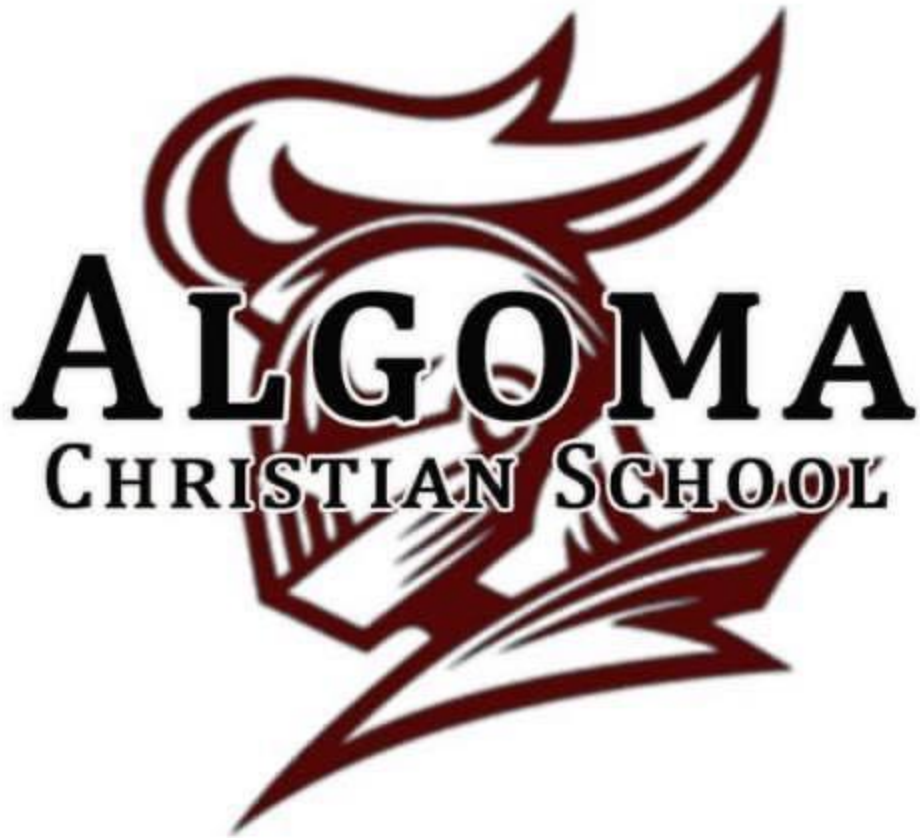


# ATHLETIC POLICY HANDBOOK



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## **SECTION 1**

Algoma Christian School (ACS) is an independent Christian school with sports programs designed to contribute to our students' physical and spiritual growth. ACS students are encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity to play an organized sport here at their school. ACS also has policies in place that allow homeschool families to send their children here to participate in athletics. (See Homeschool Packet)

### **WARNING OF INHERENT RISK**

**Participation in athletic competition carries with it the inherent risk of injury, which may range in severity from minor to major injuries, and could include death. Although serious injuries are uncommon in structured, supervised athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate all risk. Participants have the responsibility in helping to reduce the chance of injury by obeying all safety protocols and training rules in place for each sporting activity. Athletes need to report physical issues to the coach; they must also follow proper guidelines for safe play in athletic competition, which includes inspecting the integrity of their personal equipment. Algoma Christian School takes all reasonable precautions for providing student athletes with a proper and safe environment for athletic competition.**

## **SECTION 2**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The primary purpose of sports at ACS is to provide the framework for Christian friendship, spiritual edification, teamwork, and to exhibit a pure testimony for Jesus Christ.

