



Life Center Academy

Athletic Handbook

For Students and Parents

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I. Philosophy of Athletics

Life Center Academy believes that all that is done in life should be pleasing to God, including athletics. The athlete, coach, and team are striving to do their best in all areas of life. Playing with actions pleasing to Christ is of the utmost importance. Performance at one's best for the benefit of the team is primary, while winning is secondary. The coach is to teach the athlete how to deal with both winning and losing, as well as with the pressures in the athletic world, in a manner that is pleasing to God.

We believe the team is more important than one individual. Team unity is vital, while individual achievements are also recognized.

I Cor. 10:31 – Whatever you eat or drink or whatever you do, you must do all for the glory of God.

Col. 3:23 - Work hard and cheerfully at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

II. Statement of Purpose

1. Our athletic program will strive to develop a Christ like character in our athletes. This goal will be incorporated into all practices and competition events.
2. LCA will seek out and utilize coaches who view athletics as a vehicle for ministry in the lives of young people. The development of the spirit and the body is to be biblically balanced.
3. Our approach and delivery will encourage parents to see sports as a valid extensions of Life Center Academy's (Christian) educational program.

Team Levels: Since there are different skill levels of the players within our athletic teams, it is important to emphasize different goals at each team level. Therefore, our goals are:

1. Junior High Team:

- a. To learn basic fundamentals of the sport(s) and the individual skills of the game.
- b. To learn team concepts
- c. To emphasize individual participation/playing time rather than team success.

2. Junior Varsity Team:

- a. To build individual skills.
- b. To further develop team concepts, strategy and tactics.
- c. To achieve a balance of individual participation/playing time and team success.

3. Varsity Team:

- a. To refine individual skills and team play. Team achievement and success is more important than individual achievement.
- b. To apply the learned team concepts, strategy and tactics.
- c. To strive for team success.

III. Guidelines

- A. It is a privilege not a right for a student to participate in interscholastic athletics. The school may revoke this privilege when the athlete does not conduct himself in an acceptable manner.
- B. The participant must maintain acceptable levels on academics, Christian character, citizenship and sportsmanship.
- C. Team Size- Student athletes that wish to compete must realize that often a “try-out” is necessary in order for the coaches to determine who is best prepared to compete. Unmanageable numbers can cause discouragement and unsafe conditions for all involved. The maximum number of team members will be as follows:

Soccer – 18

Cross Country – 14

Basketball – 12 (if no JV, 15 player max.)

Junior Varsity Basketball - 12

Baseball/Softball – 15

Cheerleading – Size determined jointly by Administration, Athletic Director, and coach.

Team sizes may exceed the maximum at the discretion of the Administration, Athletic Director, and coaches.

When a try-out is necessary, selection of a candidate may be based on athletic performance, attitude, conduct, cooperation, and the desire to represent both Christ and the student body in a manner that compliments the school.

Students in grades 9 – 12 are eligible to participate at the Varsity level. The decision to allow 8th graders to participate on a Varsity team will be made by the Athletic Director, Coach and the Administration. However, if the 8th grader is allowed to play on a varsity team his/her parent(s) must sign a waiver that states they understand the implications that may arise if they transfer their athlete to another school that has 4 year eligibility rules.

Any student who turns 19 prior to September 1 will be ineligible for any Penn Jersey Athletic Association contests per the league By-Laws/Constitution.

Students in grade 12 are not eligible for Junior Varsity level teams unless consent has been given by the Athletic Director and school administration.

It is not possible to state how much playing time each team member will have because coaching decisions are based on many factors.

D. Practices and Games

All athletes must be prompt and are expected to attend all practice sessions as well as games. Practices generally begin at 3:00 pm every day except Wednesday. There are no practices on Wednesday unless absolutely necessary. All Junior High practices finish at 4:30pm and Varsity practices finish at 5:00pm. The only exception to these times would be basketball. Practices vary due to gym availability.

Excused absences from school are also excused absences from practice and games.

It is at the coach's discretion to dismiss a player from a team due to numerous unexcused absences.

It is the responsibility of the athlete to notify the coach in advance of any practice or game that he/she will miss; otherwise the practice or game that is missed is considered unexcused.

If an athlete missed practice or a game that is unexcused, disciplinary action may result from the coach. This includes not starting, mandatory bench time, etc.

In order to participate in any athletic practice or game on a given day, the athlete must attend school on that same day and must be at school by 11:30a.m.

