

Family Christian Academy



Athletics Handbook
2026-2027

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Therefore, whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, do it all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31 –

Introduction

Here at Family Christian Academy, we strive to teach our athletes lessons that will translate into their daily lives. Our goal at FCA is to teach our athletes to glorify God in everything they do (1 Cor. 10:31). The purpose of this handbook is to provide necessary information for students, parents, and coaches, thereby creating consistency with the standards set forth by our athletic department. Athletes and parents should take the time to read this manual and understand the guidelines established by the FCA Athletics Department.

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Forest A. Wood, AD

Mission Statement

FCA considers participation in athletics a privilege, not a right. Athletics are an integral part of a student's overall educational experience, providing essential tools for social growth and development among our student-athletes. We aim to provide our student body with a competitive interscholastic athletic program, foster a strong spirit of excellence among our athletes, and enhance their physical abilities and Christian character. It is up to each student to grasp the lessons they are taught in each sport offered.

The mission of our athletic department is to glorify God through the discipleship of student-athletes and to teach the pursuit of excellence in each sport.

Values

We aim to foster a winning environment by displaying a positive attitude and offering daily encouragement to those under our leadership. Caring for our athletes on a personal level helps them understand that we have their best interests at heart and that we genuinely want what is best for their teams. **Good sportsmanship means respecting others at all times** and in every circumstance. This includes behavior toward our coaches, opposing teams, and fans at sporting events. Defiance and disrespect will not be tolerated in our program.

We want our athletes to promote and encourage **honesty, integrity, humility, loyalty**, and overall character development for their own betterment. These traits are non-negotiable and are essential to building a **team**. We aim to cultivate a commitment to excellence among our student-athletes—success in athletics results from coaches and athletes going the extra mile for their teams. Your best effort is always expected in everything you do for your coach and your team.

Coaches

FCA coaches are an essential component of the athletic program. They are both teachers and active participants in our sports programs. Our coaches are also responsible for modeling Christ-like behavior and attitude at all times.

To be effective coaches and role models, our coaches must possess a thorough knowledge of their respective sports, be capable of detailed preparation, motivate athletes, and work effectively under the authority of the athletic director and the school administration.

Our coaches take their role in molding our young athletes into strong and competitive individuals seriously. Coaches help our athletes understand how to win with humility and lose with dignity. Our coaches should advocate for their sport and serve as positive Christian role models.

Parents

All parents of our student-athletes have an equal responsibility to their children and the team. With robust parental support, the student-athlete will be able to reach their full potential for the team. The parents (legal Guardians) need to provide positive reinforcement and understand their role as team parents. Parents and players should always support the coaches and their fellow players.

Parents are spectators, not coaches or referees. To create a stable sports environment, parents must respect the authority of coaches and referees. Parents also need to allow the Lord to guide their actions and attitudes during sporting events, at FCA, or abroad.

Athletes

FCA athletes should strive to do their best and put 100% effort into all sports they choose to participate in. Student-athletes must demonstrate personal discipline, be respectful in all situations, maintain self-control, retain humility, and pursue excellence in their performance, both on and off the field, within the allotted time, and in their interactions with officials and opponents. Responsibility ultimately rests with the athlete alone. The student-athlete is responsible for their attitude and their actions toward their parents, coaches, teammates, and opponents. The student-athlete is responsible for all communication from the team and coach to the parents, whether verbal or written.

Fans and Spectators

FCA students and parents need to be aware of the school's standards, but they also need to be informed about our expectations of them as spectators. Whenever you attend an FCA athletic event, we strive to maintain a respectful crowd. Please follow the rules listed to make our sports experience a pleasant one. Please refrain from criticizing. Fans sometimes think they **‘know better’** and blame the officials and coaches. It is not your job as a spectator to criticize anything at our sporting events. Please support and encourage all who are involved.

All comments to opposing teams, their members, and officials should be positive. Please note that the word 'Christian' means 'Christ-like'. We are a family here at FCA, and we should always strive to bear testimony of Christ-likeness. Regardless of how the opposing team behaves, we must choose to rise above the norm and display the best attitude at sporting events to support our team. Long after the score is forgotten, our behavior and reputation will be remembered.

Athletic Requirements

ALL students must complete **all required documents** before they are allowed to try out for our sports teams for the school year. To try out for a team, a student must submit a completed/ signed FCA Permission Slip for Team Tryouts and hand it to the coach conducting the tryout. Students will not be permitted to try out without the signed permission slip. **NO** students are allowed to practice or play until they have fulfilled this requirement. These clearances cover all school and SSAA requirements. Once a student has completed all their clearances, they can be added to a sports team's roster.