## **PROGRAMS**

Each year, ACS may field the following teams, numbers permitting:

### Fall Season

Varsity Boys' Soccer

JV Boys' Soccer

MS Boys' Soccer

Varsity Girls' Volleyball

JV Girls' Volleyball

MS Girls' Volleyball

### Winter Season

Varsity Boys' Basketball

JV Boys' Basketball

MS Boys' Basketball

Varsity Girls' Basketball

JV Girls' Basketball

MS Girls' Basketball

### Spring Season

Varsity Boys' Baseball

Varsity Girls' Soccer

JV Girls' Soccer

MS Girls' Soccer

Athletes may be advanced to a higher level if the Head (Varsity) Coach thinks it is warranted. It has to be cleared through the AD and the athlete's parent(s)/guardian(s) before it is approved.

## **SECTION 3**

### **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

#### Athletic Director (AD):

The AD will oversee the complete athletic program at ACS. He/She will handle scheduling, hiring officials, hiring/terminating coaching staff, evaluating coaching staff, disciplining/rewarding athletes, and ensuring that ACS rules and regulations are followed.

In addition the AD will procure equipment and uniforms for sports programs based on available finances and coach input. The AD will also coordinate with building level maintenance personnel to ensure that playing areas are ready for competition.

The AD is expected to be at home sporting events, unless there are other arrangements that have been made (i.e. Asst. AD, Games Manager, etc.).

The AD is expected to keep the head administrator informed of what is happening in athletics as needed.

If busing is provided for a season, the AD will schedule the transportation for away games.

If athletic fundraisers are authorized, the AD will be responsible for coordinating them.

#### Coaches:

Coaches will oversee the training and competition for their particular team. Varsity Coaches will act as the Head Coach and oversee training and competition for all teams in their program, including their own.

Each team's head coach may have as many assistants as they see fit. However, financial compensation for these assistants is the head coach's responsibility. The head coach is also responsible for the assistant's conduct. Head coaches are advised to be certain an assistant is qualified before bringing them on board.

Head coaches will be required to undergo a formal national background check, which includes fingerprinting. This check ensures that the coach has no previous convictions that preclude them from working with children. Assistant coaches will be required to undergo a local volunteer background check. ACS will be financially responsible for the cost of these background checks.

Coaches must also be CPR certified. ACS will be financially responsible for the cost of this training.

Coaches are expected to stay current in their knowledge of the current athletic league's by-laws. The ACS AD will be responsible for ensuring coaches have copies of said by-laws. Coaches are also required to attend any regularly scheduled league meetings.

Coaches will be responsible for arranging transportation to and from away games if busing is not available. Coaches will also be responsible for informing parent drivers of their responsibility to complete the Motor Vehicle background check in the main office, which includes valid proof of insurance and driver's license.

**\*\*\*NOTE: The AD, Asst. AD, Games Manager, and Coaches must be in compliance with the doctrinal statements of ACS. The ACS School Board is the parent representative authority at ACS and the head administrator is their only employee, and as such, the head**

**administrator, and then the school board would be the final arbiters of any issue involving members of the athletic department. Athletic personnel are expected to conduct themselves as representatives of the school and, therefore, an extension of the overall ministry at ACS.\*\*\***

Athletes:

Athletes must have a current physical on file in the Athletic Department office. This physical must be on an MHSAA-style form. This physical **MUST** be turned in **BEFORE** the athlete is allowed to practice or play in a contest. **A “current physical” according to the MHSAA is one that has been performed on, or after, April 15th of the PREVIOUS school year.**

Athletes and a parent/guardian must also read and sign a Parent-Athlete Contract **EACH** year they participate. Athletes are expected to follow the guidelines laid out in this contract.

Athletes and a parent/guardian must read and be briefed on the protocols for determining concussion injuries and about the repercussions of such an injury.

Any HS athlete that quits a sport mid season or is dismissed from the team will be required to meet with the Athletic Director and their Head Coach before they are allowed to play another HS sport at ACS.

-The purpose of this meeting will be to determine the situations surrounding the athlete’s decision to quit or why the athlete was dismissed from the team and whether or not the athlete will be allowed to participate in the sport they currently wish to join.

