see a Christian World View in athletics as something that is just "playing nice" and throwing a prayer time in. In reality it is a different way of life and character development. It is how we conduct ourselves as coaches. It is what our goals are in terms of developing students. It is how we handle the moments of tension and passion. These become the critical measure for how we determine a successful program. Each opportunity that we have to do so models that we are willing to break and are willing to reexamine. It is our belief in doing so, that not only will students grow, but coaches will also grow to become more like Christ.

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