E. Miscellaneous

1. Parents are responsible to see that their children are picked up promptly after practices and games.
2. Students may bring electronic devices to games/practices but use of those devices will be subject to the head coach's discretion. Students are solely responsible for these devices.
3. The coach of each sport may set specific team rules in addition to those found in the Student Athlete Handbook. These rules will be given to the athletes by the coach at the first meeting or practice of that sport.
4. Athletes are expected to adhere to the school dress codes for all athletic events. When there are alterations to this policy, the coach and/or Athletic Director will give directions concerning what may be worn to these events.
5. Any player dismissed from a team for disciplinary reasons may not compete in that particular sport until further notice from the coaching staff involved, the Athletic Director, and the school Administration.
6. All sports are governed by the rules stated by NFHS (National Federation of High School), except when modified by the league rules to which a team belongs. The varsity teams are members of the Penn-Jersey Athletic Conference and the Jr. High teams belong to the Eastern Burlington County Middle School league for basketball. For all other sports the Jr. High teams follow an independent schedule.

IV. Eligibility Requirements & Expectations of Student-Athletes

A. Behavioral Eligibility

Proper behavior must be demonstrated whether in school or during competition. The consequences of improper behavior may be temporary or permanent suspension from a team as determined by administration.

It is the expectation of Life Center Academy that as a student-athlete you will represent our school in the best possible manner. Life Center Academy respects the rights of its students to use social media. However, it is important for all students to understand the need to exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior and to understand that what may seem private in the digital world can often become public, even without knowledge or consent. Social Networking Guidelines include avoid posting illegal activities, avoid bullying/threats of violence, and avoid lying, cheating, and plagiarizing. Failure to adhere to the social networking policy will result in disciplinary action.

B. Academic Eligibility

Athletes must maintain passing grades in all subjects while their sport is in season. Every 2 weeks during the season an academic eligibility list will be generated by the school office. If an athlete's grade in one or more subject drops to an "F" they will be on placed on the eligibility list.

They will remain ineligible for two weeks regardless of when they bring their grade(s) to passing. During these two weeks they may practice with the team but they cannot play in games or travel with the team.

- D. Student-Athletes are expected to be leaders and mentors for younger students. Initiation rituals and hazing are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. One is expected to lead by example. Leave a positive legacy during your time at Life Center Academy.
- E. Profanity will not be tolerated at any time.
- F. Student security and safety in the locker room facility are priorities of the coaching staff. Each student-athlete is responsible to assist in keeping the locker room are clean, safe, and secure. Absolutely no horseplay. Lock and re-check your locker before leaving the locker room. Report any missing items to your coach or administrator immediately. Treat the facility with respect.
- G. All student-athletes, their parents, and head coach will sign Life Center Academy Athletics Rules and Expectations contract at the start of each season. This contracts will be kept on file in the Athletic Directors office.

V. Awards

- A. All students who participate for an entire season with an athletic team will receive a certificate of participation.
- B. Athletes at the Junior Varsity and Varsity level may earn letters by playing in 50% (25% for seniors) of total halves, quarters, or innings played.
- C. A first year letterman receives a letter with a pin representing the sport. A returning letterman receives a bar for each additional year completed. Captains receive Captain pins. Managers, scorers, and statisticians who complete a sport will be given a letter and receive a pin/bar indicating their participation with the team.
- D. Varsity All-Stars who are chosen by the league are given All-Star certificates.
- E. Other recognition may be given with the approval of the coach, Athletic Director, and Administration.
- F. The following awards will be given for the various level:
 - 1. Junior High Sports: all participants will receive a medal
 - 2. Junior Varsity Sports: Most Valuable Player, Sportsmanship and Most Improved
 - 3. Varsity Sports: Most Valuable Player, Most Improved Player, Sportsmanship, Best Offensive Player, and Best Defensive Player.

4. Scholar Athlete Award will be given to any athlete who achieves Honor Roll during their sport season.
- G. Overall awards will be given to the Male/Female Outstanding Athlete of the Year. The Athletic Director will choose the recipients of these awards. Also, an award will be given to the Male/Female Scholar Athlete of the Year. These awards will be given to the athlete who meets the criteria set forth below.
1. Outstanding Athlete of the Year – To be a great athlete and individual must be physically prepared, mentally agile, and a cooperative team player. The mastery of such qualities is worthy of recognition. The award of Outstanding Athlete of the Year goes to a male and female who has played a minimum of 2 varsity sports while demonstrating excellent athletic abilities, leadership, Christian character, and good sportsmanship on the playing field and in the classroom. The athlete must maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA.
 2. Scholar Athlete of the Year – Success on the athletic field and in the classroom is an accomplishment that should receive the highest accolade. Both require stamina, endurance, determination, and hard work. To do both well is an exceptional feat. In addition to the Life Center Academy requires that the individual exhibit a good Christ-like attitude. In recognition of this outstanding accomplishment Life Center Academy is awarding the title of Scholar Athlete of the Year to the deserving male and female junior or senior athlete who has played a minimum of two varsity sports and shown a desire for excellent overall athletic performance and has the highest GPA (minimum 3.75) in their sex group.
 3. LCA Varsity Club - Any athlete who participates in a minimum of 2 varsity sports during an academic school year would be considered for this award.
 4. 3 Letterman Award - Any athlete who participates in 3 varsity sports during an academic school year would be considered for this award.

