

Athletic Handbook for Student-Athletes and Parents

Partner - Prepare - Protect - Provide

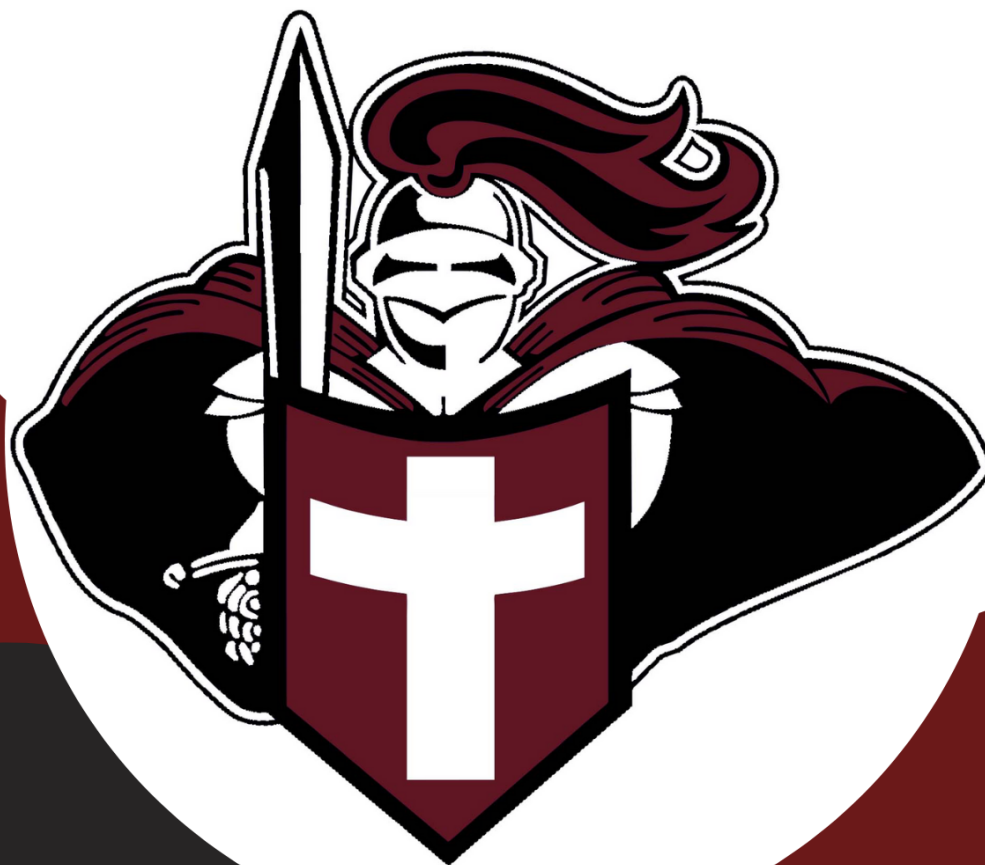


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I. Purpose

This handbook explains the policies of the interscholastic athletic program of Seffner Christian Academy. SCA believes participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege not a right, therefore the parent/student athlete is required to abide by the rules as written in the handbook.

II. Mission Statement

In accordance with the mission/purpose of Seffner Christian Academy, the Seffner athletic department exists to facilitate extracurricular opportunities for Seffner students. The athletic department at Seffner is dedicated to providing winning programs committed to the development of each student-athlete as maturing Christians first and then as an improving athlete. The pursuit of these outcomes is achieved through an emphasis on discipline, Christian character building and quality sport instruction and encouragement.

THE SADER WAY is to be.....

Christ-like, Humble, Responsible, Supportive, and Bold

Athletic Statement of Beliefs:

We believe athletics exist to enhance the overall school experience.

We believe each student-athlete can improve and is important to the team.

We believe team success is more important than individual success.

We believe our coaches should consistently teach these beliefs through their actions.

We believe all athletic endeavors should be done “heartily unto the Lord and not unto men” so as to give all the honor and glory to God.

We believe in the pursuit of victory for our teams.

We believe each student-athlete should commit to growing in their knowledge of sports they participate in and improving physically through intense training.

CORE VALUES

Biblical Worldview Formation

We seek to intentionally help students build a God-centered lens through which they view the world, resulting in a biblical perspective that recognizes the supremacy and evidence of God and His truth in all aspects of life.

