



**SALISBURY**  
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

# **Athletic Department Handbook**

August 2019

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information to student-athletes, parents, and coaches regarding the Salisbury Christian School Athletic Department. This document will serve as the general expectations for all Salisbury Christian School teams. Coaches may have additional expectations and guidelines that pertain to their specific philosophy; those must be communicated early, clearly, and effectively. The information provided in this handbook is intended by the Salisbury Christian School Athletic Department to help create competitive athletics at all levels and to nurture young men and women of character, integrity, and faith, remembering “In all things... Christ pre-eminent” (Colossians 1:18).

## **Salisbury Christian School Mission Statement**

Salisbury Christian School exists to honor Jesus Christ by offering a comprehensive educational program founded upon Biblical truth and academic excellence.

## **Salisbury Christian School Vision**

Salisbury Christian School leads students to spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical maturity, in partnership with parents and the church, so that students become disciples of Jesus Christ, walking in wisdom, obeying His Word, and living their faith.

## **Athletic Department Mission Statement**

Athletics at Salisbury Christian School are a vital part of the student experience and the development of young men and women. Athletics will assist in the overall mission of growing in spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical maturity. The values of teamwork, commitment, dedication, servant leadership, sportsmanship, and fitness are crucial to this mission.

## **Goals of the Salisbury Christian School Athletic Department**

- Student-athletes buy in to the idea of “Team First” (1 Corinthians 12:20-25).
- Student-athletes learn the fundamentals of their sport.
- Student-athletes grow in their love of the game.
- Student-athletes learn how to become godly men and women.
- Student-athletes exemplify the ideals becoming of a successful athletic program.

## **Expectations of the Salisbury Christian School Athletic Department**

Students participating in athletics as part of their experience at Salisbury Christian School are held to high expectations regarding behavior and character. Student-athletes are a representation of Salisbury Christian School and, paramount, the faith that is essential to the school community. Student-athletes come in contact with many people on and off campus and should represent SCS and Jesus Christ well at all times (Matthew 5:14-16).

These expectations extend also to coaches and fans that are associated with Salisbury Christian School. Coaches and parents not only represent Jesus Christ and the school, they are also called to be examples of character and integrity for our students.

## **Academic Probation & Eligibility**

Early intervention is a critical component to the academic success of a student who is showing signs of academic decline. The Academic Probation & Eligibility Policy is designed to help students refocus on their academic studies and seek the appropriate assistance for improvement.

- A student with a GPA at or above 2.0 will be considered *academically eligible* for participation in extracurricular activities.
- A student with a GPA between 2.24 and 2.0 and/or any failing grades will be placed on *academic warning*. While still being eligible for extracurricular participation, the student is expected to demonstrate academic initiative by seeking assistance from coaches, advisors, and/or the guidance counselor. A student may only remain on academic warning status until the next progress report or report card, at which time he/she will then be considered academically ineligible if grades have not improved.
- A student with a GPA below 2.0 will be considered *academically ineligible*. Students may regain eligibility if grades are improved to a GPA of 2.0 or above at the issuance of mid-term progress reports. Student athletes who do not regain eligibility at the issuance of mid-term progress reports will be considered ineligible for the remainder of that sport season.
- Students can only receive academic probation status at report card distribution. Progress reports are only used to reevaluate a probationary status already in place.

The probation period will begin the first school day following the distribution of report cards for each term, including Term 4 into Term 1 of the subsequent school year. Up to two (2) credit recovery courses may be completed prior to Term 1 of the new school year in order to be considered for academic eligibility at the start of the year. While students will be notified of the

academic probation status via letter shortly after the issuance of progress reports/report cards, it is the responsibility of the student to monitor their grades and seek academic assistance. If probation continues into a second marking term, a mandatory meeting will take place with the student, parent, guidance counselor, and principal. Continued academic probation beyond three marking terms will necessitate discussion of whether continued enrollment is feasible.

### **Athletic Awards**

At the conclusion of each season, coaches and student-athletes are invited and expected to attend the athletic awards ceremony. Teams will provide a short recap of the season and receive certificates, and varsity letters and individual awards will be given at the varsity level. Coaches and student-athletes are expected to “dress for success” for these events.

