



STONEHAVEN

CHRIST-CENTERED CLASSICAL EDUCATION

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK TABLE OF CONTENTS

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ATHLETIC PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1 ATHLETICS PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

Vision Statement:

The goal of Stonehaven's athletics program is not to bring glory to ourselves, nor is it to seek the praise of man. Rather, we are to pursue excellence because it reflects the very character of God. We desire our athletics program to complement the school's mission and vision to glorify God through truth, goodness, and beauty. The central aim of our program is to further instill Christian virtue into the moral fiber of our children. Athletics provides a unique and awesome opportunity to develop discipline, perseverance, and responsibility. A natural result of this focus will be a passionate desire to win and succeed in our athletic endeavors. Our coaches seek to nurture a will toward excellent performance in harmony with good sportsmanship, humility, and grace. We expect all student-athletes and coaches to model Christ-like behavior in victory and defeat. The development of godly character helps point to the ultimate goal of doing it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and giving thanks to the Father through Him (Colossians 3:17).

The Stonehaven Athletic Program will:

- Complement the school's mission and vision to glorify God through truth, goodness and beauty;
- Build into the student-athletes gratitude, responsibility, respect, and humility
- Be known as a competitive school in GAPPS.

The Stonehaven Coaches will:

- Glorify God by recognizing that all players are uniquely created by God, players have their own specific gifts and talents, and coach to those attributes in each player;
- Represent The Stonehaven School with integrity, passion, and good sportsmanship;
- Strive to build gratitude, responsibility, respect, and humility in the student-athletes.

The Stonehaven Student-Athlete will:

- Glorify God by competing with gratitude, responsibility, respect, and humility;
- Represent The Stonehaven School with honor, appreciation, and dignity;
- Dedicate themselves to maximize their God-given abilities regardless of outcome.

Belief Statements:

We believe that athletics can provide unique learning and growth opportunities for the students at Stonehaven;

We believe that athletics can be a field where children develop gratitude, responsibility, respect, and humility;

We believe that all student-athletes, regardless of God-given abilities, talents, and skills provide positive contributions to their respective team and school;

Philosophy:

Because we believe that God has created human beings with bodies as well as souls, our *paideia* must target the whole child. While sports cannot become a school's dominant priority, much less an idolatrous pursuit, a balanced approach to athletics can contribute to the school's mission to train up young people in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

Paul often uses athletic metaphors to describe the Christian life (1 Cor 9:24-27; 1 Tim 4:7-8; Heb 12:1-2). In Paul's understanding, the *ascesis* (practices of self-discipline and self-denial) needed to succeed in the athletic arena provides a model for the kinds of virtues and disciplines needed to build our "spiritual muscles" in order to pursue greater intimacy with God. Like the pagan writers of antiquity, Christians have also believed that a child's education could—and, indeed, should—work toward the end of promoting the virtues of self-discipline and self-denial. More broadly, athletics can cultivate other important virtues, such as gratitude, responsibility, respect, and humility.

On the one hand, as Paul himself recognizes the goal of any athletic competition is to win (1 Cor 9:24). On the other hand, though, we recognize that the pursuit of winning "at all costs" can fundamentally compromise the school's mission and witness. For one thing, we believe that all student-athletes, regardless of God-given abilities, talents, and skills, provide positive contributions to their respective team and school, and therefore aim to create opportunities for broad participation in our athletics program. Thus, while we have a passionate desire to win and succeed in our athletic endeavors, our ultimate aim is not to bring glory to ourselves, nor is it to seek the praise of man. More than the pursuit of any championship, our coaches seek to nurture a will towards excellent performance in harmony with good sportsmanship, humility, and grace. We expect all student-athletes and coaches to model Christ-like behavior in victory and defeat. The development of Godly character helps point to the ultimate goal of doing it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and giving thanks to the Father through him (Col 3:17).

1.2 RELATIONSHIP TO ACADEMICS

All Stonehaven students participating in extracurricular activities must maintain a G.P.A. of 2.00 or above. This does not apply to transfer students during their first quarter of enrollment at Stonehaven.

For the good of the rest of the participants in any activity, students who are ineligible for the beginning of a season remain ineligible for participation during the entirety of that season, regardless of their grade point average for the following quarter. Similarly, if students are eligible to begin a season, they remain eligible until the end of that season.

