

Heritage Christian Academy

Athletic Handbook

2025-2026



Statement of Non-Discrimination:

Heritage Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the school.

Heritage is an accredited school member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and a member of the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA). HCA is a proud member of the Mile High League for High School Sports and the Northern Colorado Independent League for Middle School sports.

The HCA Board and Administration reserves the right to change any policy or procedure at any time as is deemed necessary and to be in the best interest of Heritage Christian Academy

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Heritage Christian Athletics

Our Purpose: To partner with families and the school to develop life-long followers of Christ who demonstrate His character, conduct, and compassion while competing with excellence.

HCA Athletics are an extension of the school's educational mission to cultivate Authentic Faith, Academic Excellence, and a Nurturing Environment.

Our Mission:

To develop outstanding student-athletes and coaches who display extraordinary character as representatives of Jesus Christ resulting in statewide influence through a powerful and intentional Christian witness.

Our Values and Culture: (the Core Four)

Relationship: Authentic love for God and for others. A culture marked by genuine and selfless love for teammates and opponents, and respect for officials. This includes bringing glory to God by competing with a determination to win with humility and grace. This also includes embracing and enfolded non-HCA students and their families who participate in our sports program.

Discipleship: extraordinary Christian character and conduct. A culture marked by coaches mentoring all student-athletes to excel in sports, the classroom, and life. This includes encouragement for athletes to participate in multiple sports for their full development and potential.

Fellowship: team unity, teamwork, and trust. A culture marked by encouragement, humility, and selflessness. This includes winning and losing as a team with grace and respect.

Sportsmanship: a positive witness that produces an excellent reputation across all classifications in public and private schools. A culture marked by extraordinary sportsmanship demonstrated by players, coaches, and fans. This includes developing a corporate evangelistic testimony that involves every person on the court/field and in the stands taking personal responsibility for their actions.

We prepare, plan, and play to win, but winning is one of our goals, not our primary purpose. Legendary coach Tony Dungy put it this way: "Goals have a beginning and an end. Purpose does not. Our purpose is what we live for." As Christians, we live for the glory of God and to carry out His mission. Our school and its sports program work in partnership with the home to make disciples of our children: Christ-followers who are responsible, self-disciplined, trustworthy, courageous, committed, and hard-working.

Christian Witness:

We expect our coaches, players, parents, and fans to be positive representatives of Jesus Christ. How does the world know that we are authentic followers of Christ? By the love we demonstrate and by our unity. Jesus said, *"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."* (John 13:35) He also prayed for us: *"May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You sent Me and have loved them."* (John 17:23)



As parents and fans, we can do this together in the following ways:

Demonstrate respect to opposing players and coaches.
Demonstrate respect to the officials.
Shout encouragement to our team. Let the coach do the coaching.
Remind each other we want to be a positive Christian witness.
Do not speak disrespectfully about the coach in front of your child or with other parents.
Support the coach and his/her decisions.
“Go the extra mile.” Think of ways to be a blessing to the other team and their fans.
Win or lose with humility and grace.

Behavior Guidelines for Athletes:

- Lead a Spirit-controlled life and He will control your tongue. Any improper language (swearing, boasting, disrespectful talk) will not be permitted.
- Treat opponents with respect; shake hands prior to and after contests.
- If you don’t understand a call, ask politely; accept the official’s decision and learn from it. Don’t incite fans by behaving improperly.
- Applaud the introduction of opponent’s team members and coaches. Shake hands with their coach when introduced.
- Affirm an opponent that fouls out or must leave because of injury or other reason. Thank him for playing hard and challenging you.
- Search out individual opponents after the game to congratulate them, point out a great performance. This could be an opportunity to witness for Christ.
- Show concern for an injured player of either team. Help up fallen players from both teams.
- Encourage and build up one another
- Be a team, not just a group of individuals. The goal is to make your fellow teammate a better player and person; honor him above yourself.
- Live Christ on and off the court/field.
- Be enthusiastic – take an interest in every part of your sport and be glad to quickly carry out every part of the job.
- Be humble and coachable; show that God is the one responsible for your abilities, talents and success.

Behavior Guidelines for Parents:

- Provide love and support regardless of the outcome of the game.
- Emphasize the importance of hard work with your child.
- Demonstrate excellent sportsmanship in the stands.
- Avoid talking to the coach about concerns right after the game
- Encourage your child to talk directly to the coach about any concerns.
- Avoid gossip or slander directed toward the coach or players.
- Emphasize character and effort over winning and losing.

High School and Middle School Sport Offerings:

Boys’/Girls’ Cross Country
Boys’/Girls’ Basketball

Boys’ Soccer
Boys’/Girls’ Track

Girls’ Volleyball



High School students who attend HCA desiring participation in sports not offered at Heritage may do so at a local public school. Colorado law states that any private or home school student desiring to participate on a public school athletic team may try out for that team.

