

VERITAS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY *of* HOUSTON

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www.VeritasAthletics.com



RAMS

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK 2011-2012

MEMBER OF:

West Houston Christian Athletic Conference (WHCAC)

Greater Houston Athletic Conference (GHAC)

“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.” ~ 1 Corinthians 9:25

“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.” ~ 1 Timothy 4:8

Mission

In addition to physical development, athletics provides a unique opportunity for students to grow intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. The Athletic Department at Veritas Christian Academy seeks to use the arena of physical training and competition to teach each student-athlete the disciplines needed to build Christian character and excellence in education, teamwork, and leadership.

As part of our educational process, Veritas Athletics exists to serve these purposes:

- To develop Christian leaders who glorify God in all they do.
- To develop a commitment to good sportsmanship and a respect for others.
- To develop Christian leaders who are dedicated to God and loyal to their school and team; who exhibit fairness, integrity, consideration, hard-work, discipline; who persevere and sacrifice in the face of adversity, and are thankful and gracious in victory.
- To develop God-given talents and instruct students in the rules, fundamentals, and skills of various individual and team sports.
- To develop a submissive and respectful spirit for authority.
- To provide physical training and physical outlet for adolescent energy.
- To develop and maintain the spirit of true amateur competition.
- To partner with parents to provide a healthy atmosphere in which student-athletes can apply principles learned in competitive sports to enhance their relationship with God and quality of life.

Objective

The objective of the Athletic Department at Veritas Christian Academy is to be competitive in all sports within a Christian framework that promotes the development of character, leadership, teamwork, and game competition for each player.

Rules & Conduct

(Students, Coaches, Staff, Parents, Spectators)

It can be difficult to define the expectations for such subjective terms as “proper conduct” and “good sportsmanship.” Yet, there is no more important task than to set standards which are fair, honorable, and consistent with God’s expectations for us. When ***anyone*** is involved with Veritas Athletics, the following list acts as a guideline for Veritas’ standard of excellence:

- Always be conscious of your words and actions; for they reflect you, your family, your school, and most of all - God.
- Treat ALL athletes, coaches, officials, fans, etc... with respect.
- Regard the rules of your game as an agreement, the spirit and letter of which you should not evade or break.
- Accept absolutely, and without quarreling, the final decision of any official or authority.
- Honor visiting teams and spectators as your own guests and treat them as such. Likewise, behave as an honored guest when visiting another school.
- Be gracious in victory AND defeat.
- Be as cooperative as you are competitive.
- Remember that a student-athlete is a student first and foremost - what is done in the classroom influences what is done on the field or court.

Specific Guidelines for Coaches

- Coaches must remember that athletics is a part of a student's education and overall development - academics is always a priority to athletics.
- Coaches should help each child reach his/her full potential as an athlete and student.
- Coaches should remember that their team will reflect and model the coach's own attitude, manner, temper, conduct and behavior. They must conduct themselves in a way that brings honor to God, their school, their team, and themselves.
- Coaches will treat the student-athletes with proper respect. Instruction and correction, while demanding, should be overwhelmingly positive. Coaches should never intentionally demean or embarrass a student-athlete.
- Coaches are obligated to hold themselves to the same high standard of sportsmanship, respect, preparation, organization, dedication, hard work, self-discipline, sacrifice, and Godly behavior they expect of their student-athletes.

Specific Guidelines for Student-Athletes

- Student-athletes should represent God, their family, their school, and themselves with honor, proper conduct, good sportsmanship, and a Christian spirit.
- Student-athletes must remember that representing Veritas Christian Academy is both an honor and a responsibility. The school has established an expectation of high standards both on and off the playing field or court.
- Student-athletes must demonstrate respect for all athletes, coaches, staff, officials, and spectators.
- Student athletes must comply fully with the ruling of any official. In no way should a student-athlete demonstrate by voice, action, or gesture, his or her dissatisfaction with an official's decision.
- Student-athletes are expected to exhibit exemplary behavior in the classroom and in other non-athletic activities.
- Student-athletes must maintain a balance between athletics and academics, remembering that academics is top priority.
- Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate a commitment to the team by attending all required team practices, games, and meetings.
- Student-athletes must understand that competitive rivalries are encouraged, but that disrespect for opponents is unacceptable.

