

# **2024-2025 ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**



**Whitesburg Christian  
Academy**

## PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

In order to achieve excellence in our athletic program, policies and procedures must be established and followed. The Athletic Department has defined in this handbook these policies and the principles upon which they are based. The handbook is to be used as a reference and resource for those involved in athletics at Whitesburg Christian Academy. Heartfelt thanks to all who contribute their time, talents, enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment in supporting our sports program.

**“And whatever you do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.” Colossians 3:17**

## GENERAL STATEMENT OF MISSION

*The mission of Whitesburg Christian Academy is to provide a Christ-centered, academically challenging education for the children of believing parents in our community. Whitesburg Christian Academy provides this opportunity for students in grades TK through 12. This education emphasizes that God is to be glorified in all aspects of our lives. It is our goal that all our endeavors, whether they be in academics, the arts, or athletics be done in ways that honor our God as creator, redeemer and sanctifier. Our goal is to equip our students to fulfill their calling in family, church, and society in a way which is pleasing to their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.*

**“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” I Timothy 4:8**

The goal of Whitesburg Christian Academy Athletics Department is to develop the gifts of the student-athletes in a way which brings glory to God. The athletics program serves as an integral part of the total education of our students. We seek to develop not only physical skills but also encourage development of Biblical values and Godly character. We seek to improve the skills of our student-athletes and bring them to their full potential – physically, academically and spiritually. We want each of our athletes to develop an understanding of responsibility to, and respect for, each other, their coaches, opponents, officials, spectators, parents, etc. They will learn:

- To control their actions and emotions
- The importance of diligent work individually, and as a team
- The importance of being a team member who can be counted on by the coach and teammates
- The importance of self-discipline in adherence to rules and regulations
- The importance for a believer to honor his Savior by doing his very best in all his endeavors, including athletics
- That competition can be enjoyed and can aid in the development of the whole person

We want to provide quality coaching, teaching, and competition experiences from a Christian perspective, designed to prepare and enable students to have an influence on the world for Christ. We strive to emphasize and teach spiritual principles, and we also strive to improve the physical skills of the athlete so that the total person may be an effective servant of God.

The athletics program is a very visible entity of our school. It is vital that our athletes represent the academy in a positive way. Hence, athletes, parents, and fans are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which will not embarrass individuals, Whitesburg Christian Academy, Whitesburg Baptist Church, or our Lord.

Our Heavenly Father is our primary audience, and we want to please Him with our efforts. It is our belief that many valuable lessons can be learned through athletics when our hearts are turned toward Jesus Christ and He is kept as the center of our focus. We want to teach Christ-like character to our athletes, to promote sportsmanship with our athletes and fans, and to provide a solid Christian witness to those with whom we compete as well as to those observing our teams as they represent the Academy.

*Above all else, the aim of the Whitesburg Christian Academy Athletics Department is to glorify God in all that we say and do, and to bring honor to His Name.*

## ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Whitesburg Christian Academy is a member of the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) for Varsity, Junior Varsity and Middle School sports. As a member in good standing, we recognize and adhere to its guidelines, and we submit to its authority. The AHSAA rules and regulations are outlined in its members' handbook, copies of which are kept in the Upper School Office and the Athletics Office. We are classified as a 3A member for most sports for the 2024-2025 school year.

The Academy's elementary sports program participates in the Huntsville Independent School League (HISL). The league is comprised of private schools around the Huntsville area and was established as a developmental league for athletics.

