

COVENANT PREPARATORY SCHOOL



Athletic Handbook 2018 – 2019

Covenant Philosophy of Athletics

Covenant is committed to providing not only a competitive sports program to its students, families, and fans; but also one that fosters Christ-like character among our student-athletes in addition to athletic abilities.

Many circumstances arise in preparation for and during athletic competition that offers opportunities for God's principles to be applied and it is our goal to see students exemplify Christ-likeness in everything they do. Our dedicated coaches help young people relate victories and defeats, as well as the principles of hard work and teamwork to their daily walk with the Lord.

One of the guiding principles for the Covenant Athletic Department can be found in **Colossians 3:23-24**:
“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”

All policies and procedures that are defined by the Athletic Department are done so with the intent of teaching and instilling Christ-like qualities in the student-athletes for them to put into use in their daily lives. Our athletic handbook also provides a way to maintain consistency throughout our athletic program and to set forth the standards by which we expect our athletes to adhere. We require that parents, as well as student-athletes, take time to read this handbook so each can properly support Covenant and its Athletic Department. Whatever we do, we want to do it in a manner that glorifies Christ the King.

Athletic Goals and Expectations

Our goal is to glorify Christ, on and off the playing field, by living out our School's Creed:

Follow Christ the King

Live Pure

Speak True

Right Wrong

Follow the King

“If not to live out these ideals, why else was I born?”

Code of Conduct

The student who chooses to participate in the athletic program will be observed by many public and private schools, media, parents, guests, peers, teachers, and the public at large. Participating in athletics provides the opportunity to demonstrate one's desire to reflect Christ-like virtues in sportsmanship and in performance. In that regard, each Covenant student-athlete will be held to the following code of conduct:

1. After an athlete receives a suspension from school, the student will be suspended from his/her team for the next game. Further action will be at the discretion of the principal and/or athletic director.

Note: A suspended athlete may participate in practices with a team, but may not actively participate in games until he has served a probationary period.

2. The use of profanity will not be tolerated. The use of profanity on or off the field may result in additional conditioning, a loss in playing time, or another form of punishment as agreed upon by the coach and athletic director.
3. Fighting during athletic events will result in a minimum two-game suspension. More severe disciplinary action may be enacted depending upon the circumstances.
4. Athletes are to be good representatives of Christ and Covenant on road trips. Failure to do so may result in suspension or dismissal from the team.
5. Covenant does not condone and will not tolerate "hazing" or "initiations" of athletes by other athletes. Any such actions will result in suspension and/or dismissal from the athletic team.
6. Any student-athlete that is ejected from a game will be suspended for the next game. If the student-athlete receives a second ejection, he/she will be suspended for two games. A third ejection will result in dismissal from the team.

Athletic Associations

Our high school athletes compete in the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) 1A level of competition. TAPPS is a statewide program that is governed by a Board of Directors. They form the rules, regulations, districts, and levels of competition that we adhere to.

Team Formation

For the Covenant Athletic Department, it is important that all desiring student-athletes have the opportunity to participate in the athletic programs that we have available. With that in mind, we do not cut students in a tryout process; instead, we will form the number of necessary teams that aligns with our student interest for any program that is offered. Student-athletes must keep in mind that as they represent our school, they must possess the proper character, attitude, and passion for the game, to go along with the commitment, time availability, energy, and academic standing to compete at this level.

Middle School Team Formation

We view the middle school years as an excellent time for our students to gain the necessary athletic experience that will prepare them to be a contributing factor on our varsity and junior varsity teams. At this level, every athlete will have the opportunity to gain in-game experience during each game/match. This does not mean playing time is equal, but it does mean every athlete will have the opportunity to improve their in-game competition skills.

High School Team Selection

Varsity High school teams are more competitive, and thus more selective, than that of middle school teams. Many factors go into the selection of a team. Each Covenant varsity coaching staff is allowed to set the size of their team roster, with remaining athletes forming a Junior Varsity team. All final rosters will be shown to the athletic director for approval before any official postings or announcements can be made.

Players may play on both teams if it is necessary to do so in order to form the junior varsity team. However, a player who starts for the varsity team will not be allowed to play for the junior varsity team on the same day. Also, any player who plays on both teams is limited in the total number of games that he or she can play in during the season (per TAPPS handbook).