Christ Centered Community

We seek to create a community of believers based on a shared commitment, fellowship, and the love of Jesus Christ. We value relationships with coaches, student-athletes, parents, administration, and officials. Our response to each other should reflect what we value.

Pursuers of Excellence

We seek to cultivate excellence in athletics by forming winning habits and manners through proven and tested methods. We will strive to master our skills by committing to our scholastic endeavors, strength training, and specific skill-development.

Growing Leaders

We seek to develop leaders who are maturing in their faith and are selflessly dedicated to following Christ by serving others before themselves. We seek to instill a passion for Biblical truth, a love for others, humility, and dedication to Christ's calling in their lives. We want student-athletes who chase wisdom by seeking instruction and guidance.

Operational Integrity

We seek to be a model of integrity, efficiency, and accountability in developing policies, governance, and assessments, stewarding all God has given us ethically and justly. We strive to operate fairly and consistently in all areas.

VISION

To honor God and exalt Jesus Christ in all we do, compete at the highest level, develop championship teams and championship athletes. To be humble in winning and show grace in defeat.

III. ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT STAFF

Athletic Coordinator: Andy Holmes

Athletic Coordinator: Angela Knox

Athletics Administrative Assistant: Kadie Duncan

Strength and Conditioning: David Linton

Athletic Trainer: Alex Williams

IV. ATHLETIC TEAMS

BOYS: Basketball, Soccer, Football, Cross Country, Golf, Tennis, Baseball, Track and Field

GIRLS: Basketball, Beach Volleyball, Soccer, Cheer, Cross Country, Flag Football, Golf, Tennis, Softball, Track and Field, Volleyball

V. GENERAL ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility requirements include but are not limited to the following:

- A. Must be a student at SCA or Certified Homeschool student. (See Homeschool)
- B. Must have a cumulative unweighted GPA of at least a 2.3.
- C. A student who falls below a 2.3 GPA after the first semester of ninth grade is ineligible for the spring semester until completion of a successful improvement plan.
- D. A student-athlete who is not eligible at the beginning of the academic year cannot become eligible until the beginning of the second semester.

VI. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

- A. Student-athletes must be in good standing with the business office and admissions office and meet eligibility standards.
- B. All athletes need to go through the Athletic Clearance process which can be accessed through our website. All Athletic paperwork must be uploaded to the online site including the athlete physical. After submission, clearance may take up to 48 hours.
- C. Student-athletes are expected to be in school the day of an athletic contest. If a student misses school for an illness or doctor/dentist appointment, he/she must attend 1/2 of their academic classes to be eligible to participate in contests.
- D. Student-athletes must adhere to rules and regulations set forth by this school in order to represent SCA on the field.
- E. Any student enrolled full time in SCA and chooses to withdraw during the school year will not be permitted to participate in athletics as a homeschool student for the remainder of the year.
- F. A parent or guardian is required to volunteer at least three times per sport per child. (For example: work gate, chains, concessions, etc.)
- G. Athletes may participate in multiple sports during the same season per an agreement of both head coaches. Student-athletes must choose their “primary” sport if they intend to

participate in multiple same season sports. Both coaches must agree and will create a written calendar for the athlete for practices and contests. A spirit of cooperation is encouraged amongst coaches. The primary sport of the student-athlete is the main focus for practices and games. Conflict calendar must be used. SCA values and encourages multi-sports participation for our athletes. Coaches should not discourage athletes from participating in another season's sport.

VII. STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

- A. Student-Athletes must abide by all regular school policies and the Florida High School Athletic Association. Adherence to guidelines is expected throughout student-athletes' tenure at the school. (In and Out of Season)
- B. Student-Athletes must be responsible for the care of all school equipment, school facilities, school uniforms and school property. Athletes will be held financially responsible for any damage or loss through negligence.
- C. Student-Athletes shall report any injuries or illness to their respective coach immediately upon occurrence.
- D. Student-Athletes are expected to attend all practices, meetings, and contests. All absences must be communicated to the appropriate coach by the student-athletes. No third party communication. No season is over until State Championship has been won or possibly eliminated from postseason play.
- E. Student-Athletes quitting a sport after being selected as a member and placed on the final roster of a team will be ineligible for participation in another sport for one full semester.
- F. Student-Athletes who are under any type of medication shall have on file with the Coach (or Athletic Director) a note from the parent/guardian and or doctor.
- G. Student-Athletes ejected from a game will be penalized by the state as well as disciplinary action from the Athletic Department. Continuous technical fouls, unsportsmanlike conduct, and/or yellow/red cards can face additional discipline by the Athletic Department.
- H. Student-Athletes shall abide by additional rules and regulations presented by the coaches.
- I. It is the policy of Seffner Christian Academy and this Athletic Department to prohibit the use by students of any tobacco product, alcoholic product, drugs not prescribed by a physician. For any violation, the student handbook code of discipline will be used.

