



Athletic Handbook

Run the Race

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Hebrews 12:1 – 2a



Bethany Christian School

BOBCAT ATHLETICS

Dear Parents and Student-Athletes,

Welcome to Bethany Christian School Athletics!

Our overall athletic program complements the mission of the school: partnering with you to fully develop your child's unique potential in Christ – academically, spiritually, socially, **physically**, and creatively. We subscribe to the truism that physical fitness is a life skill.

Being physically fit serves to honor God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) and exposure to physical skill development activities at an early age contributes to a healthy lifestyle in later years.

Our program provides wonderful opportunities to strengthen the larger family of Bethany Christian School. Relationships built on the sidelines strengthen the sense of community among our parents as they support their children. Your enthusiastic participation is important as we continue to seek to honor God through our athletic program.

It is my privilege to serve Bethany Christian School in directing an athletic program that strives for excellence. It is a blessing to watch the athletic program grow while witnessing our students tap into their potential and use the talent God has given them. I am committed to the philosophy of maintaining a God honoring program and providing a positive experience for everyone involved.

This handbook contains the philosophies, goals, responsibilities, policies, guidelines and forms that govern Bethany's Athletic Program. While the handbook is intended to be comprehensive in nature, there may be situations that occur that are not yet fully realized.

We ask that both parents and student-athletes thoroughly read this handbook. It will help to ensure a common understanding of our athletic program and serve as a guide for a great year of athletics.

Go Bobcats!

Matt Wiehl, Athletic Director

Athletic Program Profile

Bobcats: Navy – Competitive Program (Grades 6-8)
Silver – Developmental Program (Grades 5-6)

Mighty Cats: Intramural Sports (Grades K – 5)

Colors: Navy and Silver

League: Valley Christian School League (Navy teams)

Sports: Bobcats
Girls Volleyball
Coed Soccer
Coed Cross Country
Coed Golf
Boys Baseball
Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Girls Softball (Fast Pitch)

Mighty Cats
Coed Soccer
Coed Basketball

Recognition: Proud member of Valley Christian Schools League since 2006 – received awards for each year since 2006

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Athletic Program

Purpose

The Bethany Christian School athletic program complements the mission of the school by partnering with parents to develop each student's unique potential in Christ – academically spiritually, socially, **physically**, and creatively. Being physically fit serves to honor God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) and exposure to physical skill development activities at an early age contributes to a healthy lifestyle in later years, affirming the truism that physical fitness is a life skill.

Philosophy

Athletics, rightly understood as an integral part of education, complements the greater mission of Bethany Christian School.

Participation in developmentally appropriate and logical progression of learning activities such as throwing, catching, jumping and kicking provide our students physical activities that contribute to a sustainable healthy lifestyle. Lessons of commitment, teamwork, tenacity and overcoming adversity are advanced in our overall athletic program and offer our students opportunities to experience valuable life lessons.

Our program strengthens the larger community of Bethany Christian School as cohesive relationships are developed among parents and coaches as they support and coach their children.

It is our desire that our entire athletic community participate in such a way that honors God and conveys a positive witness to all. Emphasis is placed on the importance of character building, commitment, responsibility, hard work, sportsmanship, and teamwork.

Goals

The athletic program goals are:

- To provide well-grounded instruction of fundamental skill areas
- To provide coaches who demonstrate an ability to manage a quality, structured program
- To emphasize and model character development in the areas of fair play, teamwork, selflessness, integrity, and respect
- To provide league, non-league and tournament game opportunities

Team Level Philosophy

We recognize the normal stages of a child's development and strive to provide age-appropriate opportunities in athletics. We encourage participation and desire to instill in students a love for the game.

Students are provided the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports at various levels of competition. Fundamentals of the game are strongly emphasized. Whatever we do, based upon the multitude of factors such as number of participants and coaching resources, we are committed to provide a healthy experience for all parties involved.

The creation and size of teams is determined by many factors, such as the level of interest by students, availability of facilities, and coaching resources.

