

**Mt. Bethel Christian Academy
Student/Parent
Athletic Handbook**



MT. BETHEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
EAGLES

**Mt. Bethel Christian Academy's Mission Statement:
The mission of Mt. Bethel Christian Academy is to provide a truly
Christ-centered education for our children through an
environment which develops and encourages academic
excellence, spiritual growth, and a lifelong love and desire for
learning.**

1. Introduction

The Student/Parent Athletic Handbook exists so that athletes and their parents may better understand their responsibilities and rights when an athlete participates in any MBCA athletic program. It shall be understood that the Student/Parent Handbook of Mt. Bethel is applicable to all students, including student athletes, and shall have precedence over the Parent/Student Athletic Handbook in every situation. The Athletic Directors, Division Heads, and Head of School reserve the right to evaluate each situation and determine an appropriate course of action based on extenuating circumstances for individual cases.

2. Mission Statement

The mission of Mt. Bethel Christian Academy is to provide a truly Christ-centered education for our children through an environment which develops and encourages academic excellence, spiritual growth, and a lifelong love and desire for learning.

3. Philosophy

Co-curricular activities are an important and vital part of our educational system and have great potential to contribute to the sound growth and all-around development of students. The standards established and practiced through our athletic programs will greatly influence our students, the school, and community; therefore, we aim to foster the highest ideals of good citizenship and conduct. Athletic programs should conform to and be closely and wholly integrated with the administrative policies of the school so that there are no interruptions or interferences with the established rules and principles. The health and welfare of the student shall take precedence over any other interest. All athletic activities will be school-controlled and school-directed. The athletic department should be a close-knit organization, and all sports will be considered with regard to each other and with the rest of the school activities.

4. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of our athletic activities is threefold:

- To promote Godly character development
- To foster rigorous exercise of the body
- To nurture healthy competition, good sportsmanship, and school spirit (“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not men.” Colossians 3:23).

The objective of our sports programs is for our students to:

- gain an understanding of the fundamentals and rules of their sport(s),
- enhance their skills,
- be able to compete proficiently, and
- learn about - and ultimately exemplify - Christ-like sportsmanship.

The school ministry expects its athletes to be positive leaders both academically and spiritually. Our student-athletes are expected to give their best effort and to demonstrate an appropriate Christian attitude and behavior at all times - including when they are off of the school's campus. Athletics should be used as a platform for our students to impact others by bringing Christ-like actions onto the field or court of play.

5. Governing Bodies and Rules

High school interscholastic athletics (junior varsity and varsity teams) will be governed by rules and regulations established by the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS), by the Georgia High School Association, and in some cases by the Georgia Independent Christian School Athletic Association. Middle school athletics will be governed by the rules and regulations of the Metro 10 Conference (Metro 10).

6. Athletic Fees

Athletic fees are essential for the day-to-day operation of the Athletic Department. Every effort is made to keep these fees minimal. Each sport requires a fee specific to the needs of that sport. The fee amount is determined yearly by the Athletic Director and Business Office. Some sports may require charges in addition to the fee, as deemed necessary by the Athletic Director. There may also be charges for events that take place outside of the athletic season. Parents will be supplied with information regarding additional charges prior to being charged. Once the student-athlete has been placed on a roster, the Athletic Director will submit the student's information to the Business Office for billing. **Once a roster is submitted, there shall be no refunds.**

7. Sports Seasons and Calendars

Each season, the governing athletic conference dates indicate the start and end of a sports season. MBCA offers a variety of sports throughout the school year in the fall, winter and spring seasons. Teams are formed based on numbers of students desiring to participate. Tryout dates and preseason conditioning information comes from athletic directors and coaches. Head coaches of each team will supply you with information at team meetings.

8. Game Entrance Fees and Passes

Game Entrance Fees or "Gate Fees" are fees charged to enter all Upper School athletic events. The maximum entry fee is determined by the GHSA and set by the host school. Current MBCA students wearing MBCA Spirit Wear are exempt from charge into any athletic event hosted at a MBCA venue. All others will be asked to pay the gate fee. Athletic Association Members will receive yearly passes into all MBCA home events; however, passes are not valid when visiting other schools or GHSA State events.