Below is a list of the documents that must be signed and turned in before an athlete can play on the court or on the field:

1. Sports Liability Release Form
2. Parent Sports Permission Form
3. Sports Physical with ECG (must be from SSAA: CRF-1 & 4 SSAA physical exam forms)
4. Athletic Handbook Agreement (last page of the Athletic Handbook/school website)

Once you have made the roster to play on a team, you are committed to that team until the last game of the season is completed. Athletes are required to attend all practices and games. Still, they may be excused for some of the following reasons: family tragedy, unforeseen accidents, sickness (with a doctor's note), or 'special' permission from the coach. It is the athlete's responsibility to contact the head coach (first option) or athletic director (second option) to let them know of any absence. Do not tell someone else to transfer the message to the coach for you. Talk directly to the coach when these circumstances arise.

Athletes must be on time for all practices and games. Being tardy can cost an athlete a starting position or playing time. Please make every effort to attend all scheduled times for your team. Athletes are expected to maintain a strong Christian testimony both on and off the field. Students can be disciplined or removed from the team for tardiness, profanity, fighting, excessive detentions, suspension, a bad attitude, poor grades, or any behavior that the coaches or athletic director deem unbecoming of a Christian.

If a student quits after the season has started or is removed from the team, they WILL NOT receive a refund. This student may also not be eligible for the following sports season on any FCA team. Character is never built by quitting, even when things seem harsh. Students who habitually quit teams may be permanently disqualified from participating in sports.

Athletes may not 'bully' or 'haze' any other student or athlete for any reason. This behavior will not be tolerated at FCA. Any athlete kicked out of a game will also be suspended from the next game. Depending on the level of the offense, they may also suffer additional repercussions.

Any athlete who leaves school early may not be eligible to participate in a game that same day. If you need to leave early for a physician's appointment, please contact the athletic director to verify your eligibility for that day. Failure to do so will result in your not being able to play that day. Students must maintain a 2.0 grade point average to be student-athletes at FCA. Students cannot have an 'F' in any subject. Students should have reasonably good grades. FHSAA and SSAA hold the same standards.

God created each of us uniquely as male and female. With that in mind, we will follow the state law passed in July 2021, which stipulates that girls will play girls' sports and boys will play boys' sports. There will be no exceptions to this law.

Athletes must remember that they are playing their sport for their team, not for themselves. They are playing for FCA and not for themselves. They are here to represent the Lord Jesus Christ in the best manner possible. They are not here representing themselves. Athletes can be removed from any team, without compensation, for violating any of the rules or philosophies in this handbook or for any reason that the coaches or athletic director feel is inappropriate.

Playing Levels

All students who play at the high school level will be in grades 9 through 12. All students who play at the middle school level will be in grades 6 through 8.

Occasionally, an 8th-grade student may be able to play up a level (on the high school team) if they are an exceptional athlete and fit that level both mentally and physically. Most students will not be able to play up; this will be a rare exception.

Fifth graders may be permitted to try out for our middle school non-contact sports (cross country, tennis, or track). To participate, they must be pre-selected and pre-approved by the Athletic Director. There is a strict process in place, with referral as the only way for this to happen. There are no exceptions to this rule. A limited number of 5th-grade players will be approved per sport.

The process for applying for an exception for 5th and 8th graders:

1. An exception can be made only for the following sports: cross country, tennis, and track. This is because they are non-contact sports. Due to safety concerns, no exceptions will be considered.
2. Complete the "Request for Play Exception" form. This must be completed and submitted to the Athletic Director before tryouts.
3. On the "Request for Play Exception" form, obtain the student's and the parent's signatures, the head coach's signature, a detailed explanation of the reason for the request, and complete all other portions of the form.

4. Submit the form to Athletic Director Wood at Fwood@fcamustangs.org before tryouts.

Participation Requirements

Participation fees are essential to help fund our athletic events. Fees include but are not limited to athletic events, game officials, tournament fees, and transportation costs. The cost for one student to play is a \$200 sports fee. This one-time fee covers all sports for the entire year. Paying this one-time fee does not ensure a place on the team's rosters. Additional costs may occur if the teams want to get spirit shirts or warm-up clothes. If a sport can only accommodate 12 team members and 30 students try out, it's evident that some students will not make the team. A student will be charged only once when they are added to the roster for their first sport. Sports fees will be charged through FACTS. Before students are eligible to play, they must fulfill all athletic requirements and pay their sports fee.

Athletes Dress

Athletes are expected to follow the dress codes established by each coach in each sport. Whether an athlete is wearing clothes to a game, wearing warm-up garments, or in their uniform, they are expected to wear modest clothing. All clothing must be worn correctly and fit properly. All athletes are prohibited from wearing fake fingernails, jewelry, hair ties, or any other items that could cause harm to themselves or others during practice or games. As part of the team, athletes should wear their game shirts to school on game days, which shows school spirit and support for their fellow teammates.

