



# Athletic Handbook

# Introduction

Dear Parents and Student Athletes,

Jonathan Edwards Classical Academy exists to assist Christian families in rearing their children to be lifelong learners who, with wisdom and beauty, shape and influence their worlds for Christ.

This same mission is used in our athletic program as well. We know that God has created all of our students uniquely, equipping them with their own gifts and skills. Athletics is a great way for young men and women to discover their talents. We want to create a culture and environment that is welcoming to that discovery.

We recognize that school athletics is an excellent and safe place for students to learn some of the important life lessons. Examples of these life lessons are what it feels like to work hard towards a specific goal, to learn how to win graciously, and how to lose graciously, all the while shining their lights for Christ.

To this end, our athletic program is and should be a ministry. We want our athletes to be used by God to witness to others, and to be ambassadors for Christ and JECA. Therefore, while the school has the responsibility to provide a program of excellence, our student athletes also have the responsibility to represent themselves, their families, school, and community in a manner reflective of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the expectations of the administration and coaching staff. This handbook is designed to spell out the expectations of all members of our athletic community.

Please review the entire athletic handbook very carefully. All student athletes will be held under the code of conduct during their entire season, as well as off-season. Please keep this handbook as a reference for future use. If you have any questions or comments on this handbook or in any aspect of our athletic program, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you!

JECA Athletics

# Athletic Eligibility

## *Academic Eligibility*

All athletes must maintain a 70% class average in all classes at all times. Failure to do so will result in probation from the team. Grades will be checked by the athletic director every couple weeks during the season on scheduled days. These grade check days will be coordinated with the Academic Dean and Athletic Director and can be found on the JECA Archers Athletics Calendar. An athlete on his/her first academic probation may not participate in meets/games for two weeks. A second academic probation means no participation in meets/games for four weeks. Before being reinstated to a team, an athlete on academic probation must obtain a grade verification form from the athletic director. The athlete is to give this form to his/her teachers and have the teachers fill in the grade and sign the form. *The athlete is to acquire grades and signatures at the teachers' convenience.* After all grades have been received, the athlete is to give the form to the athletic director for evaluation. If the proper improvements have been made, the athlete may return to the team at that time. **A third academic probation will result in removal from the team.**

If a student receives a failing grade in a class on any end of the quarter's progress report, he/she will be ineligible to participate in athletic games until the fifth week of the following quarter. A mid-quarter progress report will take place after the fourth week of the following quarter to determine eligibility. This ineligible period applies to weeks when JECA's classes are in session; therefore, all students may participate in summer camps, etc.

As an example, if a basketball player's final grade in a class during the first quarter is below a 70, they are ineligible to play until the fifth week of the second quarter. They may be reinstated at that time if all that quarter's grades have stayed above a 70. As another example, if a student fails a class during the fourth quarter, they must wait until the fifth week of the first quarter to be reinstated to the cross country, volleyball, or golf teams. (They will still be able to practice.)

## *Participation of Homeschool Students*

As we have been developing JECA's sports program, we have traditionally allowed homeschool students to participate to help our school fill a roster, and secondarily, to be competitive. As we are growing, we will still allow homeschool students to participate in JECA athletics, adhering to TSSAA's participation bylaws which state: *A minimum of 70% of the athletes on any given team must be full time students attending the school for which they are playing on a daily basis. A maximum of 30% of the athletes on a given team may be homeschoolers.* Please be aware that homeschoolers' sports fees will be slightly higher than JECA students' sports fees.

## ***Athletic Attendance Policy***

All athletes are expected to attend all practices, even if they aren't participating due to an injury. Athletes who miss practice or are late may have to make up practice activities and face the team's policy for reduction in playing time. This is not meant as a punishment for an excusable absence, but as a reward and incentive to those team members who were present. A team member who must miss a practice or game may return to their former status as soon as they have fulfilled the team's policy for absences (This policy will be set forth by the team's coach). If absences or tardies are excessive or chronic, a player may be removed from the team.