II. Affiliations

Heritage Christian is a member of the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA). CHSAA is the organizing body for all of Colorado's high school sports competition. The CHSAA Mission Statement:

In pursuit of educational excellence, CHSAA strives to create a positive and equitable environment in which all qualified student participants are challenged and inspired to meet their highest potential.

Based on CHSAA's 9-12 grade enrollment standards HCA is in the 2A classification. The school competes in the regular season in the 2A Mile High League. HCA competes in the post-season as a 2A school in all sports.

CHSAA does set roster limits and game regulations that we must follow. We go beyond CHSAA's standards because we take seriously the witness our students have as athletes. Because of travel and game schedules, student-athletes are visible "ambassadors" for Christ; we have a stricter standard for them spiritually, academically, socially, and athletically.

Heritage is a member of the Mile High League, which is part of the Colorado High School Activities Association. The MHL mission statement:

The Mile High League promotes good sportsmanship and fair play by athletes, coaches, students, and spectators. We encourage both participants and spectators to promote a positive competitive spirit and enjoy the fellowship of the Mile High League.

Member schools of the Mile High League

Alexander Dawson
Bellevue Christian
Clear Creek
Dayspring Christian
Denver Academy
Estes Park
Flatirons Academy
Front Range Christian
Gilpin County
Heritage Christian
Highland
Lyons
Union Colony

Although CHSAA has no jurisdiction over middle school programs, we have chosen as a school to follow many of their principles and guidelines. We are a part of the Northern Colorado Independent League (NCIL) for our Middle School sports program. We participate in volleyball, boys' and girls' soccer, boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' track, and boys' and girls' cross country.



Member Schools of the NCIL

West

St. Joseph
Heritage Christian
Ridgeview Classical
St. John
Loveland Classical
Ascent Classical

East

West Ridge Academy
St. Mary
Union Colony
Dayspring
Knowledge Quest
Windsor Charter

III. Non-HCA Student Athletes

Heritage Christian Academy welcomes non-HCA student athletes to participate in its athletic program based on individual sports' roster size. According to the Colorado High School Activities Association and the State Statutes Handbook: "State law also allows a student who attends a school which does not offer a particular program the ability to try out for a program in another school in their school district of attendance or school district of residence first; then if that program is not offered at a school in their school district of attendance or residence; then at the nearest public school that has the facilities and offers that activity, even if the public school is not in a contiguous school district."

Students who homeschool and students who attend high schools that do not offer sports are eligible to compete in HCA Athletics. By State law, these student-athletes must choose the one school that offers them the most opportunities to play the sports in which they compete. For instance, a homeschool athlete who plays football at a public school must play all the sports of their choosing at that public school, and cannot play any sports for HCA

Non-HCA athletes and their parents are required to fulfill the necessary registration requirements, based on either middle or high school prior to the first official day of practice.

Non-HCA athletes pay a higher athletic fee per sport than HCA students, whose families pay tuition to the school that helps subsidize the athletic program.

Only teams sponsored by HCA will be allowed to use the name "Heritage Christian" as their team name. This is to assure that any team using the name Heritage Christian will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the standards and philosophy of Heritage Christian Academy.

Heritage Christian does not cut any HCA students from its sports teams based on ability. Non-HCA students who are part of the team are given equal opportunity to start and to get significant playing time. However, if the number of players on a team exceeds a certain number, HCA reserves the right to limit the number of non-HCA athletes on that team. Those students must attend the official try-out time conducted by the coaches. The number of players on each team will be determined by the coaches and Athletic Director.

Non-HCA students placed on a team must follow CHSAA rules regarding registration and eligibility. Home-based students must be registered with the Poudre R-1 school district of participation. Academic eligibility will be determined by weekly checks of the student's grades as determined by the policy of Heritage Christian Academy.

Any Heritage student who transfers out of HCA to attend another school will be unable to participate in athletics at Heritage for one year from the date of transfer. This applies to any high school sports and does not include transfers to homeschool.



IV. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Both middle and high school students must be fully registered, including a current sports physical before any sport participation.

High school and middle school students and their parents will comply with all required forms on CHSAA's online system, [rSchoolToday](#). Forms will be digitally signed, and a current sports physical will need to be uploaded to the system. Failure to do so will result in the athlete being unable to participate until completed as this is a direct violation with CHSAA and can result in team penalties. This process will take place each school year, forms do not roll over from year to year

V. STUDENT ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

HCA meets or exceeds academic eligibility standards set by CHSAA. All students will be classified as either eligible or ineligible for athletics and activities.

