

Middle School and High School Athletic Handbook

Updated January 23, 2025

JACKSON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

“Equipping students to impact the world for Christ”

Philosophy of Athletics

The philosophy of athletics at JCS is to provide a medium by which our students can glorify Jesus Christ through athletic competition. Athletics is an important and integral part of the JCS total educational program. Through our program, we strive to teach principles of maturity, courage, discipline, cooperation, commitment, sportsmanship, dependability, respect for others and grace and humility in victory or defeat.

The goals for the athletic teams can be summarized with the words: participation, skill development, service, and competition. The Middle School teams emphasize skill development and participation while striving to compete as a group. Junior Varsity continues to further skill development, participation, and competition. While the Varsity squads seek to progress individual skill development, serve others, and compete at every opportunity/circumstance/situation.

Participation in Athletics

Students must understand that participation in any form of athletics at JCS is a privilege and not a student right. We desire wide student participation in our sports program. Every person related to our athletic teams is an automatic school representative. We desire only those who will accept this responsibility with character. Negative attitudes, actions and inadequate academics will immediately remove even the best of athletes from the JCS sports team. The administration reserves the right to determine a student's eligibility at any time.

Athletic Opportunities

Fall Sports

Cross Country	Boys/Girls Boys/Girls	Middle School (6-8) Varsity
Soccer	Boys	Middle School (6-8) (Club Team) Junior Varsity Varsity
Volleyball	Girls	Middle School (6-8) Junior Varsity Varsity

Winter Sports

Cheerleading	Girls	Middle School (6-8) Varsity
Basketball	Girls	Middle School (6-8) Junior Varsity Varsity
Basketball	Boys	Middle School (6-8) Junior Varsity Varsity

Spring Sports

Track	Boys/Girls Boys/Girls	Middle School (6-8) Varsity
Baseball	Boys	Varsity (when #'s allow)
Soccer	Girls	Middle School (6-8) (Club Team) Varsity
Golf	Boys	Varsity

*****Each sport must maintain a minimum number of athletes for JCS to offer a team sport.**

*****Under special circumstances, a student may be allowed to participate in a co-op with another school. This requires recommendation by the administration and will happen only under select situations.**

Policies

Michigan High School Athletic Association

Jackson Christian High School and Middle School are members in good standing with the state association. The school is obligated to adhere to all standards of the MHSAA.

MHSAA Eligibility*

Your role in following the rules will assure MHSAA eligibility to participate in interscholastic sports or prevent your participation as an ineligible athlete, resulting in forfeiture of contests.

1. **AGE** ...High School students become ineligible if they reach their nineteenth (19th) birthday before September 1 of a current school year.
2. **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION**...Students must have on file, in the school office, a physician's statement for the current school year, certifying that he/she is physically able to compete in athletic practices and contests.
3. **ENROLLMENT**...Students must be enrolled in a school before the fourth Friday after Labor Day (first semester) or the fourth Friday of February (second semester).
4. **SEMESTERS OF ENROLLMENT**...Students cannot be eligible in high school for more than eight semesters, and the seventh and eighth semesters must be consecutive. Students are allowed four first semesters and four second semesters of competition and cannot compete if they have graduated from high school.
5. **ACADEMIC RECORDS**...Students must have passed at least 66% of their classes in the previous semester of enrollment and must be currently passing the same.
6. **TRANSFER STUDENTS**...A student in grades 9 through 12 who transfers to another high school is not eligible to participate in any interscholastic contest for one full year in any sport that the student has participated in during the previous year. The exception would be that the student qualifies for immediate eligibility under one or more of 15 published exceptions. Students and parents anticipating a change of schools should first seek advice from their high school administration.
7. **UNDUE INFLUENCE**...The use of undue influence by any person directly or indirectly associated with a school to secure or encourage a student's attendance for athletic purposes shall cause the student to become ineligible for a minimum of one year.
8. **LIMITED TEAM MEMBERSHIP**...After practicing with or participating with high school teams, students cannot participate in any athletic competition not sponsored by his or her school in the same sport in the same season.
9. **ALL-STAR COMPETITION**...Students shall not compete at any time in any sport under MHSAA jurisdiction in all-star contests or national championships, regardless of the method of selection.

10. **AWARDS & AMATEURISM...**Students cannot receive money or other valuable consideration for participating in MHSAA-sponsored sports or officiating in interscholastic athletic contests, except as allowed by the MHSAA HANDBOOK.