Previous Athletic Participation

Students who participated in a sport in either junior varsity or varsity in the 9th grade through 12 grades during the current or previous school year at another school MUST have the Previous Athletic Participation Transfer Form completed and returned to the Athletic Director. The form must be completed and returned BEFORE they are eligible to participate at the JV or varsity level. A Previous Athletic Participation form is also available at www.tapps.biz. Click on Forms; scroll down to Required Forms, Click on Transfer Form. The Previous Athletic Participation must be turned in to the Athletic Director once all necessary signatures have been obtained.

Quitting a Team

We believe that character is never formed by quitting. Responsibility, integrity, loyalty, and honoring commitments are all attributes that we wish to instill in our athletes. We also believe that students and parents need to realize that participating on an athletic team, whether in middle school or high school, is going to require some effort and sacrifice of time and resources. When a student decides that they want to play on a team and begin a season they are making a commitment to that team.

If after the season begins the student-athlete decides that he/she wishes to quit the team, he/she needs to realize that it is hurting the team by not honoring the commitment that was made when the season began. We feel that a student-athlete needs to take seriously the decision to play for a team, and if he/she makes that choice then everything needs to be done in his/her power to honor that decision.

A student-athlete may drop off the team any time before the first game without penalty. After that period of time no student-athlete may quit the team without penalty. There should be a strong sense of belonging to the team even when personal injuries would restrict the individual's participation in practices and games. An injured player is expected to be at all practices and games as if he or she were healthy, unless other approval is received from his or her coach.

Any student-athlete who quits a team after the first game will lose all athletic eligibility for one year. For example, if a student-athlete quits during basketball season, he/she will not be eligible to play any sports until the start of basketball season the next year. A student-athlete who quits will be removed from the final team roster and forfeit any post-season rewards such as team pictures, letters, awards, etc.

Exceptions to this rule would be for family hardships, severe injury, or serious academic problems. The athletic director and head of school will decide any exceptions.

Multiple Sports and Activities

We encourage athletes to be well rounded, participating in different activities both athletically and otherwise. Different sports challenge athletes in different ways, and the skills developed through the training methods used in one sport will often help the athlete in another sport. Additionally, the disciplines and work ethic required in fine arts is similar to those in athletics. When student-athletes do participate in multiple sports, good, open communication between the student-athlete, his/her parents, and the two coaches involved are tantamount and a priority will be declared in case of scheduling conflicts and agreed upon by the coaches.

Regarding multiple activity participation on school teams, student-athletes may participate in a non-athletic department (i.e. fine arts) program and on an athletic team at the same time. Leadership from both activities will work closely together to minimize conflict; however, there will be times when a family will have to choose between two competing commitments. Where there is dual commitment and schedule conflict, there must be a declared priority and agreements made between student, parents and team or department leadership before the season begins as to how the student will divide his/her time between the activities. The decision to participate in multiple sports or multiple activities should ultimately be decided by the parents and student.

If a student is planning on participating on a team or organization outside of school while also participating on a school team, the student will need to meet with their current in-season head coach to talk about practice and game attendance expectations. Absences from practices due to an athlete playing in a non-school sport may result in extra conditioning and/or loss of playing time.

Playing Time

Covenant's goal is to provide a competitive athletic program. Coaches determine playing time based upon various factors. These include a student's athletic skill, attitude, character, work-ethic, performance in practice, and "in-game" needs. Our goal is for all players to gain in-game experience, but playing time is not equal for all athletes on a given team. Participating on any Covenant team, and more specifically playing in games, should always be considered a privilege and not a right. Student athletes who have questions regarding playing time should visit with their coaches to discuss what they can do to earn more playing time.

Playing Time at the Middle School Level

At this level, every athlete will have the opportunity to gain in-game experience during each game/match. This does not mean playing time is equal, but it does mean every athlete will have the opportunity to improve their in-game competition skills.

Playing Time at the High School Level

At the High School level of play, coaches strategically put players in the game that puts the team in the best position to succeed. In many cases this could mean that not every player at the Varsity level will get in the game depending on the flow of the game or match. If there are enough athletes to form a Junior Varsity team, the coach will make every effort to get each player playing time in order to provide each Junior Varsity player with in game experience.

