



# ARBORBROOK ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

*Last Updated March 2024*

Our athletic program exists to be an extension of the Christian values being taught in the classroom. We seek to glorify God with our words and actions while playing, coaching, volunteering and cheering. While preparing and striving to win, our coaches look for opportunities to integrate sports concepts with life principles and Biblical truths.

## 1. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

### A. Academics Over Athletics

This school policy should be viewed as a natural consequence rather than a punishment. Because we value student-athletes and firmly believe it is a privilege to participate in sports, we have purposely set a high standard. Academics must still take priority over athletic participation. It is recommended that student-athletes who are having trouble keeping up with class responsibilities consider hiring a private tutor.

### B. Academic Eligibility

In order to participate in any school-sanctioned sport, student-athletes are required to ***maintain a grade of 70 (C-) or better in all core classes*** which includes Science, History, Math, English, and Foreign Language. Those unable to meet this requirement will be placed on Academic Probation.

### C. What Does Academic Probation Mean?

When on academic probation, student-athletes lose the privilege of dressing in their uniform for games and playing in games. **Student-Athletes on academic probation are still required to participate in practices and sit on the bench during games.** If a student-athlete is failing to make positive progress, he/she may be excused from attending practices and/or games in order to use that time to get caught up (may be recommended in some situations). If this is needed, the coach must know asap and be kept informed on academic progress.

### D. How Can Student-Athletes Regain Eligibility?

Academic Probation will be evaluated on a weekly basis beginning the third Wednesday of

each new semester (early-September and mid-January). The athletic department will check grades on Monday mornings to determine the eligibility of all student-athletes (update emails will be sent). Those meeting the requirement will remain eligible or be reinstated effective immediately. Those not meeting the requirement will remain ineligible or be placed on academic probation effective immediately.

### **E. What Happens if a Student-Athlete Finishes a Semester with a Low Grade?**

If any student-athlete fails to meet the requirement at the end of a semester (final grade is below a C-), he/she will be placed on Academic Probation until *the third Wednesday of the next semester* (at that time, the past semester will no longer apply, eligibility will be determined based on the current semester grades). This means second semester final grades will carry over to the first semester of the next school year for returning student-athletes.

## **2. Value of Athletics**

Athletics can be a great way to glorify God. Colossians 3:23 says to “work heartily as for the Lord.” Matthew 5:16 states, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” By participating, students can learn many key Christian values such as leadership, working together, hard work, respect for others, and being a Christian example to those around you. As Christians we want to strive to set a Christian example. Our coaches will teach our athletes how to glorify God through sports. While we all want to win on the scoreboard, the most important part of athletics is to grow, learn, and glorify Jesus in how we conduct ourselves.

## **3. Policies and Procedures**

### **A. NCISAA (North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association)**

Beginning in 2023-2024, Arborbrook high school sports are provisional members of the NCISAA. There are specific rules we must follow throughout the year in order to become full members. Some of these rules include no homeschool players being allowed to participate on varsity level teams, player transfer rules, recruiting, player eligibility, health and safety protocols, and out of season team activities. These will be communicated with all coaches, players, and parents.

### **B. Code of Conduct**

Student-Athletes, parents, administration, and coaches are expected to conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner at all times – both on and off the field/court. Student-Athletes are also expected to consistently conduct themselves according to Arborbrook’s Honor Code.

Involvement in any inappropriate activities on or off the playing field may result in suspension or dismissal from the team. The behavior from each of us represents our faith, our school, our families, and ourselves.

Any student that is suspended from school is ineligible to practice or play on the days they are suspended. A second suspension in the same season can result in removal from the team at the discretion of the coach and AD.

### **C. Illness Policy**

If a student-athlete is unable to attend school due to illness, he/she will not be permitted to participate in a practice or game later that evening. This policy only applies Monday-Thursday. Please notify your coach as soon as possible if you will not be at school or will miss a practice/game due to illness.

### **D. Time Commitment**

It is important for those interested in playing sports to be **fully committed to attending all practices and games (aside from illness, required school activities, and family emergencies)**. The consistent absence of one or more players can lead to challenging situations for the team.

Vacations/family trips should be scheduled for before or after the season in which a player is playing. If a player will not be able to play in a game or practice for any reason during the season, this needs to be communicated to the head coach ASAP. Telling a coach you can't be at a game or practice on short notice, unless it is an emergency situation or sickness, hurts the team in multiple ways and will likely result in less playing time.

