

LCA Athletic Department Handbook



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Smyrna, TN

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Department Philosophy

"Sports remain a great metaphor for life's more difficult lessons. It was through athletics that many of us first came to understand that fear can be tamed; that on a team the whole is more than the sum of its parts; and that the ability to be heroic lies, to a surprising degree, within." These are the words of Susan Casey, world class female athlete. Her statement speaks quite cogently and profoundly concerning the true value of sports---as an avenue towards maturity and self-confidence through determination, effort, and teamwork. The apostle Paul understood that athletics serves as a model for how the Christian life should be lived. He wrote, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." (I Cor 9) The lessons to be learned from sports have the potential to help mold our students into well-rounded adults---physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

The Lancaster Christian Academy athletic program exists to glorify God by providing opportunities to students to develop skills, self-esteem and self-confidence through sports, so that they can reach their greatest potential and develop lifetime skills that will help them now and in future years.



The Value of Athletics

- Athletics teach students the value of working with teammates in order to reach the goal of success. Every good team understands the importance of teamwork. The Bible tells us that “If two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, the two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.” (Ecclesiastes 4:11-13) It is biblical to unite with other believers to meet a common objective! The value of group effort is emphasized throughout the Bible, and athletics is a practical way to illustrate this practice.
- Self-discipline is an essential element of a successful athlete. Even the most gifted of athletes must maintain good health, work to reach peak physical condition, and diligently practice their sport in order to improve their performance. Athletes learn very quickly that they often must rely upon only themselves to meet these goals. As students develop athletic self-discipline, the habits of hardwork are sown into their physical and spiritual lives.
- Athletics, particularly at a Christian institution, demand the highest level of sportsmanship. Students learn to both win AND lose graciously, as ultimately God alone is responsible for our athletic gifts. Students who learn the value of good sportsmanship will develop into Christians who can find joy in both good and bad situations, can accept failure and defeat, and are humble when they find success.
- Praise and discipline are important components of an athletic team. Athletes must learn how to humbly accept praise and openly receive criticism while remaining respectful of coaches, teammates, administrators, and referees. The respect insisted upon by coaches often carries over to the home, the classroom, and the church. Just as Paul warns Christians to obey those in authority, this lesson can be aptly demonstrated on the athletic field in the coach-athlete relationship.
- God has given us, his children, great gifts that he expects us to use. For many believers, athleticism is a gift from God. Christ warns us in the Gospels that we are not to bury our gifts, or we may lose them. As a Christian institution it behooves us to help our students recognize their gifts and abilities and then assist them in using them; this includes athletic gifts. By allowing students to utilize the blessings given them by God, He is ultimately glorified.



Academic/Discipline Eligibility Policy

As a Christian academic institution, LCA's priorities will always remain education and the promotion of Christ-like values. That said, athletics will necessarily take a backseat to the school's main objectives under all circumstances. Students must be spiritually and academically successful in order to be awarded the privilege of competing in athletics. The following is the academic/discipline policy for the 2005-2006 athletic season that will maintain the emphases the school exists to promote:

- Grade reports on athletes will be submitted on a weekly basis. Students with an “F” in any class, during any point of the season, shall be deemed ineligible to practice or participate in games for one week and until the grade is brought to a passing level. Additionally, students with two “D's” will be deemed ineligible for one week and until they have raised at least one “D” to a “C-” or higher. Athletes who receive a suspension will be placed on probationary status for three weeks following the incident, during which time they may be dismissed from the team if their grades again fall below the acceptable standards.
- Christian character must be exhibited on the field of play at all times. An athlete called for a technical foul or ejected from a contest shall be suspended from the team for a minimum of two games and a maximum of a season-long suspension, pending the severity of the infraction.
- Any athlete sent to the office will be ineligible to practice or play during the day of the incident. Any action taken by the school (i.e. suspension) will necessarily extend to the practice and athletic field. For minor infractions, coaches will have discretion as to how to punish athletes (i.e. extra practice, loss of playing time, etc).
- Student-athletes are often looked upon with respect and admiration. Thus, a great deal is to be expected from LCA students when competing at another institution. Any student who brings embarrassment to the school or has to be disciplined while on an athletic trip is subject to the discipline penalties of a normal school day.