Mighty Cats (Grades K-5) is an after-school coed intramural program that provides beginner level competition in a fun, highly successful environment. Players rotate in and out of play based on a number system and will play an equal amount of time.

Silver Bobcats (Grades 5-6) provides beginner to intermediate level of competition, with an emphasis on fundamental skill development, to prepare the individual for the next level of competition. Teams compete with other private or charter schools independent of a league in order to provide fundamental principles of team offense and defense. Players dressed for play receive balanced opportunities to play in games.

Navy Bobcats (Grades 6-8) comprises the competitive program for intermediate and advanced level of competition in order to prepare students for high school programs. Fundamental skill instruction continues, along with the introduction and development of team offense and defense strategies.

Navy Bobcat teams compete in the Valley Christian Schools League. Placement on teams is based on skill and ability in order to achieve the best competitive advantage possible within the league. Based upon interest level in any given sport and availability of coaches and facilities, we strive to offer the same sports offered by the league for competition.

Our philosophical approach to middle school athletics is that student-athletes are to be afforded the opportunity to refine skills, learn strategy in both practice and under the pressure of competition, and experience what it means to be part of a team throughout tournament play; thus a player dressed to play receives an opportunity to play.

Valley Christian Schools League

The league mission statement reads: *"This league exists to develop middle school athletes, who strive to develop character, sportsmanship and life lessons through competitive sports."*

The purpose of the league is to provide league schools with inter-scholastic athletic competition in an atmosphere that will develop Christian character, leadership, and sportsmanship; to honor the Spiritual admonition that all things are to be accomplished decently and in order; and to establish and reinforce standards that are honoring to God (adapted from The Constitution of the League).

Multiple Sports and Activities

Student-athletes are encouraged to be well-rounded by participating in different activities both athletically and otherwise. Different sports offer distinct challenges and the skills developed through the training methods used in one sport will often help the student-athlete in another sport.

If agreed upon by the athletic director and coaches of the sports, a student-athlete may participate in multiple sports at the same time. Strong and open communication between the student-athlete, his/her parents, and the coaches involved are vital to a highly successful athletic experience.

General Policies

Sportsmanship

When Bethany Christian School serves as hosts to a visiting team and its supporters, we treat them as our guests. When we are the visiting team, we are expected to act as invited guests and treat the home school's personnel and facilities with care and respect.

As participants and spectators, we want to cheer *for* the Bethany Christian School team, *not* against the opponent, being modest in victory and gracious in defeat. All cheering and all comments are to be positive, uplifting, and respectful of the other team.

All are expected to abide by and follow the rules of the game. Players play the game and coaches coach the game. Officials are to be treated with respect and the final decision of any official will be accepted without quarrel. Players and coaches are expected to shake the hands of the officials and the opposing coaches and players following each contest.

It is our desire each year to be the recipient school of the Valley Christian Schools League Sportsmanship Award. This award exemplifies exemplary behavior, demeanor, attitude and conduct of student-athletes, coaches, and family members and friends. While it is appropriate to want to excel, development and demonstration of Christian character is a higher calling.

Scheduling

The athletic department does its best to schedule games and practices well in advance of the season. Because we cannot control league changes or changes made by an opponent when we travel to their home court/field, changes to schedules will inevitably occur. Additionally, as Bethany Christian School coaches are volunteers with busy schedules, there will most likely be a few changes throughout the season due to their work schedules.

Requisites for Participation

Each student-athlete desiring to participate in Bethany Christian School athletics must have the Athletic Agreement and the Athletics Transportation Permission Form on file in the athletic office before the first day of participation in any given sport. These documents are distributed at the beginning of each sport season and are also available on our website, www.bethanychristianschool.org, or in the school office.

It is understood that student-athletes cannot participate in their next sport if fees have not been paid or uniforms have not been turned in. The business manager maintains tracking of fees.

Transportation

Bethany Christian School does not provide transportation to/from practices and games; however, each student-athlete must have an Athletics Transportation Permission Form on file in the athletics office. Optimally, a Volunteer Team Coordinator assists parents with transportation coordination and will utilize the permission slips.

