



# **2026-2027 Athletic Handbook**

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engage the culture for Christ.”**

# Southwest Florida Christian Academy

## History

Southwest Florida Christian Academy was started in 1994 with 75 students in grades K-3. In our second year, we nearly tripled in size with 200 students in grades K-6. For the 1996 school year, we added grades 7-9 and another 100 students. Tenth grade was added in 1997, 11<sup>th</sup> grade in 1998, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade in 1999. We proudly graduated our first class of students on May 26, 2000.

## Vision

Southwest Florida Christian Academy is a ministry of McGregor Baptist Church, dedicated to excellence in education, empowering students to reach their educational goals and to exemplify Christ through a lifestyle of leadership, service, stewardship and worship.

## Mission

Southwest Florida Christian Academy, a ministry of McGregor Baptist Church, will partner with Christian parents to provide their children with a distinctively biblical and academically excellent education that will equip students to be godly leaders and to successfully engage the culture for Christ.

## Core Values

To fulfill its mission, Southwest Florida Christian Academy will honor the following core values:

- The Bible
- The Christian Family
- Quality, Bible-based Education
- The Church
- Qualified, Christian Staff
- Stewardship
- Discipleship of Students

## Operating Principles

SFCA's daily operation will be guided by the following operating principles in an effort to fulfill its mission in accordance with its core values:

### **Core Value #1 – The Bible** (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

*The Bible is the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God that is the authority for all that is done at SFCA.*

SFCA will:

- Teach the Bible as the source of absolute truth.
- Integrate the Bible into all aspects of SFCA life.
- Form the basis of its philosophy of education on the principles of God's Word.
- Develop and implement policies and procedures that are consistent with God's Word.
- Expect all faculty, board, and staff to study the Bible and apply its principles to everyday life.
- Implement a comprehensive Bible curriculum (K-12) that will lead students to study, memorize and apply God's Word to their life.

**Core Value #2 – The Christian Family** (Ephesians 5; Genesis 1)

*The Christian family is the foundational unit for society that is based on the biblical pattern for marriage and family in accordance with God's will.*

SFCA will:

- Develop policies and procedures that honor the Christian family.
- Develop strong home-school relationships through clear and effective communication with parents.
- Develop and maintain unity between home and school by encouraging mutual respect between home and school authorities.
- Teach all students God's ideal for the marriage relationship and the family.
- Pray for and with SFCA's families.
- Help parents understand and fulfill their biblical responsibilities as presented in *Kingdom Education*.

**Core Value #3 – Quality, Bible-based Education** (Proverbs 9:10)

*A quality education encompasses the total educational program based upon the foundation that all knowledge and wisdom are from God.*

SFCA will:

- Design an educational program that will meet the spiritual, mental, physical and social needs of each student.
- Design and use curriculum and teaching methods that are grounded in God's absolute truth.
- Challenge all students to reach their full potential in all aspects of their school life.
- Employ, develop and retain godly teachers who strive for excellence in all areas of their lives.
- Develop a comprehensive K-12 Bible curriculum that will effectively lead the students in a thorough study and application of God's Word.
- Provide teachers with the training necessary for them to effectively plan and implement biblical worldview integration in the classroom instruction.
- Provide teachers with the necessary training on the biblical philosophy of education found in *Kingdom Education*.
- Teach all students that man is born with a sin nature and in need of Christ.
- Encourage students to seek God's plan for their life.
- Develop an educational program that will equip students to engage all areas of the culture for Christ by utilizing the gifts and talents they have received from God.

**Core Value #4 – The Church** (1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Ephesians 4:12-13)

*The church is the body of believers whose purpose is to fulfill the Great Commission.*

SFCA will:

- Develop policies and procedures that will honor the purpose of the local church.
- Recognize that it is a ministry of McGregor Baptist Church and submit to the church's spiritual authority.

- Require all board members, administration, faculty and staff to be active members of a local, Bible-believing church.
- Encourage all school families to become active members of a local, Bible-believing church.
- Teach all students God's purpose for the church so that students will understand the importance of being an active member of and serving in a local church.
- Continually work at developing strong relationships with local churches in the Ft. Myers area.

**Core Value #5 – Qualified, Christian staff** (Luke 6:40; 1 Timothy 3:1)

*A qualified, Christian staff is comprised of born again Christians who have a calling to Christian education and the training necessary to fulfill their responsibilities.*

SFCA will:

- Develop a staff selection process that will ensure that all staff have a calling to Christian education, possess the skills necessary to fulfill their responsibilities and can effectively communicate the plan of salvation to others.
- Hire staff that have a personal relationship with Christ and live a life in support of the school's statement of faith.
- Provide all staff with a continuing staff development program that will enable them to develop professionally and meet certification requirements.
- Provide all faculty with training in the principles of *Kingdom Education* and effective biblical worldview integration.
- Select, develop and retain board members, administration, faculty and staff who exhibit Christ-like attitudes and behaviors.
- Encourage administration, faculty, staff and students to model Christ by serving others in the school and community.