All those involved in the athletic program must arrive at school by 11:00 a.m. each day in order to be eligible to participate in a practice or game scheduled for that day. The only exceptions are a previously scheduled doctor or dentist appointment, or a previously scheduled commitment approved by the administrator. If a student is sick and does not attend school, or goes home early from school due to illness, that student may not attend a game or practice scheduled on that day. Furthermore, if a student is well at school, but becomes sick before game time, they should also not participate in the game.

## **Forms & Fees**

Students must turn in all sports fees (amount dependent on the sport being played) and forms on or before the first practice date. The following necessary forms must be turned in to the JECA office on or before the first practice date:

- Sports Physical Form
- JECA Emergency Contact Form
- JECA Athletic Participation Acknowledgement Form
- NFHS Concussion Awareness/Acknowledgement Form (new to 2022-23)
- NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness/Acknowledgement Form (new to 2022-23)

Students who fail to turn in the above listed forms on or before the first practice date will not be allowed to participate in practices, games, or matches until all forms are received. Failure to turn in forms may also result in a further probationary period assigned at each coach's discretion.

# Codes of Conduct and Dress

## *Athlete Code of Conduct*

Just as Paul urges the Ephesians to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which [they] have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1- 3), so we urge our students to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of Christ.

This expectation extends to our student athletes. We want our athletes to uphold the highest form of sportsmanship, humility, and grace at all times—on or off the track or court. Our aim is for our athletes to be a shining example of Christ's love and sacrifice at all times, and to yearn for truth, beauty, and goodness in all aspects of their sport. We want our athletes to diminish the importance of themselves with their concern for others. We also desire that our athletes always have an attitude of striving to do their best for themselves and their teammates, even when they face challenges. Overall, they should be ambassadors for Christ, and for JECA.

To that end...

- Athletes should be respectful and encouraging to their teammates and opposing team members at all times both on and off the field. Any type of insults, name calling, or "tearing down" of another player will not be tolerated.
- Athletes should be respectful of the game, meet, or match venues by always making sure to clean up any trash or other belongings before leaving. They should treat the locker rooms, bleachers, bathrooms, etc. with respect and care, leaving them better than they found them.
- Athletes should be courteous by thanking members of the other team, coaches, and officials for their part in the game.
- Athletes should never "stoop to the level" of another team that is not behaving in a Christ-like, respectful manner, remembering always to shine Christ's light into the darkness.
- Athletes should remember that winning games, while exciting and fun, is not the primary end of athletic endeavors. Christians participate in sports to take dominion over the inner desires and skills God has created within us, thereby worshiping God with our bodies. Participating in athletics has many practical benefits, especially when they are pursued first as a sacrifice of praise to God with a humble and contrite heart.
- Athletes should come to practices and games with an attitude of readiness to put in the hard work to improve and better themselves. They should never have an "uncoachable" or "unteachable" attitude. They should recognize that there is always room for improvement.

**Note:** Coaches are allowed to remove student-athletes from athletics, being practice or games, due to misconduct on or off the playing field. Further disciplinary action may also be taken.

## ***Parent Code of Conduct***

Just as we expect our athletes to be shining examples of Christ, we expect our parents and fans to be the same for our athletes. What this looks like practically is for our parents to:

- Understanding parent help is required for tasks like ticket-taking, concession stands, refilling water, occasionally helping with practices, providing snacks/meals for athletes, driving other students to/from meets/games etc.
- Parents and spectators are expected to act as leading examples to student athletes by complying with rules and procedures. Continual misconduct can result in further conversation.
- Realize that athletics are part of an educational experience, and the benefits of involvement go beyond the final score of a game.
- Encourage our athletes to perform their best, while discouraging egotism and other “puffed up” behavior.
- Participate in positive cheering that encourages ALL the athletes, and discourage any cheers that would redirect that focus, including those that taunt and intimidate opponents, their fans, and officials.
- Learn, understand, and respect the rules of the game, the officials that administer them, and their decisions. Members of the JECA school family should not question or pester the officials.
- Respect the task our coaches face as teachers, and support them as they strive to educate.
- Respect our opponents as student athletes made in God’s image, and acknowledge them for striving to do their best.
- Go to the coach directly (and privately) if you have a question or concern about your athlete or the coach’s decision making. Refrain from discussing troubling matters with other players or parents. If your question or concern takes place on a game day, sleep on it first, and talk to the coach the following day.
- Make a concerted effort to be in the stands supporting your child as often as possible.

