

PORTAGE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
2011/2012
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



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Verse for the Athletic Program

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

Athletic Mission Statement*

May God help us to . . . build character through competition, passionately inspire a devotion to excellence, and develop champions for Christ.

Philosophy of Athletics*

We believe that competition presents challenges similar to those that every person might one day face throughout life. Although these challenges may be on a smaller scale, the ways in which we overcome them and the lessons that we learn from them are the same. Portage Christian’s athletic program is dedicated to developing character through sports. We strive to promote working together in oneness, to conquer fears, to overcome obstacles, to look for lessons and motivation in loss, and for humility and opportunity in victory.

Most importantly, we strive to honorably represent our Lord Jesus Christ and to advance His kingdom through our words, thoughts, and deeds. At Portage Christian School, we recognize a battle far greater than any sports arena: a battle for people’s eternal souls. As coaches at PCS, we are to be diligent and desperate as we fight to develop champions for Christ. Let us make a pledge together to focus on the invisible, chase the intangible, and do the impossible.

School Mission Statement

Our mission is to impart God’s wisdom for godly living to our students through the education process.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Portage Christian School’s students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, are entitled to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, or athletic and other school administered programs.

*Adopted from Aurora Christian School in Illinois

Athletic Department Chain of Command



COMMUNICATIONS “The Matthew 18 Principle”

Portage Christian School is made up of parents, an administrator, teachers, board members and students; and just like any other institution in which you have a large group of people, the potential for misunderstanding, disagreement, and even wrongdoing exists. Nevertheless, it is God’s will that we work in harmony to always give a “good report” and constantly work for “unity.” When misunderstanding or strong disagreements occur the following principles should be the guidelines in solving people-to-people problems. These principles are based on the spirit of Matthew 18:15-17.

KEEP THE MATTER CONFIDENTIAL

The very pattern of sharing the problem with only those directly involved establishes the principle of confidentiality. This is important because it stops gossip and statements, which can hurt.

KEEP THE CIRCLE AS SMALL AS POSSIBLE

The first step, and usually the only step needed in solving a person-to-person problem, is for one of the two people involved to initiate face-to-face dialogue. Most problems are solved at the two people level.

BE STRAIGHTFORWARD

Sometimes it is very difficult to be straightforward in telling someone the very heart of the matter, but restoration and improvement can only come when the issues are lovingly and clearly presented.

BE FORGIVING

“...if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.” This implies that once the matter is resolved, you should wholeheartedly forgive and restore the person who is at fault.

....BUT IF THE PROBLEM HAS NOT BEEN RESOLVED, THE INVOLVED PARTIES SHOULD AGREE TO SHARE THE MATTER WITH THE NEXT PERSON IN THE ABOVE CHAIN OF COMMAND

“...take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” An open and honest discussion among people who are sensitive to godly principles will most often reach an amiable solution.

....BUT IF IT HAS NOT BEEN REACHED

The Administrator should explain the problem to the Chairman of the School Board; the Chairman will then have input on how the matter will be presented to the Board or resolve the issue with the Administrator and others involved and then report to the Board at the next meeting. Depending upon the complexity of the problem, it may be appropriate for the Board to request a special board meeting. The goal of such a high level meeting is the following:

1. Have a clear understanding of the problem
2. Offer a solution or solutions for resolving the problem
3. Give reproof and correction if necessary
4. Give forgiveness and wholehearted restoration to those who made amends
5. Share with the student body in *severe discipline* cases.

In summary, the Matthew 18 Principle requires that parents speak with the coach concerning athletic problems before they speak with the athletic director or administrator. If the matter is unresolved at the two-person level, it is moved upward in the school organizational structure in a prayerful and orderly manner. A prayerful systematic approach to any problem that involves people can help to improve any situation, even if it does not solve the problem completely. PCS is a Christian school; therefore, we need to handle our problems the best way possible with the guidelines which lead us to a “good report.”

Bus Seating Policy for Athletic Trips

The following policy is in effect whenever male and female students travel on the school bus (or any motorized school vehicle) together.

- Female students will sit in the rear of the bus.
- Male students will sit in the front of the bus.
- Coaches and/or chaperones will sit in the row of seats between the females and males.
- No electronics are allowed.
- Cell phones may not be used. The only exception is to call for rides, or in an emergency.

Character

Christians are commanded to be different from the world around them and this includes athletics (Isaiah 55:8, 9). We operate from a different perspective because Jesus Christ is the center of all our attention both on and off the athletic field/floor. We are to have His attitudes, actions, and moral mindset (Philippians 2:5; Romans 8:28).