If implementation of this policy would be counter-productive to a student's best interests, the administration may decide not to restrict a student's eligibility. [Taken from the Stonehaven Student-Parent Handbook, *Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities*]

1.3 PARENT COMMUNICATION

The principles and practices of communication for the Stonehaven community are found in the Stonehaven Student-Parent Handbook. Specific for athletics:

- Parent communication with a coach should not occur during a practice or contest, unless initiated by the coach.
- At the Varsity level the player must communicate with the coach first regarding any grievance or concern (except in cases of criminal behavior).
- At all other levels, parents should wait to communicate with the coach 24 hours after the contest or practice in which the proposed grievance occurred. This allows for a more productive conversation after a "cooling off" period.
- If a meeting with the coach does not result in resolution, the parent may bring the concern to the Athletic Director with the coach.

PARTICIPATION POLICIES

2.1 REQUIRED FORMS AND FEES

To participate in a Stonehaven athletic team, the following forms must be completed and submitted to the school (all forms can be found on our school [website](#)):

- Pre participation Physical Evaluation
- Extra-Curricular Activity Parent Permission Slip
- Risk and Insurance Statement

Athletics fees will be paid per student per participating sport. This fee will be sent as part of FACTS incremental billing via email. Homeschool participants may pay via check or our online store.

2.2 PRACTICE FREQUENCY

In keeping with our commitment to the balanced place of athletics, Stonehaven teams will practice for age-appropriate amounts of time each week, leaving athletes time for other activities and interests, and guarding family time.

Middle School Teams: A maximum combination of three practices and contests per week. In middle school sports where there is a corresponding high school sport, families will have the option to participate in more practices, if desired.

High School Teams: A maximum combination of four practices and contests per week. Practice is defined as training in sport specific activities, strategy, weight and/or cardio training. Exceptions may be made by the Athletic Director in rescheduling competitions in response to weather-related or other cancellations.

NOTE: For pre-season practices for fall sports, practice times are increased as appropriate and the number of days per week are also increased prior to the start of classes.

2.3 | SELECTION OF ROSTERS

Rosters are determined by multiple factors, such as grade level, level of competition, number of participants, cost of sponsoring the sport, and the number of teams Stonehaven sponsors in a sport.

Middle School teams will not “cut” students from rosters if at all possible. When possible, Stonehaven will add an additional team at these grade levels to best accommodate all the interested players.

Tryouts and “cuts” may be needed at JV and Varsity team levels to create reasonably sized rosters. Stonehaven will not add teams at the high school level to accommodate additional players.

The grades for which athletes will be eligible for each level of a sport are:

- MS – Grades 6-8*
- JV – Grades 8-11
- Varsity – Grades 9-12

*5th grade participation will be allowed on a case-by-case situation at the discretion of the Athletic Director

2.4 | PLAYING TIME

At the Varsity level, playing time will be solely at the discretion of the coach. Members of JV teams may expect some playing time in every contest, while students on Middle School teams will play substantial amounts of time.

2.5 | CAPTAINCY

Captains will be chosen for each Varsity Sport at the beginning of each school year. This selection will come from the coach and any assistant coaches. A captain at Stonehaven should be in good standing with the school both academically and behaviorally. A captain should not be prone to tardiness or absence from either school or athletic events. A captain should lead with integrity and put the interests of others ahead of their own. Captains should be involved with leading off-season training and be in sync with the demands of the coach.

Being a Captain will bring honors and privileges to the student-athlete. Captains should expect to meet with administrators and be decision-makers for their teams. Captains will receive training in leadership from the faculty and administration. A captain may be removed if they do not meet the standards of the disciplinary code set by The Stonehaven School.

2.6 | ATTENDANCE

Stonehaven sees the athletic arena as an extension of the classroom. Acceptable and unacceptable reasons for missing school are transferred to the athletic arena. Much as we require our students to be present for performing arts rehearsals and performances, we require them to be present for games and practices. Therefore, attendance at all practices and competitions is mandatory

In cases where a player would be absent, they should contact the coach and let them know the date and reason they cannot attend. Acceptable excuses for missing practice or games are illness, injury recovery, family emergencies, weddings, graduations, and funerals. Unacceptable excuses are other outside sports practices or games*, part-time jobs, homework load, vacation, birthday celebrations, and activities outside Stonehaven performing arts.