VI. Physical Exams and Permission Slips

- A. Each athlete is required to have a physical exam. A physical exam is good for 1 year from that date it was issued. This physical exam must be given by a licensed physician and reported in writing before the student may start practice.
- B. If a student has been injured during a sport's season or has had an illness that prevents the athlete from playing that sport for an extended period of time, the athlete must have a licensed physician and a parent sign a "Return to Athletics" form before being permitted to return and participate in the sport.

- C. Any athlete that sustains a concussion during any athletic contest or practices must submit a physician's approval to return to full competition.
- D. Injuries:
 - 1. Precautions are taken to prevent injuries, but they do occur. All injuries must be reported to the coach so that proper aid may be given. It is important that allergies or other ailments that require special attention be reported to the coach at the start of the season.
 - 2. If an athlete is injured, the parents will be contacted as soon as possible. If necessary, emergency personnel will also be contacted.

VII. Uniforms and Equipment

- A. The team's coach will issue the team uniform. Each athlete who is issued a uniform is responsible for its proper care. It must be returned to the coach in good condition at the end of the season. If it is damaged, worn beyond normal wear, lost or not returned, the athlete will pay for the uniform at its replacement price. Usually one replacement uniform will cost far more than when originally ordered. Report cards, transcripts or any requests for official school documents will not be given out if the following uniforms are not returned or paid for.
- B. The uniform may not be worn anytime or place other than what is authorized in connection with official games.
- C. All uniforms must be returned cleaned with every piece included that was originally issued.
- D. All uniforms must be returned within one (1) week after the last game of that sport's season.
- E. The equipment a team uses is the responsibility of the team. Abusing equipment or supplies may result in the dismissal from the team and/or replacement of the damaged equipment by one or ones that damaged it.

VIII. Transportation

- A. The school will provide transportation for the teams to go to the athletic event. After the athletic event, it is the parents' responsibility to pick up his/her own child at the appointed time and place.
- B. Students will ride school-provided transportation. Prior written request from the parents involved and approval by the Dean of Students will only grant exceptions.
- C. Student drivers are not permitted to transport themselves or other students to any athletic event. Prior written request from the parents involved and the approval of the Dean of Students will only grant exceptions. In specific situations verbal approval by the parent(s) involved will be allowed by the approval of the Dean of Students.

- D. For some athletic events, there may be room for student spectators to ride the school-sponsored transportation. Student spectators must have written parental permission to travel to these events. The presiding coach will determine if there is sufficient room on the team vehicle for spectators.

**ATHLETE PARTICIPATION FORM AND RELEASE
JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

Last Name	First Name	Grade
Address		
Home Phone Number	Emergency Number	
Birthday (month, day, year)	Place of Birth (city, state)	

The above named student has my permission to participate in Interscholastic Athletic Activities as approved by the Board of Directors of Life Center Academy.

We have read the Life Center Academy Athletic Handbook and understand our responsibilities involved.

We realize that there is a risk of the above named student being injured that is inherent in all sports. We expect school authorities and coaches to exercise every reasonable precaution to avoid accidents and injury. We hereby release Life Center Academy, the Board of Directors and its agents, servants, teachers, and employees of any liability, what so ever, for any accidents that may occur during such participation.

We understand that the above named student will be responsible for the safe return of all athletic equipment issued to him/her, and we agree to responsible to the Board of Directors in the event of loss or damaged through careless or improper use.

I, _____, have read the Athletic Handbook and agree to abide within the guidelines.

I, _____, understand that any violation to the handbook could result in a dismissal from the team or from participation in future Athletic Department events.

_____ Print Student's Name	_____ Student Signature
_____ Print Father's Name	_____ Father's Signature
_____ Print Mother's Name	_____ Mother's Signature
_____ Date	

**LIFE CENTER ACADEMY
ATHLETE INSURANCE INFORMATION**

Accident or Hospitalization insurance carried by parents, which would cover any injury, the student might have while participating in school athletics:

Insurance Co.

Family Physician Phone Number

Hospital Preference (list two)

Parent/Guardian Signature Date