Specific Guidelines for Parents/Spectators

- Spectators - whether students, staff, family, friends, or visitors - bear an important responsibility to facilitate an atmosphere at games which is conducive to good sportsmanship and honoring to God.
- Spectators must observe games from the designated spectators' areas.
- Any action that distracts the coaches, players, or officials from doing their best is not acceptable.
- Any spectator, representing Veritas Christian Academy, who violates this standard of behavior, may not be allowed to attend Veritas Athletic events. Parents who violate this standard of behavior may forfeit the privilege of their child's participation in Veritas athletics.

Attendance

In athletics, as in life, attendance is crucial. It is imperative that athletes, trainers, and coaches be present for practices, meetings, and games. When someone chooses to participate in Veritas Athletics, he/she is making a commitment, and it is important to follow-through on commitments.

It is understood that special situations arise where it is necessary to be absent. The key to this type of situation is open communication. If a coach needs to be absent he/she is to communicate with and

receive approval from the Athletic Director and/or Head of School. If, for any reason, an athlete must miss a practice or game, he/she must give notice to his/her coach. All athletes must understand that discipline may be given to the athlete by the coach for missing a practice or a game. **Remember: God honors us when we honor our commitments!**

Discipline

It is essential for each athlete and coach to remember that he/she represents not only Veritas Christian Academy, but also Christ. As mentioned earlier, there are a number of rules and guidelines that must be followed to play sports at Veritas. Let it be known that it is at the discretion of the coach, Athletic Director, and/or Head of School to administer discipline to an athlete who violates these rules.

A student can and should be disciplined for, but it may not be limited to, the following: tardy to practice or games, conduct or grades in the classroom, missing practices or games due to ineligibility, lunch detentions in school, lack of effort in practices or games, fighting with another student or athlete, disrespect to an official, coach, or teacher, etc...

Discipline can take place in the following ways: extra running or exercise above and beyond what is required of the team, temporary or permanent probation from game(s), community service, loss of playing time in games, loss of leadership privileges, etc...

Game Participation

The philosophy and directives concerning the amount of time each student will play in a game is an essential component of the overall athletic program. One of the purposes of our program is to develop fundamental skills. Game competition and practice are major factors in building these skills.

Desire alone to be an athlete on a team and to participate actively is not always sufficient. An athlete's playing time is exclusively the coach's decision based upon the following factors:

- Grade level – Junior Varsity players will have the greatest level of participation of all student-athletes. The amount of playing time for the Varsity level may not be as great.
- The skill the player possesses.
- The growth and development of skills as the season progresses.
- The ability to function effectively as part of the team; to follow the game plan; to put team success first.
- The effort, attitude, and seriousness devoted to practice sessions and game situations at all times.

In keeping with good sportsmanship and fair play, Varsity level players are not allowed to play at the Junior Varsity level, unless under special circumstances and must be agreed upon by the administration.

Communication

- The Athletic Director and coaches must clearly communicate with parents and teachers about practice and game times.
- Coaches must communicate to a student if they have diminished play time due to poor attitude, attendance, or participation. If a problem persists with a student, the coach will contact the parents to inform them of the problem.
- Students and/or parents must clearly communicate with the coach about any absences or illnesses.

Uniforms

Veritas Christian Academy provides athletic uniforms for each team. New uniforms are a privilege. The standard rule applying to athletic uniforms is that the uniforms are on a four year rotation system. This means that each sport team wears their particular uniform for four years and then, at the discretion of the Athletic Director, new uniforms may be purchased.

Students will be given a uniform at the beginning of each season. They are expected to take proper care of the uniform and return it at the end of the season with only reasonable “wear and tear.” Students who lose their uniforms or whose uniform is damaged in any way (including stains) will be expected to pay for replacements.

Student-athletes are to be in proper uniform for every game.

