

Millwoods Christian School - Athletic Handbook

One Team, One God, One Goal

Philosophy and Objectives

The following statement of philosophy and the objectives of participation are basic to the athletic program of Millwoods Christian School. They are given here to place athletics in the proper perspective in our school.

Philosophy

It is the philosophy of Millwoods Christian School that all aspects of Christian education, including interscholastic athletics, must fulfill its mission - "***Preparing minds for leadership, hearts for service.***" Millwoods Christian is committed to providing a God-centered education. As such, Millwoods Christian expects its coaches and athletes to pursue the goal of excellence with Christ-like character. Consistent with this goal, Millwoods Christian seeks to develop the entire student, as it believes that successful Christian education results in the development of a balanced lifestyle in the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions of a student's total being.

We believe athletics is more than competition between two teams of individuals representing different schools; it is an educational experience between the coach and the team through practice, competition, and person-to-person relationships. Participation in athletics contributes to good character development, good sportsmanship and the development of God-given talents and abilities. We expect our athletes and coaches to work hard, enjoy the sport, respect each other and their opponents and honor Christ in all they do.

Our athletic program provides a means to teach young people how to compete and grow in the context of a Christian worldview. Our teams must participate in such a way that honor comes to the team, the school and the Lord. Millwoods Christian School athletes and coaches must play fairly, observe regulations and policies, treat others with courtesy and respect, and accept adversity without complaining. Millwoods Christian is committed to developing a perspective on winning and losing that is consistent with the teachings of scripture. We require our coaches and athletes to dedicate themselves to this goal. Our challenge is to be in contrast to a sports world that all too often emphasizes winning at any cost. Winning should be one of our goals, but we recognize that losing can present a beneficial learning experience. To this end, Millwoods Christian strives for Excellence with Christ-like Character in all athletic endeavors.

Excellence places emphasis on:

Education: participants will develop an understanding of the game, including strategy, rules, and fundamentals.

Development: participants will develop their gifts, abilities, and skills in order to maximize their potential as individuals and as a team.

Competition: participants will work hard and compete intensely to achieve victory, while recognizing that success will not be defined exclusively by winning.

Christ-like Character places emphasis on:

Sportsmanship: participants will respect their teammates, coaches, opponents, and officials and will bring honor to their school and the Lord through their actions and attitudes.

Perspective: participants will understand and experience the enjoyment of athletics within the context of a balanced lifestyle that seeks to reflect the wholeness to which our Lord calls us.

Discipleship: participants will benefit from the Christian mentoring of their coach, and engage in practices that will promote their spiritual growth.

Objectives

The objectives we have for our coaches, teams and players are consistent with our philosophy.

1. To keep the well-being of the team and the individual as the priority in what we do and teach in our coaching. Coaching provides a unique opportunity to work with students. Few jobs provide the satisfaction derived from playing a part in the development of young people.

2. To develop within our athletes the individual and team skills necessary to compete successfully and reach their God-given potential recognizing that athletic ability is a gift from God and should be used to His honor.

3. To encourage and instill an atmosphere where all players feel included and a valuable part of the program. The goal is to play as many athletes as possible without diluting the objective of winning the contest.

4. To teach our athletes to compete with a humble attitude, thanking God for all good things, and to win or lose with a heart that praises God for the opportunity to participate and learn from the experience.

5. To teach our athletes to submit to the rules of the game and the officials who enforce the regulations. The goal is to win, but only in an appropriate manner.

6. To treat each opponent as being worthy of respect.

7. To emphasize that "sportsmanship" is more important than "championship". How we win or lose must be consistent with the name we wear.

8. To provide the Millwoods Christian School community with the enjoyment of athletics while they in turn encourage and support the students and coaches in both winning and losing efforts.

9. To experience respect and cooperation between all coaches within our school.

10. To teach each athlete that through caring, sharing, dedication and mutual respect, all participants contribute to a group that is greater than the sum of its parts. The goal is to build community and teamwork.

11. To understand the importance of maintaining a balanced, healthy lifestyle. Coaches and students have other tasks in life besides athletics; the demands on their time, energy and enthusiasm must be reasonable.