## ***Coaches Code of Conduct***

We expect our coaches to maintain all the standards and expectations of our athletes and parents. We expect that our coaches will strive to coach in a manner worthy of Christ's calling for leaders, setting excellent examples for our athletes in attitude, actions, responsibility, and speech. All coaches should be ambassadors for JECA. We recognize that coaches have an enormous responsibility to not only set good examples for our athletes, but to also keep them safe. What this looks like practically is that our coaches should:

- Know that athletes are always watching, and act as a role model to promote a healthy, Christ-led lifestyle for athletes to follow.
- Respect and support contest officials. The coach should not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials.
- Realize that athletics are part of an educational experience, and the benefits of involvement go beyond the final score of a game.
- Encourage our athletes to perform their best, while discouraging egotism and other "puffed up" behavior.
- Pray for and with their athletes.
- Have high expectations for their athletes, on and off the field or court. Encourage and expect behavior that is above reproach. Encourage all athletes in their academic endeavors, and support teachers and administration in their academic goals for students. Do not exert pressure on faculty members to give student athletes special consideration.
- Learn the game that they are coaching well, in order to be excellent teachers to our athletes in all matters of rules and skill.
- Meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.
- Teach all athletes equally, regardless of skill. (This does not mean, however, that all athletes will be guaranteed equal playing time in games.)
- Take seriously injuries and illnesses of athletes, and make sure they get proper care.
- Complete Sudden Cardiac Arrest training and AED training each year before their respective season starts.
- Remain after practice and games until all players have been picked up and accounted for. Leave their practice/game facility better than they found it, cleaning up all practice/game supplies, making sure all lights are turned off, and all doors and gates are locked. In the case of meals before games, make sure all chairs/tables have been put back in place, floors have been swept, tables wiped, dishes washed, etc. If you bring chairs to the gym from another room in the school, make sure they are put back and set up correctly.
- Be good communicators; make sure all parents and athletes are informed of practice and game dates, and informed quickly when those things are changed or rescheduled.

## ***Dress Code***

We desire to maintain the same modest dress expectations in sports as we do in our school uniforms. For all our athletes, including those joining us by homeschool, we require they follow the JECA dress code. This includes the hair and grooming standards set forth in the JECA student handbook. To that end, please adhere to the following dress code:

### *Practice Attire for Athletes and Coaches*

- *Gentlemen* - Shorts and athletic pants should fit well and not be “sagging.” Sleeveless shirts may be worn, but should not have excessive arm holes, and should not be see-through or mesh. Appropriate athletic socks and footwear should be worn at all times.
- *Ladies* - Shorts should be 5 inch inseam or fingertip length at all times. Leggings or spandex shorts may not be worn (unless underneath shorts that come below fingertip length). Sleeveless shirts may be worn, but bra straps should be covered at all times. Shirts should not be see-through or mesh or have oversized arm holes. Appropriate athletic socks and footwear should be worn at all times.
- **Failure to adhere to this dress code will result in the loss of practice privileges for that day.**

### *Game Day Attire*

In all game, meet, or match situations, the modesty guidelines for practices also apply. Other considerations:

- Athletic socks should match the uniform.
- Undershirts should be the same color as the jersey and have hemmed sleeves and neck.
- Ladies’ hair accessories should match the uniform, and hair should be pulled back neatly.
- No jewelry of any kind may be worn.