Note: Student athletes who have questions regarding playing time should visit with their coaches to discuss what they can do to earn more playing time. If a parent would like to talk to the head coach after the student talks to their coach about ways they could earn more playing time, the parent may set up a conference with the head coach.

Positions/Events

Each of Covenant's coaches are given the charge to field the most competitive team possible based on the members of the team. Therefore they have the freedom to place athletes in positions/events that he or she feels is best for the team. Student-athletes are expected to give their best at that position/event assigned barring any physical injury that prohibits them from participating.

Injuries

We understand that injuries are a part of playing sports and that at times an injury may preclude an athlete from competing in practices/games. If an athlete has an injury that keeps them from competing, a parent note will be accepted for the first two days. After two days a doctor's note will be required as severe injuries must be dealt with medically to ensure the health of our athletes. Student-athletes and parents must also understand that missed practice time may or may not result in diminished playing time in a game. That is up to the discretion of the team's coach.

Practices for Junior High Teams

Most team practices for our junior high teams will be held either immediately before or after school. For 5th/6th graders some practice time may also take place during their PE period. Coaches may call additional practice time as needed (and facilities permit), but sufficient notice will be given to both the student-athletes and parents.

Practices for High School Teams

Practices for our high school teams will be held before or after school hours. Most practices will begin after school around 3:30 and last anywhere from 1-3 hours. As our buildings are multi-use facilities, there will be times when gym availability (or a coach's schedule) could warrant practices before school, later in the day (i.e. 5:30-7:30 p.m.), or on Saturday. These are possibilities that should be considered by both students and their parents before committing to play for a team.

Note for MS & HS Practices: In some cases we may hold practices off campus at a rented facility. Time and location of practices will be communicated to parents by the head coach via email. Transportation for afternoon practices will be provided by the school (see pages 9-10).

Practice Attire

Practice attire will be set by the head coach and will be in-line with our school's code of conduct policies.

Practice Attendance by Parents

Practices are closed for parents to observe. As it is the coach's responsibility to lead and instruct the team, parents are asked to refrain from interfering with practice by "coaching" from the stands or interacting with the student-athletes. This is to minimize confusion as to who is given our student-athletes instruction.

Game and Practice Attendance Requirements

Once any student-athlete has joined a team, he/she has committed attention and attendance to that team until the last game/meet is completed. Players must be at every practice or game unless excused for one of the following reasons:

- 1) doctor or dental appointment
- 2) personal sickness
- 3) death in the family
- 4) previously scheduled church commitment.

Student-athletes and/or their parents are responsible for communicating any absence to their coach before the practice or game, unless there is an unexpected emergency.

Covenant is supportive of its student-athletes being involved in their local church/youth group. We would never schedule a game on Wednesday or a practice or game on Sunday that would interfere with a regularly scheduled worship service. We encourage our families to be actively involved in the local church, however, any athlete who misses a practice or game may have to make up practice activities (i.e. conditioning) and face the team's policy for reduction in playing time. This is not meant as punishment for an excusable absence, but a reward and incentive to those team members who were present.

A team member who must miss a practice or game may return to their former status as soon as they have fulfilled the team's policy for absences. Each coach will announce their discipline procedure for missed practices or games. Multiple unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the team. All athletes must also be on time to all practices and games. Coaches will also announce their own discipline procedures for tardiness.

Physical Exams

Students participating in the athletic program will be required to have a current physical exam performed by a doctor prior to the first practice of the season each academic year. Without a physical form on file in the office, a student will be considered ineligible to participate in competition. Any physical performed within the past 12 months will be accepted and will be in effect for one year. A copy of the TAPPS Medical Form can be received from the athletic director. This form is available at www.tapps.biz click on under the 'Athletics' tab. Click the 'Athletic Forms' link, and it is labeled 'Medical Forms Packet'.

Eligibility for Participation

This policy applies to athletics, art, clubs, debate, drama, or any other co-curricular activities.

The Covenant Preparatory School uses the no pass, no play policy to govern a student's participation in co-curricular activities. A 5th - 12th grade student is considered ineligible if he/she receives one F (0-69) or two or more D's (70-72) on a quarterly grade check. Quarterly grade checks happen at the end of every 9 week grading period.