Coaches are to communicate their attendance expectations at the beginning of the season and may use their discretion with how unexcused absences will impact participation in games. For varsity teams, unaccepted absences *may* result in the following penalties:

- Missing one game or practice: One game or contest suspension
- Missing two games or practices: Two game or contest suspension
- Missing three games or practices: Week sports suspension and meeting with coach, athletic director, and parents to discuss possible removal from the team.

An athlete who chooses to leave a team or is dismissed once the regular season has begun may be deemed ineligible to participate in a sport during the next season. The Athletic Director must approve subsequent participation in a Stonehaven sport.

*In some cases, families and coaches may come to a preseason agreement about participation in both travel and Stonehaven sports. These situations are unique and should not be detractors from the program.

2.7 | PARTICIPATION AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

To participate in a Stonehaven athletic team practice or contest, a student must attend school for at least four class periods of the day. Exceptions to this policy may be granted on a case-by-case basis only by the Athletic Director (not a coach).

2.8 | MULTI-SPORTS ATHLETES

Many of our student-athletes participate in multiple sports during the school year. When one sports season overlaps a second, the student-athlete must complete his/her obligation to the current team/sport before advancing into the next season. Under normal circumstances, student-athletes are not permitted to participate in more than one sport during a sports season. Student-athletes who would like to participate in more than one sport during a sports season must petition the Director of Athletics for approval. Guidelines for approval by the Director of Athletics will be presented to the athlete and the family on a case-by-case basis.

2.9 | END OF SEASON CELEBRATION

Our End of Season Celebrations are an important part of our athletic program to carry out our goal of glorifying God through truth, goodness, and beauty. It is a wonderful opportunity to speak to our students, recognize growth, and to celebrate the victories and losses from that season. Here are some guidelines.

- a. Timing: Takes place at the end of each sport season. Often times it follows after the last game/match/meet of the season.
- b. Location: Preferable to make use of Stonehaven's campus. The Lower School Commons is probably the most appropriate space for a larger gathering. If you are Stonehaven staff, you can book your space using your Google calendar. If you are not Stonehaven staff, you can fill out this [form](#).
- c. Content: No two team award ceremonies will look the same! We would like our coaches to be free to lead their award ceremonies with their individual characteristics. At the same time, we would like to ensure common elements are present in all Stonehaven athletic award ceremonies:
 - i. Open and close with prayer
 - ii. Have a simple meal together (usually team parents will pay a la carte or pool money together to purchase pizza/drinks etc)
 - iii. Coaches take time to publicly recognize each individual athlete, without missing anyone. Ideally, awards (e.g. printed certificates) are to be presented to all athletes recognizing how each student has grown in a season athletically and spiritually/in godly character. Coaches have the creative licenses to create their own awards, however, each sports team must include the following award:


Knights Award - The recipient of this award consistently participated with effort, passion, integrity, and good sportsmanship throughout the season; represented the Stonehaven School with honor, appreciation, and dignity; dedicated themselves to get

the best out of their God-given abilities regardless of outcome; and displayed athletic excellence.

Coaches will work with the Athletic Director to get this certificate printed before the banquet.

- iv. Lettered student-athletes: The criteria to receive a Varsity Letter can be found [here](#). Please recognize these students. Reach out to the Athletic Director for a list of student names and the letter/pins to hand out in the ceremony.

2.9 | SPORTS OFFERINGS

		JUNIOR TEAM 2nd-5th grades		MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM 6th-8th grades		HIGH SCHOOL TEAM 9th-12th grades	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
FALL	Cross Country*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Volleyball*				✓		✓
WINTER	Basketball			✓	✓	✓	✓
SPRING	Tennis*			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Track*			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Soccer			✓			

*Denotes that the team is part of the Georgia Association of Private & Parochial Schools (GAPPS)

CODE OF CONDUCT

3.1 | GLORY AND HONOR

Athletics offer both players and spectators the opportunity to glorify either God or themselves. We strive to resist the temptation to use athletics for self-promotion and self-worship. Athletics, then, gives us insight into whose glory we are ultimately after.

