

MILFORD CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
2024-2025

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

For Students and Parents



Home of the Bulldogs

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SECTION I INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of Milford Christian Academy athletics is to provide an atmosphere where student-athletes can develop their physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual gifts through the avenue of competition. The mission of our athletic department is to develop our students so that they are pliable to God's will in submitting their lives to pointing others to Christ. This cannot be accomplished without structure and order, and this goal remains consistent in the athletic program. There is little to gain from exercise, sports, and competition if these activities are not accomplished in a godly way. The athletic program shall proceed with this priority as a driving force so that win or lose; the athletic program will bring glory to God and always endeavor to point others to Christ.

MCA athletics should be a catalyst that helps develop a lifestyle of character, integrity, discipline, hard work, and leadership. Athletics provide a wonderful opportunity to develop and practice skills and lessons that are learned in the classroom. MCA athletics can be used as another way to help educate and develop our student-athletes as they mature.

The interscholastic athletic program at MCA is an integral part of the entire school program. It is never to be thought of as being separate from, above, or beneath any

program of our school. The athletic program supports and reinforces the mission and purpose of Milford Christian Academy and First Baptist Church of Milford.

Philosophy of Christian Athletics

Competitive sports take a substantial position in our culture today and challenge those of us in Christian education to know and understand their redemptive value. To compete means, "To strive in opposition." By definition it requires a desire and an effort to win, without which there would be no competition. Therefore, the MCA athlete has the intent to win. While this must be the competitor's intent, the Christian athlete must have a higher purpose in competing.

Athletics has become an invaluable window to the soul. Playing games is physical, emotional, and spiritual – all at once – and consequently provides experiences that mirror life itself with its struggles, battles, disciplines, rewards, successes, failures, disappointments, and challenges. Seeing athletics in this light brings out its purpose and value, perhaps more so for the Christian than for anyone else. To pursue athletics in this way is to make it a practice field and testing ground for the growth and establishment of God's character in us and in our children.

Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct

Remember that our athletic events are just games. Be honest about your child's ability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level. Be the parent not the coach. Be supportive from the stands. Let the coach do the coaching. When a parent coaches from the bleachers your input may be contrary to the coach's direction. Be supportive of the coach in the stands and at home. If you undermine the coach eventually this undermining will appear in your child.

- I will remember that young people participate for their enjoyment, not to entertain me.
- I will respect the official's decision and will encourage all participants to do the same.
- I will respect and show appreciation for the coaches, athletic director and administration and understand that they have given their time to provide extracurricular activities for our young people.
- I will show respect for the opponents.
- I will always show good sportsmanship since young people learn best by example.

Parents and spectators are to never enter the field or court of play during a game unless asked by administration. Parents and spectators are asked to never approach the officials in a negative way before, during, or after a game. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action by administration.

Chain of Command

The chain of command is in place to best answer questions that may arise during the season. Coaches are the best contact for day to day questions. If you have a question about athletic department philosophy please feel free to contact the Athletic Director directly. Otherwise please use the chain of command as we have endeavored to make this the Biblical outline (Matthew 18) of how to handle issues of concern and to maintain

consistency within the athletic department, and to meet our mission statement, philosophy, and goals.

A. First Contact	Team's Head Coach
B. Second Contact	Athletic Director
C. Third Contact	Administrator

Playing Time Philosophy

Athletes at Milford Christian Academy should strive for excellence and play to win each and every game within the parameters of a Christ-like attitude. This means that in each game both the coach and the players put forth their best effort. At the high school level, the coach's decision to play an athlete will be based on their attendance to practices (both pre-season and in-season), the effort put forth during practices, and the skill level the athlete currently possesses. At the elementary and junior high levels we understand that athletes have had less experience in the sport and will need both practice and game time to properly develop and refine their skills. There is no set formula that works for all sports when it comes to playing time, but consideration for both competitiveness and participation will be weighed by the head coach.

Conference Affiliations

Milford Christian Academy is a member and participant of the Ohio Valley Christian Conference (ovccsports.com). We also participate in the Ohio Christian School Athletic Association (ohiocsa.org).

SECTION II PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Elementary (Grades 3-6)

The athlete is provided an introduction to the sport with basic individual and game skills. The focus is on participation and gaining knowledge to succeed in later years. This level is under a "no-cut" policy.