If a student receives an F or two D's on a quarterly grade check, he/she will be deemed ineligible for three weeks beginning at 3:15 PM on the day that quarterly grade check takes place. After the three week ineligibility period ends, the student's grades will be checked again. If at that time the student is no longer failing any classes, he/she will regain his/her eligibility. If at that time the student is still failing one or more class, another period of ineligibility of one week will begin until the student is passing.

Student-athletes are required to continue practicing with their team but will not be allowed to play in games or scrimages during their time of ineligibility. If an athlete continues to struggle academically the head coach and Athletic Director may excuse the student athlete from attending practices in order to seek extra tutoring and academic help. Students who are ineligible will **not** be permitted to travel with the team for out of town games.

Notification of Ineligibility

Notification of ineligibility will come from the Athletic Director. Notification of ineligibility will come by an email or letter to the student's parents or guardians. The Athletic Director will notify parents and students when eligibility is regained. No student may return to eligibility until notified by the Athletic Director.

Semester Failures (High School)

If a student receives an F or two D's for the first semester, he or she may regain eligibility requirements at the end of the third quarter progress report. At that time, failure to meet the eligibility requirements will continue a student's ineligible status until the end of the second semester. If a student receives an F or 2 D's for the second semester, he or she may regain eligibility by meeting the requirements at the end of the *first quarter/mid-term progress report date of the following school year*.

Class Failure

If a student fails a course(s) he or she must complete the course work with a minimum grade of a "C" during the summer to regain eligibility.

Teachers, coaches, parents and guardians are encouraged to keep current regarding their students' grades so that students will be continually encouraged to make their academics a priority. Student-athletes are also encouraged to seek tutoring before or after school and to communicate with teachers about their grades and to use tools such as Ren-Web to stay current with the status of their grades.

While Covenant views athletics as an integral and necessary part of a student's overall education, we also feel strongly that it is a privilege earned and maintained by thorough and diligent attention given to respect and responsibility in the academic areas.

School Attendance on Game Day

In order for a student-athlete to participate on any given day in a team's practice, he/she must be in the classroom for at least half the school day. In order to participate in a game, he/she must be at school by the start of 2nd period and be in attendance the rest of the school day. Exception: A student who has a doctor, dentist, or orthodontist appointment must return to school before 3:00 pm and sign back in at the school office with a doctor's note verifying the appointment. Any other exceptions must have prior approval from the athletic director.

Failure to Follow the School's Principles of Conduct

The administration reserves the option to revoke a student's privilege of participating in co-curricular activities if a student's behavior is in violation of the school's Principles of Conduct stated in the Covenant Preparatory School Family Handbook.

Note: If a student is removed from an athletic team because of conduct, he or she will not receive credit toward physical education requirements.

Athletic Fees

All Covenant student athletes that compete on a middle or high school team are required to pay an athletic fee of \$100 per sport. All fees are due to be paid in full prior to the team's first game in order for the student to be

considered eligible. Athletic fees are non-refundable when joining the team. That includes quitting the team, injury, failing grades, etc. This fee will help defray the cost of state fees, uniforms, equipment, travel, etc. All paperwork and athletic fees must be in before the first game of the season. Until all paperwork and fees are paid, the athlete will not be eligible to play. Transcripts and final grades will not be issued until all uniforms/equipment is turned in.

Note: The athletic fee for some sports such as golf may be slightly more than \$100 in order to cover various costs that come with the sport.

Concession Stand/Gate

Every athlete's family will be required to volunteer in the concession stand and gate a minimum number of 3 times per sport. This is essential to be able to operate a successful concessions operation. If you are scheduled to work a particular time and are not able to fulfill your obligation, please contact the athletic department immediately. The proceeds from the concession stand and gate go towards the daily costs of running the Covenant athletic department and help keep the athletic fee to a minimum.

Communication

Coaches will let parents know via email on a weekly basis about changes to the team's practice schedule, changes to travel itineraries, times expected back to school after away games, and other pertinent team information.