**Core Value #6 – Stewardship** (James 1:17)

*Stewardship is the awareness that everything one has belongs to God and must be effectively managed for His glory.*

SFCA will:

- See, appreciate, and effectively manage everything, everyone, and every day as a stewardship responsibility from God.
- Model and train students to appreciate and effectively manage all that God provides.
- Establish policies and procedures that reflect biblical principles of stewardship.
- Implement and manage a budget based on biblical principles of stewardship.
- Hold the board, administration, faculty and staff accountable to fulfill their duties in a way that will honor the Lord and assist the school in achieving its mission.

**Core Value #7 – Discipleship** (John 8:31; 1 John 2:6)

*Discipleship is demonstrated by a commitment to a consistent application of the Word of God to all of life.*

SFCA will:

- Encourage staff and students to exemplify the fruit of the Spirit.
- Strive to instill godly character in all students through all the school's educational programs.

- Develop and enforce the school's discipline policies that will emphasize the importance of Christ-like behavior.
- Commit itself to the absolute authority of the Bible.
- Train students in daily Bible study, prayer, devotion and application of biblical principles in every area of life.
- Encourage discipleship relationships across all levels of the school.  
Integrate the Bible into all subjects and areas of the school.
- Prepare the students for a lifelong commitment to the discipleship process.

## Philosophy of Christian Education

We live in a world with two views of life. It is from these two opposing world views man contemplates his existence and finds value and purpose in life. We believe God is the center of His creation.

God the Father is our loving creator. Out of nothing He created all that we know and all that we are yet to discover. God is active in His creation, having plans and directions for each of His children. Jesus is man's bridge to God. The Holy Spirit is God's gift to us as Christians. He is our helper and our guide as we live the adventure of our spiritual pilgrimage.

Man can only be understood in context of a God-centered world view. Our potential, our reason and our purpose are enveloped in the fact that man is the centerpiece of God's creation.

Education must address the needs of the "whole man." A Christian approach to education will insure sensitivity to the unique needs of each individual. The imparting of God's knowledge and wisdom is the goal of Christian education. The desire to be a life-long learner of His truth is the mark of a maturing disciple. Truth and reality are found only in a world view focused on God.

God's Word, the Bible, is His revelation to man. The daily lives of God's people will be changed as a result of knowing and studying God's Word.

The education of a child or young person must be a cooperative effort with the family. It is the parental responsibility to see that children are taught a proper understanding of the world. Thus, Christian education becomes a partnership between parents, the church and the school in this important task of exploring and discovering a God-centered world view.

Education itself is not the answer to man's problems. It is only as we start with the knowledge of an all-knowing and loving creator that we can successfully educate. In this process of education, we will not only impart wisdom and knowledge for this world, but we will prepare man for eternity!

## Statement of Faith

- 1) *We believe God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe.* He has eternally existed in three personalities: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. These three are coequal and are one God. (See Genesis 1:1, 26-27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; I Peter 1:2; II Corinthians 13:14.)

- 2) *We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God.* He is coequal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. (See Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5, 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14-15; I Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 1:3-4; I Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13.)
- 3) *We believe the Holy Spirit is coequal with the Father and the Son of God.* He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living and understanding of spiritual truth and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians we seek to live under His control daily. (See II Corinthians 3:17; John 14:16-17, 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; I Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:16.)
- 4) *We believe the Bible is God's Word to us.* It was written by human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error. (See II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21; II Timothy 1:13; Psalm 12:6, 119:105, 160; Proverbs 30:5.)
- 5) *We believe people are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character.* People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin." This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life. (See Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6a; Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1-2.)
- 6) *We believe salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must accept it.* We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith, we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith. (See Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12, 14:6; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1.)
- 7) *We believe because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity.* If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot "lose" it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security. (See John 10:29; II Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10-14; I Peter 1:3-5.)
- 8) *We believe people were created to exist forever.* We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is eternal existence in Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life in Heaven. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. (See John 3:16, 14:17; Romans 6:23, 8:17-18; Revelation 20:15; I Corinthians 2:7-9.)

## Expected Student Outcomes

A Southwest Florida Christian Academy graduate will:

1. Spiritual
  - 1.1 Trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (CV 3)
  - 1.2 Commit to the absolute authority of the Bible (CV 1, 7)
  - 1.3 Articulate and apply a biblical worldview (CV 1, 3)
  - 1.4 Exhibit servant leadership (CV 7, VS)
  - 1.5 Exemplify the fruit of the spirit (CV 7)
  - 1.6 Engage the culture for Christ (MS)
2. Academic
  - 2.1 Master the content and skills necessary for post-high school success
  - 2.2 Pursue solutions to complex problems by thinking critically and creatively
  - 2.3 Seek to learn and grow intellectually
3. Social/Emotional
  - 3.1 Demonstrate resilience when faced with challenge
  - 3.2 Assume responsibility for attitudes and actions
  - 3.3 Effectively communicate and collaborate with others
  - 3.4 Manage physical and emotional well-being for health and wellness
  - 3.5 Value civic responsibilities

## Creation Statement

We at Southwest Florida Christian Academy feel a strong duty to teach Creation Science as a basis for understanding our origins. We believe in the creation of all that we know out of “nothing.” All life is a wonderful gift from God to be respected and cared for. A true understanding of the present world requires correlation of all the data of science within the framework of the Bible. For us this would include the following thoughts:

- Special creation of all things in six literal days.
- The fact of a universal flood as evidenced by both biblical and geological record.
- Biblical genealogies are for origin purposes. This makes it difficult to use these genealogies for establishing absolute time prior to Abraham. The fossil record and geological record of time support special creation. • Man’s methods of dating yield conflicting ages, and therefore must be viewed as erroneous.

