MARANATHA CHRISTIAN

BULLDOGS



MCS Athletic Handbook

2026-2027

Maranatha Christian School Athletic Handbook

Introduction:

Athletics teach young people many lessons that can help them in their Christian lives. It is the goal of MCS that its students exemplify Christ-likeness in everything they do. The purpose of this handbook is to maintain consistency with the standards adopted for our athletic program.

We require that parents, as well as athletes, take the time to read this handbook in order to minimize any misunderstandings. We want to ensure everyone involved properly supports our school and its athletic program, as we seek to provide the best possible opportunities for our students.
Thank you for your support!

Philosophy of Athletics in a Christian School:

Christian schools conduct athletic programs for the purpose of providing a positive atmosphere for young people to develop character through physical competition. As this purpose is carried out, we understand that the athlete must allow the Holy Spirit to be in control, guiding his spiritual, as well as physical, development. Ultimately, a Christian athletic program should produce enhanced Christian character in the lives of all who participate.

Maranatha Christian School is committed to the development of the spirit as well as the mind and body of each of its students. Competing with one's peers in athletic competition provides for growth in all of these areas. The desire to win is a legitimate goal in athletics because winning indicates a standard of excellence for which anyone should strive. Winning is not the highest goal, however.

Though it is a fruit of effort, there are other outcomes that many times provide character lessons not learned through winning. If one has maximized his athletic potential, glorified Christ, done his best, and has given the credit to God, then the reward will be a more gratifying relationship with his Creator.

It is also not the purpose of athletics in a Christian school to be the launching pad for an athletic career. The Christian school does not exist primarily for athletics. **The education of all students must remain the priority, and athletics must remain an extra-curricular activity subordinate to academics.**

The testimony of the school is affected deeply through the athletic program. There is also a personal testimony that each parent, athlete, and coach must maintain. There is a corporate testimony that belongs to the school constituency—parents, friends and students who watch the games, and they are expected to conduct themselves in a manner

pleasing unto the Lord. It is essential to maintain a good testimony, and it is delightful when fellowship among all, from both schools, is allowed to flourish. Psalm 133:1 - "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

Scope of Authority:

The athletic program of the school is normally delegated to an athletic director who answers to the principal. There may be administrative tasks that are reserved to office personnel. Coaches of teams are chosen by the AD and approved by the principal. They answer to the AD. Playing time is given by the coaches. Our coaches will only reward playing time for **hard work, participation, and a good attitude**. A player will not receive playing time just because of their age/experience, talent, or relationships.

The athletic program includes elementary-level sports (1st-6th Grade) through varsity athletics (7th-12th Grade). The gymnasium is the responsibility of the athletic director. Teachers who desire to use the gym must coordinate that use with the athletic director. The preparation of the gym for practices and games all take priority.

Requirements for Participation:

Students in first grade through 6th grade may participate in elementary athletic competition each year under the supervision of their respective coaches.

Sports Physical: To participate in either JV or varsity athletics (7th-12th), students **must** have a sports physical before the beginning of the school year. Only one physical is required for all sports during the school year.

Handbook Agreement: This handbook **must** be read prior to the beginning of practice for the first sport in which a student participates. A signed statement of understanding **must** be turned in to the office stating that the student understands the content of this handbook and will abide by it.

Excused Absences: Players are required to participate in all scheduled practices and games. These are the only reasonable excuses for missing games or practices:

1. Medical appointment
2. Illness
3. Death in the family
4. Weddings and other very important family events
5. College visits
6. Previously scheduled church commitment
7. Unresolvable work conflict

Players must notify the coach of their absence prior to practice or game. Should a player be injured, they should still attend practices and home games unless physically unable.

Testimony: All athletes are expected to maintain a good Christian testimony. Conduct **on or off** campus that brings shame to the team or school may be grounds for suspension or dismissal from the team.

School Attendance: A student **must** be in school no later than 11:00 AM in order to participate in a practice or game scheduled for that day, unless the student has a previously scheduled medical appointment after 11:00. An exception to this rule may be made but may only be approved by the Athletic Director.

Discipline:

For those students playing JV or varsity sports, an academic standard is required to play.

- Quitting a team during the season is not acceptable and comes with consequences. A student who quits the team after the first two weeks of practice and/or games of a particular sport, cannot participate in the next sport offered without the approval of the principal and the Athletic Director. The student who quits their team will not be eligible for any post-season awards or activities for all sports.
- Grades will be continuously checked by the Athletic Director. If needed, students will be allowed two weeks for grade turnaround. If the grade is still failing at two weeks, the probation period will continue until the grades are no longer failing. The student will continue to attend practice but will not be allowed to play in a game until the grades are no longer failing.
- Starting at 40 demerits, the athlete will not play the 1st quarter (or 1st part of the half depending on the sport) of the next available game. This only applies to that game. If an athlete were to receive 50 demerits, they will not be able to play the first half of the next available game. This only applies to that game as well. Once 75 demerits is accrued, the athlete will be suspended for the entirety of the next game, and the athlete must meet with the Athletic Director for a conduct evaluation.
- Once an athlete has collected 40 demerits, they will be required to fulfill a service project for a week that will be assigned by the Athletic Director. If the athlete were to accrue 50 demerits, another week of service projects will be assigned to the athlete. If 75 demerits are accrued by the athlete, a mandatory 2 weeks of service projects will be assigned to the student athlete. Service projects include but are not limited to: mopping and sweeping the gym floor, cleaning behind the gym bleachers, pulling weeds around the property, and other duties assigned. Service projects will not last longer than an hour per day and will not be required more than 5 days in the week.
- If 50 demerits are given at one time, the athlete will not be allowed to play in the game.