- Dependability – Athletes should be at all the practices and games unless excused by the coach. Do what is expected in all situations.
- Punctuality – Be on time for games and practices. Never be late!
- Love – Be self-sacrificing and show real concern for team members, coaches and opponents. Remember, Christ centered His love upon others, not Himself.
- Enthusiasm – Take an interest in every part of your sport and be glad to quickly carry out every area of the job.
- Faith – Show that you know the Lord is in control of all circumstances and He is carrying out His will in your life.
- Humility – Display by your attitude that God is the One responsible for all abilities, talents and success you achieve.
- Endurance – All must be able to withstand stress, hard work and the challenges that all Christian athletes experience.
- Boldness – Be ready to boldly express what Jesus Christ has done for you. The Christian athlete cannot be one who is timid or gives up.

Fundraising

Fundraising is an important part of the Portage Christian School athletic department. PCS fields 11 different athletic teams with a staff of new and returning coaches. They volunteer their time to help put competitive teams on the fields and courts. If we are to realize our goal of offering a variety of sports programs for our students, we must all come together to raise the necessary funds to support and equip these teams.

Fundraising efforts will be determined prior to the start of each sport. If it is determined that fundraising is necessary to fulfill the financial obligations of the sport, a fundraising event will be planned.

Each sport **MUST** be able to cover the expenses incurred during each season. A mandatory parent meeting will be held before the start of each sport to give an overview of the expenses and income. If fundraising is deemed necessary to cover the expenses incurred, you will be given the choice as to whether or not you wish to participate. If you choose not to fulfill your share of the fundraising effort, you can pay the predetermined amount.

Requirements to Receive a Varsity Letter

- Volleyball & Soccer – The athlete must participate in 50% of the team’s total contests.
 - Boy’s/Girl’s Basketball – The athlete must participate in 25% of the team’s total quarters.
 - Boy’s/Girl’s Track – The athlete must participate in 75% of the team’s total meets.
 - Girl’s Softball/Boy’s Baseball – The athlete must participate in 75% of the team’s total contests.
1. If there is a sport where there is no Junior Varsity team, everyone will receive a varsity letter that participates the entire season and meets the above criteria.
 2. The criterion for obtaining a varsity letter is solely based on the above requirements. No coach or other members of the athletic staff have the ability to change or modify any of these standards.
 3. Any student athlete who is dismissed prior to the end of his/her season will not receive their letter for that sport. If the student feels wronged they may give a written appeal to the Athletic Director. This letter will be reviewed by the Administrator, the Director, and the Coach. A decision will be made for reinstatement within a 3-day period.
 4. Managers for each sport must follow the same team rules as the athletes. A manager attains a manager’s letter by attending ALL team practices and games in which the team participates. “Game night” camera operators, statisticians, helpers, etc. will not earn a letter unless they are also managers.
 5. Athletes not qualifying for a varsity letter and participating all season will qualify for a Junior Varsity certificate.
 6. To qualify for a letter jacket, the athlete must receive a varsity letter in any varsity sport.
 7. An injured athlete may still letter if he/she attends every practice and games.

The PACER Award

The PACER award will be given to the senior with the most athletic points. Each varsity letter is equal to 4 points per season toward the PACER Award. Each JV certificate is equal to 2 points per season toward the PACER Award.

Pre-Season

1. Student athletes will not be permitted to participate in any phase of the PCS athletic program without a current physical on file in the athletic office. A physical is considered current when it is less than one (1) calendar year old or is dated after May 1 of the previous year. A meeting will be held prior to the start of the season in an effort to explain the forms listed below. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL AN ATHLETE BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY SPORT, AT ANY PHASE OR LEVEL, UNTIL WE HAVE ALL THE FOLLOWING FORMS ON FILE.**

- Athletic Permission Slip
- Physical
- Authorization to Consent to Medical Treatment
- Athletic Fee

If you have any questions related to any of the above, contact the athletic director for clarification and explanation.

2. Please consider being a volunteer for your child(s) sport. Volunteers help run our programs in a significant way. Examples of volunteer work would be running the scoreboard, keeping the score book, keeping stats, selling concessions, taking gate money, etc. Volunteering as a “Team Mom” is very helpful to the coaches in assisting with rides to games and practices.
3. In the event the bus is not available for a contest, athletes may not drive other athletes to any athletic contest under any circumstances. If you need a ride, please contact the coach and they will provide names of people to ask. Directions to all away contests may be obtained from the athletic director.
4. Athletes will not be cut from any level on the basis of lack of ability, unless the coach, athletic director, and the administrator feel it is in the best interest of the individual and/or athletic program involved. This may include consideration given to the number of available uniforms respective to that sport. Selection of team members is the responsibility of the coach. The procedures for selecting team members for each sport will be announced by the coach prior to making team selections.
5. A picture day for your sport will be scheduled just prior to the start of your season, during your season, or even at the end of your season. All athletes are required to be at picture day. Picture order forms will be distributed to the athletes by the coach.
6. Commit yourself to prayer for the upcoming season. His strength is demonstrated best in our weakness.
7. Due to the nature of a competitive sports league, all athletes may not receive equal playing time.