Players who are on an Arborbrook sports team while also playing on another team (Club, AAU, Rec.) in the same season is allowed. However if there is missed practice time with the Arborbrook team because of the Club, AAU, or Rec team, the player will likely see less playing time during the games they play for Arborbrook. **As a school sport, this should take precedence over other leagues during the school season.** This also **MUST** be communicated with your Arborbrook coach.

**(We do try to leave Wednesdays open for families who attend church/church functions. However there may be select games/practices on Wednesdays. If a team has to reschedule a practice or game to a Wednesday, the coach will let the team know ASAP).**

- *School Sports* require a commitment of **at least 4-5 days/week for high school, 3-4 days/week for middle school** (multiple practices/games during week, possible Saturdays and Wednesdays)

### **E. Dress Code**

All athletes and coaches must dress appropriately for practices and games. For games, all coaches must wear clothes that have no other school or team affiliation, logo, etc. during games (excluding small brand logos like Under Armor, Nike, etc.). Pants must be khaki or dress pants, and shirts should be polo's or dress shirts.

Khaki shorts or athletic pants (no leggings) can be worn for outdoor sports (jackets, hats, and sweatshirts are also acceptable for outdoor sports based on the weather). Dresses for female coaches and suit/tie for male coaches are acceptable as well, but not required. **No athletic type shorts/t-shirts during games for coaches.** Professional attire for all games.

Players must wear the exact same uniforms during games. If there is an issue with a player's uniform, this must be communicated with the coach well before the game. Lost uniforms by players can result in not being able to play.

**Gameday school dress code for high school players:** Away games - Boys: collared long sleeve shirt with a tie and khaki or dress pants. Girls - Dresses or dress pants/shirts. Home games - players can wear their jerseys to school (not required).

## **F. Communication**

Communication between coaches, parents, and players is very important during the season. Every parent needs to be on the sportsYou app to receive notifications and communication from each team your child plays on. Practice/game cancellations or postponements will be communicated ASAP. **Sometimes these can happen last minute**, so we will communicate changes as soon as we can. Each coach should be responsible for communicating practice/game times, changes to the schedule, when players should arrive for practice and games, and any other info players and parents need. All game and practice schedules can be seen on the sportsYou app.

A Fall, Winter, and Spring sports parent/player meeting will take place before each season, and individual team parent meetings can take place before respective seasons begin if the coach desires. **The Pre-season sports meetings are strongly encouraged to be attended by the athlete and at least one parent.** The individual team meetings should be communicated by the head coach in a timely manner. All communication on the sportsYou app, email, or in person should be respectful and represent who we are as Christians. This includes all coaches, parents, players, and administration.

**Coach communication with players is encouraged to be in-person/sportsYou.** Private information regarding the student-athlete should be shared in-person with the student along with their parent or another coach/school administrator present. sportsYou and email are the best ways to communicate individually with a player or coach if you need to use a phone/technology to communicate. In case of emergency/quick communication, texting is also acceptable. **There should be no private communication between a player and a coach via social media.**

## **G. Music Played at Practice and Games**

Music played at practices and games should be clean of any vulgar language. Music that has "bleeped out" words is also not acceptable. Playlists made by players should be reviewed beforehand by the coach or AD before playing at a practice or game.

## **H. Players Interested in Playing College Sports**

Players who are interested in playing at the college level need to be sure their transcripts and ACT/SAT scores are sent to the schools they are interested in/are being recruited by. This needs to be communicated with the school counselor. Any player who is accepted to and signs to play at a college will have a college signing day event that they can invite family, friends, and former coaches to come to and sign their National Letter of Intent (NLI) and celebrate their accomplishment. The NLI should be sent to the student-athlete by the college. Once the student has this, the signing day event can happen. More info on college academic eligibility and recruiting can be found at [Want to Play College Sports? - NCAA.org](https://www.ncaa.org) and [Your Guide to College Athletic Recruiting | NCSA \(ncsasports.org\)](https://www.ncsasports.org).

Please communicate with your head coach and the AD if you have any questions or want to find opportunities to be recruited. We will use our connections along with any other resource to help your child fulfill their dream of becoming a college athlete.