- If 100 demerits are accumulated, the athlete is off the team for that sport. The consequence for demerits between 50 and 100 will be determined by the administration and the AD.
- A player suspended or dismissed from a team may appeal the decision to the executive committee consisting of the Athletic Director, the Principal, and a High School Teacher. The committee's decision is final.
- An athlete ejected from a game will be subject to discipline. During a season, an athlete who earns four technical fouls (or cards) will be suspended from the next two games. A fifth technical foul or card may disqualify him for the rest of the season. The player will be able to appeal if they so choose.
- The coach and the Athletic Director hold the right to remove any player from the team for disciplinary reasons. Bullying, foul language, destruction of equipment, bad attitudes, rebellion, and other actions similar to those listed will not be tolerated and could be grounds for dismissal from the team.

Away Game Pick-Up Policy:

Away Games Pick-Up Policy: Athletes are required to be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the arrival back to campus.
1st Offense: Warning; 2nd Offense: Suspension of one game

Transportation:

The members of a team will in most instances travel to an away game on a vehicle that is owned and operated by school staff. Should there not be enough space in one vehicle, the members of the team will split up into two vehicles owned and operated by school staff. Students may also be transported in privately owned vehicles driven by parents holding a valid state driver's license. All transportation must be approved by the athletic director.

Athletes may travel back to Florence with their parents after the game, or they may ride the bus/van. The athlete must notify the coach before the end of the game that he is leaving with his parents. An athlete may ride with the parent of another athlete provided there is permission from both parents. If a parent wants their child to ride with another party, it is that parent's responsibility to coordinate that with the Athletic Director **before** the game. The members of the team will all dress in the manner prescribed by the coach while in route to the game.

Electronic Devices

Playing music or using speakers, earbuds, or headphones are not allowed during any practice at MCS.

Uniforms and Equipment:

Athletes are responsible to return any uniform or equipment to the coach in good shape within a week after the season is over. Athletes will not be allowed to participate in the next sport if the uniform is not returned. Should uniforms or equipment be lost, damaged, or not returned in the allotted time due to neglect or foolishness, there will be a $150 replacement charge added to the student's school account.

Athletes are to wear their uniform top with appropriate pants/skirts on game day unless their coach specifies otherwise.

Awards and Special Events:

An Athletic Awards Assembly will be held during the month of May, conducted by the Athletic Director. Coaches will announce the winners of awards in each sport. These awards include: MVP, Coaches Award, and Most Improved.

- Outstanding student-athletes will be recognized at the Athletic Awards Banquet. The first award is the All-American award. Those student-athletes who exemplify all-around athletic ability, leadership, Christian character and strong academic success, along with having participated in at least three sports will be named to the MCS All-American Team.
- The most outstanding athlete will be awarded the Bulldog Award, the highest award in MCS athletics. This award will also be presented at the Athletic Awards Banquet.

Parents and Others:

There are some important standards that should be maintained:

1. Don't criticize. This is not the job of the fan. Fans come to support the players and coaches without being critical and harsh. Also, don't criticize the coach in front of the athlete. It is never good to tear down authority in front of your children. Handle disagreements privately and responsibly. We will not tolerate a parent being cruel to a coach, and we will respond accordingly.
2. Comments to officials, opposing team members, our coaches, and our guests should be positive. Speaking offensively to anyone is certainly not keeping with a good testimony and does nothing to further the cause of our school. Furthermore, when adults choose to speak and act immaturely, they simply embarrass their children and everyone around them.
3. At no time may a fan enter the court, with the exception of a serious injury of their own child. When a parent enters the court a penalty can be called against the team, and the parent may be asked to leave the game. The referee can eject a fan at any time for unruly conduct, such as, yelling at referees, players, the opposing team's fans, inappropriate language or disrespect of coaches, referees, or other players. Any unsportsmanlike incident on the court will be

resolved by the referee and head coach. Any parent or fan dismissed from a game for disorderly conduct will be required to meet with administration before being allowed to attend future games.

4. We all need to realize that the outcome of the game is not as important as the lessons that our young people are learning from the experience of playing and being part of a team. Long after the score is forgotten, our behavior and our reputation are remembered.
5. Take time to be appreciative. Proverbs 25:11 states, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Remember, the coaches of your children are taking their time to mentor your kids. This time could be spent doing other things. Although you may not always agree with their decisions, appreciate the fact they are willing to put in many hours so your child can mature and grow.
6. MCS students, coaches, and assistants must understand and show character by winning without boasting and losing without becoming bitter. We are never to demean other schools, coaches, or players.

MCS Athletic Handbook Agreement

Please sign and return this page to the school office.

I have read the athletic handbook in its entirety and understand that I am responsible for what I have read.

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Student signature and date

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Parent signature and date