-Athletes are advised not to quit a sport once they have made a commitment. Quitting (with some obvious exceptions, i.e. Family or medical EMERGENCIES) is a poor choice and flies in the face of the way the Bible encourages us to live lives of integrity.

MS athletes are also encouraged to “let their Yes be yes and their No be no,” however, MS athletics are a learning experience to prepare students for HS athletics. MS quitting situations will be handled in a situational manner and do not prevent a student from trying a different sport (or same sport) in a later season.

Athletes are expected to follow the training rules laid out by their coach for the sport in which they are participating. Coaches have some leeway in how they enforce these rules, so it is incumbent upon the athlete to make sure they understand the training rules.

Athletes are under the direct authority of their coaches before, during, and after any contest, or practice. This would include a team bus if busing is provided for that season. The coach’s authority devolves onto the driver of any vehicle that is officially transporting athletes to and from an event.

Athletes will recognize the authority of any faculty member as an ACS official. This includes at away contests.

Athletes are expected to treat officials, opposing coaches, spectators, and their opponents with respect and Christian charity. Disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the team could be the consequence for disrespecting an individual in the list above.

## **SECTION 4**

### **PARENT CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS**

Algoma Christian School is committed to the highest level of athletic competition within the limits of our school’s resources. ACS is dedicated to honoring God through the behavior of not just coaches and athletes, but also of spectators. ACS believes that a spectator is a professional encourager, not a professional critic - fan behavior should be distinctly Christian at its core!



In the spirit of this philosophy, the ACS Board and the Administration of ACS would like spectators to:

1. Focus on encouraging OUR team.
2. Refrain from any degree of critical, sarcastic, or negative spirit.
3. Demonstrate appreciation for the skillful play of our team and our opponents. **Remember the other teams' players, coaches, and fans are not our enemies, JUST OUR OPPONENTS in a game!**
4. Refrain from making personal comments about any coach, player, or official.
5. Set a positive example of Christian behavior by displaying the Fruits of the Spirit as laid out in Galatians 5:22-23.
6. Submit to the authority of school administration, coaches, and game officials whether home, or away.
7. Use the principle of, "The right place, the right time, and the right spirit," when speaking with people at an athletic contest. Our goal is to give glory to God in victory or defeat! Immediately following a game is not the right time, or place to meet with anyone over a concern. (Please refer to the Parent-Athlete Contract - 24 Hour Wait Period. The Athletic Committee, in conjunction with ACS administration, reserves the right to enforce consequences on athletes, students, or parents/fans that habitually don't follow the guidelines listed above.)

ACS is a school devoted to the principles of discipleship. Please demonstrate this to your student athlete(s) as you discuss coaches, officials, and the other team. Give Christian charity at all times. The ACS Athletic Department depends on the support and involvement of parents as we strive to develop Christian character qualities in our student athletes. To build these desired traits into our student athletes, parents must agree with the school's athletic philosophy. Parents are asked to view themselves as working WITH ACS and the Athletic Department, praying for administrators, coaches, and athletes and attempting to be part of the solution, not the problem.

Parents should always be aware that supporting a quitting mentality is counterproductive in sports, but also in life. Parents are encouraged to have their student athlete finish what she/he started. Athletic seasons aren't that long and the athlete doesn't have to participate in that sport again. Quitting should only be the last choice in any situation. Talk things out if there is a problem. Model coping strategies to your athlete. Parents should be supportive of the decisions of ACS administration, Athletic Committee, and coaches, and always strive to use the principles laid down in Matthew 18 in dealing with any conflict, or misunderstanding. ***It is important to note that BOTH winning and losing an athletic event can provide valuable biblical and life lessons for our students.*** These are lessons that might not be learned anywhere else in the ACS experience.

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES/PARTICIPATION**

As part of the parental partnership with ACS, the Athletic Department requests involvement and participation from parents. Driving to games, helping with concessions, helping to clean-up after home games, taking admissions money at games, and helping to run the clock are all examples of things a parent might do.