## King’s

At SFCA we are the King’s. The name is a witness that we belong to the King of Kings. Each staff member has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We strive to see each child trust Jesus as personal Lord and Savior. It is our expectation that each student will reflect his/her personal salvation by living a life pleasing to the Lord as they serve the King of Kings.

## Accreditation

Southwest Florida Christian Academy is fully accredited by Cognia and the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). The ACSI provides its 3,800 member schools with such benefits as: a credentialing process for teachers, leadership and training seminars, assistance with standardized testing, curriculum development, and representation of Christian schools in state and national issues concerning Christian education.

SFCA offers a variety of sports to students in grades 6-12. Through sports programs, students have the opportunity to develop physical skills and abilities, to work with other members of a team, and to express and promote Christian values and attitudes. All of this is accomplished within a competitive framework and requires selection, sensitivity, and care on the part of the coach or sponsor.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 says, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might." At SFCA, we will strive for excellence in our athletics, but we will also practice Kingdom Athletics whereby athletic success is measured in terms of spiritual growth and development of the team members. This must receive greater emphasis than the won/lost record. It is vital that students give their best effort while representing our Lord, SFCA/McGregor, the team, and themselves in such a way as to lead others to desire what our students have in terms of their spiritual walk. When all the proper priorities align, the wins will take care of themselves.

This leadership by example extends to our coaches, administration, staff, parents, and fans. We believe it is critical that an atmosphere of respect and courtesy be shown to both game officials and opponents. The coach has a critical responsibility to serve as a Christian role model for our students, to respect game officials, to apply biblical principles to practice and game situations, and to demonstrate humility in victory and graciousness in defeat.

Within this competitive framework, it becomes easy to lose our focus, to alter our perspective, and to allow winning to become the main focus. At SFCA, success is not only determined by the scoreboard and performance, but also by the satisfaction that comes from knowing that we put forth 100% effort and a proper attitude to represent our God, our school, and our team. While the quest for victory is a part of any athletic contest, our commitment to Christ demands that we reject the "winning at all costs" philosophy and develop within students a perspective on our activity that is consistent with our Christian heritage. Those demands place a significant responsibility on the coach, who is called at all times to be a Christian role model for our students, regardless of the score, the circumstances, or other pressures that naturally arise as a consequence of competition.

## SFCA Athletic Department Core Values

### Winning and Competing the KING'S Way

**Kingdom Focused:** In all things – our actions, our words, our behaviors – we are focused on the KINGDOM and spending eternity with Jesus, taking as many people with us as possible.

**Integrity:** Strive to do all things the right way in the pursuit of excellence and winning.

**Never Quit:** Being competitive and tough through all situations, positively navigating adversity and remaining humble and hungry during times of success.

**Grow:** Always pursue opportunities to grow. Having a positive mindset of development for immediate and long-term success.

**‘:** Always remember to whom we belong. This is the most important core value we possess.

**Serve:** Intentionally building community through serving each other and holding each other accountable so that all can achieve success.

## Goals of the SFCA Athletic Department

### **GOAL # 1 – Develop our student-athletes to be examples of our department’s Core Values: “Be the King’s”** Strategic Plan:

1. Be intentional about sharing what our core values are and why they are important to us
  - a. Pre-Season Athletic Meeting
  - b. Covered in every team meeting (Head Coaches must buy-in to our core values and make them an integral part of their programs).
2. Establish and maintain a program-wide shared level of accountability
  - a. Each program/team devotes part of their team philosophy to establish a culture of accountability

### **GOAL # 2 – All teams at all levels compete for championships**

#### Strategic Plan:

1. Hire ELITE coaches (especially head coaches/directors of programs) that fit the mission and vision of SFCA and the Core Values of the SFCA Athletic Department.
  - a. An ELITE Coach:
    - i. Focuses on development of talent, assistant coaches, and program culture
    - ii. Is a builder of relationships and bottom-to-top programs
    - iii. Creates and executes a yearlong plan of program development that also fits cooperatively with the culture and needs of the SFCA multi-sport athlete
    - iv. Is an incredible communicator
    - v. Purposely connects with the community, intentionally and positively pushing the SFCA brand
  - b. Coaches are the heartbeat of an elite and consistently successful athletic program. We must relentlessly seek the best people for these positions.
2. Placing an emphasis on the development and training of our athletes
  - a. The Athletic Department will set and communicate the standards and requirements researched, developed, and believed to help best prepare our athletes to physically and mentally perform at high levels.
  - b. Head Coaches of each program will meet with SFCA Performance Director Annually
    - i. Share Visions and Goals
    - ii. Be on the same page, developing a collaborative plan to best train our and prepare our athletes for success