### **I. Social Media**

Arborbrook Athletics has its own Instagram and Facebook page. We do not have any other social media pages, so any account that says it is associated with ACA athletics is not associated and should be reported immediately. Individual team accounts can be created at the discretion of the AD and head coach.

Players should not post any inappropriate behavior to their social media accounts. Suspension and/or removal from the team can happen depending on the severity. This will be determined by the coach, athletic director, and Head of School. Anyone associated with ACA or ACA Athletics should keep in mind that you are representing your school, team, family, and your faith on social media.

## **4. Parent Responsibilities**

### **A. Registration Fees**

Beginning in 2023-2024, there will be no registration fees for Arborbrook students to play a sport. Homeschooled middle school or JV players will have to pay a fee to play. There will be a \$50 jersey rental fee for every student and homeschooled player. Students will be charged the uniform rental fee through their FACTS account.

### **B. Volunteering**

Parents of players are asked to help with carpooling to and from practices and games. They are also asked to support each team by volunteering with concessions, ticket sales, scoreboard and scorebook, clean up after games, etc. A minimum of 3 hours is required in order to count towards a parent's school PVC hours. **(Parent volunteers are crucial to putting on athletic events at ACA. We appreciate your help and time investment into our athletics program!)**

### **C. Waiver of Liability & Statement of Faith**

During the online registration, Parents will need to accept a Waiver of Liability and agree with the Arborbrook Statement of Faith. Both are required in order for any student-athlete

and homeschooled student to participate in the Arborbrook Athletic Program. This is also signed by every ACA coach and administrator.

#### **D. Communication with Coaches**

Please do not try to speak with your child's coach directly before, during, or after a game if possible. It is crucial for coaches to have time to prepare for and evaluate the day's activities without interruption. If there is an emergency, a message can be sent to them and then contact AD Derek Durst or Assistant AD Andrea Robson .

If you need to speak with your child's coach, set up an official appointment that does not interfere with the times stated above. You may contact the coach directly for this purpose. Please do not call coaches at home or work unless you have scheduled an appointment with them.

#### **E. Travel for Games**

ACA Athletics plans to have a van for teams to travel to and from away games beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. If there are multiple away games on one day, the team traveling the furthest distance and/or has the earliest game that day will get the van to travel. If the locations are similar distances, high school teams will have priority over middle school teams.

#### **F. Behavior**

Fan/parent behavior is crucial to the overall experience at our games. **PLEASE do not disrespect coaches, officials, or other spectators during or after a game.** We are to set a Christ-like example for others. Self control is a major part of being a Christian example. The coaches and officials do the best they can each game, and while there are mistakes made or "bad calls" we fully expect our parents and fans to conduct themselves in a mature, Christian way. Please cheer on our team and have fun, but do not let your behavior get out of control.

Players ejected from a game will be suspended at least one game. A longer suspension can be placed on the athlete at the discretion of the coach and AD, depending on the severity of the player's behavior.

Coaches will also be suspended one game if ejected from a game. A longer suspension can be placed in the coach at the discretion of the AD.

### **5. Team Information**

#### **A. Equality of Teams**

At Arborbrook, all teams and sports are not created equal when resources are limited. High School teams and sports will be given priority in all situations (gym space, coach availability, practice times, etc.).

#### **B. Tryouts**

Each team will conduct tryouts before the season and official practices begin. Depending on the sport and how many players come out for the team, there may be cuts made in order to have the proper amount of players on the roster. **The head coach has the final say on who makes the team.**

### **C. Levels of Teams**

We will strive every year to have at least a middle school and varsity team for every sport offered. Some years, we will have enough for a “JV” or junior varsity team. This is made of high school players that are in 9th, 10th, and sometimes 11th graders. Middle school players can play JV and varsity sports at the discretion of the varsity coach and AD.