Volunteer sign ups will be sent out prior to each season by the Athletic Director, Asst. AD, or Game Manager. The current format of volunteering at home games is each volunteer handles their responsibilities for each home game all season with the option of signing up 'per game'. Perks include free admission for the volunteer and their immediate family to each home game.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Currently, ACS does not bus to away games. It is the responsibility of the coach of a team to make arrangements with parents to carpool to away games. As a parent, this will allow you to do some of your volunteer commitments. You will be asked to fill out a Volunteer Vehicle Background check, which includes submission of license and insurance. Also, you **MUST NOT** take more players than you have legal seating for. This is strictly forbidden. Parent drivers are volunteers and as such, they fall under

the authority of the coach, or the AD. Parents may make decisions for themselves and their children, but not the team as a whole. In the case that coaches are transporting players, there must be more than one player with the coach; in other words, coaches should not be alone one-on-one with a player.

Players will return to ACS with the driver they rode to the game with, unless they have written permission from a parent to ride home with someone else, or they ride home with their parent(s). Drivers are asked to stay at school until an athlete's ride arrives. Never leave a student athlete unsupervised!

## **SECTION 5**

### **STUDENT-ATHLETE PARTICIPATION**

For each high school-level athletics team only, there is a numerical threshold in which cutting players is permissible by the head coach; if the amount coming out for a team meets or exceeds said threshold, coaches may consider cutting players based on skill & development. Those numbers are as follows:

Soccer - 18, minimum of 16

Volleyball - 14, minimum of 12

Basketball - 12, minimum of 10

Baseball - 16, minimum of 14

*\*\*If there are established JV and Varsity teams, these numbers will apply to both teams*

*\*\*If there is no JV team, discretion can be exercised by the AD and the head coach on whether or not the amount signed up constitute a JV/Varsity split or if the team will function as one high school team - should there be one high school level team, these numbers would apply to that team*

It is up to the discretion of the coach if cuts are done once the above roster numbers are reached. However, coaches are not permitted to cut only one player; two or more players must be cut. Once cuts are permissible and deemed as necessary by the coach, said coach may cut down to no lower than the minimum to be carried per team. Coaches will inform the AD of the players being cut with a basic level of reasoning prior to carrying out the cuts. If there is a decision between a homeschooled and an enrolled student being cut, the nod should be given to the enrolled student. However, it is up to the discernment of the coach who makes the team, regardless of enrollment status. Lastly, the AD reserves the right to use administrative discretion when it comes to cut situations.

When sign ups are made available for each season, a date will be given as to when the sign ups will close. No sign ups after the communicated date will be permitted. The only exception to this would be if the numbers signed up do not constitute the ability to field a team; in this case, the AD can use discretion in exploring the possibility of a team still being able to be fielded prior to officially closing down that team's season.

Middle school sports are seen as developmental, meaning our goal is not purely wins and losses; rather, the goal of middle school sports should be exposing athletes to proper game play and fundamentals in order to gain appropriate experience prior to playing high school level sports. Coaches are encouraged to ensure each player gets a level of playing time throughout the season. In light of this, there will be no cut policy at the middle school level. Rather, there will be a "cut off" policy pertaining to new homeschool athletes in which additions to our teams in this manner will be disallowed.

Homeschool athletes that play for our teams and continue to do so year after year will be 'grandfathered' in and will be permitted to play as a returning participant. Once in high school, all athletes, no matter their enrollment status, fall under the roster cut policy.

## **PARTICIPATION FEES**

The Athletic and Finance Committees have elected to go with a “Pay Once, Play All,” policy for full time students of ACS. Homeschool students play under a different fee scale (See Homeschool Packet). The fees are as follows:

Varsity Sports	\$275.00
JV Sports	\$225.00
MS Sports	\$200.00

In accordance with the student-athlete participation policy for high school sports teams, fees will be assessed once rosters are made official. Homeschooled athletes will be assessed the fee each season that they make a team per the homeschool athletics fee infrastructure. Enrolled students will be assessed the fee the first season that they officially make a team. Due to the ‘pay once, play all’ fee infrastructure for enrolled students, no refunds will be given if an enrolled student gets cut from a team in any subsequent season.