- c. Head Coaches of each program will support this goal by emphasizing, encouraging and participating in SFCA training opportunities
- d. High School athletes will take advantage of the following:
  - i. Performance Training Class Offerings During the School Day
  - ii. Before School Training Sessions During the School Year (if not in class)
  - iii. Summer Training Program (“If in town then at workouts”)
- 3. Each program has a developed team philosophy, vision, and established goals
  - a. Each head coach will meet with the athletic director prior to each season to go over and discuss philosophy, vision, and team goals
    - i. Discuss ways to achieve goals and program needs
  - b. Weekly check-in meetings between head coach and athletic director
    - i. Discuss issues, stay on track with goals and any needs that have developed

**Goal # 3 – Build a positive reputation and known commodity in the community**

Strategic Plan:

- 1. Establish a strong, consistent, and quality Social Media presence
  - a. Dee McBride – Game Day and Award Winners
  - b. Publicize athlete, coach, and program records, achievements, and milestones
  - c. Promote our facilities and coaches
  - d. Instagram/Facebook Reels – Quick Videos featuring our athletes, programs and facilities
- 2. Teams host and be involved in off-season competitions (summertime etc) to build relationships
  - a. 7v7 League
  - b. This helps so many people see our campus
- 3. Get teams involved in community outreach
  - a. Team service projects
  - b. Hold a camp on campus as an outreach
  - c. Hoops on Mission
- 4. Make sure stats and records are updated on MaxPreps
  - a. This is vital for media recognition.
  - b. Maintaining record board legitimacy
- 5. Coaches attend all local meetings for all area, all district, and all-star teams
  - a. Important to fight for our kids to get recognized
- 6. Compete against our local rivals whenever possible
  - a. These are the games that bring attention to the program, school and athletes

**Goal # 4 – Develop our homegrown talent while attracting talent from the community**

Strategic Plan:

- 1. Varsity head coaches must have a presence and involvement with middle school athletes and coaches and prioritize ensuring these programs are excellent
  - a. Regularly meet with coaches/staff
  - b. Be present consistently each week at practice. Practice in same area/shared space
  - c. Attend games to support sub varsity teams as a part of the entire program and process to excellence
  - d. This is a very important relationship in taking advantage of built in feeder system to our varsity programs
- 2. Prioritize building of relationships of current players in your program
  - a. These athletes must believe that you care for them and their development as a young person and as an athlete
  - b. The goal is to always have a core group of our teams comprised of our kids who have been developed here at SFCA, while attracting impact athletes who will fit into our school and team culture
- 3. Establish a culture where our kids are proud to play for SFCA
  - a. This begins with the head coach and how important the coach makes playing for SFCA

- i. Each coach must be proud to be a part of SFCA and being a King and our kids must know it
    - ii. Building authentic positive relationships, throughout the entire year
  - b. Consistently recognize our athletes for their accomplishments (social media, newsletter)
  - c. Honor and celebrate those who have fully embraced being a King
    - i. End of season awards? Athletic Awards?
  - d. Our athletes will be our best promoters of our program. If they are proud being a King, it will resonate to their peers

**Goal # 5 – Identify and Develop Leaders among our Student Body**

Strategic Plan

1. AD Leadership Council
  - a. Based on recommendations from head coaches
  - b. Represent each varsity team in our athletic program to form a single group of our student-athlete leaders to work together
  - c. Hear each other’s opinions and thoughts, while working towards unifying our athletic program where genuine support of each other is achieved.
2. Team Captains
  - a. The easiest and best way for each team to help develop leadership on their teams and into our athletic program.
  - b. Head Coaches discuss with AD their best practices for selecting captains in their program and how they will grow those leaders
3. Honoring our student leaders
  - a. End of season awards? Annual Athletic Awards?

## **Participation**

Participation in the athletic program at SFCA is a privilege, not a right. Our administration, teachers and coaches are committed to collaborating to ensure the most positive education-based athletic experience for each student-athlete. We would ask that the same level of commitment is demonstrated throughout each season that the student-athlete participates in.

If at any point during the season the student-athlete, parent, or family become a detriment to the positive team chemistry, the student-athlete may be removed from the team. This will be left up to the coach and athletic administration.

We understand that in today's society, non-school (travel) organizations play a role in many student-athletes' athletic endeavors. Our coaches will spend many hours preparing each student-athlete and team mentally and physically for competition. We ask that during the school sport season, the school sport takes priority. At no time will an absence due to a non-school organization be excused or tolerated. If you can foresee scheduling issues ahead of time and feel that the non-school organization should take priority, please do not start the school sport.

## **Attendance**

To participate in an athletic practice or competition, the student must be present at school a minimum of 4 periods the day of the event or have prior approval from the Administration for the time absent from school.

Each athlete must inform the coach of any absences. Any unexcused absence from a practice or game may result in loss of playing time or dismissal from the team. If an athlete misses a test/quiz for any reason and returns to school that same day, the test/quiz **MUST** be made up before the athlete will be permitted to practice or compete. This must be arranged with the teacher before the end of the school day.

