

# **Athletic Handbook**



**Eastern Christian Schools**

# Eagles Athletic Pillars

All EC athletes are expected to uphold the following six pillars for athletic success with the support of the Athletic Director, coaches and parents:



**GLORIFY GOD**  
the most important measure of our success

Colossians 3:17a

**STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE**  
exhibit a heart for hard work, passion, enthusiasm and energy

Colossians 3:23

**EXEMPLIFY CHRISTIAN CHARACTER**  
attitude, behavior, and sportsmanship, exhibiting a God-honoring lifestyle

1 Corinthians 6:19b-20

**RUN THE RACE TO WIN**  
compete at the highest possible level

1 Corinthians 9:24b

**COMPETE AS ONE**  
what is best for the team always comes first

Philippians 2:4

**BE COMMITTED**  
showing up and honoring your word is the norm

1 John 2:5b ESV

The Eastern Christian athletic program exists to glorify God by developing Christian character and competitive excellence in its student athletes

# **EASTERN CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL**

## **Department of Athletics**



## **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

At Eastern Christian High School a diverse athletic program enables students so inclined to develop, enhance and use their God-given physical and mental gifts. Opportunities are available for both individual and team participation. Athletics offer a unique and effective environment in which to learn some of the Christian life's most valued lessons. These can include sacrifice, diligence, perseverance, respect, and putting the good of the group ahead of what is good for oneself.

Ideally, every student would be involved in the athletic program and experience all that competitive sports have to offer. Realistically, however, not all students are equally gifted and/or interested in this pursuit. Additionally, space on most teams should be limited to provide students who are most qualified the adequate opportunity and attention needed to fully realize their potential.

As with any quality academic program, the athletic program allows students to progress and compete at a level consistent with their ability regardless of age or grade level. Every effort is made to encourage and involve students who desire to be part of the program. Sports, such as track and field or cross country, provide opportunity for students with a range of abilities, including those with little or no experience. Other sports, such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, baseball and softball, offer junior varsity teams that allow less skilled players the opportunity to participate and develop.

In the pursuit of excellence, our varsity teams provide an opportunity for those students demonstrating the highest level of ability, as evaluated by their respective coach, to compete against the best athletes other schools have to offer. Our memberships in an established league, county association, and state athletic association provide the teams with such opportunities. While we are committed to this pursuit, we also recognize that winning is merely the object of the contest, not the sole purpose of the competition. Our goals for competing include building school spirit, teamwork, self-esteem, confidence in a competitive environment and the ability to win humbly or lose graciously. A desire to win is healthy; the need to win is not.

In a society that often encourages and honors those who would use athletics for selfish gain, we at Eastern Christian seek to use sports for the reason we believe they were intended for: to bring out our best as we celebrate God's gifts to us.

## GENERAL SPORT CODE OF ETHICS

### Expectations for Athletes:

- ◆ Represent the school and team with the highest standards of respectful behavior and conduct.
- ◆ Abide by the rules of the game and the guidelines of the coaches and athletic director.
- ◆ Demonstrate good sportsmanship while being humble in victory and gracious in defeat.
- ◆ Support the decisions and judgment of the coach.
- ◆ Respect the decisions and judgment of the officials.
- ◆ Refrain from using obscenities, profanities or inappropriate gestures.
- ◆ Strive for maximum achievement in scholastic and athletic endeavors.
- ◆ Practice good health habits, including abstaining from use of unhealthy and illegal substances.

### Expectations for Parents:

Supportive parents are one of the hallmarks of a successful athletic program. Their witness on the sidelines and in the stands at home and away games can often speak more about our school community than the conduct of our athletes themselves. With this in mind, we thank our parents for adhering to the following guidelines:

- ◆ **Support the team** through positive talk and enthusiastic encouragement, not just for your own athlete but for their teammates as well. Never criticize any athlete (including your own) out loud.
- ◆ **Support the coaches** by accepting their decisions regarding strategy, lineups and playing time. Never call or approach a coach after a game unless it is to compliment and congratulate. Concerns should be addressed the following day at practice by the athlete first, then by the parent if deemed necessary. If still unresolved, the athletic director can be called.
- ◆ **Respect the officials** by understanding they are very experienced and educated in high school rules interpretation, are not biased against our school, and like us, are imperfect and make mistakes. While a reactive groan or “NO” is understandable at times, personal attacks, berating and collective booing of an official are viewed as embarrassments at a school that bears our Lord’s name. Parents who do so will be asked to leave without further incident.

