

Shawnee Mission Christian School



Athletics Handbook

I. Philosophy and Goals

The primary goal of SMCS is to assist the families of Olivet Baptist Church and other local fundamental churches in the education and nurture of their school-age children by providing a Christ-centered, academically sound Christian School environment. It is therefore our purpose to assist Christian parents in their responsibility to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph 6:4) by providing a Christ-Centered Academic environment. We are an extension of the Christian home so Christian parents can fulfill their God-given responsibilities to their children. Proverbs 22:6; Eph. 6:4; Proverbs 19:27; Jeremiah 10:2.

SMCS athletic programs strive to be an extension of this philosophy and to provide a setting for our student-athletes to develop and display Christ-like character in all situations. We strive to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of young people through our athletic programs. Well-organized and managed athletic programs convey many Biblical principles taught by the Lord Jesus. Unity, others first, patience, endurance, stewardship, commitment, self-control, and respect for authority are only a few principles that characterize individuals who are working together to build a team that honors the Lord Jesus Christ. Developing these characteristics are vital for student-athletes to be successful Christians later in life.

The process and programs provided for achieving our purposes are filled with many unique opportunities. SMCS athletic programs strive to help provide athletes, coaches, parents, and fans with four distinct opportunities:

1. The opportunity to **disciple** each other toward greater perfection in Christ.
2. The opportunity to develop **skills** in areas of physical and athletic competency.
3. The opportunity to use the talents and time God has given as a **witness** to others.
4. The opportunity to **support** and **enjoy** the collective efforts of teams that focus on honoring the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is God who desires to take all these components and weave them together in ways that honor His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He uses the athlete's desire to complete, the fan's supportive enthusiasm and our response to the rules of the game as opportunities for us to witness to an unbelieving world and, on occasion, even to fellow believers. How we respond to the circumstances inherent in the challenge before us at any given time is of great interest to God.

II. Responsibilities of the Athlete and Parent

1. To understand that participation in an athletic program is a privilege and not a right.
2. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
3. To respect and support the coaching staff and their goals.
4. To show courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
5. To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
6. To achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game or competition and the standards of eligibility.

III. Sportsmanship

Athletes, coaches, fans, and parents at SMCS are expected to exhibit Christ-like behavior before, during and after athletic contests. This includes attitudes toward our own team members, coaches, opposing teams, fans, and officials. We believe all should be diligent in preparation, relentless in effort, disciplined by nature, respectful in actions, self-controlled with words, humble in spirit and aggressive in the pursuit of excellence without regard to the score, opponent, time or official. As Christian athletes display these characteristics, teams are successful, players are motivated, fans are supportive and enthusiastic, parents are proud, perspective athletes want to participate, and hopefully non-believers are drawn to Christ.

IV. Parent-Coach and Player-Coach Relationships

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics. It is imperative that the player respects and trusts the coach and his/her direction and decisions. SMCS requires our coaches to have a personal relationship with Christ, maintain a high level of personal integrity, and show deep care for both the players' physical and spiritual growth. As a parent you can have a pronounced effect on this important relationship. While you may not agree with a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a distinct affect upon your child and their experience. When you express a negative opinion in the presence of your child, remember that he or she will return to practice and will then have to interact with this coach. When you model support and encouragement for the coach and their leadership, you help build a stronger team.

V. Relationship with the Officials

The home team does not choose the officials; a scheduler assigns officials. While you may not agree with all their calls, please do not harass, taunt, or yell at them. Do NOT approach them before, during or after the game to discuss calls made. Remember that they are in charge of the contest and have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. In many sports, a team will see the same official several times during a season. Coaches along with the Athletic Director(s) work hard to establish a good rapport with officials; this relationship can easily be damaged by spectators. Please remember that you may be the only witness for Christ the officials see.

If you have questions or concerns about calls made/not made, an officials' conduct, etc., do not approach the Official, or the opposing teams' Athletic Director, Coaches. Please communicate with SMCS's Athletic Director only and matters will be addressed appropriately.

VI. Expectations for Spectator Behavior

1. Appreciate, cheer, and applaud players for their efforts, commitment, and sportsmanlike behavior. Please remember that the players are children.
2. Accept the decisions of officials
3. Support the coaches of both teams in their endeavor to follow their game plan and coach a competitive game. Maintain composure when things seem to go against your team
4. Focus attention on positive aspects of competition.
5. No vulgar or inappropriate language, taunting, trash talking or interference of any portion of the event from spectators will be tolerated.
6. Spectators should never enter onto the court or field during a contest. If they do, they may be asked to leave the event.
7. Do not yell at an opponent during a foul shot or as a player attempts to serve.
8. Encouraging only sportsmanlike conduct, reflecting class, dignity, respect, and Christ's love at all times.
9. Administration reserves the right to remove any spectator from the game who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

VII. Conflict Resolution

When expressing an occasional concern with a coach, please refer to and use the following guidelines.

1. Always approach the person with whom you have conflict first.
2. Never approach a coach immediately after a contest. Call the following day and make an appointment time that is convenient for both you and the coach to meet.
3. Raise your concern in a calm and civil manner. Raising your voice, being rude or using abusive language is totally unacceptable.
4. Once you have stated your question or concern, listen to the explanation. Listening receptively may really help you to understand another's perspective and lead to equitable resolution.
5. While you may not agree with all decisions of a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a distinct effect upon your child. If you express a negative opinion in the presence of your child, you need to remember that he or she will return to practice the next day and may carry with him or her your emotional turmoil, even if you were just venting.
6. Always express your concerns directly to the coach, not to other parents.
7. Parent/Adult, never approach another student athlete about concerns, or question them about decisions made. That student athlete is another parent's child and is not your peer. They follow instructions from their coach, and answer to their coach and their own parent. If there are concerns, call to make an appointment with the coach.
8. If you are unable to resolve your concern with the coach, please contact the Athletic Director or Administrator to arrange a meeting between all parties involved.