The Athletic Department also identifies the following stipulations:

- A. Since State Laws prohibit purchase and consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors, law enforcement and legal ramifications may exist.
- B. It is either a misdemeanor or felony in this state to use, buy, or sell illegal drugs. Law enforcement personnel will be notified and legal ramifications may exist in the use, sale, and purchase of illegal drugs.
- C. Random drug testing will occur among athletes, including Homeschool Athletes.

VIII. SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT (Sader Way in Action)

Attending an Athletic event means that the spectator has assumed responsibility for proper representation of Seffner Christian Academy, just as the athlete does. These rules apply to all spectators (parents, students, fans, etc.).

Spectators should conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner remembering that they are always representing Seffner Christian Academy.

Parents are to be supportive of their child, give positive reinforcement, and refrain from coaching their child from the stands.

Parents and spectators are not allowed to enter home locker rooms, visiting locker rooms, or official's dressing rooms.

According to FHSAA rules, parents and spectators are not allowed to sit on the same side as the bench unless separated by a barrier that is either natural or man made.

Spectators are to cheer positively for their team. Abusive, coarse, slang, or racist language or comments will not be tolerated at events.

Spectators are to show support for the National Anthem and pre-game prayer.

Spectators who are asked to leave or are removed from a game by Seffner administration or ejected by an official, may be suspended for the duration of the season. This applies to all home and away games.

Parents and spectators are not to approach coaches after games to discuss playing time of any child, including their own.

Parents and spectators can be very productive after contests either at home or away by helping clean up. Serving others can help you in so many ways. (The Sader Way)

Failure to meet the standards we have set will result in disciplinary action. Any spectator situations will be reported to the AD and Head of School. Because we are a Christian school, we expect a high level of morals and values to be displayed at all events. It might do us all some good to have a call go against us or have to work hard for playing time. Let adversity make us stronger instead of responding like the world does.

IX. PRACTICE/GAME SCHEDULE COMMUNICATION

Practice/Game Schedule

Coaches have the responsibility to communicate game and practice schedules to athletes and parents prior to the start of the season. Each head coach is required to have a team meeting with parents prior to the first regular season contest. Updated game schedules will be posted on the athletic calendar. Coaches will send out weekly schedules for practice, and games via team preferred communication method each Sunday evening.

Note for Wednesdays: No games are scheduled and practices must conclude by 5:30 pm. (Unless we are in State Series Tournament)

Changes to Practice/Game Schedule

Coaches will use text, email, and preferred team communication to notify of any changes made to the schedule. The Athletic Department will make necessary changes to the schedule on the website as soon as possible.

X. DEALING WITH CONFLICT ON ATHLETIC TEAMS

Both parenting and coaching are difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to our children. As parents, when your child becomes involved in our programs, you have an obligation to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication Parents Should Expect From Their Child's Coach

- Philosophy of the coach and statement of commitment to Jesus Christ, the child, and his/her family

- Expectations the coach has for the child, as well as other players on the squad
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements will be given during the pre-season parent/player meeting (i.e. special equipment, off-season conditioning, tournaments etc.)
- Procedures if an athlete is injured during practice/contest
- Discipline that may result in the denial of an athlete's participation

Communication Coaches Should Expect From Parents

- As children become involved in the athletic programs, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way athletes or their parents wish. At this time, discussion with the coach is encouraged.
- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Parents' commitment not to be an agent of division or gossip in the community
- Notifications, well in advance, of any schedule conflicts
- Specific concerns in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations
- Medical or physical limitations of the child
- Requests made before the season for holiday travel and missed games

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

- The treatment of the child: spiritually, relationally, emotionally, and athletically
- Ways to help the child improve or concern about the child's behavior

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches Outside of a Private Setting

It is very difficult for parents to accept their child's not playing as much as they may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all athletes involved. Here are the items not appropriate to discuss with the coach:

- Playing Time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student athletes

Procedures to Follow When a Player/Parent has a Concern with the Coach

There are some situations that may require a conference between the player and the coach and the parent and the coach. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these times of conflict arise, here is the established Chain of Conflict Resolution to follow: (Mathew 18 Principle)

Step 1 – Athlete to Head Coach

We believe that student athletes should be able to approach his/her coach with regards to conflicts that arise on athletic teams. Parents are asked to encourage their child to deal directly with the team's head coach.