Transportation

Athletes will be required to attend all away games together as a team. While riding the van, students are required to remain calm and quiet so they can focus on the task ahead. If tension arises during the ride, it can carry over into the game once students leave the van. While traveling in the van, athletes can wear earphones or earbuds, but they cannot play music out loud. All devices must be silent. Students are not allowed to play video games while in the van en route to a game. Students are allowed to do homework as long as they are quiet and do their own work. [When adequate transportation is unavailable, a team member may ride with a parent, provided the parent gives written permission to the school.](#) After the game ends, students can ride home with their parents, provided they notify the coach before leaving. **Students may leave only after notifying their coach.**

Uniforms and Equipment

Any uniform or equipment that is issued to an athlete is the property of FCA. Students must turn in their 'borrowed' items within one week of their season ending. Athletes may not be allowed to enter another sport until they have turned in their uniform from the previous sport. Lost or damaged equipment **will be charged** to the student. Athletic uniforms are only to be worn for

games or to school on game day. Students **are not** permitted to wear their uniforms at any time other than during school hours without special permission.

Homeschool Umbrella Program Students

Homeschool students who wish to participate in sports at FCA must meet the requirements established by our Homeschool Umbrella Program (HUP). Parents must visit our school [HUP](#) webpage to learn about the process of becoming an athlete at FCA and to apply online. Once this is done, a family interview will be scheduled. If approved, the student may try out for our many seasonal teams.

Awards

Athletes should be rewarded for their efforts during each season (Proverbs 3:27). Only athletes who finish the season with their team will be eligible for awards. The school will hold an athletic ceremony at the end of the year to recognize and award all athletes who have earned recognition and awards. All teammates will receive a participation certificate, but not all athletes will earn an award. All athletes are expected to attend the awards ceremony to receive their rewards. The awards ceremony is a formal affair, and students are expected to dress nicely.

Varsity Letters and Pins

High school students may earn a letter in varsity sports. Getting a letter in any sport is considered an honor for our athletes. Not every athlete receives a letter, and students must follow specific guidelines to be awarded one. Guidelines for a varsity letter are as follows: (1) the student must be on a high school varsity sports team; (2) the student must be a starter in 75% of the games for the season; and (3) the student must attend the majority of practices, games, and team activities (coach's discretion).

If you have any questions about our athletic program, please contact the athletic director. I will do my best to help. Thank you, and God bless.

Request for Play Exception Permission Form

Please complete this form to request a special exception for your child to play on a middle school non-contact team (5th grade) or a high school team (8th grade).

Section 1: Participant Information

Participant's Full Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Grade: _____

Sport: _____

Proposed League/Team for Exception: _____

Section 2: Parent/Guardian Information

Parent/Guardian Full Name: _____

Relationship to Participant: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Section 3: Reason for Exception Request

Please provide a detailed explanation for this request. Attach any supporting documentation, such as a coach's letter of recommendation, a progress report, and any other documentation you deem significant.

Reason for Request (Please be specific): _____

Checklist of Attached Documentation:

☐ Coach's recommendation (required)

☐ Progress Report- No D's or F's allowed (required)

☐ Other (Please specify): _____

Section 4: Acknowledgment and Agreement

I, the undersigned parent or guardian, understand and agree to the following:

- ☐ I have read and completed this form in its entirety.
- ☐ All information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- ☐ I understand that granting this exception is at the sole discretion of the athletic director and FCA and is not guaranteed.
- ☐ I assume all risks and responsibilities for my child's participation in the requested team, including all related injuries or accidents.
- ☐ By signing below, I grant permission for my child to be considered for a play exception and understand the terms of this request.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

For FCA Use Only

Date Received: _____

Decision:

☐ Approved

☐ Denied

☐ Pending Review

Notes: _____

AD Signature: _____

Date: _____

2026-27 Athletic Handbook Agreement

We have read and agree to support, abide by, and follow the procedures and policies of Family Christian Academy as outlined in this *Athletic Handbook*. This includes, but is not limited to, guidelines for attendance, behavior, transportation, and other policies that may be adopted or amended during the school year, as may be distributed in writing or emailed directly to the parent/guardian.

Student Name (print)

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Sport(s) Student is Planning on Trying Out For

- ☐ Girls Volleyball
- ☐ Boys Football
- ☐ Girls Basketball
- ☐ Boys Basketball
- ☐ Tennis

- ☐ Co-ed Soccer
- ☐ Cross Country
- ☐ Softball (HS only)
- ☐ Baseball (HS only)
- ☐ Track

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