## PROGRAMS OFFERED

Interscholastic sports offerings possibly offered for Whitesburg Christian Academy for the 2024-2025 school year are shown below. **All are contingent upon having the numbers of students required to field a team.**

### FALL

**Cross Country-** Varsity

**Swimming-** Varsity

**Volleyball-** Grammar (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>)

MS

- JV/Varsity

**Football-** MS (7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)

JV/Varsity

**Flag Football-** Grammar (K-6<sup>th</sup>)

**Soccer-** Grammar (TK-6<sup>th</sup>)

### SPRING

**Baseball-** MS, JV/Varsity

**Golf-** Varsity

**Softball-** JV/V

**Soccer-** MS/JV- Boys and Girls

Varsity- Boys and Girls

**Tennis-** JV –Boys and Girls

Varsity- Boys and Girls

**Track and Field-** Middle School

Varsity

**Track-** Grammar (5<sup>th</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup>)

### WINTER

**Basketball-** Grammar (3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>)

Middle School- Boys and Girls

Freshman Boys

JV- Boys and Girls

Varsity- Boys and Girls

**Indoor Track-** Varsity

FALL/WINTER

**Cheerleading-** Grammar School (1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>)

Middle School

Varsity

## COACHES

A goal of Whitesburg Christian Academy athletics is to provide Christian coaches of integrity who love young people, possess high level coaching skills, and have experience in and passion for their respective sports. Whenever possible, faculty or staff members are used to fill coaching positions. The varsity head coach in each sport is responsible for the overall program for that sport and supervises the assistant coaches, junior varsity or middle school coaches involved.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

Good sportsmanship is expected of **everyone** who is involved in athletics at Whitesburg Christian Academy. Coaches, players and fans are to consistently demonstrate a commitment to fair play and respect for opponents, officials, and each other. We are to approach athletics with integrity and a concern for our witness as Christians, as well as a concern for the reputation of the Academy. Unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of our coaches, players, and fans is not to be part of our athletics experience. We ask that everyone refrain from making derogatory comments directed toward any participants at athletic contests, including officials and coaches. **We expect everyone representing Whitesburg Christian Academy, either as a participant or fan, to treat other players, coaches, officials, and visiting fans with respect, showing courtesy and hospitality at all times.**

**It is our belief that God-honoring character and witness, not victory, is our ultimate goal in athletics.**

## BOOSTER CLUB

The Warrior Athletic Booster Club (WABC) is an organization of parents & other supporters of Whitesburg Christian Academy formed to support the athletic program of the school. The Booster Club provides financial support to the athletic department through booster club membership drives and fund raisers. It also assists the athletic department with athletic events, and supports the athletic department in raising awareness of our athletics programs, teams and events. Membership in the WABC is open to the parents and extended family of all Academy students, as well as friends and supporters of Whitesburg Christian Academy.

## ELIGIBILITY

Academic & behavioral eligibility for athletics will be based on the outline in the Student Handbook. There are other eligibility requirements associated with our participation in the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA). These are available from the Athletics Director.

## TEAM SELECTION

Team selection for the various sports may involve tryouts and cuts. First day of tryouts will be announced by way of emails and the Warrior Window Newsletter. In addition to eligibility rules, criteria for team selection will involve factors such as:

- A possible maximum number of players for a particular team
- Skill/experience level of an athlete (particularly at higher levels of competition such as varsity play)
- Safety issues, e.g. playing younger athletes on a varsity team where the risk of injury might be increased

It should be understood that team selection is the responsibility of the head coach. *Students selected for a team will be notified privately by the coach.* Students who try out but are not selected will also be notified privately by the coach and may be given suggestions concerning skills they need to work on in order to improve for future team selections.

## EJECTIONS

Players or coaches that are ejected from games must attend a mandatory meeting with the Athletics Director and Principal. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the cause of the ejection and the possibility of further disciplinary actions by the school. The Alabama High School Athletic Association governs the conduct of our coaches and athletes in upper school athletics contests and will place monetary fines and game suspensions on ejected players & coaches. **An ejected coach or player who is responsible for a monetary fine assessed to the school by the AHSAA will be required to reimburse the Academy for those charges.**

## OUTSIDE COMPETITION DURING SCHOOL SEASON

An athlete who is a member of a Whitesburg Christian Academy school team **may not** practice or play with an outside team **in that same sport** until the school team's season has ended. Violation of this rule renders the athlete ineligible to participate on the school team for the remainder of the season in that sport. Other **AHSAA** rules apply per sport. Please contact the Athletics Director for more information.