The following absences may be justified, but are to be approved in advance by the appropriate coach (circumstances permitting):

- Family emergencies
- Illness
- Medical appointments
- Academic tutoring
- Special family situations
- Special church activities

## **Awards**

### **VARSIITY**

While each sport has separate scoring methods and participation rules, the following criteria must be met for a student-athlete to receive a Varsity letter:

- The student-athlete must attend all contests. The exception to this rule would be things such as a player being ill, a family wedding, or a death in the family.
- The student-athlete must be a member of the team for the entire season.
- If a student-athlete is injured in a sport and not allowed to play further, the student-athlete will finish the season with the team, cooperating with the coaching staff to stay involved in team activities as permitted by the injury.
- A student must be eligible to participate in every contest.

For the individualized sports, such as Cross Country, Wrestling, Swimming, Golf, Tennis and Track and Field, the athlete must score varsity points in at least ¼ of the contests to be considered eligible for a Varsity letter. Each coach is expected to fully disclose the methods used to determine a Varsity letter prior to the season beginning.

A Varsity letter or a pin will be awarded to those athletes who earn a letter for their sport season. Team certificates will be awarded to those athletes who do not letter.

Managers of team sports who meet the above requirements will be eligible to letter. Statisticians who adequately meet the above requirements are eligible to receive a team letter or certificate.

Each coach will select the athletes that will receive an award based on criteria laid forth in each individual sport.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL (Grades 6, 7, and 8)

A “Certificate of Participation” is awarded to each athlete on a middle school team. Medals are awarded to athletes in each sport based on the discernment of the coaching staff. Managers and statisticians will be eligible to receive a “Certificate of Participation.”

## SCHOLAR ATHLETE AWARD

The Scholar Athlete Award will be awarded to the SFCA student-athlete who fulfills the following criteria:

1. Has maintained at least a cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.75 after the first semester of their junior year.
2. Has received their fifth Varsity Letter during their high school years.

## LEGACY AWARD

The Legacy Award is an award meant to reward the “program builders” that contribute to the foundation of each SFCA sport. The Legacy Award will be given to the student-athlete that fulfills four full seasons in a sport beginning with ninth-grade year and finishing the season of twelfth-grade year.

## 3 X 3 AWARD

The 3 X 3 award is given to the middle school student-athlete that completes three athletic seasons (fall, winter and spring) and has a 3.5 grade point average after the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter grading period each year.

# **Coach, Parent, and Player Relationships**

The following procedures are established in consistency with the teaching of scripture as found in Matthew 18:15-17.

## PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

Both parenting and coaching are difficult vocations. By establishing and understanding each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a greater benefit to our children. As parents, when your child becomes involved in our program, you have an obligation to understand what expectations are placed on your student-athlete. This begins with clear communication from the coach.

## COMMUNICATION PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE COACH

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations the coach has for the child and the other players on the squad.

- Locations and times of all the practices and games.
- Individual team requirements (i.e. special equipment, off-season conditioning, etc.).
- Procedures if an athlete is injured during a practice or a game.
- Weekly updates to the schedule for practices/contests.

## COMMUNICATION COACHES SHOULD EXPECT FROM PARENTS

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
- Notification, well in advance, of any schedule conflicts.
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and expectations if the philosophy is in disagreement to the philosophy of Christian education.
- Medical or physical limitations of the child.

As student-athletes become more involved in athletic programs, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way athletes, or their parents wish. At this time, a discussion with the coach is encouraged.

## APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

- The treatment of the student-athlete, both physically and mentally.
- Ways to help the student-athlete improve.
- Concerns about the student-athlete's behavior.
- Academic support.

It is very difficult for parents to accept the imbalance of playing time. Coaches are professionals, and they make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for the team.

## ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH THE COACHES

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

There are some situations that may require a conference between the coach and parents. These meetings are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issues of concern.

## PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN A PARENT HAS A CONCERN TO ADDRESS WITH THE COACH

- Call/email the coach to set up an appointment.
- If the coach cannot be reached, contact the athletic department for assistance in arranging an appointment with the coach.
- Do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a practice or game. **Please use a 24-hour rule following a contest, win or lose. We ask that you take at least 24 hours before attempting to make contact of any type with the coach to allow a diffusion of emotion.** These can be emotional times for the parents and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

## WHAT CAN A PARENT DO IF THE MEETING WITH THE COACH DOES NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION?

- Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Administration to discuss the situation.
- If the issue is not resolved at this meeting, the next appropriate step would be to set up an appointment with the Head of School.
- In the case where a family and the Athletic Administration/Head of School cannot reach a meeting time, the student-athlete may be held out of team activity until the issue is resolved.