Severe/Inclement Weather

Any changes to published schedules due to inclement weather will be communicated via email and text messages to parents and coaches as soon as an affirmative decision is made.

For outdoor practices, heat and humidity are closely monitored. Bethany Christian School endorses the Kyrene School District Heat Index Guidelines and Procedures (included as a supplement to this handbook in Appendix A). If the heat index is at or above 105, extra precautions will be taken to ensure physical activity is commensurate with the set guidelines. If the heat index is at or above 130, all nonessential outdoor activities will be cancelled.

If lightning is present during an outdoor event, all parties will be moved indoors. The event can only be resumed if 30 minutes have passed since the last visual evidence of lightning.

Lost and Found

Each person should be a good steward of all personal articles and equipment. The school is not responsible for items lost. In the event a student-athlete loses equipment owned by the school, a replacement cost may be assessed. Items may turn up in the lost and found area on campus.

Student-Athletes

Code of Conduct

Being a Bethany Christian School athlete and part of a team is a privilege. Student-athletes shall conduct themselves in a way that brings positive recognition to God, their school, their team, their sport and themselves. A student-athlete at Bethany Christian School reflects the mission and identity of the school. Student-athletes are expected to behave at all times with consideration for others in thoughts, word and deed. Student-athletes are to abide by the school's stated rules and any others stipulated by the athletic department.

Academic Requirements

Each student-athlete is required to maintain a minimum of a C average with no F's in any class. Teachers will be in communication with the student-athletes on a regular basis, placing them and the athletic director on notice if the minimum is not achieved in a given period. The student-athlete will be given the following week to meet the minimum grade requirement, or be placed on an ineligibility list until the requirement is met.

If a student-athlete is assigned a detention for any reason on the day of a practice or a game, the student-athlete must first serve the detention and then be eligible to attend the practice or game afterward.

Incomplete grades are considered grounds for a declared ineligibility.

Participation

Participation in the athletic program is generally contingent on three factors: clearance from a previous sport, good academic and moral standing, and practice and game attendance.

Clearance from a previous sport includes being current on fees, with uniforms checked in. Additionally, it is highly encouraged that the parents, along with input from their student-athlete, complete a post-season survey. Feedback from this post-season survey will be used as part of the school's and athletic department's continuous improvement efforts.

In addition to meeting the academic requirements as set forth in this handbook, student-athletes must attend at least 3 consecutive academic periods the day of a practice or game in order to play. An exception to this policy is if a school event, such as a field trip, causes the absence.

Practice and game attendance is important. Parents and student-athletes are to recognize that absences from practices hinder skill development and physical

conditioning, and jeopardize team unity. Time missed from a sport team practice influences performance and often the standing with the team. Also, missing practices may affect a student-athlete's playing time during a game.

Commitment

Being a member of a team is analogous to "one body, many parts" as reflected in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. Each part is vital to the whole. As such, being a member of a team necessitates commitment.

For optimum functioning of the whole team, student-athletes are to attend all practices and games. If circumstances of a serious nature, including absence due to sickness, do not permit a student-athlete to participate in the day's events, notice is to be given to the coach and/or athletic director with as much lead time as possible.

If an injured student-athlete attends school on a practice or game day, that athlete is expected to attend the day's event to support the team from the sideline.

Each student-athlete is expected to attend all pre-season and post-season events, including any and all award recognitions.

Student-athletes are expected to remain at practices and games for the duration of the event, to support their team.

Uniforms and Equipment

All student-athletes are expected to be good stewards of all equipment, facilities and uniforms entrusted to them. Uniforms and general equipment is provided by and are the property of Bethany Christian School. Student-athletes are issued team uniforms and are expected to take great care of the uniforms. Uniforms are to be worn **ONLY** at games.

If a student-athlete is missing a uniform or piece of a uniform the day of a game, another uniform will not be issued, and the student-athlete cannot play in the game.

Uniforms are to be returned to the athletics office within one week of the final game for each sport. Uniforms are to be returned washed and in good condition. Washing instructions are to be followed and uniforms are to **HANG DRY ONLY**. Damaged or lost uniforms are to be replaced at the expense of the student-athlete.