VIII. Grades

Athletes who receive two or more D's or one or more F's when eligibility checks take place will be considered ineligible. Ineligible athletes will not be allowed to suit-up for that week's games. They are however, required to attend/participate all practices and sit the bench during that week's games. Please refer to Page 16 of the Student Handbook for further information on eligibility requirements.

IX. Dress Code

Dress Code for athletics follows the dress code outlined for Shawnee Mission Christian School. This also includes hairstyles and facial hair. Girls, no tank tops, shorts to mid-thigh, no spandex. Guys, shorts mid-thigh. If your hair style, length, color, etc., does not meet guidelines for school, it does not work for athletics (practices & games). Failure to meet the dress code requirements will result in your inability to participate in practices/games until it is resolved. Repeated violations may result in your dismissal from the team. Please refer to Pages 9-10 of the Student Handbook for further information on Dress Code Requirements.

X. Physicals

Each athlete must have a completed Health Card and physical form on file prior to the current school year. This is required to participate in practices or games. A physical taken after May 1st of the preceding school year will be valid until the end of the following school year.

XI. Sports Fees

Due to costs associated with an athletic program, all athletes are charged a fee to participate in Sports at SMCS. These fees DO NOT include out-of-town tournament fees and expenses.

XII. Transportation

A. Student Athlete Drivers

Due to liability issues, student athlete drivers may only transport their own siblings/cousins/close family members from the school to practices or games.

B. To and From Away Games

If your child is riding home from an away game with someone other than the school provided transportation, the Athletic Director must be notified, by a parent, prior to their departure. If we do not receive that notification from a parent, your child will ride home with school provided transportation.

XIII. Injuries and Doctor Notes

Any athlete under the supervision of a doctor due to an injury or illness will not be allowed to participate or return to practice without written clearance from both the doctor and his/her parents, and the athlete has completed any return to play procedures.

Injuries that occur during the season should be addressed with the following considerations:

1. All injuries must be reported to the coach so proper first aid or treatment may be given.
2. SMCS does not hold personal injury insurance for athletes.
3. Coaches are able to treat injuries to the best of their ability. Coaches may recommend further evaluation or treatment, but all decisions, other than emergent, about further evaluation or treatment are left up to the parents and are to be covered by the athlete's insurance.

XIV. School Attendance

SMCS athletes must be in attendance for four class periods each day to participate in practices or games. A student who leaves school early for an illness will be ineligible to participate in that day's game or practice.

XV. Music/Movies/Social Media/Electronic Devices

While each individual family may have a different standard for music and movies, we have certain expectations within SMCS and our Athletics Program. We expect that your athlete's music, movie, video game and social media choices be Christ Honoring, uplifting, and free from explicit language or topics. We will not be the music "police", but we will monitor music, movies, video games, social media that is being shared with other student athletes. We also ask that you help monitor your student athlete's choices.

To help with this, there will be no music played over the speakers on the bus. All music played from athlete's phones/devices must be played through earbuds/headphones. Laptops/Tablets (anything larger than a cell phone screen) will not be used on the bus or at games/practices to watch movies, play video games, or for social media. Please refer to Pages 6-7 of the Student Handbook for further information.

XVI. Practices and Games

Once an athlete has joined an SMCS team, they have committed to that team until the last game is completed. ***Athletes must be at every practice or game unless exceed for one of the following reasons.***

1. Doctor or dental appointment
2. Personal sickness or diagnosed concussion
3. Death in the family
4. Previous scheduled church commitment

Each athlete must personally notify their coach or the school office PRIOR to the missed practice or game. A missed practice prior to a game may affect an athlete's playing time in that game. This is not a punishment, but a reward and incentive to those team members who were present.

It is an athlete's responsibility to arrive for practices and games with all required personal items (uniforms/practice clothes, court shoes/cleats, knee pads/shin guards, etc.). It may be deemed unsafe for the athlete to practice or play if they do not have the required personal items.

XVII. Siblings/Non-Player Students at Practices

Due to insurance/liability issues, we are not allowed to have siblings/non-player students at open gyms or soccer/volleyball/basketball practices without parental supervision. This includes waiting in the school foyer for their athlete siblings to complete practice.

XVIII. Parental Responsibility for Practice

Parents are responsible to pick up or make arrangements for their child to be picked up at the end of practice. Coaches have been instructed to never leave a student unattended at the end of practice. If a parent is more than 15 minutes late to pick up their athlete twice during a season, the Athletic Director(s)/Administration will be notified. If the parent continues to be late, the student's eligibility to participate in the sport may be revoked by the Athletic Director(s)/Administration.

XIX. Homeschool Athletes

Each Homeschool Athlete/family is required to provide proof of school enrollment at the beginning of each season/prior to the first game. The Athletic Director(s)/Administration may contact homeschool athletes/families periodically through the season for updated information and/or grades as pertaining to SMCS's eligibility requirements.

Starting the 2022-23 academic school year, SMCS will not be accepting NEW Homeschool Athletes due to the number of enrolled student athletes. Exceptions will be announced on an annual basis, in the event we are unable to field a necessary team with enrolled student athletes.

XX. Concluding Comments

Being a parent is often challenging. This effort and responsibility is frequently complicated by being a parent of an athlete. The best way to help your athlete is to provide encouragement and to be positive, both at home and in the stands. Know that you are the most important person in your child's life, and that child wants you to be proud of them. Be in the stands, rain or shine, cheering. Enjoy watching your child learn and grow as they experience the challenges of working hard to achieve set goals, overcoming obstacles and both winning and losing with grace and integrity. We sincerely hope you enjoy this year's season.