

*Glorifying God One Heart at a Time*



# Athletic Handbook

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## **PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that the principles and lessons, learned in the classroom, at home, and through the local church, can be put into practice through athletics. A microcosm of society, athletics allows the student to develop and use his or her God-given ability to glorify God. Because the arena of competition is usually surrounded with pressure, the athlete is tested, and the true character revealed. Consequently, the opportunity for character readily presents itself through athletic competition. The athlete is challenged to let the Holy Spirit control and direct his mind and body

(I Thessalonians 5:23).

Our philosophy can best be summed up by the phrase "doing our best as we strive for excellence." As Christians, we believe we are commanded by Scripture always to do our best. As believers, we are not to waste the talent God has given us by anything less than total commitment, through participation, and maximum effort. We also believe we should strive to be the best at what we do. Being the best at anything, whether it is a National Merit Scholar or a state champion in basketball is a worthy and admirable goal of any Christian. Becoming the best may not always be the result of our athletic program; however, doing our best must be!

There are many life lessons to be learned through athletic competition. Particularly beneficial is the experience of working cooperatively toward a common goal with a team, the values of team work, and the development of the concept of fair play.

While MACA takes great pride in winning, it does not accept "winning at any cost," and discourages any action, which might negate good sportsmanship. The athletic program is conducted in a manner that best displays proper attitudes towards winning and losing.

When an athlete can come to the point that he is not playing for the fans in the stands, parents, or the coach, but for the Lord Jesus Christ, that is **winning**, regardless of the score.

## **Mission Statement**

MACA's athletic teams will strive to produce championship teams. Success will be measured, not by the end result, but by the people impacted along the journey. Coaches, parents, and fans should be changed as a result of this journey as we mold the "Christian leaders of Tomorrow."

These are the intended end results of the sport experience at MACA.

- ❖ It is the belief of the coaching staff that the student athletes are here at MACA to gain a Christ-centered education. We desire to have a program and, ultimately, student athletes that honor and glorify the Lord in all things. Our attitudes, actions, and thoughts should all be brought into control so that we can accomplish this goal. (I Corinthians 10:31)
- ❖ We want student athletes who are motivated to give 100% effort in all things and not be satisfied with mediocrity . . . not for self-recognition but for the Lord. (Colossians 3:23) In addition, we would like to see the athletes at MACA be the proper types of leaders in all areas, the most important being the spiritual realm. (I Timothy 4:12)
- ❖ We have a desire to create a sense of excitement, enthusiasm, and loyalty to the MACA athletic program. Our sources to reach are the student body, faculty, staff, and the community as a whole. When people see us compete, they should be encouraged to become a MACA Lion fan. (I Corinthians 16:18)
- ❖ Finally, it is our goal to have each member of our team give his best in every area of life. (Joshua 1:8)

➤ Christian Character  
➤ School Spirit  
➤ Talent

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Throughout this handbook you'll notice references to your "student athlete", rather than your "athlete" because we believe that your children are students first, and athletic participation is a privilege. We want to see every child succeed in the classroom first.

## **ATHLETIC OBJECTIVES AND GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION**

The following are the objectives and guidelines for athletics in the secondary school:

MACA participates in three levels in the fifth through twelfth grades:

1. Middle School
2. Junior Varsity
3. Varsity.

Each of these levels has specific objectives and purposes to maintain clear performance of the schools' primary goals and objectives.

### **JUNIOR HIGH (JH) AND JUNIOR VARSITY (JV)**

The objectives of junior varsity athletics are to reinforce basic skills, to begin the development of advanced athletic skill and Christian character, at an increased competitive level. Junior varsity athletics are more competitive and exist to prepare younger players for varsity play. At this level, each athlete will play and have the opportunity to experience a more intense, organized level of play. Each athlete will be allowed playing time (although not necessarily in every game). The amount will be determined by the players' skill, age, and attitude as viewed by the coach. Sixth graders need written permission to play on a varsity team.