Per CHSAA rules/regulations, to be eligible a student must:

- **Classes:** Students must be enrolled in at least five full credit classes.
- **Attendance:** In-season athletes must attend at least half of their daily classes.
- **Physical exam:** Students must have a physical exam that is signed by a licensed medical professional and is no more than 12 months old.
- **Academics:** Students may NOT have 2 D's and/or 1 F on weekly eligibility grade reports

Remaining eligible:

The Athletic Secretary will pull grades for each student athlete Monday morning from Thinkwave. With an ideal goal of Monday by noon, the Athletic Secretary will send an email to any ineligible student, his/her parent, the Athletic Director, Head of School, Head Coach, and Teacher, notifying them of the student athlete's "pending ineligibility status." Student athletes will receive a pending ineligibility status if their grades in Thinkwave show 2 D's and/or 1 F.

The student athlete has 48 hours from the sending time of this "pending ineligibility" email to meet with their teacher, turn in any missing assignments, and email the Athletic Secretary & Athletic Director proof of raised grades/eligibility status. The Athletic Secretary will NOT pull grades from Thinkwave after the initial "pending ineligibility" email on Monday. If a student athlete has NOT provided proof of changed eligibility status to the Athletic Secretary 48 hours after the initial notification email was sent, they will be considered ineligible, and unable to participate in athletic competitions until the following Wednesday.

For example, if a student athlete receives a "pending ineligibility" email at noon on Monday, they have until noon on Wednesday to email proof of eligibility to the Athletic Secretary. If a student was sent a "pending ineligibility" email at 2pm on Monday, they have until 2pm on Wednesday to email proof of eligibility. If a student athlete updated their grade, but fails to provide proof of eligibility, they will be considered ineligible. Coaches should assume and properly prepare for the ineligibility of a student who receives an email on Monday, until further notified by the Athletic Secretary.



Proof of eligibility could include a picture of updated grades on Thinkwave, clearly showing student name, classes, and grades, OR email/text communication from teachers of the classes in question proving approval of eligible status.

***At the end of the day, there are truly countless incalculable situations and circumstances that may arise, so ultimate say in all eligibility decisions will lie with the Head of School and the Athletic Director, especially when there is disagreement or misunderstanding. ***

Students that participate in sports at other schools must still meet the HCA eligibility requirements. Students must have effective communication with the public school office and its athletic department. Failing to do so can jeopardize the student's personal eligibility and the eligibility of the entire team of that school.

VI. STUDENT ATHLETIC FEES

Our student athletic fees help offset the costs (uniforms, equipment, fields, officials, coaches' stipends) of our athletic programs. Student athletes paying tuition at HCA are charged less than non-tuition paying students. Parents with special financial needs are encouraged to discuss their situation with the school administration. To apply for athletic financial assistance, please submit, in writing, a letter with your specific request. Please include details about your unique needs and reasons why you are seeking assistance. The school administration will review the letter and discuss it with you to determine the level of assistance. Families can also set up a payment plan with the school if needed. If awarded financial assistance, you may be required to participate in some volunteer capacity at HCA. Athletic Fees will be billed to families through the HCA Finance Department once Rosters are finalized.

VII. PLAYING TIME

The HCA athletic department does all it can to give every student-athlete an opportunity to play and not be cut.

For certain sports, athletes will be divided into two teams. An "A" team will play competitively yet strive to have reasonable and distributed playing time for every player. The "B" team will be more developmental; fundamentals will be taught, and a competitive spirit will be developed. The intent is to maximize every player's ability throughout the season.

Sub Varsity (JV/C)

The JV teams fall between our junior high developmental squad and competitive playing- to-win varsity squad. Workable numbers must be achieved.

Playing time will be based on attitude, development of skills, team play, hustle, and game presence. Efforts will be made to see that all players will see some playing time throughout the season.

Varsity

The objective of our varsity level teams will be competitive, playing-to-win. Try outs and playing time will be based on attitude, development of skills, team play, hustle, and game presence.

An athlete must earn their place on the varsity team and a starting position. Just because students are in their junior or senior year does not mean they will be given a place on the varsity team. To letter in



a varsity sport, a student-athlete must compete in one-third of the total quarters, matches, or innings in their sport.

VIII. ATTENDANCE AND PLAYING TIME GUIDELINES

Team commitment to practices and games is expected of players and their parents. In the classroom, students are independently responsible for their grades; however, in athletics, team sports do suffer when an athlete is missing. Getting a team to work together requires the presence of all the players' participation. While we realize emergencies come up, that students get sick, or have family or church obligations, please understand how frustrating it is to fellow team members and the coaches when someone is missing from practices and games unnecessarily. Students who are tardy or absent from practices and games may lose playing time. Please contact your coach if you are going to miss a practice or a game.

