

**Lancaster Christian Academy**

**Athletics Handbook**



**“KNIGHTS NATION”**

# Letter from the Athletic Director

## Welcome to Knights Nation!

Lancaster Christian Academy has experienced many successful seasons in athletics. Although our sports teams win championships and competitively compete in Middle Tennessee Athletic Conference, the measuring for success carries way beyond the playing field. The Knights Athletic program partners with mission of LCA in order to reach student-athletes for the Lord. The mission of our academy is to make Jesus famous in the lives of our students by building intentional, Christi-centered relationships and fostering a safe environment where biblical standards of living are celebrated, and meaningful learning takes place.

Competing in sports for many years of my childhood, I understand the value athletics can bring to the youth. Multiple life lesson such as, commitment, perseverance, teamwork, sacrifices, and respective toward authority are learned when playing sports at Lancaster Christian Academy. Though we want to win on the field, advancing His kingdom is the ultimate victory we are looking for.

The coaching staff will be intentional about carrying out Lancaster Christian Academy's mission while teaching the basic fundamentals and foundation of each respective sport. Our coaches will go above and beyond helping develop skills and foster an environment that encourages and motivates each athlete to strive for excellence (1 Corinthians 9:24) in all areas of their life. I encourage you join Knights Nation and experience the joy of being a student athlete.



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# LANCATER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY'S

## MISSION STATEMENT



Lancaster Christian Academy's mission is to make Jesus famous in the lives of our students by building intentional, Christ-centered relationships and fostering a safe environment where biblical standards of living are celebrated and meaningful learning takes place.

## Knights Athletics Philosophy

*"Do you know that in a race all runners run, but only one gets the prize?  
Run in such a way to get the prize." 1 Cor. 9:24*

Over the course of a student-athlete's career he/she may spend more time with coaches than any other authority figure, except their parents. This investment of time develops a coach – player relationship that mirrors the employer-employee and mentor-apprentice partnership. The intentional and incidental values conveyed by a coach to his/her players, will have a life-lasting impact on each athlete. When this occurs within the context of a Christian athletic program committed to unprecedented excellence, the results can exponentially enhance the student athlete's' preparation for a life that glorifies Go.

# A Word From Our Headmaster

Welcome!

It is my pleasure to serve as Lancaster Christian Academy's Headmaster. I could not be more excited about the opportunities that await our children at LCA. Serving this incredible ministry for the past decade, I believe that Lancaster Christian Academy is uniquely poised to be a national leader in private Christian education. At the core of our educational leadership role is our mission:

Lancaster Christian Academy's mission is to make Jesus famous in the lives of our students by building intentional, Christ-centered relationships and fostering a safe environment where biblical standards of living are celebrated and meaningful learning takes place.

While we certainly supersede and rank above the state educationally, our school blends the need for academic, social, emotional, mental, and spiritual development. Our program intentionally seeks out opportunities for students to grow holistically, and we find greater success in the realm of academics when students are thriving in all aspects of their development.

Our bible classes and chapels center around relevant, age-appropriate topics in a setting that is fun and relatable to both children and teens respectively. We are consistently looking for windows of opportunity and teachable moments in hopes to point the students to Jesus!

We are a college preparatory school. This means that the goal of preparing our students to be successful in college and in life is central to our academic program. As such, we hold our students and teachers accountable to an unwavering high standard of excellence. Our teachers work hard to guarantee success providing a loving and nurturing environment in which our students receive the support they need to be successful.

Not only are we known for academic excellence (especially with our high ACT scores), but we are also known for our national championship winning sports teams. Our athletic department offers a variety of opportunities to children as young as kindergarten, and we have been very successful in sending student athletes to Christian colleges on athletic scholarships.

Our arts department never disappoints in bringing stellar productions and opportunities for students to shine in art, drama, and music. If your child plays an instrument, we would love to have them be a part of our chapel band.

Investigating the unique programs and exceptional opportunities offered within the realm of private Christian education can be very exciting. I hope to be able to meet and speak with you about Lancaster Christian Academy! Our friendly staff are here to serve you, and we hope that you will join our eclectic school community. It is our desire that you will find our environment to be joyful, academically challenging, and ultimately a fun place where kids of all ages grow in the Lord!