### **VARSITY**

The objective of the varsity level is to exhibit impeccable sportsmanship and excellence. Varsity athletics is highly competitive and advanced. At this level the athlete will be scrutinized more thoroughly in his character, ability, attitudes, and skills. He will play before many witnesses, as well as the Lord. The most qualified athletes will be allowed on the varsity team. Playing time will be entirely at the discretion of the coach. Coaches will communicate with players regarding their roles, the expectation, and playing time expectations.

## **SENIORS**

Early in the season, coaches are encouraged to meet individually with seniors who will receive limited playing time. Coaches should tell these athletes how much playing time they can expect. Coaches should ask the athletes to consider whether they are willing to cheerfully accept their role on the team and if they are willing to make a positive contribution to the team.

## **JUNIOR VARSITY AGE PLAYERS PLAYING ON A VARSITY TEAM**

Occasionally a sport will not have a JV team. The JV age player may play on a varsity team, but must understand that playing time could be limited and is up to the discretion of the coach. Safety of the student will always come first.

## **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT CHAIN OF COMMAND**

The Athletic Director oversees the entire athletic program. The AD works with the Secondary Principal to provide a quality program. Each Assistant or JV Coach reports to the Head Coach of their sport, and all Head Coaches report directly to the Athletic Director.

Questions or concerns about a specific team will be first addressed to your student athlete's coach. If your questions are not sufficiently addressed, feel free to make an appointment with the Head Coach of that sport, and then the Athletic Director.

Parents are strongly encouraged to support the decisions of the coach. While you may not agree with every decision of a coach, how and when you express your feelings may have a negative effect on your child and on the team. The time immediately following a contest is an emotional time, so please refrain from approaching a coach with issues at that time. A good standard to follow is "right time, right place, and right spirit."

## **COACHING VACANCIES**

Parents have a vital role in our sports program; however it is the schools responsibility to pick the coaches. If you have a candidate for coaching please submit the name to the Athletic Director.

## **ATHLETIC POLICIES**

### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

One of the primary purposes of MACA is to provide an excellent education for every student. At MACA, the academic life of a student is more important than his athletic life. Academics should be a priority to all student athletes. However, student athletes will be expected to fulfill their commitment on the athletic field as well as maintain a satisfactory academic standing. If a student athlete should have to leave school early on a game day, he should inform the teacher and arrange to make up an assignment.

The following criteria will be used to check grades:

- Student athlete's grades will be checked every three weeks.

- Student athletes must maintain a 2.0 GPA and have a passing grade in all subjects in order to remain eligible for athletic participation.
- Student athletes who are not maintaining a 2.0 GPA at the three-week reports or on their report card, will become ineligible for a minimum of 3 weeks
- Academic Probation is if a student athlete is academically eligible at the time report cards are issued, but falls below a 2.0 average when grades are checked at the three-week period, an additional three weeks of evaluation may be granted by the administrator. This should be granted only to student athletes who, in the judgment of the administrator, will be able to raise their grade point average to 2.0 by the end of the additional three weeks. Student athletes not attaining a 2.0 average at the end of the additional three weeks must remain off the team (including the next sport, if applicable) for six weeks instead of three weeks.
- If a student athlete is academically ineligible at the time report cards are issued, academic probation cannot be granted.
- Student athletes who become ineligible will continue to practice with the team but may not play or travel with the team.
- Ineligible student athletes must support the team by being present at all home games.

## **ATHLETIC AWARDS**

Awards (including trophies and letters) will only be given to those student athletes who begin and finish the season. This will include all pre and post season games. The only exception will be if a student athlete is finishing one sport and another sport has already started.

## **HIGH SCHOOL AWARDS**

These awards will be given as follows:

First year .....Letter

## **JV END OF SEASON PROGRAM**

All participants will receive a certificate of participation. These certificates may list special attributes that the coach wishes to acknowledge. This is the only individual recognition given to JV players. Coaches may not purchase trophies or awards on their own to recognize individual JV school athletes.

## **LETTER JACKETS**

Students are eligible to order letter jackets if they are in the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade and have completed a season on a varsity team. Letter jacket order forms may be obtained from the athletic department.