12. To help all participants experience the satisfaction of knowing they did their best to become the best they are capable of becoming.

"In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:6

"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men." Luke 2:52

"The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." I Timothy 1:5

PHILOSOPHY OF PLAYING TIME AND THE ROLE OF COMPETITION

In MCS athletics, our overall objective is to bring glory to God, as is stated and explained above. Therefore, our ultimate goal is not winning, as is the case in many schools, but rather striving for excellence to bring honor to God's name, as our mission statement suggests.

However, striving for excellence in athletics includes attention to the objective aim of each contest, which is to win the contest. Although we never wish to sacrifice our moral integrity to achieve victory, victory is still a measuring stick of the excellence for which we strive.

In light of this fact, MCS athletics will strive to be more competitive at each higher level of athletic participation. In other words, as students get older, MCS coaches will place a greater emphasis on athletic ability with regard to the playing time of the athletes. Because of increased competition for playing time and emphasis on team excellence, as students get older, athletes have a greater responsibility to develop their skills outside of practice, rather than relying on coaches for individual development during practice.

Generally speaking, our guidelines for playing time are as follows:

Elementary Non-Competitive: Each student that comes out for the team will be guaranteed a spot on the team and every effort will be made to get each team member playing time. At this level, the goal is for player and skill development, while a lower emphasis is placed on team competitiveness.

Elementary Competitive: Students must tryout for teams and are not guaranteed a spot on the team simply because they tryout for the team. Those cut from the playing squad may be offered some position with the team (such as a manager, trainer, videographer, or statistician) and will be considered part of the team if they choose to accept that role. Every effort will be made to get each team member playing time in each game, though playing time amounts will not be equal but rather gained according to ability. At the Elementary Level, there is a higher emphasis on all players' development in practice and some emphasis on game development with a "lower" emphasis on team competitiveness.

Senior and Junior High School Teams:

Jr. High 7/8 Teams

Students must tryout for teams and are not guaranteed a spot on the team simply because they try out for the team. Those not selected to the playing squad may be offered some position with the team (such as a manager, trainer, videographer, or statistician) and will be considered part of the team if they choose to accept that role. The goal of the coaches is to provide equal playing time for the first three quarters of the game. For the last quarter of the game playing time may be designated to the higher skilled players to work on developing team success and allow students to take ownership of different roles on a team.

Jr. High 8/9 Teams

Students must tryout for teams and are not guaranteed a spot on the team simply because they try out for the team. Those cut from the playing squad may be offered some position with the team (such as a manager, trainer, videographer, or statistician) and will be considered part of the team if they choose to accept that role. The goal of the coach is to develop all players on the team but equal playing time is not guaranteed. Coaches understand that to develop lifelong skills, playing is important and during tournaments and regular season games, some playing time for all team members is our intention.

Sr. High Teams

Students must tryout for teams and are not guaranteed a spot on the team simply because they try out for the team. Those cut from the playing squad may be offered some position with the team (such as a manager, trainer, videographer, or statistician) and will be considered part of the team if they choose to accept that role. Students at this level are responsible for most of their individual development, and a higher emphasis placed on team excellence and competitiveness.

Just as people in life have different roles and abilities, players will also have differing roles based on ability at the Senior/Junior Level. Players may receive little playing time during the season, but are considered just as valuable as any other member of the team. This may be due to a lower level of skill, lack of experience, or lack of commitment to the team. (See Conduct of MCS Athlete) All players are to view this as time to grow and develop their skills while contributing to the development of the team as a whole. As coaches pick their team, they will be very clear with the player on what role he/she sees the player fitting into during the season. However, as players begin to improve and compete in practices coaches may change roles of the player on his/her team. If the player is unable to accept the role the coach has set for him/her with a positive attitude, it will be a difficult season for the coach, team members, parents, and the individual player.

CONDUCT OF A MCS ATHLETE

The conduct of a Christian athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important that his/her behavior be Christ-like in all areas, especially the following:

Academic and Attendance Expectations

Participating on school teams promotes high academic achievement in the classroom. It is our goal as a school to help student athletes maintain a high level of achievement in all courses. For high school athletes, students must be registered and attending a minimum of 2 full time courses (or more if set out by school administration) according to ASAA policy.