Great things are happening here!

Under His Grace,

Kevin E. O'Dea

Headmaster

Lancaster Christian Academy



## Sponsored Sports

Lancaster Christian Academy and Knights Athletics anticipates sponsoring the following sports and levels of participation for the 2020-21 school year:

### Fall Sports: Begin June 1<sup>st</sup> – Ends November 1<sup>st</sup>

Bowling	Elementary
Cheerleading	Elementary, Middle, and High School
Cross Country	Elementary
Football	Middle and High School
Volleyball	Middle and High School

### Winter Sports: Begin October 1<sup>st</sup> – Ends March 30<sup>th</sup>

Cheerleading	Elementary, Middle, and High School
Basketball	Elementary, Middle, and High School

### Spring Sports: Begin February 1<sup>st</sup> – Ends May 15<sup>th</sup>

Baseball	High School
Soccer	High School

# Athlete's Code of Conduct

Knight's Athletic competition should demonstrate high standards of ethics and sportsmanship. Also, Knight's Athletics should promote the development of good character and other important life skills. The highest potential of sports is achieved when participants are committed to pursuing victory with honor according to six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship (the "Six Pillars of Character"). This code applies to all student-athletes involved in the Knights Athletic program. All athletes must understand that, in order to participate in LCA athletics, I must act in accord with the following:

## Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness: be worthy of trust in all I do.

Integrity: lives up to high ideals of ethics and sportsmanship. Always pursues victory with honor; do what is right even when it is unpopular or personally costly.

Honesty: lives and competes honorably; does not lie, cheat, or engage in any other dishonest or unsportsmanlike conduct.

Reliability: fulfills commitments; do what I say I will do; be on time to practice and games.

Loyalty: is loyal to my school and team; put the team above personal glory.

## Respect

Respect: treat all other people with respect all the time and require the same of other student-athletes.

Class: live and play with class; be a good sport; be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity; give fallen opponents help, compliment extraordinary performance, show sincere respect in pre- and post- game rituals.

Disrespectful Conduct: do not engage in disrespectful conduct of any sort including profanity, obscene gestures, offensive remarks of a sexual or racial nature, trash talking, taunting, boastful celebrations, or other actions that demean individuals or the sport.

Respect Officials: treat contest officials with respect, do not complain about or argue with official calls or decisions during or after an athletic event.

## Responsibility

Importance of Education: be a student first and commit to getting the best education you can. Be honest with yourself about the likelihood of getting an athletic scholarship or playing at the professional level. Remember that universities will not recruit student-athletes that do not have a commitment to their education.

Role-Modeling: Participation in sports is a privilege, not a right, and that I am expected to represent my school, coach, and teammates with honor, on and off the field/court. Consistently exhibit good character and conduct yourself as a positive role model. Suspension or termination of the privilege is within the sole discretion of the school and athletic administration.

Self-Control: exercise self-control, do not fight or show excessive displays of anger or frustration. Have the strength to overcome the temptation to retaliate.

Healthy Lifestyle: safeguard your health; do not use any illegal or unhealthy techniques to gain, lose, or maintain weight.

Integrity of the Game: protects the integrity of the game, do not gamble, play by the rules.

## Fairness

Be Fair: live up to high standards of fair play; be open-minded; always be willing to listen and learn.

## **Caring**

**Concern for others:** demonstrates concern for others; never intentionally injure any player or engage in reckless behavior that might cause injury to others or myself.

**Teammates:** help promote the well being of teammates by positive counseling and encouragement or by reporting any unhealthy or dangerous conduct to coaches.

## **Good Citizenship**

**Play by the Rules:** maintain a thorough knowledge of and abide by all applicable game and competition rules.

**Spirit of Rules:** honor the spirit and the letter of rules; avoid temptation to gain competitive advantage through improper gamesmanship techniques that violate the highest traditions of sportsmanship.