## **HAZING/PEER HARASSMENT POLICY**

Hazing or peer harassment that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in, or affiliation with any team will not be tolerated. All student-athletes must be given the opportunity to compete without the threat of any type of abuse. Coaches have a responsibility to maintain a safe and positive environment for all student-athletes.

Students are encouraged to notify coaches or other school personnel of instances of hazing or harassment.

## **ATHLETIC DRESS**

School dress code will be the standard for dress at home and away games. Coaches may have specific requirements for team members and will address this issue in team meetings. Remember that you not only represent yourself, but also your family, the school, your team, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We want to look as sharp as possible.

## **ATHLETIC INJURIES**

When your student athlete comes home complaining of an injury, your first question as a parent should be: "Did you tell the coach about this?" If the answer is yes—Great! When a player gets injured, he needs to attend all practices unless he is at the doctor or rehabilitation for the injury. The coach will file an accident report with the athletic office. If the need arises, we will submit any medical claims to our insurance company. Our insurance is the secondary; **your insurance is the primary**. The coach will be required to give their parent a letter stating the head injury protocol if the student athlete sustains a head injury.

## **ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION FEE**

MACA's Athletic Department requires each student athlete to pay a Participation Fee. This fee helps to defray the cost of athletics. Each family will be billed after the team rosters have been set. Fees are non-refundable after the first game regardless of eligibility or desire to continue.

The exception to this policy is when a player sustains a major injury.

- 1<sup>st</sup> sport \$100.00
- 2<sup>nd</sup> sport \$75.00
- 3<sup>rd</sup> sport free

Homeschool athletes must have athletic fees paid in full before they are allowed to participate in practices or games.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

All student athletes are expected to be at all scheduled practices and contests. Any absence must be **pre-arranged** with the coach. It will be at the coach's discretion to determine acceptable reasons for missing practices and games. Absenteeism may affect the athletes' standing/position with the team. Continued unjustified, or unexcused absenteeism will result in a suspension from the team. There may be consequence for missing practice.

Student athletes may accompany parents on "family vacations" during vacation periods when practice is scheduled; however, their rank with the team will not be guaranteed upon return. We highly recommend scheduling vacation times around any athletic commitment you have made.

Student athletes must be in attendance to classes for **ALL OF THE SCHOOL DAY** to participate in athletic events or organized practices. Exceptions to the school attendance policy include: funerals, doctors' appointments, early dismissals, pre-arranged absences, and administrations' permission.



## **EQUIPMENT POLICY**

Game uniforms will be issued to student athletes by the coaching staff before each contest. Student athletes will be required to pay a replacement cost if the uniform is damaged. All student athletes must wear the uniform with the standard of the GCAA. All athletes should dress as a team; nothing should be worn to draw attention to them. Uniforms should be turned in as soon as possible at the end of the season. No more than two weeks after the completion of the sport.

A student athlete, who has not turned in his uniform or equipment, will not receive his report card. If not turned in, the student will lose participation in the next sport they are involved in.

## **PRACTICE APPAREL**

MACA Athletes must purchase our athletic practice uniforms from the Athletic Director. This will consist of our current PE uniform T-shirt and shorts.

## **GENERAL TRAINING RULES**

Each student athlete is expected to maintain personal health habits, which will insure the best physical and mental condition to participate in sports and represent the school in athletic competition. See the Junior & Senior High School Handbook for penalties involving use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. Coaches of specific sports may list rules particular to that sport.

## **QUITTING**

Quitting is highly discouraged by the athletic department. We believe one should finish what he has started. In case a player chooses to quit, he will be responsible for the athletic fee and will not be allowed to participate in the next season sport until the sport they quit is concluded and all equipment is turned in.

## **SPIRITUAL LIFE**

The main purpose of MACA is to develop the Christian Leaders of Tomorrow. The coaches at MACA desire to play a vital role in fulfilling this mission. Athletics can be used as a tool to witness to the world. In addition, the development of a disciplined Christian athlete is a major aspect of the athletic program at MACA. Coaches and parents are strongly encouraged to take part in developing and molding the Christian athletes at MACA.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

All parents, coaches, and student athletes are expected to demonstrate nothing but the most appropriate sportsmanship at all athletic events. There is a correlation between sportsmanship and a positive Christian testimony. As the saying goes, "We may be the only Bible others read."