## Student-Athlete Injury/Illness Protocol

In the event that the student-athlete is injured, the following protocol needs to be followed:

- The athlete will be evaluated by the athletic trainer.
- The athletic trainer will decide on the extent of the injury and whether the athlete can return to play. **THE ATHLETIC TRAINER IS THE SCHOOL'S EXTENSION OF THE TEAM PHYSICIAN AND REPRESENTS THE SCHOOL IN ALL MEDICAL DECISIONS. THE ATHLETIC TRAINER'S DETERMINATION REGARDING THE INJURY WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO THE COACHES AND FAMILY. HOWEVER, THE DECISION OF RETURN TO PLAY IS SOLELY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ATHLETIC TRAINER.**
- If it is determined that the student-athlete needs to see a physician, the family must provide documentation from the physician detailing the extent of injury and treatment plan recommended.
- Before the student-athlete may return to play, documentation must be provided by the physician stating the athlete is cleared for participation.
- Every student is subject to temperature checks to ensure the safety and well-being of each student-athlete. If the student-athlete is found to have a fever, they will be sent home and asked to not return until there is no fever for minimum 24 hours.

## Conduct

### STUDENT CONDUCT

As a member of athletic teams, athletes are high-profile representatives of Southwest Florida Christian Academy. Student-athletes are expected to act in an appropriate manner. The following behaviors are inappropriate and will not be tolerated:

- Fighting
- Profanity
- Harassment of another athlete
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and drugs
- Rude and disrespectful behavior
- Taunting opponents or officials
- Destruction of property
- Kneeling in protest during the National Anthem

Student-athletes who exhibit any of the above behaviors or any other inappropriate behavior will be disciplined by the coach and, possibly, the athletic department.

### UNSPORTSMANLIKE OR INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

- A student-athlete who is ejected from a contest for a flagrant foul or unsportsmanlike conduct shall be ineligible to participate in at least the following game (determined by FHSAA rules and regulations).
- If a student-athlete is ejected from an athletic contest and the school is levied a fine, the athlete will be financially responsible for his/her proportionate part of the fine issued by FHSAA.
- All student-athletes who act in an unsportsmanlike manner will be required to meet with the Athletic Administration before resuming athletic participation.

## SPECTATOR CONDUCT

- Everyone associated with an athletic event plays an important role in seeing that standards of sportsmanship are upheld. Fans are reminded that their sportsmanship and behavior reflect upon the reputation of SFCA.
- Fans are not permitted on the playing surface at any time unless authorized.
- A spectator should –
  - o Demonstrate good sportsmanship
  - o Respect, cooperate, and respond enthusiastically to cheerleaders
  - o Diplomatically censor fellow spectators who display negative behavior
  - o Respect the property of the school and the authority of the school officials
  - o Never heckle, jeer, or distract members of the opposing teams
  - o Apply the “courtesy is contagious!” slogan at all times
- Fans/students will be directed by the athletic staff to cheer for their teams and not against the opponents.

## Discipline

The student-athlete represents Southwest Florida Christian Academy in school, at practice, and at sporting events. Practices and games are considered an extension of the school day. Therefore, school rules are to be followed at practice and at all athletic events, as well as when being transported to and from games.

If an athlete receives a disciplinary action that conflicts with practice or games, the athlete must serve the disciplinary action that is given. If the disciplinary action is not served, the athlete will move to the next level of disciplinary action. In the event that a team moves to post-season play, other disciplinary options may be considered.

If an athlete is on Internal or External Suspension, depending on the infraction, the student-athlete will be ineligible for a certain amount of days. This will apply to post-season activities as well. The Administrative Team will hold the final decision in such matters.

If a student-athlete receives more than fifteen disciplinary referrals over the course of the academic school year, he/she will become ineligible for participation in any sports program the remainder of the current school year.

## Eligibility

To be eligible, students must maintain a “C” average or above (2.0 GPA) each semester while in middle school and a cumulative “C” average or above (2.0 GPA) while in high school (SFCA standards were formed in compliance with the Florida High School Athletic Association.). Students whose grades drop below a “C” average (2.0) for the semester will be removed from participation by the Administration until the next semester. Students who receive an “F” at the quarter grading period will be placed on Academic Notice and may lose eligibility if their grade does not improve by the next three week period. If a student becomes ineligible, they will be reevaluated at the next progress report or quarter to determine eligibility to resume participation (as long as their GPA is above a 2.0). Eligibility for fall activities is determined by the grades received for spring semester the previous school year.

The following forms must be completed before participation (practice).

- FHSAA Pre-participation Physical Evaluation (EL2)
- FHSAA EKG. All student-athletes participating in high school athletics (grades 9–12) are required to complete a one-time FHSAA EKG screening prior to participation.
- FHSAA Consent and Release from Liability (EL3) which requires the viewing of “Concussion For Students,” “Sudden Cardiac Arrest,” “Sportsmanship,” and “Heat Illness Prevention” videos and printing of completion certificate when finished
- SFCA Participation (Waiver and Indemnity)
- Student/Athlete Guidelines & Commitment Agreement (back page of handbook)

Please go to [athleticclearance.com](http://athleticclearance.com) to register your student-athlete and complete the eligibility process. You will fill out all necessary information on-line and upload the EL2 (FHSAA Physical Examination). You will digitally sign all

forms (including the Athletic Handbook) and click on the links to view the necessary videos. Once all steps have been completed, the student athlete will receive an email of clearance to participate in athletics.