Student will have the option to purchase a separate sport-specific athletic t-shirt to wear on game days. On game days, student-athletes have the privilege of wearing the specific season’s t-shirt to school. If this privilege is abused, it will be taken away.

Academic / Athletic Eligibility

All students who participate in extracurricular athletics must maintain a passing grade (70 percent or above) in all courses including the elective classes. Students must also maintain an average of an “S” or better in conduct.

Every three weeks, student-athletes will be evaluated academically using progress reports or report cards. Any student who has a failing grade (below 70 percent) or has an “N” in conduct will not be allowed to participate in games nor travel with the team.

One exception to this three week time period is the first three-weeks of each semester. In the past, we have found that when starting a new semester (August and January), students do not accumulate enough grades to fairly assess their eligibility. If a student has a failing grade during this time period, they will be put on probation. They will still be able to participate in games and travel with the team, but must seek out extra help or tutoring. This exception only applies to academic grades – it does not apply to conduct or behavior.

If a student-athlete becomes ineligible, they will be allowed to continue to practice with the team at the coach’s discretion. He/she may rejoin the team (if there is a spot) when his/her grades are found acceptable at the next grade check.

All student-athletes must remember that there are a limited number of spots on each team. Therefore, grades and conduct play an important role in the decision of who will and who will not be chosen for the allotted spots on a particular team. It is at the discretion of the coach, Athletic Director, and/or Head of School as to whether or not a student will be able to come back to the team after having been ineligible.

Conference Play

Veritas Christian Academy is currently competing in the West Houston Christian Athletic Conference (WHCAC) and Greater Houston Athletic Conference (GHAC). These are independent leagues consisting of local schools in the Houston area. The leagues are operated and managed by a board of directors in conjunction with the coaches of the league. A simple majority by vote determines decisions made by the league.

Programs Offered

Veritas offers four team sports to middle school: Football, Volleyball, Basketball, and Track. Soccer, Cheerleading and Basketball are offered to elementary students. The cost for a student to play any one of these sports will be determined at the beginning of each year. These fees will cover incurred costs such as uniforms, officials, travel expenses, equipment, awards, etc...

Football – Middle School Boys

Football takes place in the fall during the first semester of school. Veritas Christian Academy competes in the WHCAC (West Houston Christian Athletic Conference), which is a flag-football (8-on-8) league. Football is a team sport offered to boys ranging from the 5th grade to the 8th grade. Veritas chooses to allow no more than 20 players on a team. If 20 or more players try-out for the football team the coach may institute a cut.

Volleyball – Middle School Girls

Volleyball takes place in the fall during the first semester of school. Veritas Christian Academy competes in the GHAC (Greater Houston Athletic Conference) and follows the UIL (University Interscholastic League) high school rulebook. Volleyball is a team sport offered to girls ranging from 5th grade to 8th grade. If the number of students interested in playing volleyball is large enough, Veritas will field two volleyball teams: a varsity team and a junior varsity team. If there is not enough student interest, there will only be one varsity team. Veritas chooses to allow no more than 12 players per team. If 12 or more players try-out for the volleyball team the coach may institute a cut.

Basketball – Middle School Boys & Girls

Basketball takes place in the winter during the first and second semesters of school. Veritas Christian Academy competes in the GHAC (Greater Houston Athletic Conference) and follows the UIL (University Interscholastic League) high school rulebook. If the number of students interested in playing basketball is large enough, Veritas will field four basketball teams: a varsity boy's basketball team, a varsity girl's basketball team, a junior varsity boy's basketball team, and a junior varsity girl's basketball team. If there is not enough student interest; there will only be one varsity team. Basketball is a team sport offered to girls and boys ranging from 5th grade to 8th grade. Veritas chooses to allow no more than 10 players per team. If 10 or more players try-out for the basketball team the coach may institute a cut.

Track – Middle School Boys & Girls

Track takes place during the spring in the second semesters of school. Veritas Christian Academy competes in the WHCAC (West Houston Christian Athletic Conference) and the GHAC (Greater Houston Athletic Conference), following the UIL (University Interscholastic League) high school rulebook. Track is a team sport, which consists of both individual and team events. Track is offered to boys and girls ranging from 5th grade to 8th grade. There is no maximum or minimum number of players that constitutes a team.