Parents

Perspective

Parents recognize that most young people participate in sports to have fun, to develop that natural desire to play, to make new friends or be with their friends, to be part of a team, and to compete. “To win” or “to be a champion” is often not at the top of the list. It is important that parents convey, along with coaches, that it is the process of competing that counts. Too much emphasis on winning and losing puts the value of sports out of context.

Parent as Volunteer

Parents are critical to the success of our athletic program. The athletic department welcomes and needs parents to come alongside all teams to serve in one or more of a variety of volunteer positions throughout the year, including that of serving as a team parent, and assisting in home game management.

Parent as Fan

It is the role of the parent to be a fan, to support, encourage and cheer for the team, and to respect the coach.

The coach’s classroom is the court or field, usually with undefined walls, making it easy for parents to naturally move close to the action. Parents should be interested and supportive observers from a distance. The coach needs room to be able to instruct and the student-athlete to perform without distraction from the stands. Distraction only yields poor results. Cheer them on – yes! Coach or yell at them – no!

Coach as Leader

Parents are to trust that coaches strive to make the best decisions for the team as well as the individuals that make up the team. Coaches concentrate in practice and in competition on evaluating character and performance, and make judgment decisions based on what they feel is in the best interest of the team.

Playing time, players’ positions, and strategy are left to the discretion of the coach. Accepting the coach’s decisions in these matters is critical.

Communication

The athletic department supports the overall desire of the school for open and authentic communication. Direct communication between the coach and student-athlete is very important and is usually the best way for any questions to be answered or conflicts to be worked through.

Any matter deemed by a parent to be an issue will be treated with the utmost respect; however, before or after practices or games is never an appropriate time to approach a coach or the athletic director with an issue. A set time that is convenient for parents to meet face-to-face with the coach and/or the athletic director is the best opportunity to

exchange information and respectfully discuss issues, concerns or questions. Please call or email the athletic department in order for a meeting to be arranged with the coach and/or the athletic director.

If the coach and the athletic director do not satisfactorily resolve an issue with a student-athlete or a parent, the athletic director will convene a meeting with the Principal.

Financial Expectations

A participation fee is assessed per student-athlete for each sport. This fee covers expenses such as gym rentals, league and tournament fees, officials, awards, uniform replacement and equipment. Fees are communicated prior to each season.

As the school does not provide transportation to and from practices and games, additional financial expenses are out of pocket costs incurred by the parents.

Fundraising beyond the participation fee may be necessary at times.

Coaches

Perspective

Successful athletic programs start with quality coaches. We believe coaches are one of the most significant components to the athletic program, serving as Christian role models who are committed to fulfilling the mission of the school. We fully support the desire of coaches to serve our student-athletes and their families.

School athletics are an integral part of each student's overall education and development. As such, coaches are enablers for student-athletes to develop their unique and full potential. Mentoring, development, care and safety of our student-athletes are the most important responsibilities of our coaches.

Code of Conduct

Because the behavior of a team can reflect the coach's own manner, attitudes, temperament and approach to athletics, coaches shall conduct themselves both on and off the court in a way that brings positive recognition to God, their team, their sport and themselves. Instruction and correction, while demanding and critical, should be positive. Coaches should never embarrass or demean student-athletes.

The same high standards of preparation, organization, dedication, hard work, self-discipline, sacrifice and Godly behavior that coaches expect of players is expected of coaches. Coaches shall model good sportsmanship and respectful attitudes toward officials and opposing teams in victory and defeat.

All coaches are expected to know the rules of the game and the rules/policies of the leagues in which we participate, which will be provided to them.

Commitment

Coaches are expected to attend all scheduled events (practices and games). In the event of absence, to the extent possible, prior arrangements should be made for coverage and should be communicated to all constituents with high regard for continuity and organization. Coaches should arrive to practices and games early enough to set up equipment and the facility, and to greet their team. Coaches should not leave the facility of a game or event until all student-athletes have left the premises or have made prior arrangements with parents.