Those students who are deemed to be ineligible for reasons other than academics or discipline (i.e. age limitations, transfers, etc.) may practice or serve as managers or statisticians at the discretion of the athletic director and head coach of the sport in question.

The administration reserves the right to declare eligibility for each student athlete. Each student athlete must be fully enrolled and remain in good standing with the school to be eligible to participate in the athletic program.

No student may participate in games, team camps, etc., who currently is not in good standing at SFCA. Home school students may participate on middle school teams or on high school teams as approved by FHSAA, Gulf Coast Athletic Conference (middle school teams only), and the Administration of SFCA.

Home school students in grades 6-12 may participate on a middle or high school team if he or she makes the team. Participation is contingent upon meeting FHSAA regulations, filing the required paperwork, receiving an endorsement of the athletic director following a family interview, and submitting in advance the current annual registration fee and per sport fee. If a student fails to qualify for the team, the per sport fee will be refunded. No refunds will be available in the event a student quits the team during the scheduled season or is injured to the extent he/she may no longer participate.

## Letter Jackets

Student-athletes who have earned a Varsity letter are eligible for a school letter jacket. The student athlete is responsible for the purchase of the jacket. Managers may also earn jackets, but if the first letter is for managing, the requirement is two letters to become eligible for a jacket.

## Quitting a Team

The SFCA athletic department does not condone an athlete quitting a team. If a student-athlete quits a sports team after the first day of tryouts/practice, he/she is ineligible to participate in the next sport season (conditioning/practice/games) until the conclusion of the sport the player quit. If the student-athlete quits after the halfway point of the season, he/she is ineligible to participate in the next athletic season. The Athletic Administration will make the final determination of student-athlete eligibility moving forward. **Before the athlete quits a team, the athlete must meet with the Athletic Director.** Quitting a sport also forfeits any awards/banners the student-athlete may have received.

## Team Selection

SFCA offers the following inter-scholastic sports for grades 6-12:

### FALL

Girls Football Cheerleading  
Boys/Girls Cross Country  
Boys Football  
Boys/Girls Golf  
Boys/Girls Swimming  
Girls Volleyball

### WINTER

Girls Basketball Cheerleading  
Boys/Girls Basketball  
Boys/Girls Soccer  
Boys Wrestling  
Girls Weightlifting

## **SPRING**

Boys Baseball  
Girls Softball  
Boys/Girls Tennis  
Boys/Girls Track  
Girls Beach Volleyball  
Weightlifting

Athletes who come out for any sport will be selected by means of a tryout. The athlete will be chosen based on skill level, attitude, and academics. The coaches of each sport will make the selection. The amount of participation in a given game will be up to the discretion of the coaches.

For winter and spring sports, a tryout may be necessary for current in-season athletes on a Saturday. At NO time can an in-season athlete miss a practice/game for the season they are currently in to try out for the next season sport. The coaches may communicate if desired to allow a tryout time, but the current sport will take precedence.

Students-athletes may participate only in the gender of sport that is their God-given gender, as documented on their legal birth certificate.

Student-athletes who possess skills and abilities well above those of typical students at their grade level may have an opportunity to “play up” as follows:

- No student below 6<sup>th</sup> grade may play on a SFCA interscholastic sports team.
- No student will be permitted to “play up” if this would place them or the team in violation of any FHSAA or league rules.
- A middle school student may be invited to try out for a JV/varsity team based on input from the coaches and Athletic Administration.
- Students may be asked to “slide” between the gold and blue middle school teams and the JV and varsity teams during a sport season based on athletic ability and/or need (see next paragraph). This decision is left solely to the coaching staff and the AD. This is not a parental decision.
- Students may also be permitted to play up with a tryout available to all students in their respective grade for situations where the number of players on a given team is insufficient to compete with other schools. This determination is to be made by the AD in consultation with the respective administrator.
- At no time will an athlete be permitted to participate on two athletic teams during the same season. Tryouts for the upcoming season will be worked out between the athletic administration and coaches to allow all athletes a fair tryout. The only exception is weightlifting.
- Spring football and spring cheer are held in preparation for the upcoming fall season. These sports are not a “spring” sport. Student-athletes that are returning to SFCA in the fall will be permitted to participate in these sports. Families must have registered intent with the front office to return in the fall to participate in these sports.

## **Transportation**

Students must use transportation provided or designated by the school for transport to and from school activities. Only in extenuating circumstances will a student-athlete be permitted to ride to an event with a parent. All students will be brought back to school when the team participates in an event scheduled away from the school. It is neither the coach’s responsibility nor that of anyone offering their services for car-pooling to take any child home once the team has returned to the school. If a parent is not available to pick up his/her child, it is the responsibility of that family to make arrangements prior to the scheduled event. Parents may sign only their child out at the conclusion of the game if the coach chooses to allow athletes to not ride the bus back to the school. We strongly encourage each

student-athlete to return to school on the bus. This promotes team cohesion and also promotes teamwork in unloading and cleaning the van/bus.