### **Athletic Transportation**

Student-athletes are encouraged to ride to and from athletic competitions with the team, to assist with team spirit and camaraderie. Parents may transport students home from athletic competitions after communication with the coach. Students are prohibited from driving themselves to or from athletic competitions without explicit written permission from the students’ parents. Students are prohibited from transporting other students to or from athletic competitions without explicit written permission from both students’ parents.

### **Boosters Club**

The Boosters Club at Salisbury Christian School is intended:

- To increase school spirit through creating and implementing strategies for increasing attendance and participation in Salisbury Christian School athletics.
- To observe and address issues with athletic policies and procedures.
- To address areas necessary for growth and/or improvement and to create and implement strategies for improving these areas.
- To assist in the fundraising tasks of the Salisbury Christian School Athletic Department in order to provide the optimal athletic experience for all coaches, fans, and student-athletes.

### **Captains**

Solid leadership is important to the success of any group or team. Team captaincy is an honor and privilege that is to be earned. Captains are expected to maintain high character and integrity at all times, communicate well with the team, and lead by example in word and deed. Captaincy will be determined by the coach and should not simply be reserved for the best athlete or oldest athlete on the team unless deserved. Captain designations will be shared with SCS Faculty and Staff.

### **Coaches**

Quality coaching is important to the success of teams and development of student-athletes at Salisbury Christian School. Coaches should be knowledgeable in their respective areas and

should have experience playing and/or coaching. Coaches are representatives of Salisbury Christian School and should conduct themselves professionally at all times. Coaches are expected to incorporate Biblical integration in practice and game plans and, therefore, must be of good moral standing and have evidence of Christian faith. Coaches should lead by example in the way they teach and instruct teams and student-athletes, teaching and encouraging student-athletes to grow in character and faith.

### **Conference Affiliation**

Salisbury Christian School is a member of the Eastern Shore Independent Athletic Conference (E.S.I.A.C.), as well as Delmarva Christian High School, The Gunston School, Holly Grove Christian School, The Salisbury School, St. Thomas More Academy, Worcester Preparatory School, and Sts. Peter and Paul (girls only). Salisbury Christian School also competes on a regular basis against schools from the Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association (DIAA), Bayside Conference, and the Virginia Public School Conferences, as well as Christian and private schools throughout the state of Maryland.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Salisbury Christian School expects all constituents to follow the Biblical principle of conflict resolution found in Matthew 18:15-17. Conflicts should be addressed directly with the coach/teammate with whom there is an issue before involving other coaches, the Director of Athletics, and other administrators, in that order, as appropriate. Open, clear, and direct communication is Christ-like and healthy for believers who should always strive to be of one accord (Philippians 2:1-11).

### **Cuts**

Due to limited roster sizes, cuts may be made for any team at any level, depending on the desired number of participants and the number of students who try out for any team. Cuts will be determined by the Head Coach after conferring with the Assistant Coach(es) and/or Director of Athletics. Concerns about these decisions should be addressed directly by the player in question. The player should arrange a mutually convenient time to meet with the coach(es) and Director of Athletics (if necessary).

### **Discipline**

Each student-athlete is held to a high standard of behavior expectations. Discipline will follow the procedure below. This process may be adjusted for any excessively inappropriate behavior. All behavior issues will be reported to the Dean of Students. Salisbury Christian School reserves the right to implement additional discipline strategies if necessary. Please refer to the “School Culture/Discipline Policies & Procedures” portion of the Student Handbook for information regarding school discipline.

- 1) The first time a student-athlete is written up or a parent/staff member informs the Director of Athletics that a student-athlete is having behavioral issues, the athlete will be disciplined in practice.

- 2) The second time, the athlete will not play in the next game.
- 3) The third time, team membership will be discussed with the coaching staff and Director of Athletics.

### **Ejection/Excessive Penalties**

Any coach or student-athlete that accumulates an excessive number of penalties or is ejected from competition will be subject to a suspension imposed by the Director of Athletics, in accordance with E.S.I.A.C. policy.

- If a coach or student-athlete is ejected from a competition, she/he will be suspended for the next competition (Example: a red card in a soccer game).
- If a coach or student-athlete receives a penalty in consecutive competitions, she/he will be suspended for the next competition (Example: a yellow card in consecutive soccer games).
- The Athletic Department reserves the right to implement additional disciplinary strategies if necessary.