Step 2 – Parent to Head Coach

Once your child has met with his/her head coach, parents are welcome to set up meetings with the head coach of their child's teams. Such discussions should be done with a professional demeanor. *Parents are not allowed to approach coaches immediately before or after contests and must follow the 24-hour rule. This action will not be tolerated in our department. Failing to comply can result in your child's loss of privilege to participate.*

Step 3 – Parent to Athletic Director

If the proper channels of communication have been followed and the conflict is still not resolved, parents are encouraged to set up a meeting with the athletic director. Please contact the athletic department to schedule this meeting. This will allow the proper allotment of time to be scheduled for the meeting. A follow-up meeting with parent, student-athlete, head coach, and athletic director will take place if necessary.

Step 4 – Parent to Head of School

If steps 1-3 have been followed, and the conflict is not resolved, a meeting with the Head of School can be set up through the school office.

Please Note:

*If at any point during an athletic season, behavior of a Seffner Christian coaching staff member is observed that would be considered unethical in regard to the Christian morals, values and standards of our school, please notify the Athletic Director directly.

XI. ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHIES

Elementary

The purpose of the elementary athletic programs is to develop a passion for the respective sports and to provide a solid foundation of fundamental skills and concepts. The elementary programs will teach rules of fair play, rules of the game, and a focus on team over me.

Junior High

*For grades 6-8, SCA plays in the FHSAA class of Middle School. But 6th-8th graders can be on a varsity roster.

The purpose of the Jr. High athletic program is to integrate the individual's passion for the game into the mastery of the skills and concepts within the team setting. The Jr. High athletic programs will begin focusing in on the complete mental, physical, and spiritual development of the student-athlete.

High School Junior Varsity/Varsity

The purpose of the JV/Varsity athletic programs is to complete the integration of the individual skills into a team concept. We want to teach the concepts of competitive greatness, perfect practice, and commitment to others before self. We aim to compete at a High Level without compromising the Christian Values that set us apart.

XII. TRYOUTS/CUTS

It is our desire to see as many students involved during the athletic season as possible. However, due to facility space, time constraints, and manageable numbers on some sports teams, tryouts are necessary.

In sports with limits on the number of participants a tryout process will be in effect to select the team. Our tryout process is as follows:

1. There will be a minimum of 2 evaluation workouts.

2. The tryout process will be communicated to the team prior to the beginning of workouts. This will ensure that each student-athlete is aware of the following expectations:

- A. Length of tryout period will be a minimum of two days
- B. Objectives used to select members of the team
- C. Distribution of practice and completion of schedules
- D. Explain the commitment necessary to join the team
- E. Academic standards

F. Classroom behavior and discipline

3. Attendance is required for making a team. You must attend every session of tryouts.
4. The head coach and his/her staff will select the team. If the tryout is for a middle school or junior varsity team, the varsity head coach will be encouraged to assist.
5. The head coach will notify student-athletes who do not make the team prior to the release of the final roster.
6. During the tryout process, head coaches will be working directly with the Athletic Director to work through any special situations that may arise. (injury, illness, etc.)
7. Parents are not allowed to attend the tryout process.
8. Risk of Participation Disclaimer: Participation in interscholastic athletics can lead to possible injury. Seffner Christian Academy is not liable for any injury due to participation in the sport of choice.

XIII. TRANSPORTATION

1. No student may drive to an away contest if SCA can provide transportation, unless a transportation waiver is signed by the parent/guardian and is approved by the coach.
2. Student-athletes must return to the school on the bus, unless a parent/guardian notifies the head coaches of other arrangements.
3. If a transportation issue occurs and car-pooling is necessary, written permission must be given to the team's head coach for a student-athlete to travel to practice or away games.
4. Student-athletes are not permitted to drive school vehicles.
5. Transportation of one student by another after school dismissal through athletic hours requires written permission from a legal guardian.