## **Parent's Code of Conduct**

- I will enjoy my child's opportunity to experience the benefits of playing sports at Lancaster Christian Academy.
- I will trust in my child's ability to have fun and to perform and achieve excellence on his/her own.
- I will help my child learn the right lessons from winning, losing, individual achievement, and mistakes.
- I will respect my child's teammates as well as fellow parents and fans.
- I will give encouragement and applaud only positive accomplishments whether from my child or his teammates.
- I will support the efforts of the coaching staff. I will not instruct from the sidelines.
- I will ensure that my child will attend all practices and games and will inform the coach in advance if unable to attend.
- I will arrive to practices/games on time and pick my child up from practices and games on time.
- I will respect all facilities made available to my child. I will respect the equipment and uniform loaned to my child for practice and play.
- I will respect the officials and their authority during games.
- I will never demonstrate threatening or abusive behavior towards players, coaches, parents, officials, and administration.

## **Athlete's Expectations**

We will operate the Knights Athletic Program in accordance with the rules, regulations, and policies as outlined by the Lancaster Christian Academy Handbook, and the administrative policies of LCA. Within that framework we will provide an athletic program of the highest quality that meets the needs of our students, alumni, school and community.

As Athletic Director, I believe that our athletic program provides a vital link between the school and the community. Student, parental, alumni, and community involvement in our program helps to enhance school spirit, develop sound minds and bodies, and develop skills and qualities which endure for life. Most importantly, our athletic programs have the opportunity to set the tone inside the school at every standard considering a vast majority of our students are athletes.

As a general rule, all athletes are to conduct themselves with class and dignity, both on and off the field/court. Your behavior is a direct reflection of our school and the athletic program. Any actions that will embarrass you, your team, school, or parents is an action that should NOT be taken.

All players in this program will recognize and respect the authority of all coaches, teachers, administrators, and support staff members or they will not be a part of the team.

Any violation of one or more of the rules covered in this handbook is an indication that the Knights Athletic program, and being a part of it, is not important to you. Any violation will be dealt with accordingly, ranging from team/individual player punishment to dismissal from the team. Those who work hard and adhere to these policies are showing that being part of this team is important and will be rewarded with success, satisfaction, and wins.

## **Parent's Expectations**

**Be positive with your athlete.** Let them know you are proud they are part of the team. *Focus on the benefits of teamwork and personal discipline.*

**Encourage your athlete to follow all training rules.** Help the coaches build a commitment to the team. *Set a good example in your personal lifestyle.*

**Allow your athlete to perform and progress at a level consistent with his ability.** *Athletes mature at different ages; some are more gifted than others.*

**Always support the coaching staff when controversial decisions are made.** *The coaches need your backing to keep good morale on the team.*

**Insist on positive behavior in school and a high level of performance in the classroom.** *Numerous studies indicate extracurricular involvement helps enhance academic performance.*

**Stay calm in injury situations.** *Parents can help minimize the trauma by being in control and offering comfort. Allow the medical staff to perform their assessment of your child's injury. No parent is allowed on the field unless the training staff requests it.*

**Cheer for our team and players. Opponents and referees deserve respect.** *Realize that high school players will make mistakes. Your support is needed during tough times.*

**Promote having fun and being a team player. Very few high school athletes receive scholarships.**

*Concentrate on what is best for the team. Preoccupation with statistics can be very distracting.*

**An athlete's self-confidence and self-image will be improved by support at home. Comparison to others is discouraged.** *Encourage the athlete to do their best regardless of family or friends who may have been outstanding players.*

**Winning is fun, but building positive team values is most important.** *The concept of working together to perform a task will have lasting benefits. Winning takes place when all the little things are done correctly.*

**Find the time to be an avid booster of school activities.** *Help build a solid support system for coaches and athletes.*

**Help students keep jobs and cars in proper perspective.** *Materialistic values can detract from the commitment to the team. Teenagers should have the opportunity to take advantage of extracurricular activities*

## **Eligibility Requirements**

The Knights Athletics' Clearinghouse requires that all student-athletes complete the following in order to be eligible to participate in athletics at Lancaster Christian Academy.