Department Contacts

If a family event or outside activity conflicts with a practice or a game, athletes or their parents should contact the appropriate coach or the athletic director promptly.

Should conflict arise between an athlete and a coach, please contact the athletic director to arrange a meeting with all parties.

Website: www.lancasterchristianacademy.com/knightathletics.html

Email: knightathletics@lancasterchristianacademy.com

Phone: (615) 223-0451

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Athletic Opportunities

Cross Country: Open to students in grades 6-12. Cross country begins in August and concludes in October. Junior high athletes will compete on a 1.5 mile course and varsity runners will race on a 3.2 mile course.

Basketball: Open to students in grades 3-12. Third through fifth grade students will compete in an in-school recreational league during the winter, with the possibility of competing in some multi-school tournaments. The junior high and varsity teams will begin practice in October and their season will run through February/March. Junior high students may try out for the high school varsity team if they wish.

Cheerleading: Offered to all girls and boys in grades 6-12. There will be a middle school squad comprised of grades 5-8 and a high school squad for grades 9-12. Cheerleading sponsors will determine the hours of practice required and the commitment to attendance at basketball games. Cheerleading is considered a physical and mental commitment equal to any sport at Lancaster Christian Academy. Knight cheerleaders are valued as an integral part of our basketball program.

Tennis: Open to students in grades 9-12. Tennis season runs from March to May. Students will compete against a full regular season schedule, as well as several tournaments.



Transportation

LANCASTER ACADEMY REQUIRES MEMBERS OF ATHLETIC TEAMS TO USE SCHOOL PROVIDED TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM ALL AWAY GAMES AND OFF- CAMPUS PRACTICE AND GAME SITES.

Exceptions may be made in the following circumstances:

1. Parents or parent-designated adults may transport team members home after off site practices or games. Parents or guardians must notify the coach that the student has a ride home. Other team members may ride home with the adult with prior written or verbal permission from their parent or guardian.
2. On the recommendation of team coaches and the athletic director, the principal of the middle and high school may allow a student to drive his or her private vehicle to a practice or game, however parents must grant written or verbal permission to the coach or athletic director.
3. Exception must be requested in writing by the parent or guardian on a case-by-case basis and approved in advance. An eligible driver may request to drive to a specific practice site for the entire season. If a request to drive to a practice site for an entire season is approved, the athletic director, principal of the middle and upper school may revoke that approval at any time during that season. Requests to drive to all game sites for an entire season will not be approved. No other student may ride in the vehicle of a student granted permission to drive to practice or game sites. The student may drive other students from the practice or game site to home with the written permission of the parent of the student riders. Written permission is to be given to the coach or Athletic Director.
4. When the practice or game is on a weekend or other day when school is not in session, the athletic director may approve a team coach's recommendation to have team members arrange their own transportation to games and practices. This exception must be approved in advance. Team members and parents must be notified in timely fashion.



Athletic Physicals

All athletes must have a completed athletic waiver on file before being permitted to participate in any athletic event. This form waives all liability on the part of LCA in the event of injury, illness, etc. Athletes must also complete an athletic physical under a medical doctor each school year. LCA offers free athletic physicals periodically throughout the school year.

Safety

The Athletic Department strives to provide students a safe and enjoyable environment in which to participate. Consequently, all coaches and administrative personnel have a responsibility to reduce and/ or eliminate all potential safety hazards. It is vital to understand that participation in athletics involves inherent risks. Coaches and administrative personnel are obligated to act in a prudent manner in order to prevent foreseeable accidents and injuries.

Supervision of Athletes

A qualified adult must supervise all athletic areas in use. The areas include the gym, weight room, and all athletic fields. Athletes may not work out or participate in any unsupervised activity. Coaches have a duty to supervise the members of their team. This involves always being physically present at practice. In an emergency, if the coach needs to leave the gym or field, he or she will instruct the players to stop action until his or her return. All students are required to follow the coach's direction to stop playing. All athletes must be properly supervised during practice, and while traveling to and from an athletic event and games. Coaches must remain with the players until all transportation needs are met after all practices and games.