XIV. SPORT FEES

Participation Team Fees

Our athletic participation fees have been set by our business office and are necessary for the athletic department's budget operations to cover the cost of officials, uniforms, facilities, transportation, and equipment. All fees must be paid for participation within 15 days of the final roster announcement.

High School/Jr. High School Fees

High School all sports (except Football) - \$125 per sport.

Middle school all sports (except Football) - \$105 per sport.

Football Middle School - \$350

Varsity Football - \$525

*For grades 6-8, SCA plays in the FHSAA class of Middle School. But 6th-8th graders can be on a varsity roster.

Note: Specific Fees are per child participating.

Player Packs

Every athlete must be in approved SCA athletic wear for practice and weight room activities. Each athlete will be required to purchase a "Player Pack" that is specific items used as practice tops and bottoms related to each sport. Some sports may require bags, shoes, or additional items needed to participate at a high level. These items will be sold and distributed through the Athletic Office.

XV. FUNDRAISING PROCESS

No fundraising by SCA athletic teams is permitted without permission from the advancement office. If you are interested in fundraising or donating, you must contact the Athletic Director. The annual golf tournament is the sole fundraiser for SCA athletics.

XVI. EQUIPMENT/UNIFORM POLICY

1. Team uniforms (Game Attire, Warm ups, pads etc.), and other athletic equipment are the property of Seffner Christian Academy and must be treated with care. Uniforms must be kept clean and under security. Uniforms are for game use only and are not to be worn as street wear. Report any loss or damage to uniforms to the respective coach. Lost, stolen, intentionally

damaged uniforms and/or equipment must be replaced at cost. If the uniform is out of print, then two times the cost of the old.

NOTE: Since uniforms must be ordered in large quantities, carelessness becomes expensive. Equipment will be repaired or replaced at the athlete's expense, at over the counter cost. The student-athlete's school account will be billed for the amount of the replacement.

2. At the end of each season, all uniform components and equipment must be returned in good condition and on the date specified by the head coach. An automatic \$75.00 fine will be assessed if uniforms are not returned to the head coach.

3. Uniforms must be turned in to the head coach. Do not drop off uniforms to the front office or athletic department. If a uniform gets lost, it is the athlete's responsibility. The coach will sign off that the uniform has been returned in the presence of the student-athlete.

XVII. HOMESCHOOL POLICY

Seffner Christian Academy recognizes that the parents are ultimately responsible for the education of their children. As such, some parents will choose a program of home education that specifically meets the needs of their children. Seffner Christian Academy will seek to support home education families who desire to participate in our athletic program as long as the family commits to support the Christian values and beliefs of Seffner Christian Academy.

Home school Athlete (grades 7-12)

1. An annual registration fee of \$500.00 per student must accompany the application for admission (discounts are awarded for multiple children in the same household with a maximum of \$1000 annually). Then specifically, each team has sport fees (see fees schedule). All fees must be paid in full for participation within 15 days of the final roster announcement.

2. Student-athletes and at least one parent/guardian must interview with the athletic director.

3. Student-athletes must commit to attending Chapel services on campus for the duration of the season they are participating in. Chapel service time is Wednesday morning: Jr. High 9:00-9:40 and HS 9:45-10:25. Chapel dress code- Boys: khaki pants and polo shirt. Girls: knee length khaki skirt or Chino style khaki pants and polo shirt.

4. Home school students and family members must follow all athletic department and school policies of SCA.

5. Once a homeschool student is selected to join a sports team, he/she is treated like all other SCA student athletes with regards to discipline, playing time, and commitment. Student-athletes will abide by all the rules and regulations found in the SCA parent/student handbook including uniforms, grooming, and behavior.

Parent/Guardian responsibility

1. Register with a local homeschool association and the Hillsborough County School Board (or appropriate county school board) . This is a requirement of all students of compulsory attendance age who are not enrolled in a full day traditional education program.
2. Show proof of catastrophic insurance coverage and/or sign a waiver of liability in the case of an accident or injury.
3. Parent/Guardian must assume full responsibility for the health, education, and welfare of the home-educated student-athlete.

Home School Fees

\$500 registration fee plus designated team fees and player pack fees

XVIII. TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL AWARD PROCEDURE

A. JV and Varsity Teams

Each sport season will have a sports award celebration for JV and Varsity teams to hand out appropriate certificates, letters, pins, and awards.