1. All Student-athletes must be enrolled for the participating sport's school year and have an active FACTS account.
2. All student-athletes must have paid or have a payment agreement for their sports fees.
3. All student-athletes must have all required participation forms completed and turned in to the athletic department. Forms consist of:
  - a. Student Handbook Agreement
  - b. Sports Waiver
  - c. Concussion protocol
  - d. Physical
  - e. Consent for Athletic Participation and Medical care
  - f. Emergency Contact Information
  - g. No Quit Policy
  - h. Testimony (high school only)
  - i. Statement of purpose (high school only)

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **No Quit Policy:**

- Lancaster Christian Academy has a "No Quit" policy for the Knights Athletic Program. Once a student commits to playing a sport, he or she is committing to the entirety of the season including all practices, games, post-season tournaments, and any other team activities. We place a high value on commitment and want to teach that to the athletes.
- If circumstances arise and an athlete can no longer participate, the athlete and parent must first meet with the Headmaster (Kevin O'Dea) and the Athletic Director (Joey O'Dea). All sports fees are required to be paid in full and are non-refundable.

### **Academic Credentials:**

- Each athlete must maintain a G.P.A. of 2.3 or higher to participate in the Lancaster Christian Academy Knights' Athletic Program. Failure to meet these standards will result in suspension from all athletic activities until the required G.P.A. is met.

### **Behavior Policy:**

Students will abide by school rules provided in the student handbook. The Headmaster and respective administration/directors have the right to withhold a student's participation from any event if they deem necessary. The student handbook and school policies will supersede all athletic department rules and policies.

#### **- Study Hall / Detention**

Study Hall and Detention takes priority of any practice or game. Student athletes assigned to study hall will be required to complete their time and then can return to athletic activities. Practice and/or game time missed due to study hall is determined by the head coach. Student-athletes that receive detention will be suspended for their next scheduled athlete game. Detention is assigned by the administration. The athletic department follows up with an additional consequence in the results of a one game suspension. After the first detention received, consequences relating to athletics, will be determined by the athletic director.

- **In-School Suspension (ISS)**: the student-athlete must attend practices and games during their suspension, but cannot participate during their suspension, the first day back to their regular schedule from ISS, the student athlete will be eligible. Playing time will be determined by the coach. The Athletic Director must provide clearance to the coach, player, and parents prior to their return to activity.

- **Out of School Suspension (OSS)**: the student-athlete is NOT allowed to attend practices or games. He/She cannot participate or attend until given the approval by Headmaster, Administration, or Athletic Director. The Athletic Director must provide clearance to the coach, player, and parents prior to their return to activity.

- **Game Ejection/ Unsportsmanlike Conduct**: student-athletes that are ejected from a game and/or receive any type of unsportsmanlike penalty are required to sit out the next game. Each case will be reviewed by the athletic director and LCA's administration to determine if suspension from the next game and/or further consequences are deemed necessary.

### **Absence/Tardy Policy:**

- If an athlete is not present at school, he/she cannot participate in practice, games, or any other athletic events that day. The Athletic Director can provide approval for participation in the case of absences depending on the circumstances. (ex. college visit, COVID-19 protocol)

- Athletes must be present at school by 10:50 a.m.- high school and 11:15 a.m. – middle school to be eligible to participate in practice, games, or any other athletic events that day. Students-athletes that fail to meet those required times are still expected to attend the athletic function they have that day, but cannot dress out or participate. The athlete is required to be in game day dress code when attending the event. Excused tardy's will be approved only by the athletic director.

### **Transportation Policy:**

- The Lancaster Christian Academy bus and/or van will be used for all athletic transportation needs, unless specifically announced otherwise. All student-athletes are required to ride with the coaches and

team in the school provided transportation to and from every athletic event. Parents may drive other students to and from practice if the following information is on file with the school: name, contact information, copy of driver's license, and signed permission slips from BOTH parents for all students in the vehicle. Student-athletes are expected to follow all behavior policies on the bus. Coaches and administration riding the bus are in charge and responsible for all the student-athletes. Athletes may ride home with their parents with pre-planning by coaches and notification from parents. For consistency and safety, the coaches will determine the plan for transportation for the team. Outside of a family emergency, the coaches plan will take priority.