### **D. Participation of Homeschoolers**

Beginning in 2023-2024, **homeschooled students are not allowed to play on any varsity team.** If any JV and middle school team has enough roster spots available, homeschoolers can participate on those teams. A JV player's homeschool must be registered with the NC DOA. For all homeschool requirements go to the links below:

<https://ncadmin.nc.gov/public/home-school-information/home-school-requirements-recommendations>

[Handbook – General Rules & Regulations – The North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association \(ncisaa.org\)](#)

### **E. Younger Players on High School Teams**

Middle school players (grades 7-8) are only permitted to try out for the high school team if invited by the coaches. In addition, based on the situation of each team as the season progresses, one or more middle school players of any age may be asked to join the high school team to help fill a void left by an injury, academic ineligibility, or other situations where the team is in need of additional players. If the middle school season concludes before the high school season, coaches are permitted to invite one or more middle school players of any age to join the high school team. “Moving up” to the high school team at the end of a season does not guarantee that that player will play on the high school team the next season.

Fifth and sixth graders are encouraged to try out for middle school teams if given permission by the AD. This does not guarantee they will make the team, unless there is a shortage of players on a given team. Head coaches determine who makes the team at the end of tryouts.

### **F. Playing Time**

**There is NO guaranteed playing time for middle school or high school teams.** The players who perform the best along with their behavior/attitudes being in line with expectations will get the majority of playing time. **Head coaches decide playing time during each game.**

### **G. Athletic Trainers, Health and Safety of Athletes**

We strive to have a certified athletic trainer at all home games. This will help in the event of an injury or emergency that happens during a game. Trainers have the final say as to if an athlete can go back into a game after an injury.

### **Concussions Policy**

All head injuries will be taken seriously and evaluated by our athletic trainers during games and coaches/staff during practices. In the case that an athlete sustains a concussion, a return to play form, which will be provided by the AD, must be completed by the physician who is caring for the athlete before the athlete can return to games and practices. A player that suffers a concussion must follow the NCISAA Return to Play guidelines, which includes being fully cleared by a licensed healthcare professional (LHCP) All health/safety guidelines can be found at [ncisaa.org/health-and-safety](http://ncisaa.org/health-and-safety).

### **Pre-Participation Physicals/Concussion Information**

Any pre-existing condition or injury needs to be communicated with the AD and head coach before the season starts. **All middle school and high school players must have a pre-participation physical examination before the first sport they play each year. These physicals are good for a full calendar year.** [2023.24-NCISAA-PPE-form.pdf](#)

All parents/players must read, sign, and turn in to the AD the NCISAA Consent to Participate/Release form, the Gfeller-Waller Compliance form, and the Sudden Cardiac form before the first sport a student-athlete participates in during the school year. All can be found here: [Health and Safety – The North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association \(ncisaa.org\)](#)

## **6. General Information**

### **A. Athletics To Be Offered**

Arborbrook is interested in offering as many sports as we have time and resources for. However, in order to offer team sports at Arborbrook, many things have to come together: players, coaches, adult supervision and facilities. Athletics are an extracurricular activity and are not guaranteed from year to year.

### **B. Player Interest**

All sports require a minimum number of players to create a team. If the minimum number of players is not established the sport will not be offered that season.

### **C. Coaching Availability**

Teams can only be created based on coaching availability, which may vary from year-to-year. Coaches are to uphold the Christian values and behavior expected by Arborbrook Christian Academy. They are required to sign and uphold Arborbrook's Statement of Faith form.

### **D. Facility Availability**



When no on-campus athletic venues are available, Arborbrook will attempt to rent field and gym space at the best possible price in the best possible location. This means practice and game venues may change from year-to-year, week-to-week, and possibly day-to-day. If there are no available facilities that sport may have to be canceled until such time as the appropriate space can be secured.

#### **E. Adequate Supervision**

A minimum of two (2) adults known by and in good standing with Arborbrook must be present at all athletic practices. If two (2) adults are not able to be present, the practice will be canceled for that day.

#### **F. Athletic Awards Night**

All teams will be recognized and honored at the end of each school year during the Awards Banquet. Location and time will be announced in the Spring semester.

#### **G. Student Volunteer/Service Opportunities Through Athletics**

Service opportunities will be made available for athletes and parents during the year. This may be by an individual team or the program as a whole. These are encouraged to be attended by players because of the value of serving our community.

#### **H. Recruitment of Athletes**

ACA and the NCISAA do not condone any recruitment of athletes from other schools. If you are approached by a student or parent from another school about information regarding athletics offered at Arborbrook, please direct them to our admissions office. You are free to tell others about your experience at our school and with our athletic programs, but intentional recruiting strictly for athletics purposes is illegal per NCISAA rules.