### **Hazing**

- Hazing and degrading initiations have no place in education-based activities.
- NFHS defines hazing as any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student to belong to a group.
- Students found guilty of hazing will be subject to discipline from the Athletic Department and will be reported to the Dean of Students.

### **Holidays**

Teams may still hold practices on days that Salisbury Christian School is not in session (Christmas break, spring break, federal holidays, professional days, etc.). These practices are strongly encouraged and attendance is expected, if stated by the coach. However, these practices may not be stated as mandatory. Salisbury Christian School is mindful that families plan trips and events when school is not in session for such holidays and the Athletics Department is accordingly mindful of the situation. Families should be aware and mindful of their student-athlete(s)' commitment to the team during the season when scheduling trips and events. Games and competitions may occasionally be scheduled during school holidays, if the schedule dictates such.

### **Media Relations**

It is important that athletics at Salisbury Christian School maintain good relations with media outlets in the community. Press coverage is a positive way for the school and the Athletics Department to reach out to the community. Coaches and the Director of Athletics should communicate often with local media outlets. Coaches will be provided with contact information to provide scores to local media outlets. Any special story requests should be processed through the Director of Athletics and the Director of Marketing & Communications.

## **Notice of Fees**

There is an Athletic Participation Fee associated with each sports season that a student-athlete participates in athletics at Salisbury Christian School. The school business office will post the required fee to the student-athlete's account once rosters are determined and final. An email will be sent to parents by the Director of Athletics when fees are posted to the student-athlete's account. If payment is not received by the deadline stated, access to RenWeb will be shut off until received.

## **Out-of-Season Activities – *High School Sports Only***

- **Camps**
  - It is illegal for a school team to attend a camp as a team because school teams may not practice, compete, or assemble out-of-season.
  - However, it would not be illegal for a group of players from the same school to attend a camp.
    - Attendance or participation in the camp must be voluntary.
    - Coaches may attend camps and observe returning players, but they may not coach, supervise, or instruct them except as provided below.
- **Coaching “Returning Players”**
  - A player who has previously participated in that sport at that high school is considered a returning player, whether the participation was on the varsity or junior varsity level.
  - Incoming 9th grade students are not considered “returning” players.
  - No returning players from the school may participate in a sports camp if it is conducted or sponsored by the program's coaching staff.
  - Returning players may be used as camp counselors. When functioning as camp counselors, returning players are not considered camp participants.
- **Conditioning Programs**
  - Individual teams may not conduct conditioning programs beyond the sports season. This would be considered practicing outside of the sport season.
  - However, schools may conduct voluntary, “all-school” conditioning programs. An “all-school” conditioning program would include the following elements:
    - Participation is voluntary.
    - The conditioning program must be advertised and available to all students in the school.
    - The conditioning program is oriented exclusively toward conditioning of a general nature – not specific sports-related skills.
    - All students participating in a conditioning program must have a valid physical form on file.

- **Coaching Returning Players on an Individual Basis**
  - School teams are not permitted to practice or assemble after the season. School teams are defined as “any school group or team gathering consisting of three or more players that has assembled for the purpose of drilling or instruction.”
    - The above opens the door for coaches to work with a limited number of athletes on an individual basis beyond the sports season. Specifically, school coaching staffs may work with a maximum of two players per day.
    - Thus, school coaches or coaching staffs may work with a maximum of two players on an individual basis on a particular day outside the sports season. Under no circumstance, however, may the total number of players per day exceed two, no matter how many coaches may be involved.
  
- **Coaching Returning Players on School Teams**
  - As mentioned previously, a school team may not practice or compete beyond the parameters of the sports season. These parameters begin on the first day of practice and end upon conclusion of the playoffs.
  - Similarly, a school coach may not instruct/coach returning players beyond the defined sports season unless the players are on a non-school team led by the school coach.
  - If the school coach is the coach of a non-school team, the number of returning players that can be on the non-school team is determined by the calendar, as indicated below:
    - **“Eighty Percent” Rule**
    - From the first practice of fall sports (mid-August) to the last spring sports date of competition (late-May), the non-school team may include a maximum of 80% of what would constitute a starting line-up for that sport. For instance, eleven players would constitute a starting lineup for a soccer team. Eighty percent of eleven, rounded down to the nearest whole number, is eight. Thus, if the school coach is the coach of a non-school soccer team, between mid-August and late-May, a maximum of eight returning players may be on the non-school team.
    - **Unrestricted Period**
    - From the last spring state championship (late-May) until the first practice for fall sports (mid-August), there is no limit on the number of returning players that the school coach may lead on a non-school team.
  