Teachers who have concerns about an athlete's course mark (ie: an honors student falling below their capability or a student who is struggling in passing the course) or have athletes with many outstanding assignments will need to initiate an "Athletes At-Risk Action Plan." Please see the following steps so that this action plan can be implemented properly to support the student athlete.

Action Plan Steps:

1. Teacher contacts Athletic Director with the issue that needs to be addressed, assuming that the necessary steps of intervention have already taken place with the teacher and the student.
2. AD will then meet with the player for a discussion about the issue.
3. AD will meet with the coach, player and parent (if necessary) to set the action plan in place to address the issue as necessary.
4. AD will communicate with teacher what the plan will be for the athlete.
5. Teachers will communicate with AD when the deadlines are met or not met.
6. If students do not meet deadlines, Administration will have a meeting to outline consequences with regards to eligibility. This will be communicated to the teachers.

Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend classes on the day before, the day of, and the day after any activity. Administrative approval will be needed to excuse an absence. If students miss a class without parental consent, they will get a warning and the next unexcused absence will result in an in school suspension for half a day and they are ineligible to participate in any athletic event that day. The next offence will result in athletic suspension for 7 days from the day of the skipped class unless otherwise dealt with by administration.

If a student athlete misses any class on the day of the event unexcused, they will not be permitted to participate in the athletic event. If a student athlete skips class on a Friday, they are ineligible for any weekend events.

On The Field

In the area of athletic competition a Christian athlete never uses profanity or illegal tactics. A Christian athlete should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. It is always courteous to congratulate the opponent on a well-played game after the contest whether in defeat or victory. This will mean there will be no fits of temper, taunting, clowning, ridicule, or complaining in any form or manner. A Christian athlete's goal is to have complete self-control at all times.

Any behaviour contrary to this is a direct reflection on the team, coaches, school, and Christ, and will not be tolerated. Violations of a minor nature will be handled at the discretion of the coach. Those of a more serious nature may result in suspension or possible expulsion from the team, and will be handled by the coach and administration together.

In the Classroom

A Christian athlete should always try to be a good student and succeed academically. The athlete needs to plan his/her time carefully to provide sufficient energy for his/her studies to insure acceptable grades.

Students must attend at least a morning or afternoon to participate in practices or games. Any student that skips a class without permission will have disciplinary measures taken, which may include up to a game suspension. Students who attend classes must also attend practices unless receiving verbal permission from their coach.

Students will be required to have all assignments completed on time. In the event that a student-athlete is unable to complete an assignment by a due date, it is his/her responsibility to ask for an extension at least one day prior to the due date. Extensions are not to be used as a “norm”, but under special circumstances. As every teacher will have his/her own policy on late assignments and extensions, students are to assume that extensions will not be granted and late assignments will not be taken for marks. In addition to maintaining due diligence, an athlete should give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect to all students and faculty members at all times. If an athlete cannot meet this higher standard of behavior in the classroom, disciplinary measures will be taken by his/her coach and/or MCS Administration. Minor infractions may result in extra conditioning exercises during practice. Major infractions could result in suspension from the team.

On Trips

Athletic trips provide the most obvious opportunity to represent our Lord and school well.

Therefore, exemplary behavior is especially important away from home.

Athletes must return with the team, unless written permission is given by the parent. We will strive to leave every school, locker room, park, van, car, and restaurant cleaner than we find them. Drivers of the vehicles that we ride in, and any other adults we encounter on the trip, will be shown respect and will be obeyed.

Treatment of School Equipment and Uniforms:

Students are personally and financially responsible for all equipment/uniforms checked out to them. Failure to return equipment and uniforms in a timely fashion will result in the student/parent paying the replacement cost of the items. Students should treat all equipment with great care, helping the school with the stewardship of its resources.

ATHLETIC DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

All students must have a signed permission slip before they will be allowed to participate in a sport.

When a student-athlete is medically excused from school, he/she will also be excused from practice or a game. The athlete should call his/her coach as soon as possible to notify them that they will not be at a game, so that the coach may adjust the line-up.