***Administrators reserve the right to change and/or enforce any rule at any time to remain in compliance with MHSAA guidelines.**

JCS Academic Eligibility Requirements

- For a student to be eligible to participate in a competition, he/she must maintain a C- average without any F's.
- Students with an ineligibility status will be placed on probation.
- Students with an ineligibility status may try out for a team while still adhering to the probation requirements.
- Eligibility will be officially checked at the time of the progress report and report card release.
- Students who received less than a C-average or who received one F in any subject will be placed on probation. Probation status will be checked every two weeks.
 - While on probation, a student with not more than one (1) F and whose average was at least a C- may practice but not dress or play in any game during the two-week probation.
 - While on probation, a student who received less than a C-average and/or more than one (1) F in any subject may not practice, dress, or play in any game during the two-week probation.
- Students with unexcused incompletes are ineligible until grades are completed.
- Students who have shown a pattern of ineligibility according to the above guidelines may be deemed ineligible more frequently.
- Students with individual IEP/504/adapted grades may have special consideration at the discretion of the administration.

Athletic Dress

The following guidelines will be the standard for school dress for all home and away contests. This applies to all team members, managers, and statisticians. Coaches may have specific requirements for team members and will address this issue in team meetings. The standard of dress applies both before and after games on road trips. Remember that you represent not only yourself but also the school, your team, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We want to look as sharp as possible. See Parent/Student Handbook for game day attire guidelines: Dress for Success under Dress Code. (MIKE)

Attendance Regulations

- All athletes are expected to be at all scheduled practices and contests. Any absence must be pre-arranged with the coach. It will be at the coach's discretion to determine acceptable reasons for missing practices or games.

Unexcused absence from practice shall require disciplinary action. The severity of this discipline shall be at the discretion of the coach and staff. Absenteeism may affect the athlete's standing/position with the team.

- An athlete must be present in school by 10:14 AM in order to attend practice or a contest that school day.
- An athlete, after signing out at school due to illness, may not return after school for practice or a contest.
- An athlete who is on suspension from regular classroom attendance may not participate in any form of athletics.
- Other than illness, excused absences approved by the administration in advance allow students to participate that day in athletic practices or contests (i.e., college day, funeral, doctors appointment, etc.).

Dual Sports*

If a student wishes to participate in two sports simultaneously, the following procedures must be followed.

1. A Dual Sports form must be obtained from the Athletic Office, completed, signed by both coaches and returned prior to the first game/meet in order to participate in dual sports.
2. The student must declare a primary sport and honor that sport if any scheduling conflicts arise. The coach of the primary sport is not allowed to hinder a student from dual sports, but the secondary coach may decline the services of an athlete. The student must realize their position within the team could be affected.
3. Event priorities are as follows: games over practice, districts regionals over regular season games.

***Dual sporting is discouraged for middle school students, but the administration reserves the right to permit it in special circumstances.**

Transportation

Transportation to and from athletic events will be arranged by JCS. All athletes are expected to ride with the team. Transportation will be in school vehicles. On rare occasions, coaches will assign athletes to ride with selected approved adult drivers in privately owned vehicles.

- Athletes cannot ride with boyfriends or girlfriends to or from games.
- In the event a parent would like to take an athlete home after an away contest, you, the parent, must go to the coach to inform him/her that your child will not be riding the bus home.
- In the event a parent would like their student-athlete to ride home with another adult after an away contest, a written request must be given to the coach.

- In special situations, an athlete may drive their personal vehicle to a game ONLY if the game is near their home. No other athlete may ride in a private vehicle driven by another student. Permission must be given by the athletic director, and the athletic director will inform the coach.

Schedules

All athletic schedules can be obtained at www.bigteams.com or on the JCS school website under athletics. Practice schedules will be posted on the school website a few days prior to the start of each month.

General Training Rules

Each athlete is expected to maintain personal health habits that will ensure the best physical and mental condition to participate in sports and represent the school in athletic competitions. The interests of the team and the school should have the highest priority. See the Parent-Student Handbook for penalties involving the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. Coaches with specific sports may list rules particular to that sport.

Minimum Number of Practices

For the purpose of safety, a minimum number of five practices will be required for athletes prior to their first competition.

Team Tryouts and Cuts

All eligible students will be offered the opportunity to try out for an athletic team. Each sport has a starting date, and there will be a minimum of three tryouts or practices before cuts are made. Cuts may be made only on the J.V. and Varsity levels.

