



SHALOM
CHRISTIAN
ACADEMY

Athletic Handbook

Updated May 2025

Shalom's Mission Statement

To prepare each student for a life of consequence in the world for the kingdom of God

Purpose of the Athletic Handbook

In order to achieve excellence in our athletic program, policies and regulations must be established. The athletic department has defined these policies and the principles on which they are based in this handbook. It has been developed as a reference and resource for those involved in Shalom athletics. A heartfelt thanks to all who contribute their enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment to the athletic program at Shalom.

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him".

Colossians 3:17

Purpose and Goals of Shalom Athletics

The purpose of Shalom athletics is to provide a training ground of interest to the students in which each participant can use the talents that God has given him (her). It is our goal to teach young people as they participate to keep Christ as the focus.

Overall Goals:

1. To use the gifts He has given to reach out to the many other athletes.
2. To witness the love of Jesus through good sportsmanship and conduct.
3. To learn discipline and respect to one's self and others.
4. To acquire personal values that will help throughout life.
5. To learn to be unselfish and sacrifice for the team objectives.
6. To increase fitness awareness.

Fulfilling school objectives:

1. To honor Christ in our actions.
2. To emphasize humility and personal growth.
3. To live and act according to God's Word and Biblical principles.
4. To reach out and be a Godly witness to all those with whom you compete.
5. To grow as a Christian by honoring Jesus through athletics.

Personal benefits from participation:

1. Recognize that Biblical principles apply to athletics.
2. Helps develop character.
3. Builds personal discipline.
4. Helps teach personal growth.
5. Encourages a healthier lifestyle.
6. Builds fitness

Philosophy of Athletics

Shalom provides a God-centered education through the teaching of Christian principles. The athletic program serves as an integral part of the total education program.

Participation in a sound athletic program will produce many qualities in athletes. Shalom's athletic program serves as a channel to develop, above all else, a strong Christian character through athletics. Participation should foster the spiritual growth of an individual and team. Our athletic program strives to contribute to the athlete's development of good sportsmanship, positive self-image, dedication and commitment to personal team goals, physical fitness and athletic skills, emotional maturity and social interaction.

Rom. 12:1 "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship."

Through athletic participation, the athlete should learn how to work with others to attain a goal, how to take adversity without complaining, how to be gracious in defeat or humble in victory, and how to treat others with respect and consideration. The athlete needs to learn the value of discipline, emotional control, and compliance to the rules.

Phil. 2:5 "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus."

Shalom is committed to excellence in athletics. The educational benefits of such an athletic program develop a balanced lifestyle in the spiritual, mental, physical, and social dimensions of one's total being.

Middle School Philosophy

The middle school athletic program should meet the needs of the middle school child. Special concern must be given to the unique emotional, physical and mental stages of the 10- to 14-year-old child. The primary goals of the middle school athletic program should be:

1. Participation. Our desire is to involve as many students as possible in athletic activities. This may mean adding a 'B' team when there are sufficient numbers. We will do our best to avoid cutting students at this level but at some point, it may be necessary. Coaches may only make cuts with approval from the athletic director.

2. Positive Attitudes. We want to teach responsibility and positive attitudes. Christian character, sportsmanship, team effort, and enthusiasm are held in higher esteem than game skills.

3. Involvement. While coaches will do their best to play as many players as possible, not all players are guaranteed playing time in each game.

4. Physical Development. Because this is an age of intense physical changes, coaches will monitor physical training carefully. While some middle school students have gone through puberty and their physical development is similar to an adult, others are still children in physical development.

5. Skill Development. Athletes will be taught the fundamentals of the particular sport. They will develop gross motor skills, drill exercises, etc.

6. Schedule Conflicts. When there is a schedule conflict between the varsity baseball schedule and the middle school drama/chorus program, it is mandatory for the athlete to participate in the drama/chorus program.

Junior Varsity Philosophy

In addition to the central and primary goal of developing Christ-like character, attitude, and behavior in each athlete, the junior varsity (JV) program seeks to develop individual skills and team play.

The development of both the individual and the team are important. Development through competition is a priority. Much of the competition will come through team practices. Depending on the number of students trying out for the team, squad size may be limited.

Varsity Philosophy

In addition to the central and primary goal of developing Christ-like character, attitudes and behavior in each athlete, the varsity athletic program seeks to refine the players' athletic skills. The further purposes of the varsity athletic program will be to mold the best possible team for the purpose of competition and to teach the importance of understanding and performing the roles given to each member for the good of the entire team and the glory of God.