In-Season

1. Before an athlete is allowed to participate in any way, all the necessary forms and fees (listed in Pre-Season, Page 5) must be submitted.
2. An athlete may participate in more than one sport during the same season if approval has been obtained from both coaches involved and the athletic director.
3. If an athlete joins a team late, he/she must make up the amount of practices missed before participating in a game. Exceptions may be granted due to injury or other circumstances. See the athletic director with any questions.
4. No athlete removed from or who removes him/herself from an athletic team will be permitted to begin practice with another sport until the final contest has been played by the team on which he/she was involved, unless special permission to do so has been granted, in writing, by the head coaches of the two sports involved and the athletic director.
5. A coach may encourage an athlete to attend open gyms, summer leagues, competitions, and camps, etc., but they will not be forced.
6. If an athlete misses an in-season official school contest (unexcused), he/she must miss the next scheduled contest.
7. Work hours, doctor and dentist appointments, or any other appointments are to be scheduled around practices and games. Based on the discretion of the coach, on rare occasions, an athlete may miss practice for such prescribed reasons. However, an athlete may never miss a game for such reasons.
8. Coaches may determine whether an athlete is excused or unexcused from practice.
9. An athlete coming late to practice from a detention or other unexcused reasons will be penalized in some form (i.e., extra running). Consistent tardiness to practice or missing of practice will require a more severe penalty. If a coach feels that a more severe penalty is necessary for an athlete for any reason, a conference will be scheduled involving the coach, athlete, parent(s), and the athletic director to determine the status of the athlete. Dismissal from the team may even result.
10. If a practice must be cancelled, the athletic director will get the word out to all the athletes. Cancellation of practices will only be due to emergencies. Every effort will be made to avoid such cancellations.
10. Every practice should begin with a devotion and prayer given by the coach or athlete. Each practice should conclude in prayer as well.
11. An athlete must never leave practice or a competition without notifying the coach.
11. Academic eligibility is based on the following.

- Athletes must maintain a C (73%) overall average in order to be considered academically eligible. If an athlete fails to maintain a C (73%) overall average, the athlete becomes academically ineligible. Athletes may not participate in any practice, contest or tournament play until the all academic eligibility requirements are met.
- Athletes must be passing in all classes. If an athlete receives an F (59% and below) in any one class, the athlete becomes academically ineligible. Athletes may not participate in any practice, contest, or tournament play until the athlete meets all academic eligibility requirements.
- Athletes who are academically ineligible will remain ineligible until the next grade check or evaluation reveals sufficient marks.
- The athletic director will check grades when report cards and progress reports are distributed. If an athlete is deemed academically ineligible, the athlete will be allowed to check his/her grades on the predetermined date set by the athletic director and administrator. On this predetermined date the athletic director will give the ineligible athlete a *Student Athletic Evaluation Form*. He/she will take this form to each of his/her teachers to be filled out. The ineligible athlete will turn this form into the athletic director, who will either deem the athlete eligible or will continue the ineligible status until either report cards or progress reports are checked.

13. Detentions:

- Detentions must be served on the day they are assigned, regardless of the sports calendar.
- Athletes receiving detentions on a game day may not play that day.
- Athletes receiving detention on a practice day are required to attend practice after serving the detention (extra running may be required).

14. If an athlete is suspended from school, the athlete may not attend practice during the day of his/her suspension. Any suspension will also result in that athlete missing the next scheduled contest in its entirety. An expulsion from school will obviously result in the withdrawal of that student from the sport.

15. Age Limit

- If the age of 15 years is attained on or after August 1, and the 8th grade is not completed, the student shall be eligible to participate in 6-8th grade junior high or junior varsity team (if one is available).
- If the age of 19 years is attained on or after August 1, and the 12th grade is not completed, the student shall be eligible to participate in 9-12th grade varsity team.
- At the beginning of each sport season the administrator shall provide the correct birth date information for the Tournament Roster Forms.

16. Home School Students: For a home school student to be eligible for participation on a school athletic team, the following items must be met.