Veritas will compete in 3-6 track meets per season. The following events will be offered at different meets: shot put, discus, long jump, triple jump, 55 meter dash, 100 meter dash, 200 meter dash, 400 meter run, 800 meter run, 1600 meter run, 100 meter hurdles, 200 meter hurdles, 400 meter relay, 800 meter relay, and 1600 meter relay. School ranking is determined based upon points earned in each race or event.

Team Managers – Middle School Boys & Girls

Team managers play an important role at Veritas Christian Academy. Their job is to support the coach in the course of a season to ensure quality management. Their function on the team includes, but may not be limited to, videoing the game, keeping stats for games, filling up water bottles, wrapping ankles, participating in practice, taking care of equipment, etc...

It is at the discretion of the coach and Athletic Director to choose a team manager for each team if needed. The team manager(s) should have a willing servant's heart. It is important that he/she be organized and detail-oriented, as he/she may be keeping the official stats for games. The team manager follows the same academic standards for eligibility as the athletes.

FCA – Middle School Boys & Girls

Since 1954, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) has been challenging coaches and athletes on the professional, college, high school, junior high, and youth levels to use the powerful medium of athletics to impact the world for Jesus Christ. FCA is the largest Christian sports organization in America.

FCA huddles (meetings) are open to any middle school student. Huddles are held once a month, usually on the last Thursday of the month starting at 7am.

The Huddle is student-led with coaches or interested volunteers facilitating the student meetings. Adults working with Huddles must take care not to dominate the leadership but to encourage the student leaders to take charge of the Huddle meeting schedule. The coach or volunteer is there to provide counsel and to maintain order.

FCA Student Leaders are chosen from the 7th and 8th grades. They meet a few times to plan out each huddle. At these planning sessions, they decide on the speaker, the message, the technology, the games, the worship songs, and who will be leading each part during the huddle. "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ" 1 Corinthians 11:1

Cheerleading – Girls in Grades 3-4

Cheerleading takes place during the fall and winter in the first and second semesters of school. The cheerleaders will cheer at most Football games and home Basketball games. Veritas Christian Academy cheerleaders follow the Christian Cheerleaders of America curriculum. If 6 or more girls tryout for the cheerleading team, the coaches may institute a cut.

RIT Soccer & Basketball – Girls & Boys in Grades 1 - 4

"Rams In Training" soccer takes place during the fall while basketball takes place in winter. The purpose of the Veritas "Rams In Training" Program is to introduce Veritas students to the arena of athletics in a Christian environment that will foster teamwork, sportsmanship, and competition that will be applicable in any athletic sport. The soccer and basketball programs will also assist in the development of fundamental skills, gross motor skills, and hand-eye coordination, giving younger students a head start on Middle school athletics.

J.A.M. Team – Girls & Boys in Grades 1-8

J.A.M. (Jump Art Masters) Team try-outs will be held during April/May for the following school year. The J.A.M. Team will represent Veritas in various jump rope competitions and exhibitions during the school year. The J.A.M. Team will practice during P.E. class as part of the Jump2BFit Curriculum.

Athletic Banquet

In order to celebrate the hard work and dedication of all athletes, Veritas Christian Academy hosts an annual athletic banquet. The goal of the banquet is to recognize and honor the spiritual, emotional, social, and athletic achievements of the individual athlete, each team, the coaches, and parents.

The banquet will take place in May after the year's athletic season has been completed. The banquet is an elegant event that will entail of a meal, guest speaker, and awards ceremony.