This should always be considered in athletic competition. We should strive to be Christ-like parents, coaches, and student athletes who show great sportsmanship at all times, give 100% at all times, and show a positive Christian testimony at all times on the athletic field, floor, or in the stands. Here are a few helpful guidelines:

- Show respect for the opponent at all times. When opponents visit our school, they should be treated as guest, greeted cordially on arrival, given good accommodations, and accorded the tolerance, honesty, and generosity, which all human beings deserve. When visiting another

school, we should be cordial and appreciative of our host. Good sportsmanship is the Golden Rule in action.

- Show respect for the officials at all times. The officials should be recognized as impartial arbitrators who are trained to do their job and who can be expected to do it to the best of their ability. Good sportsmanship implies the willingness to accept and abide by the decisions of the officials.
- Know, understand, and uphold the rules of the contest. A familiarity with the current rules of the game and the recognition of their necessity for a fair contest is essential. A good sportsmanship suggests the importance of conforming to the spirit as well as the letter of the rules.
- Maintain self-control at all times. A prerequisite of good sportsmanship requires one to understand their own bias or prejudice and the ability to prevent the desire to win from overcoming rational behavior. A proper perspective must be maintained if the potential educational values of athletic competition are to be realized. Good sportsmanship means proper behavior by all involved in the game.
- Recognize and appreciate skill in performance regardless of affiliation. Applause for an opponent's good performance is a demonstration of generosity and good will. The ability to recognize quality in performance and the willingness to acknowledge it without regard to team membership is one of the most commendable gestures of good sportsmanship.

## **SPORTS PHYSICALS**

All student athletes must have a sports physical before they can participate in any try-out, practice, scrimmage or contest. Student athletes must use the school's sports physical form, which is available in the school or athletic office and online at [GACS.ORG](http://GACS.ORG) under athletics. Parental authorization to participate, a medical release, and insurance information are all a part of the sports physical form. The completed sports physical form must be on file in the Athletic Director's office prior to participating in any athletic try-out, practice, scrimmage, or contest.

## **STUDENT ATHLETE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Represent Christ through your actions on and off the athletic field.

All student athletes at MACA are subject to the school rules at all times. In addition, stricter guidelines may also apply to student athletes. For example, any student athlete known to be experimenting with alcohol, drugs, steroids, or tobacco (includes chewing tobacco) will be suspended from athletics for one semester.

Any student athlete who is suspended from school may not participate in or attend an athletic event or practice during the duration of the suspension.

A coach has the right to refuse a student athlete's request to come out for a sport if the student athlete is late in coming out for the sport.

Coaches reserve the right to make cuts before the season.

The coach or the school administration may deem student athletes with frequent absences, tardiness, or discipline problems in the classroom or on the athletic field, ineligible.

All student athletes are required to attend all events, practices, games, awards ceremonies, etc., during and post season. In addition, student athletes are to arrive on time for all of the above. If a player chooses to skip a practice or a game it will be the coach's discretion on the punishment for the student athlete.

During practice and games, all student athletes are required to remain with the team at all times at home and away events. This includes all people involved in the sport: players, cheerleaders, statisticians, photographers, etc. A note from a parent must accompany any request to do otherwise.

Portable CD players, MP3 players, DVD players or other electronics are allowed with appropriate games and music.

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Transportation to and from athletic events will be provided by MACA. All student athletes are expected to ride with the team. From time to time it is necessary for parents to drive teams to a sporting event.

In the event a parent would like to take a student athlete home after an away game, our policy is as follows:

1. Parents are required once a season to sign a Permission Form at the Parents Meeting, which is kept on file in the athletic office. If for some reason there is no permission form on file in the athletic office, the student athlete must ride the bus back to the school.
2. After the game, you, the parent, must go to the coach and inform them you are taking your student athlete with you. Student athletes cannot sign themselves out.