- Girls' Volleyball (Fall)
- Girls' Basketball (Winter)
- Boys' Basketball (Winter)

Junior High (Grades 7-8)

The athlete is provided an introduction to the sport if this is their first year, but is expected to have basic knowledge of the sport at this level. Team concepts and individual skills are strengthened and an attitude of excellence and sportsmanship is expected. A "no cut" policy is preferred, but may be mandatory.

- Boys' Cross Country (Fall)
- Girls' Volleyball (Fall)

- Girls' Cheerleading (Winter)
- Girls' Basketball (Winter)
- Boys' Basketball (Winter)

Senior High (Grades 9-12)

The athlete is expected to have knowledge of the sport and a skill set required to compete at this level. Team concepts and individual skills are continued to be strengthened and an attitude of excellence and sportsmanship is expected.

- Boys' Cross Country (Fall)
- Girls' Volleyball (Fall)
- Girls' Cheerleading (Winter)
- Girls' Basketball (Winter)
- Boys' Basketball (Winter)
- Boys' Volleyball (Spring)

SECTION III PARTICPATION AND ELIGIBILITY

Once a student has participated in a practice, scrimmage or contest a student is considered an athlete of Milford Christian Academy. Student-athletes and parents of the student-athlete are governed by the policies of the athletic handbook as well as the school's handbook until the end of the school year.

Sports Fees

All athletic student-athletes will be assessed a sports fee. These fees go directly towards the operational costs of the athletic program. Sports fees are listed below.

- Grades 3-6 \$50 per sport for volleyball and basketball
- Grades 7-12 (JH, JV, Varsity) \$150 per sport
- At the discretion of administration, when an MCA parent serves in a coaching or assistant coaching position for the duration of the season, the sports fee may be waived for one student athlete per parent coach, per season.

Sports fees are nonrefundable after the student-athletes first game for their team sport. The sports fee does not guarantee playing time which is ultimately determined by the coach. **Sports fees will be billed to your FACTS account the month that the sport starts.** If a sports fee has not been paid, the student-athlete may be denied participation until payment is made. There may be additional expenses involved in the student-athletes particular sport which are not covered by Milford Christian Academy such as shoes, selected apparel/spirit-wear, warm up shirts, special purchases,

competition fees, required or special equipment, and away meals/lodging. Fundraising may be organized with the Athletic Director to help defray these additional expenses. All fundraisers must be approved by the administration before they begin.

Lockers, Vehicles, Equipment

The neatness and cleanliness of locker rooms, vehicles, hallways and other team facilities is the joint responsibility of student-athletes, coaches, athletic director, advisors and appropriate school personnel.

Improper behavior, horseplay, vandalism, roughhousing, harassment, hazing/bullying of others and improper care of equipment are examples of activities related to locker rooms and team areas for which disciplinary action would be appropriate, up to and including denial of participation. Incidents are to be reported to a staff member immediately.

Athletic Director, coaches and student-athletes are only permitted in the locker room or designated team meeting area. All others (including family and friends) must wait outside these areas for student-athletes and coaches.

Eligibility

Academic:

Eligibility will be checked for all junior and senior high student-athletes and determined every two weeks. Incoming 7th and 8th graders are eligible to play fall sports immediately. Their first eligibility check will be the first two-week check in the first quarter. Incoming 9th graders and all 10th-12th graders are only eligible to play the first two weeks of fall sports based upon their fourth quarter grades. All student-athletes must have earned a 2.5 GPA and received no failing grade (average of all individual grades for that particular subject) at the two-week eligibility check.

Eligibility for athletes on an Academic Intervention Plan will be at the discretion of administration. The student's grades as well as participation and effort will be considered.

Attendance:

Student-athletes may not participate in a practice or game if the student was absent for more than two class hours on that day unless approved by administration prior to the absence. Student-athletes that leave school early because of an illness cannot participate in any school activity that day unless approved by administration.

Behavior:

A student may also become ineligible due to inappropriate behavior and disciplinary actions. The administration or parent may also limit a student's participation in sports for

disciplinary action, please refer to Section IV “Behavior.” Not adhering to the mentioned sportsmanship rules will result in a conference with the athletic director or administration.

Other:

An athlete must not have been enrolled in school for more than eight semesters once he enters the ninth grade. An athlete’s nineteenth birthday must fall after August 1 of that year. Age guidelines follow the National Federation of State High School Administrations (NFHS).