Announcements of sporting events will be team-focused unless there is an extraordinary individual performance. Students should not seek to glorify themselves in front of peers and the community.

Training and competing for the glory of God and the good of others are not simply catchy mottos, but instead have concrete manifestations in our attitudes and actions. Kindness, humility, and respect should be seen in interactions with teammates, opponents, and officials. Gratitude for the athletic gifts that God has given both our opponents and us reminds us that he is the source of the pleasure we experience in playing, competing, and cheering.

3.2 | CONDUCT OF ATHLETES

Athletes must conduct themselves according to the principles found in The Stonehaven Student-Parent Handbook. While competition presents temptations, Stonehaven coaches, athletes, and spectators are called to Christ-like behavior.

Speech is to be encouraging, honest, and without complaint or arguing. Vulgarities and trash-talking have no place in practices or games. Cooperation with teammates, obedience to coaches, respect to officials, and civility toward opponents are expected. Both gloating in victory and blaming officials in loss are inappropriate, as both demean the opponent. Our desire is for Stonehaven athletes to be known for their genuine expressions of gratitude towards coaches, hosts, referees, officials, and other coaches after every practice and game/meet/match.

3.3 | CONDUCT OF PARENTS AND FANS

Spectators are expected to cheer heartily for Stonehaven teams while showing honor for opposing teams and officials. Members of the Stonehaven community are expected to be friendly to visitors on our campus and fields. Small gestures, such as clapping when visiting team members are introduced or thanking officials are demonstrations of hospitality and honor.

The speech and behavior of spectators are expected to meet the expectations set out for Stonehaven athletes. No spectator may ridicule an official's work or mock a player's error. Parents must refrain from coaching from the sidelines. A fan (parent or student) who does not follow this code of conduct may be asked by an administrator or coach to leave.

After a game, whether home or away, the Stonehaven community should leave their area 'better than they found it' by picking up their belongings and trash. For home games, greater effort is expected by our players and parents to diligently clean up our space.

UNIFORMS, EQUIPMENT, AND TRANSPORTATION

4.1 | PRACTICE APPAREL

All practice apparel must meet the standards set for modesty at Stonehaven, while taking into consideration the safety role that apparel plays with respect to a given sport and the actual weather conditions during a specific practice.

4.2 | GAME, MEET, OR MATCH APPAREL

All uniforms worn during interscholastic contests will be provided by Stonehaven and are not to be worn for practices. The purposes of uniforms are team unity; functionality appropriate for that given sport; safety related to the specific sport; adherence to GAPPS (Georgia Association of Private and Parochial Schools) and league regulations; and promotion and representation of Stonehaven. Athletes may not enhance team uniforms in ways that call attention to themselves as individuals.

Stonehaven-owned uniforms will be distributed prior to the first interscholastic contest and must be turned in to the school within a week of the end of the season for that sport; The Athletic Department will let athletes know the process for uniform collection. A uniform will not be given for another sport if a previous uniform is unreturned. Uniforms needing to be replaced because of mistreatment will be the financial responsibility of the athlete.

4.3 | TRANSPORTATION

Parents are expected to be primarily responsible for providing transportation to all sporting practices and contests off campus. Parents are asked to be prompt for all pick-ups, as coaches are required to stay until all team members have been picked up.

Student drivers are expected to abide by our expectations, safety, and legal regulations outlined in The Stonehaven Student-Parent Handbook.

Virtuous attitudes and behaviors are expected at athletic events, including during travel to and from competitions. The coach or driver will collect phones at the beginning of the ride and keep them safe in a designated bag. Electronic devices may be used only to communicate with parents. Music listening will be communal and at the discretion of the driver and/or coach.

COACH

5.1 | QUALIFICATIONS

Because the school's [Mission Statement](#) and the Portrait of a Graduate define the aims of the Athletics program, Stonehaven coaches—hired and volunteer—are expected to lead students towards the qualities listed in these documents. Coaches are to be characterized by their Christian commitment; virtuous relationships with athletes, parents, opponents, and officials; and proper use of and response to authority.

Coaches are expected to possess significant knowledge of their sports, to understand the nature of young athletes, and to prepare systematic plans for practices.

All coaches have met the Stonehaven employee requirements for background checks and undergo yearly child abuse prevention training and CPR/First Aid training every other year.