Please plan to remit funds to the ACS main office before the first season your athlete plays. Thank you.

### **SPORTS ADMISSION FEES**

Pay to Play fees are not enough to run athletics here at ACS. Admission charges are important for us and for our friends in the Great Lakes 6. The following is a breakdown of admission charges:

<u>MS Event</u>	<u>HS/Combo Event</u>
\$1/Student	\$2/Student
\$2/Senior Citizen	\$3/Senior Citizen
\$3/Adult	\$5/Adult
\$5/Family	\$12/Family

Season and All Year passes are available by request. Please inquire with the Athletic Director for current pricing.

## **SECTION 6**

### **DISCIPLINE**

Failure to follow any of the ACS Family Handbook policies, or ACS Athletic policies as laid out in the handbook, parent/athlete contract, Homeschool Packet, and coach's expectations will result in disciplinary actions of varying severity. If there is a discrepancy between written source material on a punishment, the ACS Family Handbook takes precedence. Any discipline is implemented to produce the desired change in the athlete's behavior; if the selected discipline fails to produce results, a more severe penalty may be imposed. These severe penalties might include, but are not limited to game suspensions or removal from the team. The head coach is in charge of practice/game level discipline.

Although not a signatory of the MHSAA, ACS will enforce reasonable MHSAA consequences for inappropriate behavior during games.

If any athlete is involved with the use of controlled substances, either on or off school property, they will be suspended immediately pending a more thorough investigation. Electronic media can be viable sources for charges of this nature. Athletes need to think about the implications of what they are choosing to do and understand these decisions will be reflected online, whether the athlete likes it or not. This just cannot be controlled in today's digital society.

## **SECTION 7**

### **DRESS CODE**

ACS athletes will adhere to school dress codes at all times. This will include traveling to and from away games, as well as before home games. On game day, each athlete is required to wear the team uniform for that day; the uniform options might include warm-ups, t-shirts, or dress clothes as determined by the coach.

Athletes that are on academic ineligibility or disciplinary suspensions WILL NOT be allowed to wear their GAME uniform. They are allowed to support their team by wearing the spirit uniform of the day as decided by the coach. If it is a home game the athlete may be seated on the end of his/her bench with their team. Students on academic suspension are strongly encouraged to forego away games to work on school work. At any rate, they will not travel with the team, nor will they be allowed to sit on the bench.

## **SECTION 8**

### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY**

Since athletics are part of the educational training, it is expected that athletes will maintain their grades to a cumulative average of 2.0 (73%) with NO failing grades. In this scenario, students who hold a GPA above 2.0, but are failing one or more classes are deemed “ineligible.” Athletes’ academic progress will be monitored weekly using the following method. Instructors are asked to have a letter and percentage grade assigned by Wednesday. However, the instructor is not REQUIRED to make any effort, other than their normal grading routine to accommodate the student. The instructor may CHOOSE to help, and most will, but their job is not to bail out an irresponsible athlete. The Athletic Department will check these marks, and by midday Friday, a list of ineligible students FOR THE FOLLOWING WEEK, will be generated.

Students will have the first full week of the season, plus, one GRACE WEEK, to utilize for “catching up” if that is needed. Students who are ineligible for 3 straight weeks will be required to attend a meeting of their

parent(s), the coach, and the AD to decide whether being on the team in question is the right decision for the student at that time. Eligibility resets for every season the student participates in; however, chronically low performing students may be asked not to participate in athletics for their own academic well being.

## **SECTION 9**

### **VARSITY LETTERS/AWARDS**

ACS awards a letter “AC” to all participating full time students in ALL varsity sports.