In the event parents would like their student athletes to ride home with another adult after an away contest, our policy is as follows:

1. A student athlete may ride home with his relatives or another student athlete's parent if arrangements are made with the Athletic Director.
2. Athletes **CANNOT** ride with boyfriends, girlfriends, or fellow students to or from the games.

**In the event parents would like their student athletes to drive to an away contest, our policy is as follows:**

1. A student athlete may drive his personal vehicle to a game, **ONLY** if the game is near his home.
2. No student athlete may ride in a private vehicle driven by another student.
3. It is the preference of the athletic department that team members ride the team bus. If you want your student athlete to drive, please complete the Private Vehicle Form and return it to the athletic office 24 hours in advance. Permission will be granted pending the written approval of both the Athletic Director and the coach.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Any off site activity that occurs during a potential inclement weather situation, and that MACA provides transportation to/from will have their viability assessed on a case by case basis with the administrator and athletic/preschool directors thoroughly investigating all factors and concurrence from both that safe travel conditions exist.

## **EJECTIONS**

Any ejection from a game or match by an official will result in a minimum of a two (2) game suspension from athletic events. This applies to coaches, students, and parents.

MACA parents may not approach an official to discuss any issues before, during, or after a game or match, or for any other reason. Any ejection decision by an official will be adhered to by the coaches, parents, athletes, and the school administration without further discussion. (There will be no appeal.)

## **PARENT GUIDE**

You can play an essential role in helping your child learn the values of winning and losing.

Below are some suggested topics you can discuss with your child in these situations.

### **VALUES OF WINNING**

Help your child learn the values of winning by:

- ❖ Offering congratulations for winning and identifying and discussing the efforts made by the individuals and the team
- ❖ Recognizing the improvements and growth of both individuals and the team
- ❖ Emphasizing competitiveness and doing one's best

### **Values of Losing**

Helping your child learn from losing experiences by:

- ❖ crediting the other team
- ❖ crediting the play of his opponent
- ❖ focusing on improvement by individuals and team
- ❖ discussing what was successful
- ❖ discussing what, if anything, individuals or the team could have done differently
- ❖ accepting the loss, setting individual goals, and moving forward

### **CONDUCT**

The importance of parents behaving as model spectators cannot be overstated. Parents who support the rules of conduct provide a role model for other parents and students alike. Of particular concern are parents who harass officials or make comments in the stands regarding judgment decisions made by the coach. This is counterproductive and tends to destroy the values of good sportsmanship and the game.

### **ISSUES OF CONCERN**

What are appropriate issues to discuss with the coach? This is often the question many parents have when their children are participating in sports.

### **PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO DISCUSS**

1. The treatment of their child
2. Ways to help their children improve
3. Concerns about their child's behavior
4. Coach's philosophy and expectations for your child and the team
5. Team rules and requirements
6. Sanctions incurred by their child

7. Scheduling
8. College participation

## **PARENTS ARE NOT ENCOURAGED TO DISCUSS**

1. Placement on teams
2. Playing time
3. Strategies used by the coach during contests
4. Other student-athletes

## **SPECIAL NOTES**

It is very difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you hoped they would. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best interest of the team. The coach must take into account all members of the team, not just your student athlete.

## **COMPLAINTS**

It is imperative that parents respect the position of the coach and direct any concerns to the coach first. If you wish to discuss a problem or issue concerning your child, begin by contacting his coach. Often the problem or issue is resolved at this level.

## **STEPS FOR RESOLUTION**

First contact the coach

Contact the Athletic Director

Contact the Administrator

## **PRODUCTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Do not confront the coach before, during, or after a practice or contest. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution of the situation, but often escalate it. Please make an appointment to speak with the coach for productive communication.

## **CONCESSIONS AND GATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

All student athlete parents will be responsible to work during the games either helping with the gate or the concessions stand. Each student athlete parent will be assigned a job and time to be there.

Please help the athletic department by coming at your scheduled time. If there is a conflict, please call another parent to switch with you and let us know about the change.

All MACA school policies will be followed on and off campus.