- **Definition of a Non-School Team**
  - The team must be affiliated with a league that meets the following criteria:
    - The league must be operated by a non-profit organization, educational institution outside the school system, or private bona fide business (i.e. Crown Sports Center).
    - The league must include the following components:

- The league determines the schedule, with a similar number of games for all teams in the league.
    - The league has a commissioner (or a similar designation).
    - The league provides specific parameters/rules for conducting games, including a specific structure for contests and league play.
    - The non-school team may not use a name connected with the school.
    - Participation on the non-school team must be voluntary.
    - Coaches may not coerce or pressure students to participate on the non-school team.
    - Coaches may not imply or use participation on the non-school team as a factor in subsequent school team selection or playing time.
  - Practice and Game Limitations
    - A maximum of one practice session per game or event
    - A team is allowed up to three practice sessions in preparation for the first league game. After the opening league game, teams are limited to one practice session per game or event.
  - Tournaments
    - Even though a tournament may include multiple games, it is considered one event. Thus, a non-school team may have a maximum of one practice to prepare for s tournament.
- **Any after-school athletic activity (such as weight-lifting, open gym/field for any sport, conditioning programs, etc.) conducted and supervised by coaches or school staff should meet all of the following criteria:**
    - Open to the student body as whole, not just athletes
    - Not open to the general public or students from other schools
    - Dates and times announced and publicized to the student body as a whole
    - Conducted immediately before or after school, when possible
    - Coaching or instruction may not take place! *Instruction may occur during weight training to ensure proper lifting techniques.* Coaches may be present for supervision and liability purposes only.

## **Playing Time**

The coach and Director of Athletics reserve the right to restrict play time at any level due to absence, tardiness, behavior issues, poor attitude, or poor commitment level. Playing time is non-negotiable at any level.

- Playing time is not guaranteed throughout the season at the JV and Varsity level. Coaches will make substitutions and base playing time on the coach's judgment of what is best for the success of the team.

- At the Middle School level, participation is encouraged, as the main goal is to develop athletic skills, teach the fundamentals of the sport, and build team camaraderie. Each player will play significant time throughout the season and coaches are encouraged to have each student-athlete participate in every game. If there is a reason why a student-athlete may not participate in every game, it is the responsibility of the coach to communicate clearly with the parents and Director of Athletics ahead of time.

### **Practice and Game Attendance**

Attendance of student-athletes at practice and games is vital to the success of the Athletics Department at Salisbury Christian School. Student-athletes are expected to attend all SCS practices and games during the season they are associated with at the time. Excessive absences may result in removal from a team, as directed by the coach and/or Director of Athletics.

- Students are not permitted to miss practice or a game to attend a recreational, club, or organized team practice or game.
- Tardiness to practices or games is unacceptable as punctuality is expected at all times. Tardiness will be handled first by the coach. Excessive tardiness may result in additional discipline or removal from a team, as directed by the coach and/or Director of Athletics.
- Practice attendance is important to game participation. If a student-athlete misses the practice prior to a game due to an unexcused absence, the student-athlete will not participate in that game.
- Determination of whether an absence or tardy is excused or unexcused will be made by the coach and Director of Athletics.

### **Safety**

Safety of our student-athletes is paramount to the Athletics Department at Salisbury Christian School. Student-athletes are required to turn in a Physical Examination Form and an Insurance-Release Form each school year. Failure to turn in these forms will result in the loss of participation and the inability to try out for sports at SCS. If a student is injured while in the care of a coach, the injury should be communicated quickly and clearly to the parent, athletic trainer, and Director of Athletics.

### **School Attendance**

Students must be present for at least a half-day (4 periods) of school to be eligible for participation in that day's practice/competition. Student-athletes who do not attend school because of an illness or any other reason may not participate in that day's practice/competition, unless excused by the front office.