At this level, team performance and team goals are more important than at the previous levels. Each member is expected to contribute to the development of the team and the team learns that their strength depends on each member, and his/her contribution is vital. Although each individual is equally important, his/her contribution and role is different from others on the team. At this level Shalom believes in fielding the best team possible which means the squad size may be limited and the players forming the best team will play the most.

Athletic Teams

Varsity

Girls (Grades 9-12)	<u># of Games (includes tournaments)</u>	<u>Team Size</u>
Volleyball	22	8 - 12
Basketball	22	10 - 15
Soccer	18	18 - 25
Softball	20	12 - 20
Cross Country	10	3 - 25
Boys (Grades 9-12)		
Soccer	18	18 - 25
Basketball	22	10 - 15
Baseball	20	14 - 20
Cross Country	10	3 - 25

Junior Varsity

Girls (Grades 9-10)	<u># of Games (includes tournaments)</u>	<u>Team Size</u>
Volleyball	12 - 15	8 - 12
Boys (Grades 9-10)		
Basketball	12 - 16	10 - 14

Middle School

Girls (Grades 6-8)	<u># of Games (includes tournaments)</u>	<u>Team Size</u>
Volleyball	18 - 22	10 - 14
Basketball	18 - 21	10 - 15
Soccer	12 - 16	16 - 25
Boys (Grades 6-8)		
Soccer	18 - 22	18 - 25
Basketball	18 - 21	10 - 15
Co-Ed Cross Country (7 th & 8 th grade only)	7 - 10	3 - 20

8th Grade Policy for Athletes

There are several factors to consider when determining the level of play for eighth grade athletes. There are advantages and disadvantages to each. It is important to follow the steps below in our decision making.

1. In making the determination of whether or not an athlete(s) should be playing a high school sport, the A.D., varsity and middle school head coaches must be in communication with one another before middle school and varsity tryouts to discuss what is best for the athlete and the overall program.
2. If it is determined an athlete is ready to play a high school sport, the parents of the 8th grade athlete will be asked if they want their athlete to play at the high school level or remain at the middle school level. Eighth graders are only permitted to play a high school sport with the consent of their parents.
3. Eighth grade athletes are not permitted to play both middle school and varsity sports during the same season. However, consideration will be given to playing both middle school and junior varsity ball. No player should be a starter on both the middle school and junior varsity level on the same day.
4. In the event that a middle school sport is not offered, 8th grade athletes are permitted to try out for the high school team(s).

Try-out Dates

Fall Sports:

Second full week in August

Winter Sports (Middle School):

Last full week in October

Winter Sports (J.V./Varsity):

Second week in November

Spring Sports:

First week in March

Total number of weekly meetings (practices/games)

Middle School: 3 - 5 times/week

JV & Varsity: 4 - 6 times/week

Procedures for Team Selections

1. A sign-up sheet will be posted for students at least two weeks prior to the first team meeting.
2. The coach and athletic director will establish a roster size for each sport.
3. A meeting between the coach and all prospective team members will be held to review team member requirements, skills needed, selection process, and practice and game schedules. Students are given the opportunity to withdraw at this point.
4. Try-out drills will be conducted by the coach and assistant to assess individual skills and team needs.
5. At least two coaches will be involved in the assessment and selection process. Assessment will be based on a student's mastery of individual skills as well as the needs for particular skills on the team.
6. Once tryouts are over and selections are made, the coaches will then meet with the athletes to explain their selections.
7. In order for the coach to accurately assess the player's individual skills, there must be at least two try-out dates scheduled.

General Athletic Policies

The athletic program is a visible entity of our school. It is vital that our athletes represent Shalom in a positive way. Hence, athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which will not embarrass the individual, Shalom, or our Lord.

Shalom is a member of the Mason Dixon Christian Conference (MDCC) at our middle school level and a part of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) at the high school level. Our sports programs are regulated by each entities policies and guidelines. The following are Shalom's policies and guidelines:

A. Eligibility

Age: Varsity athletes may not have reached his/her 19th birthday by June 30th immediately preceding the school year; middle school athletes - 15 by June 30th.

Attendance: An athlete must be regularly enrolled at Shalom and in full-time attendance. If an athlete is absent from school during a semester for a total of 20 or more days, the athlete will lose his/her eligibility until he/she has been in attendance for a total of 60 school days following the 20th absence.