Training

All new coaches will go through "Bethany Christian School Coaching 101," a guidebook covering the essential elements of our school, our school's culture and philosophy of athletics, and how to be a successful coach at Bethany. Sport-specific fundamentals and players' guides for each sport will be provided to coaches.

Communication

The athletic director is committed to an open door communication policy for coaches, student-athletes and parents. Coaches are to keep the athletic director informed of any issues that may arise and the resolution of the issue. If an issue is not satisfactorily resolved, coaches are to convene a meeting with the athletic director in order to seek resolution.

APPENDIX A: **Bethany Christian School Heat Index Guidelines and Procedures** *(Adapted from the Kyrene School District)*

Purpose of Guidelines and Procedures

Bethany Christian School is committed to protecting the health and safety of our students and staff. BCS provides various opportunities for outdoor physical activities before, during, and after school. These guidelines are meant to provide a decision-making and communication structure to promote student and staff safety when local weather may be detrimental to their health.

Students need daily, vigorous exercise. These guidelines are intended to provide preventive strategies that may limit or revise certain activities for physical education and other outdoor programs before, during, or after school.

Hot Weather

Heat induced illness is preventable. Children do not adapt to extremes of temperature as effectively as adults for the following physiological reasons (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2000):

- Higher surface area-to-body mass ratio than adults, allowing a greater amount of heat to transfer from the environment to the body.
- During physical activity, children produce more metabolic heat than adults.
- Sweating capacity is considerably lower in children than adults, reducing the ability to dissipate body heat by evaporation.

Guidelines

When excessive heat occurs, the following precautions are to be taken for all outdoor physical activity, including but not limited to: recess, physical education classes, and field trips.

Students should be hydrated before going outside and have access to drinking water while outside. In activities lasting longer than 30 minutes, periodic water breaks should be incorporated (approximately every ten minutes).

The **Heat Index** is the “feels like” or effective temperature. As relative humidity increases, the air seems warmer because the body is less able to cool itself via evaporation of perspiration. As the index rises, so do the health risks.

During the school year, on days that exceed 95 degrees or above, a school designee will inform all staff of the Heat Advisory and the suggested guidelines will be put into place through the normal communication protocol for the school.

Guidelines for Determining Heat Index

Temperature and humidity data shall be obtained from weather.com. Details specific to the school should be accessed as follows:

- Enter school zip code (85283)
- Select the “Hourly” tab
- Highest estimated temperature and humidity during school hours should be used to calculate **Heat Index** from Chart One. Limit activities according to Chart Two.

Chart One

		% RELATIVE HUMIDITY																			
		5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
T E M P E R A T U R E	85	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	93	95	97	99	102	105	108
	90	84	85	86	87	88	90	91	93	95	96	98	100	102	106	109	113	117	122		
	95	88	90	91	93	94	96	98	101	104	107	110	114	119	124	130	136				
	100	93	95	97	99	101	104	107	110	115	120	126	132	138	144						
	105	97	100	102	105	109	113	118	123	129	135	142	149								
	110	102	105	108	112	117	123	130	137	143	150										
	115	107	111	115	120	127	135	143	151												
	120	111	116	123	130	139	148														
	125	116	123	131	141																
	130	122	131																		

Heat Index	Category	Activity Limitations
<80		No limitations
80 to 89	Caution	75% vigorous activity/25% light activity or rest. Encourage hydration.
90 to 104	Extreme Caution	50% vigorous activity/50% light activity or rest. Enforce hydration. Sunstroke, heat cramps and heat exhaustion possible.
105 to 129	Danger	25% vigorous activity/75% light activity or rest. Enforce hydration. Sunstroke, heat cramps and heat exhaustion likely. Heat stroke possible
130+	Extreme Danger	All nonessential outdoor activities will be cancelled.