If a student misses school for illness he/she cannot attend practice unless it has been cleared by a MCS administrator. If a student attends school, he/she should also attend practice, even if he/she does not suit up. If a student goes home sick during the school day, he/she must notify the coach.

Parents should try to avoid scheduling family vacations during sporting activities where possible, and try to avoid vacations during “critical” portions of the year. When a student-athlete accompanies his/her parents on a pre planned family vacation, this will be accepted as an excused absence from practice or games. The intent of this rule is to encourage commitment to the team but also to support family activities. When the athlete returns, he/she is not guaranteed his/her previous position (e.g., on the starting line up).

Student-athletes should make an effort to schedule non-emergency medical or dental appointments so as not to conflict with practices or games. If an appointment or other activity is

scheduled which conflicts with a practice or game, the coach must be notified by the student prior to the conflict. If this is not done, the miss will be considered unexcused. Any absence that is not reported prior or as soon as possible will be unexcused.

If a student-athlete is suspended from school, his/her absences will be considered unexcused and further consequences may be given by the coach.

It is the expectation of all our coaches that all the members of a team participate in every practice, where not excused as stated previously. Failure to do so may result in but is not limited to a player losing his/her starting position, a drop in playing time or even the loss of playing in a whole game. This may mean that a player with conflicting commitments may lose playing time. The rationale for this policy is to: enable our volunteer coaches to put forth the best possible athletic product in competitive city leagues and provincial competitions; in fairness to the other players on the team who may have had to make tough decisions to commit to the team; for practical reasons of conditioning and team plays.

Exceptions to this rule will be considered under extreme circumstance. A coach may establish additional requirements for his/her team.

Restrictions for Ineligibility:

Students ruled ineligible because of grades or behavior are restricted by the following policies: If a student is ineligible, he/she must still attend all practices and games with the team, unless this requires him/her to miss any classes. He/she is expected to dress according to the coach's specifications and take a service role such as keeping statistics.

If a student displays chronic ineligibility or needs extraordinary assistance in his/her problem subjects, he/she may be allowed to miss practices or games at the agreement of the coach and teacher in order to get extra help. However, this procedure will only be used under special circumstances, since the student will once again be required to attend all practices and games once his/her eligibility is regained. It is better if the student is able to regain his/her eligibility while maintaining the same schedule that an eligible player would have to maintain.

For ASAA sanctioned sports, all players will need to be deemed eligible before participating in competition. Students and parents will be required to sign documents from the Metro Edmonton High School Athletics Association before their student can participate in competition.

CONDUCT & RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MCS PARENT/GUARDIAN/FAN:

Understanding that teacher-coaches and volunteer-coaches put in countless hours into the lives of your children we require that the parent/guardian:

- Coordinate transportation of student athletes as not to be late!
- If parents/guardians are unable to drop off or pick up their child from the playing venue or school depending on the team arrangements, they must make other arrangements or a last resort contact the coach.
- To never criticize a coach behind his/her back. See "Conflicts or Disputes".

Conflicts or Disputes

Realizing that conflict or disputes are inevitable in athletics:

- If a parent/guardian/fan has a concern or “issue” with a coach, it is the parent/guardian/or fan’s responsibility to phone the MCS office and make an appointment to meet with the coach and if needed the athletic director.

- If a resolution is not met or a parent is not satisfied with the meeting, a second meeting with the coach, athletic director and senior administrator can be made through the office.

“Next Day Rule”

- The appointment must be made the next day after the incident. Never is a parent/guardian to approach a coach right after a competition about a conflict or dispute.

- The “Next Day Rule” is designed to allow all parties to evaluate the situation or event and to approach the meeting in a Christ-like manner.

Behaviour At Competitions:

As our students are required to act in a manner pleasing to God while representing MCS, parents/guardians/fans are also responsible to display this same behaviour. In the case that a parent/guardian/fan chooses to act in an inappropriate manner, the parent will be contacted for a meeting with MCS Athletics Administration.

Tournaments/Fundraising:

To create an outstanding tournament, parents/guardians are asked to volunteer their time as a means of fundraising for the teams. Also, from time to time, parents/guardians will be asked to help raise funds for special projects. This may include bottle drives, selling chocolates, etc.