### Problems or Concerns

The cooperation, encouragement, time and effort parents provide for our programs should never be taken for granted and are truly appreciated by administration, coaches and teams alike. The Athletic Department is dedicated to providing the best athletic opportunities for the students of Eastern Christian School Association. This objective may be best attained if there is a climate of mutual trust and understanding on the part of the Athletic Department, coaches, athletes and parents. Board Policy 3.10 addresses the importance of communication and the lines established for such communication. When parents have problems or concerns, the line of communication is:

**Athlete/Parent → Coach → Athletic Director → Principal → Superintendent → Board**

It should be understood that the Principal of the building might be contacted to begin the communication process if the athlete and/or parent sees the need.

## ELIGIBILITY RULES AND REGULATIONS

### Enrollment:

To be eligible to participate in the interscholastic athletic program, one must be formally enrolled at Eastern Christian High School.

### Age:

An athlete becomes ineligible for high school athletics if he/she reaches the age of 19 prior to September 1 of an academic year. Any athlete reaching the age of 19 on or after September 1 is eligible for that school year.

### Credits:

A student entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade is immediately eligible for the first semester. To be eligible for the first semester, all 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade athletes must have earned 31.25 credits, with passing grades, during the immediately preceding academic year.

To be eligible for the second semester, all athletes must earn 15.625 credits, with passing grades, at the conclusion of the first semester.

### Semesters of Eligibility:

Starting with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, a student will have four consecutive years of eligibility. No student shall be eligible for high school athletics after the end of eight consecutive semesters following his/her entrance into 9<sup>th</sup> grade. If a student misses a school semester or an academic school year, continued eligibility may be available upon petitioning the NJSIAA for an exemption.

### Transfer Students:

- ◆ A student, whose transfer from one high school to another is necessitated by a change of residence by his/her parents or guardians who have moved from one public school district to another, will be eligible immediately as long as other eligibility requirements are met.
- ◆ A student who transfers from one high school district to another without such change of residence by parents or guardians is ineligible to participate in any sport in which they earned a Varsity letter in their previous school. ***The period of ineligibility shall be established by the NJSIAA.***

### Physical Exams:

A student must have a physical examination by a certified doctor and be approved for athletic competition by the School Nurse and/or the Athletic Director. A physical examination is valid for a one-year period from the date of the physical. Additional forms that must be completed can be accessed at [www.easternchristian.org](http://www.easternchristian.org) (***go to "Parents", then "Forms", then "Athletics" then "Sports Participation Packets"***.) A Sports Physical Update Form is required for each additional sport in which a student participates. ***Only students with current physicals, approved by the High School Nurse, may participate in tryouts and practices.***

### Practice Schedules:

Athletes must complete ***six (6) full days of official practice before they can compete in any scrimmage or athletic event.*** The official starting dates for each sport season are set by the NJSIAA.

**Awards:**

The Athletic Department recognizes each participant on a team by means of athletic awards. The Athletic Director and Head Coach of a sport will establish the criteria for earning a Varsity certificate in that sport. Under unusual circumstances, an athlete who has not met the criteria may be awarded the Varsity certificate based upon the recommendation of the Head Coach.

Special senior awards from county, state, or other athletic associations are given. The Varsity Club Award is also presented to the male and female athletes with the most Varsity awards. In addition, the Iron Eagle Award is presented to those athletes who participate in all twelve (12) seasons of their athletic eligibility.

Completion of the sports season, including all post-season games, tournaments and practices, is required in order for the student to be eligible for any awards mentioned above. Injured athletes are exempt from actual participation, but not from finishing out the season by attending practices and games unless specific permission is given by the Coach and Athletic Director.

During the course of a season, various newspapers will often feature articles highlighting individual athletes or teams. These papers also choose various all-star teams. The Eastern Christian Athletic Staff often provides input to these papers. It should be realized, however, that what appears in these articles, or who is chosen to these all-star teams, is the work of the reporter.

**STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE**

- A. New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) rules and regulations will be followed in all situations concerning athletes.
- B. Athletes are expected to abide by all rules and regulations as established by the Athletic Department. Any violation of the rules and regulations will be handled cooperatively by the Athletic Director and the Coach. Parents will be informed during the process.
- C. **Commitment to the Team and Attendance:** Students are expected to be in school in order to participate in an athletic contest/practice for that day. Exceptions can be made for medical appointments, college visits and extenuating family circumstances, subject to the approval of the coach. Absence due to family vacations, work, etc., will be viewed as unexcused. An athlete must realize his/her obligation to the team and refrain from scheduling any conflicting activity during the season. Athletes who participate on outside club and AAU teams must give priority to their high school team's practice and game schedule when conflicts arise. ***Athletes requesting an exemption for an absence must receive approval from the Athletic Director prior to the absence.*** Unexcused absence from a scheduled contest and/or practice will result in:
  - ◆ notification by the coach to the Athletic Director.
  - ◆ removal from athletic participation for a period of time as determined by the Athletic Director and the Coach of that sport.
  - ◆ subsequent violations leading to suspension from team and/or further athletic participation for the year.

- D. **Transferring Sports:** No athlete may quit one sport and transfer to another sport in the same season without the approval of the Athletic Director and Coaches involved.
- E. **Transportation:** Athletes must travel to and from contests and practices in school-provided vehicles. ***Only the Athletic Director may grant exceptions to this rule.*** Athlete Driver Permission Forms, signed by the athlete and parents, must be on file with the Athletic Director for an athlete to drive his/her own car to practice or an event. The form is also required to ride with another athlete driver. No exceptions can be made.
- F. **Equipment:** Athletes must care for and are responsible for all equipment issued to them by the school and must return such equipment at the end of the season (or when leaving the team). In addition, the athlete is responsible for the proper use of all non-issued school equipment. Failure to abide by this may result in monetary reimbursement to the school.
- G. **Sportsmanship:** Athletic sportsmanship is to be promoted at all times. Disrespectful conduct towards an opponent, teammate, coach or official will result in benching, possible suspension or dismissal from the team. NJSIAA requires any athlete disqualified for unsportsmanlike flagrant misconduct, either physical or verbal, to be disqualified from the next two regularly scheduled games/meets. Disqualification is a judgment call by the official and cannot be appealed.
- H. **Early Dismissals:** Teams are occasionally dismissed from school before the end of the day for athletic events. Athletes are responsible for all schoolwork missed. Generally, such early dismissals will be known in advance to allow the athlete the opportunity to see the teacher prior to leaving school.
- I. **Injuries/Insurance:** Athletes injured during a contest are required to fill out an accident report within three days of the injury. The accident report must be signed by the Coach and be submitted to the Athletic Director. The Coach must report all accidents to the Athletic Director. Insurance coverage is the responsibility of the athlete and parents. Extra coverage is available through the 24-hour Round the Clock Bollinger Student Insurance Policy that can be purchased through the school at the beginning of the school year. Parents should understand that medical expenses are their own responsibility.

***An athlete, who has been injured and has required medical treatment, may not participate in any practice or athletic event at Eastern Christian until a medical doctor provides a medical clearance.*** The medical clearance must be on file in the Athletic Director's office prior to participation.

- J. **Training Rules:** The Athletic Department of Eastern Christian has established training rules for all athletes. During the season in which he/she participates the athlete must:
- ◆ abstain from the use of tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs and steroids (unless medically documented).
  - ◆ observe curfew established by coaches during each season to insure proper sleep, rest and attention to scholarly and athletic responsibilities.
  - ◆ conduct himself/herself in such a manner at all times to reflect the Christian standards of the team, school and community.

Failure to observe the above rule concerning tobacco and/or alcohol will result in the following discipline:

- ◆ First Offense: Immediate suspension from athletic contests for two events. Notification to the parents will be made. During this time, the athlete must attend all practice sessions.
- ◆ Second Offense: Immediate suspension from athletic contests for four events. Notification to the parents will be made. During this time, the athlete must attend all practice sessions.
- ◆ Third Offense: Immediate suspension from all athletic participation for the remainder of the school year.