Chart Two

Sample Plan for Extreme Caution or Danger Categories

Lunch time: 20 minutes in cafeteria
 10 minutes in outside activity
 10 minutes in classroom

Recess: Limited activities with sun exposure limit of 10 minutes

General Procedures

- Utilize normal communication protocol to inform staff when Heat Advisory is in effect
- Email parents to inform them that advisory precautions are in effect
- Communicate that students are encouraged to bring water bottles to school and have access to them throughout the day
- Provide Heat Related Illness training for playground aides, PE instructors, and athletic coaches

Reference – *Care of the Young Athlete Patient Education Handouts (Copyright © 2011 American Academy of Pediatrics)*

Exercise-Related Heat Illness

Exercise-related heat illness (ERHI) or “**heat injury**” happens when exercise is done in high temperature and high humidity. It’s one type of injury, unlike **sports injuries** caused by contact, which can almost always be prevented with proper attention to safety and common sense.

About Body Temperature

- Human bodies try to keep a constant body temperature of around 98.6°F by balancing heat gain with heat loss.
- Exercising muscles create 10 to 20 times more heat than resting muscles.
- Sweating is the main way the body gets rid of excess heat.
- As humidity rises, sweating becomes less effective at cooling the body.
- Body temperature will rise if the body is unable to get rid of excessive heat, resulting in heat illness.

Signs of ERHI

- **Heat (fatigue) cramps**—painful muscle contractions (most often in leg muscles), normal temperature
- **Heat exhaustion**—body temperature up to 104°F; fatigue; nausea; vomiting; dizziness; fainting; flushed, moist skin
- **Heat stroke** (life-threatening)—body temperature greater than 104°F, confusion, combativeness, seizures and/or stroke, shock, coma (unresponsive), and/or heart failure/cardiac arrest

Emergency On-site Treatment

Immediate treatment should include cooling the body and **replacing fluids** (cool water or an appropriate sports drink).

Type of Illness	Treatment
Heat (fatigue) cramps	Stop exercising, massage or stretch the muscle involved. Replace salt and water loss by drinking a lot of cool, salt-containing fluids. Future cramping may be reduced by improved conditioning, getting more used to exercising in hot

	temperatures, and drinking more salt-containing fluids.
Heat exhaustion	Stop exercising, move to a shaded, or air-conditioned area. Replace water loss by drinking a lot of cool fluids. If the athlete does not quickly improve or is unable to drink fluids, then the athlete should be immediately taken to the nearest emergency facility.
Heat stroke	Call 911 or your local emergency number. Begin cooling immediately; don't wait for help to arrive. The athlete needs immediate medical attention.

Facts about Heat Illness

- Even the best-trained athlete can develop a heat illness when it is hot and humid.
- Early recognition is the key to successful treatment of heat illness.
- For most athletes, drinking cold water is as good as sports drinks in preventing heat illness and maintaining performance.
- Dripping sweat does not cool the body and prevent heat illness; sweat that evaporates does.
- Children may be at greater risk than adults for developing heat illness.
- Heat stroke is a serious medical emergency.
- Plans should be in place to cancel, postpone, or change events if it's too hot and humid.
- Both temperature and humidity (heat index) must be measured to accurately assess environmental heat stress. Athletes who have had heat illness before are at higher risk for another episode.

Tips to Help Prevent Heat Illness

- Schedule activities during the coolest parts of the day (early morning or late afternoon/evening); consider cancelling or delaying an activity under extreme conditions.
- Allow athletes to gradually adjust to exercising in hot, humid weather by increasing activities slowly over the first 2 weeks of practice.
- Avoid the use of excessive clothing and equipment.
- Schedule breaks every 10 to 15 minutes during any activity that lasts longer than 1 hour.
- Weigh athletes before and after each activity. Athletes should replace all of their weight lost during any exercise period prior to the next exercise period.

Know the Signs and Symptoms of ERHI

- Make sure plenty of cold water and sports drinks are available before, during, and after each activity.
- Encourage athletes to drink 4 to 8 ounces every 15 to 20 minutes during any activity period.
- Encourage athletes to eat a balanced diet that provides the necessary vitamins and minerals.

- Identify athletes at high risk, such as athletes who are obese, are poorly conditioned, are not acclimated, have a current illness, are taking certain medicines, or have a history of previous heat-related problems.
- Plan for emergencies—measure body temperature, call 911, and cool immediately.