### *Travel Attire*

Each coach will determine what athletes should wear upon arrival to each game, meet, or match. Athletes should adhere gladly and completely to their coach's policy. If athletes will not be arriving/leaving their games or meets in their game attire or official warm-ups, then they should adhere to following guidelines:

- *Gentlemen:* Wear your school uniform or something similar (such as khaki pants and a polo or button up shirt). Shirts should be tucked in, and belts should be worn. Jeans of any kind will not be considered "dress" pants.
- *Ladies:* Wear your school uniform or something similar. Khaki or dress pants and a nice dress shirt with dress shoes would also be acceptable. Pants should not be tight, and jeans of any kind will not be considered "dress" pants.

### *Game Attire for Coaches*

Coaches should either wear JECA sports attire to games, adhering to modesty guidelines, or dress in something similar to the athletes' travel attire.

## **Overview of Athletic Offerings**

### *Athletic Offerings by Grade Level*

JECA's athletic offerings vary according to grade level. The breakdown of athletic offerings by grade is listed below:

- Cross Country (Co-ed) - K-12th grades
- Girls' Volleyball (3 Levels) - 6th-8th grade, JV 9th-12th, or Varsity 9-12th grade
- Boys' Basketball (2 Levels) - 6th-8th grade or 9th-12th grade

## ***Tryouts, Practice, and Tournament Details for Each Sport***

### *Cross Country*

- No tryouts required
- Season: August-October
- Students in grades 3-12 must complete a summer running commitment on their own. Distances/times to be run are dependent upon grade level.
- Students in grades K-2 have one practice a week after school and 1 meet per week. Their race distance is a half mile.
- Students in grades 3-5 have 3-4 practices a week after school and 1 meet per week. Their race distance is 1 mile.
- Students in grades 6-8 have 3-4 practices a week after school and 1 meet per week. Their race distance is 2 miles.
- Students in grades 9-12 have 3-4 practices a week after school and 1 meet per week. Their race distance is 5 kilometers.

### *Girls' Volleyball*

- Tryouts held each spring\*
- 6-8th grade Camp may be held in the summer, and athletes will be expected to attend unless the family is traveling.
- Camp attendance is expected at the Varsity level. Dates will be communicated in the spring.
- Season: August- October. Practices start in the summer.
- Practices will be 4 days/week.
- Games may be scheduled four days a week instead of practices (not Wednesday).
- Parents are expected to transport or arrange transportation for their athlete(s) to all away games.

### *Boys' and Girls' Basketball*

- Tryouts are held the summer before and during the first week of the season, as needed
- Season: October-March. Practices start in October, with possible camps/practices in the summer.
- Practices will be 4-5 days/week.
- When games start, they will typically be 2-3 nights per week. Practices will not be held on game days.
- Parents are expected to transport or arrange transportation for their athlete(s) to all away games.

***\*Note: If new-to-JECA students enroll after tryouts are over for basketball or volleyball, they may participate in the first week of practice as a try-out period.***

# Game Day Travel

To ensure their safety, student-athletes are **not** permitted to drive themselves or others to the games for away or travel games. Parents and students must arrange their children's transportation to and from away games. Exceptions to this rule are only with written consent from parents or guardians delivered to the Athletic Director 8 hours before travel. Athletes are expected to arrive **no later than 30 minutes before** the game begins.

For home games on the JECA campus, student-athletes competing in that day's activities are not to leave campus once the game begins without communicating with their coach.

Failure to adhere to these rules is subject to discipline by the coach. Continued misconduct will result in removal from the athletic team.

# Medical Considerations

## *Sports Physical*

All student-athletes must have a sports physical before they are allowed to participate in practices or games. The sports physical must be completed **BEFORE** the team's first practice date. Sports physicals expire after one calendar year. Please turn in a COPY of the actual physical, not the primary print you receive from your doctor.