## ABSENCE/TARDY POLICY

There are two standards that must be upheld when making and administering policy regarding excused and unexcused absences from practices and contests. The first is that the athlete makes a commitment when he/she joins the team and is responsible to fulfill this commitment by being at team practices and contests and any preseason training sessions that are required. The second standard is that the athlete must communicate with the coach as early as possible when an absence is anticipated or a problem arises. All situations in which an athlete fails to show up at a practice or contest and the coach has not been told in advance will be considered unexcused absences.

An excused absence begins with informing the coach in advance except in emergency situations which render early notification impossible. Each coach is given the responsibility of determining excused versus unexcused absences for practice. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach and may be affected by tardiness or absences.

**Each athlete must attend the full day of school on the day of the contest in order to participate that day except for excused absences, such as field trips, doctor appointments, funerals, etc. A student may not practice or play in a game if he/she has missed all or part of the school day due to illness.**

## TRANSPORTATION

**Practices**--It is the parents' responsibility to arrange for transportation to and from practices. Athletes are expected to be picked up immediately after a practice.

**Games**--The Academy will make every effort to provide transportation to and from games that require students to leave before school is out for the day. If the Academy is unable to provide transportation due to a bus and/or driver being unavailable, the Coach will notify the players and parents and work with the parents to make other transportation arrangements. Athletes are required to ride with their team to these contests when the school provides transportation. Exceptions need to be cleared with the Athletics Director and Coach. Players are allowed to ride home with their parents after a game but will need to notify the coach of transportation arrangements.

For contests played in the evenings or games that do not require the students to leave school early, the Academy will make every effort to provide transportation *if* the contest site is outside of Madison County. As a general rule of thumb, transportation to sites in Madison County will NOT be provided by the school except for contests requiring players to be checked out of school early.

## **REQUIRED FORMS**

To practice or participate in athletics contests, a student must have several specific forms on file in the Academy Athletics Office. Upper School athletes must upload these forms to the Dragonfly Max system online. These forms are described below:

### **AHSAA Pre-participation Medical Evaluation (front side of Physical form)**

- AHSAA form must be used. Form can be downloaded and printed from the school website.
- Required in order to tryout, practice, or play
- Must be filled out completely and signed by both student and parent

### **AHSAA Physical (back side of Pre-participation)**

- This physical must be performed and signed by a D.O. or M.D. clearing the athlete for participation.
- The signed form is valid until one calendar year from the last day of the month in which the form was signed by the physician.
- AHSAA form must be used. Form can be downloaded and printed from the school website.
- Required in order to tryout, practice, or play.

### **AHSAA Participation/Medical Release Form**

- Required for all upper school sports in order to tryout, practice, or play
- Must be renewed annually

### **AHSAA Concussion Form**

- Required to tryout, practice, or play for all upper school sports
- Must be read and signed by player AND player's parent
- Must be renewed annually

### **NFHS Sportsmanship Training**

- Required to play all upper school sports
- Does not have to be repeated during high school once completed

**Birth Certificate-** must show the registration number

## ATHLETIC FEES

A per sport athletic fee will be charged for all sports. The fees must be paid in full prior to participation in regular season play. The fee will be determined by the Athletic Department at the beginning of each school year. If a player is removed from the team by the coach or voluntarily quits any time after one game the fee will not be returned.

### Athletics Team Fees:

Elementary Sports Teams	\$150.00
Upper School Sports Teams	\$250.00
Swimming/Tennis/Soccer	\$275.00
Football	\$400.00

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The success of our athletics program depends heavily on parent volunteers and supporters. Parents of student athletes are expected to help with transportation, concessions, gates, and clean-up after home contests when needed.

## UNIFORM POLICY

Students are responsible for the upkeep of their uniforms, warm-ups, or any other team equipment. A replacement cost will be assessed for any school property that is issued for items are not returned in usable condition.