- Students unexcused per Athletic Director and Head Administrator approval from any class period the day of the game will not be allowed to start. If the student is unexcused for more than 2 class periods, he/she will not be allowed to practice or play. Absences must be clearly communicated and preapproved by Athletic Director and Head Administrator.
- Students are expected to be in school on time the morning following a game or may lose playing time at the next game. Exceptions must be approved by Athletic Director and Head Administrator.
- Coaches, in conjunction with the Athletic Director and principal, reserve the right to suspend a player from a practice and/or games(s) for any misconduct or behavior unbecoming to a Christian or to the team. Normal discipline procedures, as outlined in the Family Handbook, will then be followed.



IX. FACILITIES, UNIFORMS AND TRANSPORTATION

The Lord has blessed us with equipment, shuttles, uniforms, and the use of facilities and playing fields. Everyone is expected to be a good steward with what we are allowed to use.

- Always leave the field and courts cleaner than the way you found them.
- Keep the school vehicles clean and neat. Please pick up after yourself.
- The coach will issue each player a uniform that must be turned in at the end of the season. It is the student's responsibility to keep the uniform washed, cleaned and in good shape.
- Uniforms must be turned in on time or be assessed a \$25 late fee.
- Lost or damaged uniforms must be paid for by the player.
- Report cards, final transcripts, and graduation cap and gowns will not be released until all items are returned or paid for.
- Players are responsible for shoes, socks, knee pads, shin-guards, etc.
- The coaches will specify what is to be worn for practices.
- Athletes must ride to away games in school vehicles or school-arranged carpools unless otherwise specified by the coach.
- Athletes may ride home with their parents, but not with other students unless given permission from a parent/guardian.
- Athletes that ride home with their parents following a game must notify the coach they are riding in another vehicle.
- Players and parents are responsible for transportation to and from practices and home games.

X. HEALTH ISSUES

CHSAA requires that every athlete must have a yearly physical exam before the first practice of the season begins. Student-athletes are not allowed to participate until the physical is completed and Parent Permission Form is signed. Forms are available in the school office and on the school and CHSAA websites. Current physicals must also be on file for student athletes to participate in offseason activities such as open gyms or strength and conditioning. All injuries must be reported to your coach. Let your coach know of any allergies or other ailments that require special attention.

XI. PARENT VOLUNTEERS

In order to provide a quality sports program, parental help is needed. At the start of each sport season coaches and the Athletic Director will sign up parents to help with scorekeeping, transportation, ticket sales, and home game preparation and clean-up. Additional help will be needed for District and Regional playoffs.

XII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF COACHES AND THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

The Athletic Director and the coaches represent both Heritage Christian Academy and Jesus Christ. It is therefore imperative that their attitudes and behavior be Christ-like. They must strive to have clear and consistent communication among parents, players and other members of the athletic staff. They must be effective role models for the athletes as well as having proficient skills in the sport they are coaching.

Following the Matthew 18 principle we encourage parents and players to speak with the coach first if any concerns or questions arise. If the questions have not been satisfactorily settled, the Athletic



Director will step in to help resolve the issue. Immediately preceding or following a game, emotions run high and we would ask that no meetings be held on a game day. Appointments with the coaches can be made through the school office.

Athletic Director Responsibilities:

- arranges schedules for middle school and senior high sports
- works with administration to hire coaches
- schedules referees, fields, courts, etc.
- works with coaches to find volunteers for game-day duties
- attends all CHSAA and league meetings
- serves as the primary public relations person with the media
- makes sure the coaching staff and the athletic program is operating per CHSAA rules and regulations
- coordinates supplies for the athletic department
- oversees summer sports programs and camps
- supervises and oversees coaches
- promotes the spiritual growth of coaches and players
- works with the coaches in regard to finances and any fundraising activities
- conducts a season-ending evaluation with the coaches
- works with administration and Stuco to develop activities that promote school spirit
- inventories all athletic uniforms and equipment at the end of each athletic season

Coaches Responsibilities:

- promotes the spiritual growth of each student-athlete
- develops each player's character, skills, ability, and potential
- ensures the coaches and players demonstrate excellent sportsmanship and integrity
- assists the Athletic Director in accomplishing the above list as tasks are assigned
- works with the AD to plan a smooth-running program for their designated sport
- regularly communicates with the AD and the administration to inform them of the ongoing status of the program
- helps the AD in hiring assistant coaches
- runs tryouts and practice following the directives of the AD and the philosophy of the Athletic Department and the school
- conducts a parent meeting prior to the start of the season to answer questions and to inform the parents of schedules, transportation issues, etc.
- outlines to the parents the financial costs of being involved in the sport and any fund raising needs
- keeps informed and up-to-date on both league and CHSAA regulations
- maintains records and statistics for the team and individual players