Withdrawal from a Sport

If a student wishes to withdraw from a sport, the following procedures must be followed. (A student will be considered a participant after completing five practices).

1. The athlete must retrieve a withdrawal form from the Athletic Director.
2. The athlete must present the form to the head coach from their parent/guardian requesting permission to withdraw from that sport.
3. This letter must be signed by the coach and presented to the Athletic Director for approval.
4. If this procedure is not followed within fourteen days, the athlete will not be eligible to participate in the next two seasons. The seasons are fall, winter, and spring.
5. If an athlete withdraws from a team for any reason other than illness or injury (doctor's note needs to be provided), they will not be eligible for any honors earned while participating in that sport during that particular sports season. They also will not be allowed to participate in a sport the following season.

Athletic Fee

An “athletic fee” for JCS athletes must be paid prior to the first contest of each sport. This fee helps cover transportation costs along with other expenses that the department incurs and will be set annually by the administration. The fee for dual sports will be ½ of the first fee.

Uniforms

The Athletic Director or coach will issue uniforms before the first game. All uniforms must be turned in on the day of an event or the next morning to be washed. Parents are not to wash uniforms at home (a few exceptions exist). Any lost uniform will cost a minimum of \$50 per item, and the athlete (family) is responsible for covering the replacement cost of any uniform that is not returned.

Music Policy

All music played at athletic and other events should adhere to/promote a biblical worldview. Each selection should reflect a biblical worldview – whether they are Christian or non-Christian songs.

In other words, songs played at games are to be chosen based on how they reflect a biblical worldview – not merely on whether they are Christian songs or not. Many Christian songs do not promote a biblical worldview, and quite a few non-Christian songs do. Rather than strict, category-based boundaries around what’s in and what’s out, students (and coaches) should critically examine what is consumed and promoted, holding on to the good and letting go of the not-so-good and the bad.

Awards

Junior Varsity - All junior varsity athletes will receive a certificate upon completion of each sport. One athlete will receive a trophy. This trophy will be the “Coach’s Award”. Each individual coach will decide the criteria for this award.

Varsity - (Member on a team for 60% of contests) (Secondary Sport - Member on the team for 40% of contests) - All varsity athletes will receive a medal upon completion for each sport. First-year varsity athletes will receive a varsity letter. Numbers are available upon request. Athletes that letter in the same sport all four years will receive a 4 year plaque. Athletes that have five years will receive a fifth-year trophy. Exceptions will be those individuals who letter in the same sport for a fourth year.

First-year	Bronze Medal
Second-Year	Silver Medal

Third-Year	Gold Medal
Fourth-Year	Plaque
Fifth- Year	Trophy

A Chenille varsity letter will also be presented to those athletes completing their first varsity year. Each varsity coach will be allowed to recognize up to four (4) individuals on each team with special award trophies. The number of special awards depends on the number of athletes.

1	1 award
2-5	2 awards
6-15	3 awards
16-above	4 awards

Special Award Trophies

The Royal Award will be given to the athlete who best demonstrates Christian character and a Christ-like attitude and treats team members and opponents with respect. All other awards will be determined by the coach from year to year.

Senior Award

The Senior Award is given to any senior athlete who has received ten or more varsity letters during his or her high school career.

Sportsmanship

All parents, coaches, and athletes are expected to demonstrate nothing but the most appropriate sportsmanship at all athletic events.

JCS trusts that you will always respond in an encouraging, supportive way, which will bring glory to the Lord, rather than reacting with words or actions that will bring dishonor upon Christ's name and JCS. Unsportsmanlike comments, actions, or gestures to players, coaches, opponents, or officials will not be tolerated.

As the saying goes "we may be the only Bible others read."

Men read and admire the gospel of Christ
 With its love so unfailing and true;
 But what do they say and what do they think
 Of the gospel according to you.

Student Contract

Coaches may require athletes to sign a student agreement to participate.

Parents' Agreement

Parent Agreement must be signed by a parent every year.

Parental/Coach Communication

Parents who have a concern that they wish to discuss with a coach must arrange an appointment with the coach to voice their concerns. Do not approach a coach with a complaint or concern before, during, or after a game. Parents must wait 24 hours before contacting the coach. Please follow the principles found in Matthew 18 when voicing a complaint.

1. Talk directly with the coach.
2. If the concern is not resolved, request a meeting with the coach and athletic director.