Parent Meeting: A Parent meeting is held at the beginning of each sports season. **This meeting is considered mandatory.** If a parent is unable to attend the meeting, they must schedule a personal meeting with the coach before their athlete is permitted to play.

Athletic Physicals: Only one physical is required per school year regardless of the number of sports in which an athlete participates. Each coach must verify that the signed athletic physical is on file in the high school office. The physical must be on file prior to the athlete's first day of sport participation. The PIAA re-certification form must be filled out for high school athletes who participate in more than one sport.

Concussion Testing: Concussion testing will be done each year for those students entering 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th & 12th grades. Concussion Testing will be done online through ImPact Applications Inc. Each athlete will receive an email with a specific code to complete the test. For Shalom's concussion protocol, please refer to page 7.

Parent/Player Pledge: The pledge must be signed before a player is able to play in games. This can be signed electronically & is found under the "Athletics" tab on Shalom's website.

Years of Participation and grade repetition: An athlete will lose his/her eligibility when he/she has reached the end of his/her fourth consecutive year beyond the eighth grade. If an athlete repeats a grade after eighth, he/she will be ineligible as a senior. An athlete may participate a maximum of four seasons in each sport during grades nine through twelve.

Academic Requirements: In order to be academically eligible for interscholastic athletic events, a student may not have 2 or more F's in any subject. Academic eligibility will be checked every week. When a player is academically ineligible, they are not permitted to be dismissed early for away games & they are not permitted to wear their uniform or warm up with the team prior to the game. They are expected to continue practicing with the team.

Behavioral Probation: A student becomes ineligible for sports if he/she is placed on behavioral probation. Behavioral probation is established as a result of faculty and administration recommendation. Athletes who are permanently removed from a team for academic or behavioral probation will not receive a varsity letter.

Detention: Students have one week to make up after school detention. If after one week they have not served detention, they will need to miss a sports practice until it is completed.

B. Absences

There are two standards that must be upheld when making policy and administering policy regarding excused and unexcused absences from practices and contests.

The first is that the athlete makes a commitment by being at team practices and contests 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. Illness or a death in the family may always be considered an excused absence. Other reasons may seldom be considered excused, such as family vacations, trips or outing, etc. Not showing up at a practice or contest without notifying the coach will not be excused. Each coach, under the supervision of the Athletic Director, will determine the guidelines for the teams for which he/she is responsible and will explain them to the athletes at the preseason team meeting. Prior notification to a coach concerning an anticipated absence does not automatically guarantee that the absence will be considered excused.

An unexcused absence from a practice may result in the athlete sitting out of the next contest. Sitting out a contest means that the athlete is with the team at the contest but may not play. A second offense will result in the athlete being dismissed from the team. An unexcused absence from a contest may result in the athlete's

dismissal from the team. At the least it will result in the athlete sitting out the next contest. Lateness to practice may result in the athlete not starting the next contest or having reduced playing time. Each team member must be in attendance at school on the day of the contest in order to participate that day. The athlete must sign in at the office and be in school by 10:30 am, otherwise they may not play in a game OR attend practice that day. The exceptions to this are doctor, dentist, or counselor appointment with a professional note, Driver's tests are also excused, not the permit test. Exceptions are also made for funerals. If an athlete participates in a practice or game when they are not permitted to, they will not be eligible to participate in the next game.

Each individual coach is given the responsibility of determining excused versus unexcused absences. Excused absences may also result in the athletes not starting. Coaches are responsible to communicate in written form to athletes and parents all athletic and team policies. The school, coach and athlete should work together to solve any conflicts concerning family vacations. If there are scheduled contests during school or any Saturday contests, the athletes are expected to attend. If contests are scheduled over a vacation period, the athletes are expected to attend if they are in town.

C. Quitting a team

Quitting should not become common in our athletic program. Quitting is generally harmful to both the individual and the team. If an athlete contemplates quitting a team during the season, the coach should counsel the athlete not to do so because of possible consequences. The coach should counsel, encourage and pray with and for the athlete as the decision is being made. Parents will be called to discuss the situation before any decision is made. Prior to the next season in which the athlete desires to participate, a conference will be held between the athlete, coach, and athletic director. This meeting will be used to determine the athlete's understanding of the obligation in being a team member and commitment to fulfill this obligation. Athletes who quit will not participate at the athletic banquet. Scripture encourages completing the race (I Cor. 9:24-27, II Tim. 4:7-8).