Varsity Letter Requirement

1. Complete season in good standing (maintained eligibility)
2. Attend all games and practices unless excused by the coach
 - a. First year: varsity letter and sport specific pin
 - b. Second year: service bar
 - c. Third year: service bar
 - d. Fourth year: plaque and service bar

Note: Letters may be given to managers at the discretion of the coach and Athletic Director. Statisticians and scorekeepers are not eligible for letters.

Junior Varsity athletes will not receive letters or awards.

B. MS Teams

MS teams will have an end-of-season get together to celebrate the season. Awards for MS individual athletes are given at the end of the year during awards Junior High chapel.

XIX. BOOSTER

The SCA Athletic Booster Club is a group of parents (current and former), along with the assistance of school administrators, whose mission is to enrich the SCA High School athletic community by providing financial support for SCA Athletic programs. We are dedicated to the continued support of our student athletes and coaching staff. Membership information can be obtained on our website or through the athletic office.

XX. SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY

SCA affirms the Biblical understanding of sexuality as a gift from God (Genesis 2:24) as defined in His Word. In concert with biblical teaching, SCA supports the principle and practice of purity in singleness and fidelity in marriage, which is the union of one man and one woman. In addition, SCA recognizes that the gift of gender is part of the goodness of God's creation and is predetermined by God and revealed at conception. Lifestyles or practices inconsistent with these biblical teachings are also inconsistent with the mission of SCA. SCA affirms the biblical teaching that all sexual conduct outside the sanctity of marriage, including both hetero and homosexuality, is a sin, a turning away from God's ideal as outlined in Scripture. SCA understands that while we all fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), the grace of God poured out through the blood of His Son calls us to repentance, forgiveness and a new life in Christ (2 Corinthians 7:10, 12:21; 2 Timothy 2:25; 2 Peter 3:9). We understand that these issues are very personal in nature, and great discretion will be given in dealing with such matters; our purpose is not to bring shame or discomfort to an individual or family. However, nor will our actions negotiate the veracity of biblical absolutes on the altar of cultural convenience and compromise. Consequently, our policy for all SCA students, staff, parents/guardians, and board members calls for devotion to a biblical standard of purity. When confronted as a result of not observing these biblical standards, continued involvement with SCA would necessitate a contrite heart before the Lord. In addition to personal behavior, board members, staff, students, parents/guardians, and their families are expected not to participate in advocacy

groups that promote sexuality contrary to biblical teaching. SCA may determine a consequence for the individual that is appropriate for the act committed. In doing so, the school shall offer counsel and assistance to the individual so that the consequence imposed may be a catalyst for redemption in his or her life. If a continued relationship with SCA and any member of the SCA staff, board, student body, or parental body is deemed to be damaging to (or a distraction from) the mission of SCA, appropriate action, which could include dismissal, may be necessary. SCA will respond to such issues with an appropriate grace and truth.

XIX. SIGNATURE PAGE

(Scroll to page)

Parent/Student-Athlete Contract

I understand the rules and regulations outlined in the parent/student-athlete handbook as well as school parent/student handbook. **Initial:** _____

I understand that the Athletic Clearance process through FHSAA online is to be completed and is required prior to participation in practices and games.

Initial: _____

I understand I am responsible for all financial obligations and must maintain good standing with the business office to participate in athletics. **Initial:** _____

I understand I am responsible for the uniform and any equipment distributed by the coach. Replacement of lost or damaged uniforms or equipment is required.

Initial: _____

The Athletic department will determine costs. Failure to comply will cause grades to be withheld until uniform/equipment has either been returned or paid for.

Initial: _____

I understand playing time is not implied nor guaranteed when a student-athlete makes a team.

Initial: _____

Excused absences include illnesses and death in the immediate family. Any other absences need the coach's prior permission to be excused. Please schedule vacations, doctor and dental appointments, etc. so as not to conflict with practices and games.

Initial: _____

Parents are asked not to withdraw any student for the reason of grades, without first speaking to the coach and seeking other alternatives. Replacement is impossible once the season begins. If discipline is needed, we ask that you find ways to discipline the student without punishing the team and the coach.

Initial: _____

Appropriate sportsmanship is always required of every athlete and his/her parents. The athlete and parents have an obligation to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that is pleasing to God. Inappropriate attitude and/or behavior may cause an athlete or parent to be removed from the Competition area. The coach and/or the AD will have the final decision in such matters. **Initial:** _____

I have read this handbook and agree to abide by the rules and regulations.

Athlete's Signature _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date: _____