### **Early Dismissal Policy:**

- Some athletic events will require early dismissal from school. Parents, teachers, and staff will be notified when the student-athletes will be dismissed from the Academy early. All early dismissals are pre-approved by the administration and the athletic director.

### **Practice Policy:**

- Practices are CLOSED to everyone except LCA coaches, athletes, faculty, and staff. Players are expected to be at every practice. It is the responsibility of the athlete to inform the coach when he/she will not be able to attend practice and the reason why. If you miss practice without contacting coach prior to the start time, the results in consequences will be determined by the head coach. If an athlete misses practice, he/she must have an excused note from the doctor, family emergency, or prior permission from coach. Failure to do so will result in consequences determined by the head coach.

### **Playing Time:**

- Playing time is up to the discretion of the coach. Being a member of an LCA Knights athletic team does not guarantee a minimum amount of playing time. Questions about playing time from the parents are inappropriate. However, questions about what the athlete may do to improve should be directed to the coach from the student- athlete.

### **Inclement Weather:**

- When a practice is scheduled, we will do something as a team regardless of the weather (obviously, extreme occurrences that cause us to miss school will be the exception) so practice will always be scheduled as planned. When a situation arises where have inclement weather (i.e. lightning) we will do one of the following:
  - o Move practice to the gymnasium/indoors.
  - o Watch film and wait out the weather for an opportunity to go back outside
  - o Go to weight room and wait out the weather (In a situation where we go inside to wait out the weather practice will end at the scheduled time)

### **Weight Room Policy:**

- The weight room is a very important tool for the success of our athletic program. It is mandatory for student-athletes to be present and abide by the posted weight room rules during all workouts. The weight room will be locked at all times workouts are not scheduled. Athletes NOT permitted in the

weight room without a coach/LCA staff member present. The team using the facility, after their workout session has concluded, must clean up and rack all weights.

### **Locker Room Policy:**

- Both locker rooms are to remain locked at all times when not in use. Student-Athletes will be allowed to put their equipment in the locker room until the first bell rings to go to class at 7:50 a.m. After the bell, the locker rooms will remain locked until dismissal at the end of the regular school day. Students should not bring books, lunches, or any supplies needed for their school day.
- Only in-season athletes are permitted to keep sports equipment in the locker room. They must drop their equipment off in the locker room before 7:50 a.m. (i.e. football will be allowed to keep their equipment in the locker room only during their fall season)
- Each in-season athlete will receive a locker in the locker room. The athlete is responsible for cleaning out the locker weekly. Only athlete supplies and equipment are allowed in their locker. Locks may be used on the lockers in the locker room. The coaching staff and administration have the authority to break the locks and search lockers at any time according to the student handbook. LCA is not responsible for missing items in the locker rooms.

### **Athletic Uniform Policy:**

- Uniforms are assigned to student-athletes by the coaching staff. All uniforms (other than cheerleading) belong to Lancaster Christian academy. All uniforms are to be returned to LCA at the end of each season. Failure to return jerseys or any issued equipment from Lancaster Christian Academy, parents will be charged for the cost of whatever item is missing at brand new cost of that item. Players are expected to keep their uniforms in excellent condition. The players/parents will be required to replace any pieces of the uniform that are not taken good care of or become lost. It is the student-athletes responsibility to keep up with their uniform and issued equipment at all times. The school is not responsible for missing equipment.

### **Transfer Student Policy:**

- If a student transfers in mid-school year, he/she must meet with the Athletic Director before they are eligible to join a team. Student athletes are NOT eligible to join a team if the season is over 50% completed. If the season is less than 50% complete the student-athlete who transfers in may be deemed as eligible immediately upon approval from the Athletic Director. All athletes will abide by the conference transfer eligibility guidelines when arriving mid-season. Depending on the time of transfer, the athlete may not be eligible to participate.