- The student must attend a minimum of one academic class on a regular basis or participate in the school's annual achievement testing process.
- The student is in accordance with player age limitations (see #14)

- The student is included in the school's student enrollment count and payment for the ACSI membership fee.
17. Every effort will be made to have after school practices completed by 7:00 PM. This gives the athlete time for family, rest and school work. Wednesday practices may be scheduled; however, an athlete will not be required to attend if he/she has church or youth group that evening. Morning practices before school may at times be necessary. Mandatory practices may be held over a school break; however, no practices will be scheduled on an actual holiday or Sundays.
 18. All injuries, no matter how minor in nature, will be documented using the forms available from the athletic director. The completed documentation should then be given to the athletic director. If an athlete must see a physician for an injury; the athlete will not be allowed to resume practicing or competing without the physician's consent. However, an athlete should make every effort to still attend practice and games even while injured.
 19. Please be sure to note the chain of command in dealing with any problems.
 20. Each athlete and parent must read through the Middle & High School Handbook.
 21. Game-day dress will be the uniform shirt or team shirt (if sleeveless, a t-shirt must be worn underneath) and a nice pair of jeans or khakis. The entire team will dress as stated above. If an athlete does not comply with the above dress option, he/she will still attend, but not participate in that day's contest.
 22. ACSI, and especially Portage Christian School, demand sportsmanship of all coaches, athletes, and spectators. "To whom much has been given, much more will be required." Luke 12:48
 23. Report any problems with athletes, parents, fans, or any other person(s) to the athletic director.
 24. Athletes will not be taken out of class for athletic meetings. If a meeting is necessary, it will be scheduled during lunch periods or after school.
 25. Athletes at the varsity level that exhibit superior skills may have an opportunity to gain a scholarship to college. Make the coach and athletic director aware of any way(s) in which they can assist the athlete and parent(s) in this process.
 26. The coach will determine how the captain and co-captain are chosen. It will also be the decision of the coach whether or not to use a captain or co-captain. Upon the discretion of the coach de-ranking may occur. If coach feels that de-ranking is deemed necessary for the benefit of the team, a conference will be scheduled between the athlete, coach, and the athletic director.

Post-Season

1. You will be required to turn in all uniforms and other school-owned equipment within two weeks of the last contest. Any athlete who loses or damages a uniform or equipment will be responsible for replacement and/or payment of the item.
2. A meeting with coaches and athletes will be scheduled upon the completion of the season. At this meeting, the past season will be reviewed and recommendations for the off-season will be given. All voting will be done for Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Heart or Spirit Award, and Christian Character. These awards will be given at an awards ceremony.
3. An awards night will be scheduled for all sports. Proper notification of the date, location, and time will be given to parents and all those involved.
4. Please note that any student who still owes any monies, or has not turned in their uniform or equipment will not receive their awards until such time as these items are turned in.
5. Information on opportunities for athletes to improve during the off season will provided. Opportunities may include summer camps, open gyms, summer leagues, weight training, etc. Although these opportunities will be not required, it is encouraged.

The school's expectations of parents, players and coaches at athletic events:

One of the things we want to encourage at our athletic events is proper behavior from everyone in attendance. If everyone understands his or her role, that may help produce the desired behavior.

Christ-like Behavior

Our behavior should be centered in acting as God desires us to act. Each item listed below should be viewed through the eyepiece of God's word and how He wants us to behave.

Parents

- Encourage and support their child.
- Be a fan of all team members.
- Don't approach coaches with negative issues on the day of a game.
- Show consideration for other players, spectators and coaches.
- Approach your child with questions before talking to the coaches. When talking to a coach be sure to follow the chain of command.
- Always be courteous to officials, even when you disagree with their calls.
- Don't speak negatively about the athletic program or personnel.
- Realize that the coach's task is not to win every contest, but to ensure the safety of the athletes and to help each athlete become a better person while increasing their athletic skills.

Players

- If you have a question or concern speak to the coach.
- Inform the coach of schedule problems ahead of time.
- Be encouraging and present a positive attitude.
- Fulfill academic requirements.
- Understand and abide by school and players regulations.
- Set high goals to improve as an individual and in athletic skills.
- Work hard.
- Be an encouragement to teammates.

Coaches

- Be a good role model for athletes and fans.
- Communicate well with athletes and families.
- Be certain that athletes know what is expected of them and the requirements for lettering for the sport.
- Organize daily practice sessions for the team.
- Distribute practice and game schedules to everyone who needs one.
- Deal fairly and consistently with athletes.
- Monitor the academic status of each team member.
- Keep an accurate account of all equipment.
- Put careful thought into decisions of playing time and other important issues.
- Ensure the safety of all team members.
- Be aware of and utilize injury-prevention measures.
- Keep up to date with new information about the sport(s) being coached.
- Endeavor to help assistants develop professionally.
- Be accessible to talk to athletes and parents.

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GREAT GATES OF HELL UNLESS
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EVERY INSTITUTION IN WHICH
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OCCUPIED WITH THE WORD OF
GOD MUST BECOME CORRUPT."
. . . MARTIN LUTHER***