D. Uniform Policy

Students are responsible for their uniforms, warm-ups, and any other team equipment. A replacement cost will be assessed if these items are not returned or are damaged in any way. Athletes not returning their uniforms by the deadline given in the announcements will serve a lunch detention each day until it is received. Report cards will be held until a uniform is returned or payment is made.

E. Student Code of Conduct

Athletics is a visible entity of our school. It is vital that our athletes are to represent the Lord and Shalom in a distinctive way. Hence, athletes are expected to conduct themselves properly.

1. The possession, use, or distribution of alcohol or tobacco is strictly forbidden.

2. Verbal abuse of officials, opponents, or coaches will not be tolerated.
3. Athletes are expected to respect Shalom faculty, staff, students, property, and parents on a consistent basis. *If an athlete's actions violate this code*, the following procedures will ensue:
 - a. The possession, use, or distribution of alcohol or tobacco will result in game(s) suspension or in termination of the athlete's privilege to participate in the remainder of that season. The athlete may return to participate only through the consent of the administrator, principal, athletic director and the present coach.
 - b. Verbal violation and disrespect of property of individuals shall be governed by the coach. If any action continues, the athletic director reserves the right to remove such player(s) for an indefinite period of time.
 - c. Athletes will abide by school codes and regulations. If an athlete is consistently disregarding school regulations, he/she may be dismissed from participation.

F. Practice Days

We will do our best not to schedule practices or games after 5:30 pm on Wednesday evenings. However, at times it will be necessary to play on Wednesday evenings. No games or practices will be held on Sundays. Open gyms or summer league games are permissible on Sundays provided they don't interfere with traditional church meeting times.

G. Parent's Code of Conduct

I Thessalonians 5:23: May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Parents attending athletic contests are expected to speak and act as representatives of the Lord and Shalom. Expectations of fans can be no less than those for players, coaches and officials as they respond to the events of contest. Parents are expected to support not only their children but also the team, the coach, and Shalom. Parents should not be verbally arrogant or verbally abusive to any person at a contest. 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.

Please Note: We ask that parents do not talk to a coach after a game or practice about matters that are emotionally charged and deal with conflict. Arrange for a meeting time when emotions are more settled.

H. Athletic Parent Volunteer Policy

Each family with a student-athlete will be required to fulfill a set number of volunteer hours throughout each sports season by helping at the concession stand or admission table. Please note that this responsibility does not need to fall solely on parents – grandparents and other family members who are high school age or older are welcome to help meet this requirement. If a family does not complete the required hours, a \$400.00 fee will be charged to their FACTS account. We appreciate your understanding and support as we continue working to provide a positive and well-supported athletic experience for our students.

Shalom's Concussion Testing Protocol

1). If an athlete is suspected of having a concussion, proceed with following steps:

- a) Remove athlete from activity
- b) Inform parents & athletic director of possible concussion

"Parents may take the athlete for immediate evaluation as they deem necessary"

2). The athlete needs to be evaluated by an athletic trainer /physician to determine if the athlete has positive testing for concussion. The athlete will need their Passport ID number from their original baseline test.

3). The athlete will be tested with several tools to help determine if a concussion is present:

- a). If abnormal testing indicates a concussion *IS* present, the athlete will then perform the ImPact test with their family doctor and compare results to baseline scores.

- b). If abnormal testing indicates that a concussion is *NOT* present, the athletic trainer will inform the parent/guardian and the athlete will be able to return to play.

4). After the athlete has been seen by their physician, the school nurse will be in charge of the return to play (RTP) protocol.

- a). Each day the student should go to the nurse's office to complete their daily symptom scores sheet.

- b). Once the athlete is symptom free for 24 hours, they may start the RTP protocol the next day.

- c). Only one stage can be completed each day and the athlete can only go onto the next stage if they are symptom free after completing the stage they are on.

- d). If an athlete has symptoms after completing the exercises in that stage they are not allowed to move onto the next stage.

- e). The athlete would need to repeat the stage that their symptoms occurred in the next day and continue in that stage until they are symptom free after exercise.

- f). The school nurse will determine when the athlete has successfully completed the RTP protocol.

- g). If extended symptoms persist, the athlete may be referred for specific rehabilitation for speed recovery.