Parents may not take another child with them unless arrangements are made in advance, and the proper paperwork is signed by both the parents and the person transporting the athlete.

When traveling out of town, teams may stop to eat after the game. The student is responsible for the purchase of his/her own food.

The following guidelines will be observed on the bus:

- While the bus is in motion, athletes must be appropriately seated and not move about.
- Misconduct and inappropriate language will be dealt with immediately.
- Food and drinks (other than water) are not allowed on the bus.

### **Uniforms**

The uniform is the responsibility of the athlete. In the event the uniform is damaged or lost, the athlete will be charged to replace the uniform.

Wash in cold water, hang to dry, and, when necessary, dry in the dryer using low heat.

Failure to return a uniform will result in report cards being held, and the athlete will not be able to report to the next sport season.

## **Grace Gym/Weight Room**

After school gym usage is only for off-season conditioning and for teams practicing when a coach is present. There will be no "open gym" time after school unless a coach or staff member scheduled the space through the athletic office.

The weight room is a common use facility. Each team will have equal access to this facility, with priority given to in-season sports. Use of the weight room requires following these guidelines:

- No student is permitted in the gym/weight room without direct supervision from an SFCA coach or staff member.
- Student-athletes must have proper workout attire consisting of a clean, dry t-shirt, athletic shorts, socks, and athletic shoes (no cleats). Student-athletes must remove all jewelry before entering weight room.
- No food or drinks are permitted at any time.
- Students are responsible for re-racking and cleaning of weight room after each use.

## **Social Media**

We encourage each family to use social media as a positive way to recognize accomplishments and get SFCA positive publicity. If at any time a derogatory or negative remark is made pertaining to a member of a team, Athletic Department or school, the student-athlete/family involved will be asked for a meeting with the AD with possibility of suspension resulting.

## **SFCA'S Statement on Human Sexuality and Marriage**

We believe sex is a gift from God to be enjoyed within the marriage relationship. We believe that marriage was instituted by God and, as such, the term "marriage" has only one meaning, regardless of current legal or cultural definitions. The Scriptures define "marriage" as the joining of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union. We believe that God has commanded abstinence from any form of sexual or intimate activity outside of a marriage. We believe that participation in fornication, pornography, homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, polygamy, or adultery are all sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We also believe that gender is a gift from God, and He

created human beings male and female; therefore, we hold the distinction between the two sexes to be sacred. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to change one's gender by any means. (Genesis 2:15-25; Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 53:1-6; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 11:11-12; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:22-33)

## **Parent Volunteer Requirements**

# Student-Athlete Guidelines & Commitment Agreement

## I. General Guidelines:

A. Each team member is a representative of SFCA (at all times, including away from school). Each member should maintain a standard of good Christian character in compliance with school guidelines.

## II. Conduct:

- A. There is to be absolutely no profane language used any time, on or off the field.
- B. Displays of temper and other immature acts of lack of self-control are prohibited.
- C. There shall be mutual respect for all officials, coaches, and other team members. Criticism or slander of others is prohibited.

## III. Grade Eligibility:

A. Grade eligibility is based on a cumulative GPA of a 2.0 (high school students) or a per semester GPA of a 2.0 (middle school students) on a straight 4.0 scale (per FHSAA).

## IV. Attendance:

- A. All excused absences from any sport, if prior notice is possible, must be presented **to the coach** two days prior to the excused absence. (See Athletic Handbook for acceptable excused absences.)
- B. An unexcused absence from practice may result in exclusion from the next game.
- C. Three unexcused absences from practices may result in expulsion from the team.
- D. An unexcused absence from a game may result in immediate expulsion from the team.
- E. An unexcused tardy to practice will result in reduced game time.
- F. If a class period with a test/quiz is missed, I understand that the test/quiz must be made up after school before I may practice or compete in competition.

Realizing that the primary objective of the SFCA sports program is to honor Christ and represent Him in all athletic competition, I hereby commit myself to the following stipulations.

- 1. I will uphold the SFCA code of conduct as specified in the Athletic Handbook and this agreement.
- 2. I will submit myself to my coach(es) as my authority, and I will respect and obey that authority.
- 3. I accept the terms that if I quit the team or am dismissed from the team for disciplinary reasons, I forfeit my eligibility for that sport.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

As his/her parents, we have read the SFCA guidelines and agree to support the guidelines set forth in the Athletic Handbook and this commitment form. Additionally, we agree to support the SFCA King's Parental Pledge listed below.

### SFCA KING'S PARENTAL PLEDGE

- We will support Kingdom Athletics by demonstrating good sportsmanship and offering positive support for all players, coaches, game officials, and administrators at all times.
- We will place the emotional and physical well-being of all players ahead of any personal desire to win.
- We will support the coaches, officials, and administration working with our child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- We will ask our child to treat other players, coaches, game officials, administrators, and fans with respect.
- We will treat visiting teams and their spectators with hospitality and respect.
- We will refrain from any activity or conduct that may be detrimental to the biblical example of SFCA, its members, or its programs.
- **We will support our athletic program and its student-athletes by volunteering at concession/gate.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Signature