## *Injury and Return to Play Protocol*

When a student-athlete is injured, whether major or minor, written communication to the coach must happen before the student-athlete can return to play. This written communication is preferred to be from their doctor, but can be from a parent or legal guardian for minor injuries. If no communication is put in writing directly to the coach, the student-athlete may lose playing time and/or be unable to participate.

## *Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs*

*What is sudden cardiac arrest?*

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is when the heart stops beating suddenly and unexpectedly. When this happens, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs. SCA doesn't just happen to adults, it takes the lives of students, too. However, the causes of sudden cardiac arrest in students and adults can be different. A youth athlete's SCA will likely result from an inherited condition, while an adult's SCA may be caused by either inherited or lifestyle issues. SCA is NOT a heart attack. A heart attack may cause SCA, but they are not the same. A heart attack is caused by a blockage that stops the flow of blood to the heart. SCA is a malfunction in the heart's electrical system, causing the heart to suddenly stop beating.

*How common is sudden cardiac arrest in the United States?*

SCA is the number one cause of death for adults in this country. There are about 300,000 cardiac arrests outside hospitals each year. About 2,000 patients under 25 die of SCA each year. It is the number one cause of death for student athletes.

*Are there warning signs?*

Although SCA happens unexpectedly, some people may have signs or symptoms, such as:

- fainting or seizures during exercise

- unexplained shortness of breath
- dizziness
- extreme fatigue
- chest pains
- racing heart

These symptoms can be unclear in athletes since people often confuse these warning signs with physical exhaustion. SCA can be prevented if the underlying causes can be diagnosed and treated.

*What are the risks of practicing or playing after experiencing these symptoms?*

There are risks associated with continuing to practice or play after experiencing these symptoms. When the heart stops, so does the blood that flows to the brain and other vital organs. Death or permanent brain damage can occur in just a few minutes. Most people who experience SCA die from it.

*Public Chapter 325 – the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act*

The act is intended to keep youth athletes safe while practicing or playing. The requirements of the act are:

- All youth athletes and their parents or guardians must read and sign this form. It must be returned to the school **before** participation in any athletic activity. A new form must be signed and returned *each school year*.
- The immediate removal of any youth athlete who passes out or faints while participating in an athletic activity or who exhibits any of the following symptoms:
  - (i) Unexplained shortness of breath
  - (ii) Chest pains
  - (iii) Dizziness
  - (iv) Racing heart rate
  - (v) Extreme fatigue
- Establish a policy that a youth athlete who has been removed from play shall not return to the practice or competition during which the youth athlete experienced symptoms consistent with sudden cardiac arrest.
- Before returning to practice or play in an athletic activity, the athlete must be evaluated by a Tennessee-licensed medical doctor or an osteopathic physician. Clearance to full or graduated return to practice or **play must be in writing**. *Adapted from PA Department of Health: Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs Information Sheet and Acknowledgement of Receipt and Review Form. 7/2013*

# Athletic Participation Acknowledgement Form\*

## Athletes and Parents

Name of Student-Athlete: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have reviewed and understood the symptoms and warning signs of SCA.*

Signature of Student-Athlete: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have read the JECA Athletic Handbook in its entirety and agree to comply and abide by the regulations and standards it sets forth.*

Signature of Student-Athlete: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*This form is valid for one calendar year.*

# Coaches' Acknowledgement Form\*

Coaches Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have taken the NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest course and understand the symptoms and warning signs of SCA.*

Signature of Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Please provide the athletic director with a copy of your certificate. (Paper or PDF is fine.)*

*I have taken the NFHS Concussion in Sports course and understand the symptoms and warning signs of SCA.*

Signature of Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Please provide the athletic director with a copy of your certificate. (Paper or PDF is fine.)*

*I have watched the video for AED training or taken the AED course, and know where JECA's AED is located, and how to use it if needed.*

Signature of Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have read the JECA Athletic Handbook in its entirety, and I agree to comply and abide by the regulations and standards it sets forth.*

Signature of Coach: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*This form is valid for one calendar year.*