Ineligible Students

Ineligibility of the student-athlete should come as no surprise to the student-athlete nor the parent. Student-athletes that are ineligible may participate in practice but may not dress for games. Student-athletes that are ineligible may not travel to away games on school nights (excluding Friday) or travel to tournaments. They may, however, attend home games at their parent’s discretion. Ineligible student-athletes that attend home games must sit at the end of their team’s bench in school uniform.

If subpar grades persist, parents will be consulted, and the ineligible student-athlete may be dismissed from athletics until such a time as it is deemed reasonable that the student has continued and will continue to maintain satisfactory grades. Student-athletes must be eligible and in good standing to participate in any official team function such as tournaments, senior night etc.

Homeschool Students

We are not able to accommodate 7 -12th grade homeschool students in our athletic programs. Parents of elementary students who wish to participate in MCA athletics should contact the office to check on availability.

Transfer Students

Transfer students’ eligibility will be based upon the last reporting of grades from their previous school. Student-athlete transfers from OVCC member schools are subject to the OVCC policy on transfer students. (see athletic director)

SECTION IV ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS

Practice

Athletes are expected to attend all practices. Every effort should be made to schedule appointments during non-practice times. Players must inform the coach personally when they will miss a practice. Failure to comply with this rule may result in diminished playing time or suspension from future games.

Games

Athletes are expected to attend all games. Players must inform the coach personally when they must miss a game. Missing a game for any non-excused reason will result in suspension from the next game. Failure to attend every game may also influence eligibility in future seasons. The coach will determine what is excused and what is not excused.

Early dismissal or overnight stays may be necessary due to travel distance or tournament schedule. These games will be approved by the administrator and athletic director.

If a student-athlete has a question regarding playing time you may ask the coach but only at the conclusion of a practice. Under no circumstance should a parent ask this type of question before or after a game.

Uniforms

Players must wear the complete assigned uniform for their sport, if he/she does not have their own uniform they will not be permitted to play in that game. Uniforms are passed out prior to the first competition and are expected to be turned in the week after the last game of the season.

Student-athletes are required to take care of laundering their uniform. Any damage or discoloration will result in a fee being assessed for repair or replacement. Most uniforms should be washed in cold water and either dried on low heat or by hanging on a plastic hanger.

Lost or damaged uniforms are the responsibility of the athlete. If a uniform is damaged beyond that of normal wear and tear, the student will be billed the current cost for a replacement uniform plus shipping and handling cost. Uniforms are property of the school. The school will purchase all uniforms; therefore, they must be turned in and inventoried at the conclusion of each season.

Practice Dress

Student-athletes must wear attire that follows the Milford Christian Academy handbook for modesty. Shirts must not have any graphic or inappropriate material or sayings on them. Shorts must come to the knee. Gym shoes are only to be worn while practicing on the gym floor. Cleats are never to be worn inside of the building.

Game Day Dress

Student-athletes must wear school uniforms on all game days while at school. Special permission may be given by the athletic director or administrator to wear a team shirt or other spirit wear on the day of a game.

Behavior

Athletes are expected to represent Milford Christian Academy with pride. If an athlete chooses to conduct themselves in an inappropriate manner during school, after school, or during a school activity may result in the following consequences.

- Saturday School: Suspended for one game. (Includes tournaments and Saturday games) (Immediately following Saturday School)
- School Suspension: Suspended for one week of games. (Immediately following suspension)

We strongly encourage a player to finish the season once started. A serious physical condition and/or academic problem may qualify a student to be released from team responsibilities. A parent conference with the coach and athletic director would be required to discuss this situation. Sports fees are nonrefundable.

In-Game Discipline

If a Milford Christian Academy athlete is charged with an unsportsmanlike penalty resulting in a yellow card or technical foul or ejected from a contest, the athletic director will meet with the coach and player the following day to discuss the penalty and the ramifications thereafter.

SECTION V GENERAL INFORMATION

Physicals and Release Forms

Student-athletes must have a valid Ohio High School Athletic Association physical with an attached emergency form that is current for the entire season. Parental permission form must also be on file in the athletic office before the season begins. Athletic forms are available on the school's website.

Parent Meetings

A new parent is expected to attend an information meeting conducted by the athletic department. The meeting will be held at the beginning of the year. Plan to attend to obtain critical information for the following year in athletics.