Failure to observe the above rule concerning illegal drugs and/or steroids will result in the following discipline:

- First offense: Immediate expulsion from the team. However if suspension or probation is appropriate, the Athletic Director, working with the deans and coach, will impose such penalties. If allowed to continue participation in the athletic program, the athlete will lose playing privileges for a two week minimum. The student may be allowed to practice with the team.
- Second offense: Immediate expulsion from all athletic participation for the remainder of the school year. In the case of the athlete being an underclassman, the student athlete would have to reapply the following year to seek permission to participate. The Athletic Director, working with the deans and coach, would make that determination.

Eastern Christian School Association and NJSIAA policies concerning drug and/or steroid violations will be followed. The above stated disciplinary action will not supercede the Eastern Christian School Association or NJSIAA policies.

Failure to observe the other listed training rules will result in a conference with the Athletic Director and Coach. Subsequent discipline may follow. All violations will also be subject to the rules and regulations as set forth in the ECHS Student/Parent Handbook.

Athletes are encouraged to also observe these training rules out of season so as to maintain the best physical condition at all times. The season starts with the first day of practice and ends after the last regularly scheduled game, post season tournament or NJSIAA event.

- K. **Dress Code**: “Student dress should reflect Christian standards of modesty and good taste. Students must also be conscious that the standards and expectations of the broader supporting community of parents, grandparents, and others, also influence what is viewed as acceptable dress at Eastern Christian School.” (Eastern Christian High School Student/Parent Handbook)

Athletes represent Eastern Christian when they visit other schools. Team members may be asked to dress according to specific standards as outlined by the Athletic Director and/or Coaches. Specific standards will be communicated to the team members who will be expected to comply.



## ATHLETIC TEAMS

### Fall Sports:

#### Boys

Cross Country  
Soccer – MS, JV & Varsity

#### Girls

Cross Country – MS & HS  
Soccer – MS, JV & Varsity  
Tennis  
Volleyball – JV & Varsity

### Winter Sports:

#### Boys

Basketball – MS, JV & Varsity  
Indoor Track  
Bowling

#### Girls

Basketball – MS, JV & Varsity  
Indoor Track  
Bowling

### Spring Sports:

#### Boys

Baseball – JV & Varsity  
Golf  
Tennis  
Track – MS & HS  
Lacrosse - Varsity

#### Girls

Softball – JV & Varsity  
Golf  
Track – MS & HS  
Lacrosse - Varsity

## **HOME SITES FOR EASTERN CHRISTIAN ATHLETICS**

### **Eastern Christian High School Field, North Haledon:**

- ◆ JV & Varsity Baseball\*
- ◆ JV & Varsity Boys' Soccer\*\*

\* Night baseball games are played at Field #1 behind the North Haledon Police Station.

\*\* Night soccer games are played at the soccer field by the Recycling Center in North Haledon.

### **Eastern Christian High School Gym, North Haledon:**

- ◆ JV & Varsity Volleyball
- ◆ Freshmen, JV & Varsity Boys' Basketball
- ◆ JV & Varsity Girls' Basketball

### **Eastern Christian Middle School, Wyckoff:**

- ◆ JV & Varsity Girls' Soccer
- ◆ JV & Varsity Softball
- ◆ Middle School Boys' and Girls' Soccer
- ◆ Middle School Boys' and Girls' Basketball

\* Night soccer games are played at the soccer field by the Recycling Center in North Haledon.

\*\* Night softball games are played at Field #5 behind the North Haledon Police Station.

### **Garret Mountain County Park, West Paterson**

#### **Darlington County Park, Mahwah:**

- ◆ Boys' and Girls' JV & Varsity Cross Country
- ◆ Middle School Cross Country

### **Wyckoff Municipal Tennis Courts, Wyckoff**

- ◆ Boys' and Girls' Varsity Tennis

### **North Haledon Recycling Field, North Haledon:**

- ◆ Varsity Girls' Soccer and all Boys' or Girls' Soccer at night

**Note:** Boys' and Girls' Middle School, JV & Varsity Track and JV & Varsity Golf are always at away sites.

JV & Varsity Bowling are at the Parkway Lanes, Elmwood Park

NJIC Cross Country is run at Darlington or Garrett Mountain as scheduled

Lacrosse is always at away sites.