## INSURANCE

Parents are responsible to provide health insurance for their children who are participating in athletics. Athletes participating in middle school, junior varsity & varsity sports are covered under AHSAA's catastrophic coverage. This coverage has a \$10,000 deductible and a \$2 million ceiling. It is for accidental injury medical expenses and can only be applied for injuries that occur during participation in athletic practices & contests. The AHSAA insurance coverage explanation can be found at <https://www.ahsaa.com/Insurance-Information>

## INJURIES AND SICKNESS

It is very important that all injuries are reported to the coach so that proper aid may be given. This includes injuries or problems that occur outside of practice and games. Please let the coach know of any allergies, medicines, problems or other ailments that might require special attention. **For safety concerns, a student-athlete may not practice or play in a game if he/she has missed all or part of the school day due to illness or injury.** An athletic trainer is available through SportsMED for our athletes to see at no charge. Please contact the AD if one is needed.

## QUITTING A TEAM

One of the character traits stressed in athletics is that of honoring commitments. For this reason, quitting should not be common in the Whitesburg athletics program. If an athlete contemplates quitting a team, for reasons other than injuries, the coach will counsel and encourage the athlete as the decision is being made (if the coach is aware of the situation). Athletes who quit a sports team will not be recognized with the team when awards are given, and **those who quit a team after the first two weeks of practice** will not be allowed to participate in another Whitesburg Christian Academy sport until the season ends for the team which the student quit.

**“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize. Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”**

I Corinthians 9:24-27

## ATHLETIC AWARDS

An Awards night may be held at the end of the season to recognize the team. The coach or a designated parent volunteer is responsible to set up the time and place. Student athletes who quit or are removed from a team for academic or behavioral reasons will not be recognized

**Varsity Letters:** There are specific criteria for each sport for earning a Varsity letter. The purpose of this criteria is to provide a fair and balanced method of selecting athletes to receive a varsity letter for their sport. The criteria are published in the coach’s handbook. Please ask your coach for details regarding your sport.

**NOTE:** Although earning a Varsity Letter is a high goal for many athletes, it shouldn’t be a player’s ultimate reason for playing a sport. Competing, participating, striving for improvement, having fun, being part of a team, and playing for the mere love of the sport should be the focus. The Letter isn’t a life or death issue, nor does it determine a person’s character. So if a player doesn’t earn a letter in any given year, it shouldn’t be viewed as a failure. After all, there is no such thing as “just a JV” player. All players are important to a program, and we will treat them accordingly.

## MULTI-SPORT ATHLETES

Sometimes there will be overlapping seasons for multi-sport athletes. A player committed to one sport may not quit during the season to begin practice in the next sport season. A player committed to a sport may not practice with another sports team until the season is over for the sport he/she committed to first. Alternative arrangements may be made ***between the head coaches*** of the two overlapping sports. **Athletes must declare which will be their primary and secondary sport. The coach of the secondary sport will not allow the player to practice with his team or participate in contests if the player does not have permission to do so from the primary coach.**

**“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”** II Timothy 4:7-8



## **FILMING GUIDELINES**

AHSAA requires that the visiting team request permission from the host team to videotape an athletic contest. This regulation applies to parents, coaches, and faculty. The head coach of the team should request permission from the host team to videotape. If permission is granted, the head coach can notify the video taping crew. This can be done before the game starts. Violation of this rule can result in fines and loss of filming privileges.

## **PLAYING TIME**

For grammar school teams (through 6<sup>th</sup> grade), the coach will make every effort to play each of their players in each game. Playing time does not necessarily have to be even among all team members but a definite effort should be made to give all team members significant playing time in each contest (as opposed to getting a player in during the last minute of the game).

For MS/JV/Varsity teams (7-12<sup>th</sup> grades), playing time is at the discretion of the coach.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT**

Participation in athletics at Whitesburg Christian Academy is a privilege. If you choose to participate in athletics, you willingly accept the responsibility of being a leader, both in and out of the classroom and on and off the court. You also understand you are representatives of our Lord and school. Those who choose to participate must make sacrifices and establish priorities.

With these things in mind, the guidelines on the following pages have been established for those students who elect to participate in athletics at Whitesburg Christian Academy. Please read the guidelines agreement which is on the next page, sign it, and return it to the coach of your team.