The Athletic Director will meet with each coach of each team and together decide who has earned each of the following awards. Veritas Christian Academy presents the following awards:

- The Coaches Award
 - This award is given to one player on each team who demonstrates the highest level of dedication, Christian character, academics, trustworthiness, and encouragement of teammates.
- Most Improved Player Award
 - This award is given to one player on each team who demonstrated a spirit to learn and whose performance exhibited the highest level of improvement of athletic skill and knowledge of the sport.
- Most Valuable Player Award
 - This award is given to one player on each team whose performance exhibited the highest level of athletic skill and knowledge, sportsmanship, perseverance, and effort.
- Ironman Medals
 - Medals are given to each athlete who participated in ALL of the seasonal sports. For boys, that would be flag football, basketball, and track. For girls, that would consist of volleyball, basketball, and track.
- Christian Leadership Award
 - This award is given to one student-athlete who demonstrated qualities of outstanding Christian leadership on the field, on the court, in the classroom, during FCA, etc...
- Student-Athlete of the Year
 - This award is given to only two student-athletes: the Girls' Student-Athlete of the Year and the Boys' Student-Athlete of the Year.
 - Traditional criteria to be nominated for this award includes:
 - Outstanding student and athlete
 - 8th Grade student at Veritas
 - Participated in Veritas Athletics for at least two years
 - Participated in all three sports during their 8th grade year

Parent Participation

Each sport team is heavily dependent upon parent volunteers. Parents have many opportunities to be involved with their student-athletes sport team.

- Volunteer Coaches for the RIT Programs
 - RIT programs will be coached by parent volunteers and overseen by the Athletic Director. Coaches are to be encouraging and be able to teach the specific sport.
- Team Parent / Team Coordinator
 - Each middle school team will have one volunteer Team Parent / Team Coordinator that will work closely with the coach and coordinate the team's transportation to away games, coordinate a clean-up crew for home games, and coordinate snacks and water for each game for the team.
- Concession Coordinator
 - During middle school Volleyball and Basketball seasons, Veritas may sell food and drink at each home game to raise money for the Athletic Department. The Concession Coordinator will be in charge of keeping the concession stocked and coordinating workers for each home game.
- Concession Workers
 - During middle school Volleyball and Basketball seasons, Veritas may sell food and drink at each home game to raise money for the Athletic Department. Workers will be in charge of setting up the concession stand, selling items, and closing down the concession stand.
- Drivers
 - If the bus is not available, a team will need to be transported to away games and meets. Drivers will be needed on a regular basis.
 - Drivers must have a copy of their driver's license and insurance in the office

- Bus Drivers
 - All bus drivers must have a CDL license.
 - An adult chaperone must accompany the bus driver on any trip, therefore having two adults on the bus at all times.
- Snacks/Water
 - Each parent will be assigned a turn by the middle school Team Coordinator to bring snacks and water for the team. Snacks and water should be clearly labeled and dropped off in the gym the morning of the game.
- Clean-up Crew
 - After each home game, we will need help cleaning up the gym and lunch area so that they are ready for the next school day. This could include setting up chairs and tables, sweeping, picking up trash, etc...
- Clock Workers
 - During middle school Volleyball and Basketball home games, each team will need trained adults to run the clock.
- Score Book Keepers
 - During middle school Volleyball and Basketball home and away games, each team will need trained adults to record the stats and/or scorebook.

Athletic Budget

It is the responsibility of the Athletic Director (with the approval and authority of the Head of School) to implement and monitor the yearly athletic budget. The budget acts as a business plan for the working year and should be followed with careful attention.

The athletic budget includes every area of Veritas Athletics such as conference fees, uniforms, equipment, banquets, banners, etc... It is important for the Athletic Director to work closely with the Administration of the school to ensure the accuracy of the budget. To ensure accountability, the Athletic Director must gain approval prior to any purchase.

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VERITAS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY *of* HOUSTON

Athletic Handbook Agreement

ALL student-athletes and parents must have this signed and returned to the office before any student may participate in Veritas Athletics.

I have read the 2011-2011 Veritas Christian Academy Athletic Handbook. I commit to cooperation and philosophical support of its content as well as to adhere to the policies, standards, and guidelines as detailed in this Handbook.

Student's Name (*please print*)

Grade

Signature

Date

I have read the 2011-2012 Veritas Christian Academy Athletic Handbook. I agree to partner with the faculty and administration in upholding the rules and procedures outlined. I understand that these rules will be enforced in order to "train up a child in the way he should go."

Parent's Signature

Date