9. Athletic Honor Code

M. Bethel athletes represent Christ, their families, and their school in a co-curricular setting, and are thus held to a high code of conduct. It is a privilege to participate in athletics at Mt. Bethel Christian Academy. This privilege comes with a great deal of responsibility. Every student-athlete is expected to demonstrate respect, kindness, responsibility, and self-control at all times at all school-related programs, activities, and events both on and off-campus.

10. Penalties and League Fines

If any student-athlete's conduct or behavior results in Mt. Bethel Christian Academy being fined by the governing league, that player shall be responsible for paying the fine. The fine will be added to the statement from the business office. MBCA coaches or administrators may also impose penalties for athletic honor code violations.

11. Level of Participation

Class participation refers to the level of sports in which an athlete typically participates, based on his or her grade level (e.g. 8th-graders typically participate in middle school athletics, and seniors typically participate in varsity athletics). Generally, student-athletes must meet the grade specifications set by the governing league. In some cases, out-of-class participation may be allowed. That is, underclass student-athletes are permitted to participate in programs designed for higher grade levels, and in rare circumstances, older or upper-class student-athletes may be permitted to participate in programs designed for lower grade levels. The Athletic Director may be petitioned to permit either of these actions; however, the governing league will have the final decision in these matters.

12. Academic Eligibility

Mt. Bethel Christian Academy meets or exceeds the GHSA, GICAA, and Metro 10 academic requirements for athletic participation:

For Upper School students an athlete must maintain a minimum of a 2.0 cumulative grade point average for each semester, with no more than one failing grade. A student-athlete who does not meet academic eligibility at the end of a semester will not be eligible to try out or participate athletically in any sport the following semester.

For Middle School students, athletes' grades will be checked 4.5 weeks into each semester. If a student is achieving a C average and passing all courses they will continue eligibility without another check until another 4.5 weeks (9 full weeks) has passed. However, if a student is below a passing grade (70) and/or below an

overall C average, they will be considered ineligible to participate. Grades will then be checked on a weekly basis. Once grades and/or averages are achieved, eligibility will be restored.

13. Absenteeism and Probation

If a student is absent for more than half of school on the day of a game or match, they will not be eligible to participate in the event, unless the absence is approved beforehand by the Athletic Director and school Administration. Student-athletes who are placed on behavioral or academic probation will not be allowed to participate in athletic team activities during the probationary period. A student-athlete who is ineligible may not participate or be present at team practices, ride on the bus, participate in a game or match, or sit with the team for any game or match during the probationary period.

Middle School Enrichment - MS athletes that will miss an afternoon study hall due to an athletic event must attend enrichment block study hall on the same day. Student athletes who are at a 75 or below must attend enrichment block study hall at least two times per week.

14. Multi-Sport Athletes

Many of our student-athletes participate in multiple sports during the school year. When one sport season overlaps a second, it is important that the student-athlete completes his/her obligation to the current team/sport before advancing into the next season. Under normal circumstances, student-athletes are not permitted to participate in more than one sport during a single sport season. Student-athletes who would like to participate in more than one sport during a sport season must petition the Athletic Director for approval.

15. Sports Physicals

MBCA seeks to provide all students who want to participate in athletic-type events the safest conditions of participation. A student may not participate in any athletic camps, practices, or games in a school year until they have been medically cleared for that year. Every student seeking to participate in athletic events is required to submit to the Athletic Director a written notice of a physical examination and approval by a licensed medical doctor. The sports physical form is valid for one calendar year and can be found on the MBCA athletics website. Forms may be uploaded to each specific FamilyID account.

16. Athletic Participation Release

A student may not participate in any athletic camps, practices, or games until an Athletic Participation Release Form has been completed by a parent or guardian and submitted to the Athletic Director. The Athletic

Participation Release Form is valid for all sports played during a school year and can be completed during creation of a FamilyID account.

17. Report of Injury

It is the responsibility of each student and/or parent to notify the Head Coach of any injury that occurs during participation in an athletic event. On occasion, an injury may not appear to require medical attention until after the student-athlete leaves the event. In those cases, it is important that the Head Coach or Athletic Director is notified as soon as possible. Some injuries may require a clearance from a medical doctor before the athlete may return to practices or full participation.