Transportation to Athletic Activities

Since Shalom Christian Academy does not own a van or bus, we rely on responsible adults to transport players to the away games. We expect our coaches and players to follow the guidelines listed below.

1. Each player & parent must have signed the player/parent pledge giving their athlete permission to ride to away games with approved adults.
2. If a player has a permission slip from his/her legal guardian, he/she may drive himself/herself to the game.
3. Players are **not** permitted to transport other team members at any time. Siblings may be considered an exception.
3. All drivers are expected to act in accordance with the driving laws & must have the proper clearances on file at the school.
4. Students who are ineligible are not permitted early dismissal with the team.
5. Coaches should never be alone in a vehicle with an athlete.

Uniforms and Dress Code Guidelines

1. Uniform selection in all sporting activities must fall within the modesty standards set up by the school. As well as being modest, practice outfits must be in good taste and will be monitored by the coaches in that particular sport.
2. When an athlete is issued a uniform, it is their responsibility to see that it is kept clean and in good condition throughout the season. Neglect and/or abuse will mean paying the full cost of a new uniform.

Dress code guidelines for practices

1. All guys' and girls' apparel worn for athletic practices must be modest in appearance and fit. All shorts must be at least fingertip length. Athletic apparel may not be tight fitting to reveal body curves or body form.
2. Athletes must wear tops at all times during practice sessions. Tops must be modest with any lettering or wording being wholesome and proper with no negative connotations.

3. Coaches in each sport may include additional specifics on practice outfits and uniform expectations for their given sport and situation.

SCA Parent Pledge

Parent Initial Here*required

In keeping with PCA's ideal of the Double-Goal Coach® – who has a goal of winning and an even more-important goal of teaching life lessons through sports – I will be a Second-Goal Parent®, focused on the goal of using sports to teach life lessons, while leaving the goal of winning to players and coaches. -----

Parent Initial Here*required

I will use positive encouragement to fill the Emotional Tanks of my children, their teammates, and coaches. I understand that, like the gas tank of a car, a full Emotional Tank can take people most anywhere. -----

Parent Initial Here*required

I will reinforce the “ELM Tree of Mastery” with my child (E for Effort, L for Learning, M for Bouncing back from Mistakes). Because I understand that a mastery approach will help my child succeed in sports and in life, I will: • encourage my child to exert maximum EFFORT • help my child LEARN through sports • urge my child to get past MISTAKES by using a Mistake Ritual, such as a flushing motion, to trigger a reminder to flush the mistake and move on to the next play -----

Parent Initial Here*required

I will set an example for my child by Honoring the Game, respecting ROOTS (Rules, Opponents, Officials, Teammates, and Self). If I disagree with an official's call, I will Honor the Game and be silent. -----

Parent Initial Here*required

I will use a Self-Control Routine to avoid losing my composure if I grow frustrated. I will take a deep breath, turn away from the game to refocus, count backwards from 100 or use self-talk (“I need to be a role model. I can rise above this.”) -----

Parent Initial Here*required

I will refrain from negative comments about my child's coach in my child's presence so that I do not negatively influence my child's motivation and overall experience.

Parent Initial Here*required

I will be as prompt as possible dropping my child off and picking my child up from practices and games. -----

Parent Initial Here*required

Shalom does not own a school bus or van. Historically, parents have provided transportation for players by driving to the away games. Every player must have parental permission to travel with an approved adult. My son/daughter has my permission to travel with an approved adult to and from away games and in the event of an accident will not hold Shalom liable. -----

Parent Initial Here*required

In the event I cannot be reached in an emergency, I give permission to the physician or supervising nurse selected by the school advisor, to hospitalize, secure proper treatment for, and to order injection, anesthesia, or surgery for my child as needed.

Photo/Video Release*

I hereby grant permission for my child to be photographed and/or video recorded while participating in athletic programs and activities of Shalom Christian Academy. It is my understanding that photographs are the sole property of Shalom Christian Academy and will be used for advertising or promotional purposes (such as Shalom's social media, website, and print publications). I give permission for my child's name to be included for such purposes. Please note: if a parent chooses not to grant consent for photo/video, a student may be asked to step out of a group photo, cropped out of a photo, or have their face blurred for promotional posting or publication.

☐ I agree ☐ I disagree

Date -----

I have read the student athlete guidelines found in the Student Athletic Handbook and agree to follow them. Please sign below and return to the Athletic Office.

Year 2025-2026

Student Signature: -----

Parent Signature: -----