Uniform Responsibility

Uniforms are one of our largest expenditures as an athletic department, and so it is important that we try to maximize the life of these items. With that in mind, we ask that athletes and parents use the following guidelines when cleaning and caring for uniforms that they are issued:

1. Wash separately
2. Wash in cold water
3. Hang up to dry – DO NOT TUMBLE DRY!!
4. Do not make alterations unless given permission by the Athletic Director.

Uniforms become the responsibility of the athlete as soon as they are issued until the time that they are returned. ***Athletic uniforms are only to be worn for games, not practices or other functions and they are not permitted as part of your school uniform at any time.*** Any damage that is done during that period, other than normal wear and tear, is the responsibility of the athlete and will be billed to them accordingly. All uniforms and equipment must be returned to the coach or athletic director within one week after the last game of the season. Any student-athlete who does not return uniforms and/or equipment will have his/her report card held and costs for replacement charged to his/her school bill. An athlete will not be allowed to participate in another sport until all overdue uniforms, equipment, and fees have been turned in. Any lost items will be billed to the athlete at full replacement value.

Early Dismissal

There are many times throughout the year when teams will travel before school ends for that day. This is because we have multiple sports in different districts stretching from San Antonio to Houston and it is inevitable that we will travel during school hours. If and when a team is to leave early to travel, they will be released by the Athletic Director or school administrator. Student-athletes are to remain in class until they are released. Once a student is released, they will have 10 minutes to be on the bus and ready to travel.

Transportation

Transportation is divided into two sections within the Covenant Athletic Department: Practice Transportation and Game Transportation.

Practice Transportation

For all practices that take place after the school day, we will provide transportation for students from their campus to the location of practice. Parents/families will then be responsible to pick their child/children up at the end of practice to go home. For practices that take place before the school day, it is the responsibility of the parents/families to get their child/children to the practice location and then the Covenant Athletic Department will provide transportation to their campus prior to the school day.

Game Transportation

When it comes to away games/matches, we are committed to providing transportation to and from every contest for our athletes. However, due to our school's high involvement in athletics at the middle school and high school level, there may be times when more teams are traveling than transportation is available. In those cases, the athletic department will assist in arranging transportation with families to and from the athletic event. If this situation were to arise, it will be communicated with families well in advance of the actual date.

What the student-athletes are to wear on road trips or to away games is set by the coach of that sport. In any case, student-athletes need to be aware that they are representing their team, their school, and most importantly our Heavenly Father in the way that they act and the way that they dress. All students are expected to dress appropriately.

When transportation to away games is provided by the school, all team members, cheerleaders, managers, statisticians, and scorekeepers must travel to the game on the school bus or van (*exceptions may be cleared with the head coach*). A student-athlete may ride home from an off-campus game with his/her parent(s), legal guardian, or a friend's parent(s) provided that the coach has been notified by written or verbal communication from the student-athlete's parent(s) or legal guardian prior to leaving the contest site.

Boys and Girls will not be allowed to share seats on the bus on road trips to away games. Boys will sit with boys and girls will sit with girls.

Severe/Inclement Weather

Any changes to published schedules due to bad weather will be updated on our website as soon as an affirmative decision can be made. If lightning is present during an outdoor event, all parties must be moved indoors. The event can only be resumed if 30 minutes has passed since the last visual evidence of lightning. For outdoor practices, heat and humidity are closely monitored. Where possible, outside practices will be scheduled in the coolest times of the day.

Insurance Coverage

Covenant requires that all student-athletes are to be covered under a family primary care/major medical health insurance policy in order to participate in any practices or games. *There is no supplemental insurance available to cover accidents to student-athletes.*

Recognition of Participation in Junior High Sports

Each junior high student-athlete will receive a participation certificate for each sport he/she plays in a given school year. Managers, statisticians, and scorekeepers will be honored with a participation certificate that outlines their contributions as well.

Recognition of Participation in Junior Varsity Sports

Each junior varsity student-athlete will receive a participation certificate for each sport he/she plays in a given school year. Managers, statisticians, and scorekeepers will be honored with a participation certificate that outlines their contributions as well.

Lettering in Varsity Sports

Letters are earned for significant contributions to a varsity team (not sub-varsity) either in playing time or servant-leadership. Being on a varsity roster does not mean that a varsity letter will be earned.