18. Concussion Recognition and Response

Concussions can occur in any type of activity and are not simply restricted to sports. It is important that not only our coaches be educated on symptoms and risks of concussions, but that our parents and student athletes become more aware as well. All head coaches employed by MBCA are certified by the National Federation of High School (NFHS) in concussion recognition. The NFHS has also developed a Parent's Guide to Concussion, which can be obtained from the Athletic Department. A student may not participate in any athletic camps, practices, or games until a Concussion Awareness Form has been completed by a parent or guardian and submitted to the Athletic Director. The Concussion Awareness Form is valid for all sports played during a school year and can be completed during creation of a FamilyID account.

A student may not participate in any athletic camps, practices, or games at the Upper School Level until a Concussion Baseline Test has been completed by the student-athlete (highly encouraged at the Middle School level, but not required) and submitted to the Athletic Director. The Concussion Baseline Test is valid for all sports played during a school year and can be done at NeuroSports' Functional Training facility, located at 1197 Johnson Ferry Rd. #200 Marietta, GA, 30068. An appointment must be made to take the test.

Other resources can be found here:

📄 NFHS-Coaches Concussion Workshop-NFHS: <http://nfhslearn.com/courses>

📄 CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/clinicians/index.html>

19. Tryouts and Participation

Tryouts are a necessary component to the success of any team. In order to put the most competitive teams on the field or court, teams may have a designated tryout period. The team's head coach will determine the period of time necessary to accomplish this goal. Student-athletes will be required to meet all eligibility requirements before attending a tryout. Student-athletes will be selected based on several criteria, including: physical condition, talent, attitude, dedication, and coachability. Once placed on a roster, the student-athlete

is expected to be an active member for the entire length of the season even if injured. Student-athletes who quit a team will be reviewed by the Athletic Director to determine eligibility for other sports and seasons.

20. Athletic Awards / Varsity Letters

The Varsity Letter is one of the highest honors the athletic department has to offer. At the conclusion of a sports season, the head coach provides the Athletic Director with nominations to receive the award. The award is presented to athletes at their sports banquet. Requirements for an athlete to be eligible to receive a letter are:

1. Athletes must participate on a Varsity team.
2. Athletes must start or play in the majority of his/her games or matches, or make a significant contribution to his/her team's success.
3. Athletes must remain on the team until the season has ended.
4. Athletes must be devoted to attending practices and games.
5. Athletes must have represented the school in a Christ-like manner.
6. Certain sports have unique requirements to receive a Varsity Letter. In such cases, the head coach of that sport will make the specific requirements known at the beginning of the season.

21. Equipment and Uniforms

All equipment and uniforms issued to the student-athlete are property of Mt. Bethel Christian Academy and must be returned. Any uniform that is purchased by the student-athlete is theirs to keep. Student-athletes are financially responsible for all school equipment furnished to them and will be required to pay for negligent loss or damage.

Please read and follow all washing and drying instructions in the uniforms. Players should only wear their uniforms in preparation for and participation in MBCA games, unless otherwise instructed by a coach. Athletic uniforms are not to be worn to school or during any other leisure situations without prior instruction or approval by a coach or school administrator.

22. Game Day / Early Release

On the day of a game athletes are to report to the team's head coach - or his/her designee - to receive instruction. Because of travel to away athletic events, it is sometimes necessary for teams to leave school prior to normal dismissal times. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to make arrangements with teachers to make up any work missed due to athletic activities.

23. Transportation

Team members are required to ride on Mt. Bethel transportation to all athletic events when transportation is provided. Only with written permission from a parent or guardian - and approval from the head coach - can a student drive their vehicle or be permitted to ride with a second party. Parents may be required to pick up their student from an event when participating at a home venue that is off sight.

24. Travel Attire

Student-athletes are expected to dress appropriately while traveling to and from athletic events. Each coach will determine appropriate dress for his or her team. Any changes from the “norm” must be pre-approved by the head coach.

25. College-Bound Athletes

Those student-athletes who plan to participate on the college level meet N.C.A.A. guidelines as they relate to recruiting and eligibility, and it is the student’s responsibility to know and comply with those guidelines. The NCAA eligibility website is www.eligibilitycenter.org. If you have questions, contact your counselor or the Athletic Director.