## Student Athlete Code of Conduct Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_ as a Whitesburg Christian Academy student-athlete, agree to:  
(Please Print student's name)

1. Model Christ in speech and behavior.
  2. Respect those in authority including coaches, game officials, parents and volunteers.
  3. Be a leader in academics as well as athletics by maintaining a "C" average or higher in each class.
  4. Demonstrate good sportsmanship before, during and after games, recognizing the talents and efforts of my opponents and the game officials.
    - a. To congratulate my opponent on his/her effort
    - b. To not argue with calls made by officials
    - c. To practice self-control at all times, including no taunting or other negative behavior, which would bring disrespect to God, my team and school.
  5. Support and encourage my teammates at all times.
  6. Be prompt to all scheduled practices, games and team meetings and inform my coach of any absence as soon as I am aware that I will not be able to participate on a given day.
  7. Accept correction and instruction from any and all authority understanding correction makes me wise and has eternal benefits as well as short and long-term benefits for my teammates and myself.
  8. Represent God, my family, my school and my team in such a way that brings honor to each whether competing at home or away games.
  9. Understand that being on a team does not guarantee playing time. Instead, it must be earned through commitment, dedication, positive attitude, good sportsmanship, and skill development in athletics.
- Verbal violation and disrespect of property of individuals shall be governed by the coach. If any action continues, the Athletics Director reserves the right to remove such player(s) for an indefinite period of time.
  - Athletes will abide by school codes and regulations. If an athlete is consistently disregarding school regulations, he/she may be dismissed from participation at the discretion of the coach and Athletics Director

I have read the **Student-Athlete Code of Conduct**. I understand that failure to uphold the expectations outlined above will endanger my athletic eligibility. I also understand that these expectations are in place to help me grow spiritually and mature emotionally and physically.

Student Athlete (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Please sign this page and turn in to:**

**Office of Athletics Director**  
**Whitesburg Christian Academy**

## PARENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT

- Parents attending athletic contests are expected to speak and act as representatives of the Lord and WHITESBURG CHRISTIAN ACADEMY. Expectations of fans can be no less than those for players, coaches and officials as they respond to the events of the contest.
- Parents are expected to support not only their children but also the coach, the team and WHITESBURG CHRISTIAN ACADEMY. Parents are expected to deal with their concerns with the person most directly involved before taking their concerns to those not involved.
- Parents are expected to help their children learn dependability, promptness and accountability by being aware of the practice and game schedule and other responsibilities.
- Parents are expected to have their family accounts up-to-date in order for their child/ren to participate in athletics

### Concerns of parents that are appropriate to discuss with a coach are:

1. Any unhealthy mental or physical strain that you detect in your child at home, especially when it affects his/her academic performance.
2. How you can contribute to your child's skill improvement and development.
3. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
4. Any physical/health conditions that affect athletic participation; \*Athletic trainers are available at no charge to evaluate your student athlete if he/she has an injury.

### Proper procedures for conflict/grievance resolution are:

1. Make an appointment to meet with the coach. **NEVER** approach a coach before or after a game.
  2. If the meeting with the coach does not result in a resolution, call and set up an appointment with the Athletics Director and coach to discuss the situation. **The Athletics Director will not meet with you unless you have followed Step 1.**
  3. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.
- I will not **publicly disparage the officials, coaching staff or other athletes during sporting events.**
  - I will follow the "24 hour rule" before confronting the Coach with any grievances. This rule simply allows for time of reflection and prayer. I will follow the spirit of the guidelines for resolving conflict/grievances outlined above.
  - I will be a role model for my student-athlete.
  - **I understand that I will be expected to occasionally assist in working concessions, collect money at the gate, or set up/clean up for a home game.**

### **Please sign this page and return to:**

Office of Athletics Director  
Whitesburg Christian Academy

I understand the purpose of the **Parent Code of Conduct.** I agree with the principles set forth and I am committed to the growth of my son/daughter at Whitesburg Christian Academy.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_