To letter in a sport, the athlete must not be a chronic discipline problem. Any more than one disciplinary action taken against an athlete in any season will result in disqualification for a letter in that sport. Unexcused absences from practice will result in the loss of the varsity letter. No player who joins a team mid-season, or quits, will be awarded a letter.

Team awards are left to the team coach. Athletic Director awards are left to the AD. League (GL6), regional (ACSI), and national (NCSAA) awards will be presented by the AD.

## **SECTION 10**

### **COACH SELECTION/RENEWAL**

#### **COACH INITIAL HIRE:**

1. Coaching position is “posted.”
2. Applicants contact AD. Preferably by letter, or email.



3. AD reviews applications, conducts interviews, and confers with the Athletic Committee if necessary.
4. Applicant is asked to give his/her Christian testimony in writing and asked if ACS' Articles of Faith will be upheld.
5. AD offers the job to the best applicant.
6. Applicant goes through mandatory school employee screening process. (ACS pays fee.)
7. Applicant goes through mandatory CPR training. (ACS pays fee.)
8. If applicant does all of the above, they are officially hired.

### **COACH RENEWAL:**

1. Coach is watched during the season by AD or Asst. AD.
2. Coach is given a formal evaluation by AD or Asst. AD.
3. The AD and the coach will go over the evaluation and the coach will be given an opportunity to respond to praise and criticism as warranted.
4. The AD and the coach will sign the evaluation. Both signatures are necessary, but the coach's signature does NOT mean he/she AGREES with what the AD has said. It simply means that the AD has gone over this with the coach. If the coach refuses to sign, they will be terminated.
5. The AD will determine if the coach is recommended for renewal.
6. If so, the AD will ask the coach to sign a "Letter of Intent" indicating they are planning on returning the next season.
7. If the coach is found unsatisfactory, the AD can decide the coach is not going to be renewed.
8. Start "Coach Initial Hire, Step #1

## **SECTION 11**

### **SPORTS RELATED INJURIES**

Any sports injury will be required to be documented on an ACS "Accident Form" as soon as possible. This is done for insurance purposes.

ACS will adhere to the concussion protocol put forth by the Great Lakes 6 Conference, the conference in which ACS athletics programs hold membership. This protocol closely resembles and adheres to the protocol used by the MHSAA in regards to concussion assessment and management. This protocol must be performed if an athlete is suspected of having a concussion. The protocols must be performed by a person who has no stake in the contest. If the athlete does not pass, or the results are unsure, the coach will follow the guideline: "When in Doubt, Sit 'Em Out." That athlete will not be allowed to return to that contest and will not be allowed in subsequent contests until he/she is cleared by a doctor to play.

There may be situations in which a signed parent waiver might be appropriate. If you think your situation warrants that, inquire with the Athletic Director.

\*\*\*ACS follows a strict NO PLAY policy. If an athlete is saying they cannot go into a game because of an injury, the coach MUST NOT play them. This doesn't mean that the coach can't inquire about injuries, or ask the player when they think they can return, it simply means that an athlete cannot be forced to play.\*\*\*

## **SECTION 12**

### **ATHLETIC COMMITTEE**

The Athletic Committee (AC) is a permanent ACS school board committee. As such it reports to the board via minutes, or by actual presence of AC members if requested. It is always made up of the Athletic Director and at least one ACS Board member. The rest of the AC membership is made up of volunteers who have an interest in ACS sports.

The AD will chair the AC and will appoint various members to various tasks as needed, and as they are willing. The AD will keep the AC briefed on the status of athletics at ACS.

The AC is asked to advise the AD and offer advice and counsel. The AD in turn will understand that the AC is an arm of the board and will listen to their advice and seriously take it under advisement before he/she makes decisions.

The AC might be asked to organize and run sports related fundraisers, activities, work on Great Lakes 6 documents, etc.

The AC does not, however, have the authority to hire and fire coaches or other athletic staff. Only the AD evaluates, hires, or fires coaches.