## **Financial Requirement and Commitment**

### **Athletic Fees:**

- All student-athletes must have completed the school's enrollment process, as well as completed an athletic financial agreement form in order to be eligible to participate in any of the sports provided by

Knights athletics (including on-time payment of registration and book fees). Any account that is delinquent will render the athlete ineligible until account is paid and current on all fees and dues.

### **Explanation of Fees:**

- There are three main sources that fund our Knights Athletic Program:
  - o Individual Sports Fees
  - o Pre-season and/or During Season Tournaments
  - o Team Camps
  
- All payments are made through our online payment program FACTS. All sports fees begin on June 1<sup>st</sup>. and each sports season has a specific payment schedule. The entire sports fee, team camp fee, and tournament cost must be paid before the end of each sports season. If a family chooses to pay in full, they may do so at the Central Office located at 240 Mayfield drive suite 105, Smyrna, TN 37167.

## **Communication**

The Lancaster Christian Academy coaching staff in conjunction with the Knights Athletic Department will make every attempt to keep our players and their parents/guardians as informed and up to date as possible on all athletic events (ex. practices, games, updates, cancelations). We have four ways of communicating with parents and players. They are email, social media, phone call, and approved group messaging.

### **Communication Policy**

- The LCA Coaching staff and Knights Athletic Department will follow the 24-hour response rule deemed by the administration/directors of Lancaster Christian Academy. You are asked to give the coaching staff and athletic department at LCA 24 hours to give you a response. If this window passes, please contact the Athletic Director so we can get your questions answered as quickly as possible. The exception to the 24-hour response rule would be on Game Day. We ask that you do not contact coaches on game day unless it is an emergency. There is a lot of preparation required on a coach on game day. Direct your questions to the athletic director.

### **Email**

- The best form of communication to get in touch with a Lancaster Christian Academy coach is via e-mail. Coaches e-mail address can be found on the school's website. Faculty and staff members are [firstname.lastname@lcknights.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@lcknights.com).
- Please be sure that your email is updated with the LCA Athletic Director, Joey O'Dea, e-mail address at: [joey.odea@lcknights.com](mailto:joey.odea@lcknights.com).
- All coaches will ask for parent's email address for weekly updates.
- Please provide all email address that require information communicated too.

### **Social Media**

- Visit our schools Facebook page for up to date information on athletic events.

### **Group Messaging**

- Lancaster Christian Academy and the Knights Athletic department does not permit text messaging between students and staff. Student-athletes will be asked to sign up for a messaging app (i.e. RemindMe) for updates from their coaches.

## **Injury and Health Concerns:**

Lancaster Christian Academy and the Knights Athletic Department's first priority is the safety of the student athlete. We ask the all athletes and parents provide information immediately concerning a child's health. If you have an injury or health concern, please contact the athletic department immediately. If an athlete is taken to the hospital, visits a physician, or physical therapist due to an injury, the athletic department requires full clearance before that athlete is eligible to return to action. Athletes/Parents should report any updates in medical conditions or medications being taken to both the Coach and Athletic Director. If a player is ill, the parent/guardian must notify the coach and athletic director so they can prevent the illness from spreading amongst the team. All sick absences must have an excuse note from a doctor in order to be excused from the athletic event taking place. Any player who is injured and/or not participating in practice is still required to be at practice and games. They will spend part of the practice (as determined by coaches and trainer) performing physical activity and part of practice getting "mental reps" by analyzing practice.

### **Concussion Protocol:**

- Concussions have become a significant conversation in the realm of athletics. There is ongoing research in concussion prevention and best ways to avoid head injuries. Any student-athlete who shows even the slightest signs of a concussion will fall into a standard concussion protocol. Any signs of a concussion will be treated seriously, and the players will be removed from the athletic activity immediately for further evaluation by a certified professional. A student-athlete will not be allowed to participate until fully cleared by doctors/trainers and even after so, will still be under coaches' discretion in regard to their return to action. The required documents per athlete will include a concussion information sheet, which will provide more details in regard to concussions and how they will be treated.

**Thank you for being a Knight!**  
**#knightsnation**