Student-athletes in grades 9-12 can earn a varsity letter in a sport under any of these qualifications:

1. **Playing/Participation Time** – a student athlete must complete the season and must participate in a minimum of 50 percent of the competitions.
2. **Servant-Leadership** – for those team members who do not meet the minimum playing time requirement, they may qualify for a varsity letter under servant-leadership by demonstrating commitment, positive attitude, and enthusiasm and serving the team in a significant way throughout the season, as decided by the Head Coach.
3. **Completion of Season** – a team member must complete the season on the team's roster. If a player quits a team or is dismissed from a team, he or she will not qualify for a varsity letter. If an injury or season-ending injury impacts the minimum playing/participation time qualification, then it is up to the discretion of the Varsity Head Coach and Athletic Director to determine whether or not the playing/participation time qualification would have been met based on to-date contribution at the time of the injury.

Out of Season Expectations

During the school year, student-athletes are expected to give the in-season sport in which they are participating first priority over any type of off-season leagues or training. Any organized training for another sport during the season in which an athlete is participating (such as an open facility or league) should be cleared with the current in-season head coach.

During the summer, all 9th-12th grade athletes are expected to work on and develop their athletic abilities. Understanding that family and personal time take first priority during the summer, there are various opportunities for student-athletes to train when they can. If a student-athlete is in town and not committed to a family activity, it is assumed that he/she will be engaged in some sort of athletic development program

Chain of Authority for Disputes

The Athletic Department does its best to run and organize our team and events in a manner that will allow all of those involved to receive the greatest possible enjoyment and benefit. In the event of a conflict or concern we refer to Matthew 18:15-18 as our Biblical guide. If any parent, athlete, coach, teacher, or administrator has a concern over an athletic issue, they have a Biblical responsibility to go first to the person(s) that they have the concern about or with. It is our desire that any problems can then be cleared up and those involved can move on. If, however, this does not resolve the issue, then and only then, should the issue be brought to the attention of another person. For the record, the level of authority at Covenant is as follows:

1. Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Head of School
4. School Board

It is important to not confront a coach before, during or after a game or practice. These can be emotional times and not best for resolving conflicts. A 24-hour waiting period is a must to address any concerns. After the 24-hour waiting period, a parent can contact the coach and set up a conference time to share his/her concerns.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking time to read over the Covenant Athletic Handbook. Please sign the next page acknowledging that you and your athlete have read the Handbook and return the form to your coach, front desk, or athletic director.

Thank you,

Jacob Hendricks
Athletic Director
Covenant Preparatory School
jhendricks@covenantknights.org

Handbook Agreement Form

I have read all of the Covenant Athletic Handbook and agree to abide by the rules, regulations, and commitments set forth in it. My signature below is an acknowledgment of my commitment.

Print Father's Name

Father's Signature

Print Mother's Name

Mother's Signature

Print Student-Athlete's Name

Student-Athlete's Signature

Date

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE

Recognition and Assumption of Risk Agreement Form

I, _____, the undersigned parent/legal guardian of _____, authorize said child's full participation in the Covenant athletic program. It is my understanding that participation in the activities that make up the Covenant athletic program are not without some inherent risk of injury.

As such, in consideration of my child's participation in the Covenant athletic program, I hereby release, waive, discharge and covenant not to sue Covenant, the Athletic Department, or employees from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions and causes of action whatsoever arising out of or related to any loss, damage or injury, including death, that may be sustained by my child, whether caused by the negligence of the releases, or otherwise while participating in such activity, or while in, on, or upon the premises where the activity is being conducted.

I also agree to follow all instructions and procedures in order to maintain a maximum level of safety. Covenant requires all student-athletes to be covered under a family primary care/major medical health insurance policy in order to participate in any practices or games. There is no supplemental insurance available to cover accidents to student-athletes.

I also give my permission for any emergency medical care or treatment by a physician, surgeon, hospital or medical care facility that may be required including transportation and accept responsibility for the cost.

Print Father's Name

Father's Signature

Print Mother's Name

Mother's Signature

Print Student-Athlete's Name

Student-Athlete's Signature

Date

Please complete this form and return to Athletic Office