### **Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership is encouraged and expected at Salisbury Christian School. Student-athletes are expected to follow the example of Jesus Christ in the following:

- Matthew 7:12 – “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do for you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

- Matthew 20:26 – “Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant.”
- Philippians 2:3-4 – “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others.”

## **Social Media**

Student-athletes should conduct themselves properly on social media at all times. Social media can be very beneficial in regard to communication with friends and family but should be handled with care. Students of Salisbury Christian School are expected to represent the school values and faith in Jesus Christ, honoring God with behavior and interaction with others on all social media outlets. Student-athletes found using social media inappropriately will be subject to discipline within the Athletic Department. All behavior issues will be reported to the Dean of Students. Salisbury Christian School reserves the right to implement additional discipline strategies for social media activity.

## **Spectator Expectations**

Spectators should be mindful that their privilege and responsibility is to be encouraging and uplifting during attendance at athletic competitions. Athletics are a way for student-athletes to learn and develop, so spectators should do their best to encourage these individuals/teams and to assist in the development of young men and women. Spectators are to be respectful of all players, coaches, and fans at all times, just as they would like to be respected (Matthew 7:12). Spectators should respect the judgments and decisions of contest officials, recognizing the fact that they are human and admiring their willingness to assist in the development of student-athletes.

## **Sportsmanship**

Coaches and student-athletes must always conduct themselves in a manner that represents Salisbury Christian School and Jesus Christ in a positive way. Sports are intended to be competitive, but that should never extend past the field of play. All student-athletes, coaches, and fans should behave properly on the sidelines at all times. Coaches and players shall comply fully with the rulings of the officials. In no way - by voice, action, or gesture - shall they demonstrate in an unsportsmanlike manner their dissatisfaction with the decisions made. Obscene language or gestures, inciting violence, and general inappropriate behavior is unacceptable at any time and is unbecoming of a student-athlete, coach, or fan of Salisbury Christian School.

## **Stewardship**

Student-athletes should demonstrate stewardship in the way they take care of equipment and facilities that are property of Salisbury Christian School. The way we make use of what we possess demonstrates thankfulness for what God has provided (Matthew 25).

## **Uniforms**

As part of their participation on a team, student-athletes will receive a team uniform at the beginning of each season. The upkeep and cleaning of the uniforms is solely the student-athlete's responsibility. Any damages that occur must be relayed to the coach and Director of Athletics immediately. At the conclusion of a sports season, the coach and/or Director of Athletics will conduct a uniform turn-in. Students will be held personally and financially responsible for any uniforms that are not returned at the conclusion of the sports season. All uniforms must be washed prior to returning them.

## **Varsity Lettering**

Earning a varsity letter is an honor and a privilege and is not reserved for all members of athletic teams at every level. The following guidelines will be used in determining which student-athletes receive varsity letters. The coach and Director of Athletics reserve the right to use their discretion in any case regarding varsity lettering.

- The student-athlete must be a member of a varsity-level team. Lettering is not a process reserved for middle school or junior varsity teams and athletes.
- The student-athlete must be in good academic standing throughout the season. Any student-athlete placed on academic probation at any time in the season will not be eligible for varsity lettering, unless otherwise decided by the coach and Director of Athletics.
- The student-athlete must demonstrate high character and behavior. Students with repeated behavior issues will not be eligible for varsity lettering. The Director of Athletics and Dean of Students will work together to determine which student-athletes are eligible.
- The student-athlete must show a commitment to the team and exhibit attendance and punctuality at all times. A student-athlete that demonstrates repeated unexcused tardiness or absence from games and/or practice will not be eligible for varsity lettering.
- Any student-athlete that is unable to complete a season for any reason other than injury will not be eligible for varsity lettering.
- If a student-athlete participates at both the junior varsity and varsity level, the student-athlete must have at least 50% of their game participation at the varsity level in order to be eligible for varsity lettering.

## **Weekends**

Teams may still hold practices on Saturdays, but they are not permitted to hold mandatory team activities on Sundays, as Salisbury Christian School believes that families should observe the tradition of the Sabbath, taking Sunday to rest and spend time with loved ones. Coaches should be aware of the other commitments of student-athletes and their families and be mindful of such when scheduling Saturday practices. Games and competitions may occasionally be scheduled on Saturdays, if the schedule dictates such. Saturday should be reserved as the last resort in the case of a make-up competition.