26. Game Schedules/Postponement

It is the responsibility of the school’s Athletic Director and head coaches to prepare all schedules as they relate to athletic events. Schedules are posted on the MBCA website at mbcaathletics.org. If games are postponed, cancelled, or rescheduled, parents will be notified as soon as the information becomes available. Inclement weather can cause last-minute changes in scheduling. If a scheduled game is cancelled or postponed on the day of the event, students will be notified via the school’s public announcement system and the information will be posted on the athletic website. Parents should review schedules often for changes.

27. Parent Volunteers

At MBCA, the success of our athletic program depends heavily on parent volunteers. There are many areas where volunteers are needed, including game set-up and break-downs, concessions, and gate workers, just to name a few. In many cases, parent volunteers find themselves serving as assistants to the coaches in positions such as scoreboard operators, assistant coaches, and bookkeepers. It is MBCA’s policy that all adult volunteers who have direct contact with the student-athletes receive the same screening as do all employees of our school. For volunteer opportunities contact the Athletic Association or the Athletic Director.

28. Parent/Coach Relations

Parents are expected to support MBCA teams in public and with Christ-like sportsmanship, encourage loyalty to team and school, and provide positive reinforcement to all athletes. Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each role in relation to a student-athlete, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to our student-athletes. When your child becomes involved in MBCA athletics, it is the parents' responsibility to learn and understand the expectations placed upon his or her student. This begins with clear communication from the coach of the program.

MBCA coaches will provide the following information in their preseason meetings:

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Location and times of all practices, meetings, and contests.
3. Team-member requirements, including practices, special equipment needed, out-of-season conditioning and special concerns for the specific sport.
4. Procedures that will be followed should your child be injured during participation.
5. Parents' responsibilities for communicating with the coach including:
 - a. How to address concerns directly to a coach.
 - b. How and when to notify the coach of any scheduling conflicts.
 - c. How to address specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As a student becomes involved in MBCA athletics, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important that both student and parent understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way he or she wishes. At these times, a conversation with the coach is encouraged. However, at MBCA, there is a proper order of how these situations are expected to be addressed:

1. First, the student-athlete should talk to their coach.
2. If the conversation between athlete and coach does not resolve the issue, the student-athlete and their parents should talk with the coach together.
3. If a resolution is still not found, the student-athlete, their parents, and the coach will meet with the Athletic Director to discuss their options.

If a parent or student deviates from this order, the conversation will be halted and the student and parent will be instructed to follow the correct order of conversation. The purpose for this protocol are to ensure fairness to athletes, teams, and coaches, and to teach student-athletes how to effectively communicate with authority figures.

Topics that are the responsibility and within the total discretion of the coach are:

1. Team strategy.
2. Playing time.
3. Team selection.
4. Play-calling.
5. Matters concerning other student-athletes.

29. 24-Hour Rule

MBCA athletics utilizes a 24-hour rule for the benefit of all parties involved in an athletic event. According to the rule, no parent, player, or spectator shall approach a coach and attempt to discuss issues about playing time, coaching decisions, or strategies within 24 hours of an event. Because the emotions of athletes, coaches, and parents are often most raw immediately following an event, this waiting period allows cooler heads to prevail, and more productive dialogue to occur.

30. Club and Feeder Team Participation

Mt. Bethel student-athletes are permitted to participate on club teams throughout the school year. However, all MBCA teams are expected to be the first priority if game conflicts arise. Communication with the head coach is essential in these situations.

Feeder programs at the Middle School level will not be permitted without petitioning the MS Athletic Director for permission. This qualifies for any student athlete during the school year for any sport offered at the varsity level of the Upper School. Feeder programs are defined as any program that feeds into any non-MBCA private or public academic institution.

31. Mt. Bethel Athletic Association

The Mt. Bethel Athletic Association (MBAA) is governed by an Executive Board of MBAA members that have been nominated by the previous board, approved by the Athletic Director and Head of Schools, and voted into office by the membership. The MBAA is composed of all parents of MBCA student-athletes. Members may be asked to help organize and operate events that are put on by the Athletic Department, such as taking up a gate at events, running the concession stand, pre-game setup, post-game breakdown, and fundraising efforts.