Facilities

No student-athlete should use the facilities of the gymnasium, locker rooms or athletic fields outside of scheduled practice times without the approval of the administrator. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Inclement Weather

Activities will not be conducted on days when school is not in session due to severe weather unless approved by the athletic director and administrator.

National Anthem

We ask that anyone associated with Milford Christian Academy, who is able, please stand for the National Anthem. All coaches and athletes will stand during the National Anthem and show respect to our country, those that fought for our freedom, and most importantly those that paid the ultimate price for our country...their life.

Weight Room Rules and Guidelines

- No horseplay at any time.
- No food, drinks, or gum in the fitness room (with the exception of water in a closed bottle).
- Shoes must be worn at all times (no sandals or open toed shoes).
- Students are **never** allowed to be in the weight room without supervision by a coach, teacher, or athletic director.
- Never interfere with someone who is lifting.
- Proper and appropriate clothing must be worn to use the facility.
- Do not alter or abuse the machines with reckless techniques or improper use.

SECTION VI SCHEDULE AND TRANSPORTATION

Transportation

All student-athletes must ride to the game via the school's transportation unless permission is given by the athletic director or administration. Student-athletes may ride home with an adult provided that the parent provides written permission via email notification to the student-athletes coach. A form is provided on the school website under Athletics: "Alternative Transportation Notice." Students that do not have permission to ride home with another adult after a game, must ride the school-provided transportation back to the school. We will do our best to provide you with an accurate return time, but this is often hard to predict due to length of games, etc.

Forms/Directions/Information

All sports forms can be found on the school's website. Addresses for away games can be found on the sports calendar by clicking on the event. Sports Travel information for all away games will be emailed at least the day before the scheduled away game. All game and practice schedules can be found on the website. (They are now in Google

calendar form so that you can subscribe to the calendars.) Periodically these two schedules may change based upon unforeseen circumstances. We will update the schedules on the website with the updated date on the schedule. We will also use our FACTS texting service to inform you of the last-minute changes.

SECTION VII REPORTING CONCERNS

Athletics at MCA are intended to be a rewarding experience, but there may be times when things do not go the way a parent or athlete wishes. There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and a parent. **THIS IS ENCOURAGED.** It is important that both parties have a clear understanding of each other's position. If a meeting is necessary the following procedures will be followed.

- Refrain from confronting a coach immediately before or after a contest, or in front of athletes or other parents; instead set up a meeting time via email or by phone.
- Appropriate topics for discussion include:
 - The treatment of your son/daughter mentally or physically, ways to improve their skills or behavior, and/or concerns about academics.
- Inappropriate topics for discussion include:
 - Playing time of team members, team strategy and play calling, team issues, or other athletes on the team.

If this meeting does not provide a satisfactory resolution, then the following procedures will be followed:

- Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director. Understand that the AD will confirm that you have already expressed your concerns directly to the head coach before a meeting will be scheduled. The Athletic Director will also ask the coach to sit in on the meeting.
- An appropriate next step will be determined.
- If an appropriate step still cannot be determined, the matter will be referred to the administrator by the AD.
- The Administrator's decision is final.

SECTION VIII AWARDS

The requirements to earn postseason awards will be set by both the athletic director and the head coach prior to the beginning of the season. The athletic department gives out standard awards to all student-athletes who meet the minimum requirements for

their season. The head coach may also give out special individual awards and sets the minimum requirements for those awards.

- The Student-athlete must not miss a game unless approved by the athletic director or administrator.
- The Student-athlete must return all athletic equipment issued to them by the athletic department or make arrangements for its replacement.
- The Student-athlete must be in attendance at the awards ceremony to receive an award unless written notification with reason for absence turned in prior to ceremony.
- The Student-athlete must meet all requirements set forth by the head coach.

Pledge and Signature

As a parent/athlete at Milford Christian Academy:

- I have read the MCA handbook and the MCA Athletic Handbook thoroughly and I understand it.
- I will support MCA and FBCM at all times in a positive manner.
- I understand that I represent Milford Christian Academy in the way that I conduct myself at sporting events home or away.
- I will follow the proper chain of command when there are any questions.
- I will strive to uphold these standards anywhere that I represent Milford Christian Academy.

I hereby acknowledge these guidelines and my responsibilities as an athlete of Milford Christian Academy. Please sign and return this page to the office.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____