

Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County



GUARDIANS

Athletics Handbook 2022-2023



The Athletics Handbook is designed for student-athletes, parents, and coaches to help define the role of educational athletics at Ascent Classical Academy of Douglas County. The basic goals of Interscholastic Athletics are defined, and the policies and regulations necessary to achieve these goals are presented. It is imperative that student-athletes and parents have knowledge of this material.

The athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing Ascent Classical Academy policies, rules, and regulations. While the school takes pride in fielding successful teams, it does not condone winning at all costs. The school discourages any and all pressures that might lead to neglecting good sportsmanship, good health, and good character. At all times, the athletic program must be conducted in such a way that it is an educational activity. School *success*, *unity*, and *pride* are greatly enhanced by proper student participation in school-sponsored activities.

Ascent Classical Academy

Vision

Ascent Classical Academy was established to develop the moral and intellectual skills, habits, and virtues upon which independent, responsible, and joyful lives are built, in the firm belief that such lives are the basis for a free and flourishing republic.

Mission

This is achieved by working to train the minds and improve the hearts of young people through a classical, content-rich education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue in an orderly and disciplined environment.



Athletics Department Philosophy

We will hold up athletics as an important part of a well-rounded education. Certain virtues are difficult to practice in a classroom. The field of competition and physical training are an arena for that practice. Students are pushed beyond limits, taught discipline, and are forced to practice strength and virtue when they are tired, losing, or pushed beyond the comfort of a typical classroom.

Objectives of the Ascent Classical Academy Athletic Program

1. The athlete learns the value of teamwork, self-discipline, a strong work ethic, and sacrifice. Contribution to the team is more important than personal goals or individual achievement.
2. The athlete learns how to be a competitor while developing self-control, honesty, and a spirit of cooperation.
3. The athlete learns to be a good winner as well as a gracious learner in defeat. Good sportsmanship is a major objective for all Ascent Classical teams.
4. The athlete learns to appreciate the skills and abilities of his/her opponent.
5. The athlete learns an appreciation of playing by given rules.
6. The athlete learns the value of physical fitness that leads to a sound body, healthy mind, and lifelong healthy habits.
7. The athlete learns, in a positive manner, to cope with the competitive nature of athletics.

Athletic Code

Participation in Ascent Classical athletics is regarded as a privilege and not a right. All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics that will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program awards. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, team, or school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the athletic program.

When a student voluntarily participates in interscholastic athletics, he/she agrees to abide by the Athletic Code of Conduct throughout his/her athletic career. The Code of Conduct begins with a student's first day of participation in interscholastic athletics and



continues through their date of graduation and is in effect during vacation breaks, summer recess, and o-season times.

Requirements for Participation

100% Commitment

When a student joins a school team, the expectation is for that team to be that student's primary extracurricular commitment for the duration of the season. The baseline of "100% commitment" includes being on time for and staying for the duration of all official team activities as designated by the coach. There are three acceptable forms of "excused absences" from team events: 1) school event conflicts that are mandatory for credit, 2) personal illness or family emergency, and 3) when the time or day of the team event has changed with less than two weeks notice. In each case, excused or unexcused, the correct procedure is to notify the coach directly as soon as the conflict becomes apparent. Unexcused absences from practices may jeopardize retaining a position on the team, an opportunity to earn a varsity letter, and/or playing time at the coaches' discretion. Excused absences from practices may impact position on the team and playing time, not as a punitive measure, but for the safety of that individual, fairness to the rest of the team, and strategic reasons. If a student is absent from school for a doctor's appointment, please provide an excuse from a medical provider. Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the Athletics Director or Assistant Headmaster.

Physical Examination

A yearly physical examination is required and must be submitted for a student to participate in any practice or competitions, including tryouts. The best time to get a physical is over the summer, as this ensures the athlete will be covered for the entire school year.

Parental Acknowledgement of Athletic Policies

Each parent/guardian and athlete shall read the Athletics Handbook and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility rules and policies of Ascent Classical Academy.

Scholastic Eligibility

In order to participate in Ascent Classical athletics, each athlete must meet the school and athletic league's academic requirements. Ascent Classical students must maintain a "C" (70%) in all of their classes to remain eligible for participation in the sports program. When grades for an academic quarter are finalized, any students who have



failed a class or dropped below eligible grade point average will be ruled ineligible for school athletics for the remainder of that season and the next. Students who are academically ineligible are not permitted to dress out for or participate in team contests, nor are they granted early release for team events. A team “contest” is defined as an interscholastic competition overseen by third party officials.

Athletic Fee & Fee Support

Ascent Classical Academy charges a fee to participate in after-school athletics. This fee helps to defray the cost of uniforms, officials, coaching stipends, and the rest of the costs associated with running a sports program.

Ascent Classical Academy makes support available, on an individual basis, to students who need financial assistance in order to participate in after-school sports. The Ascent Classical Academy Athletic Fee Scholarship Policy is as follows:

1. Ascent Classical will make Athletic Fee Scholarships available to students on an individual basis based on demonstrated need.
2. Scholarship applications must be communicated to the Athletic Director or Headmaster.

Equipment Responsibilities

All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. School furnished equipment is to be worn only for team competitions and team practices. All equipment not returned in a timely manner and in good condition at the end of the season may be subject to a financial penalty, administrative action, or both.

Athletic Training Rules

1. **School Discipline:** Any student-athlete referred to the office of the headmaster for a school rules violation may be denied the privilege of participation in all athletic activities for a period determined by the Assistant Headmaster or Athletic Director.
2. **Coach’s Rules:** Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations for their respective sport with the approval of the Athletic Director. These additional rules will be stated in writing and explained fully by the coach during a parents meeting at the start of the season.
3. **Fighting or Flagrant Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Fighting, taunting, or displaying any sort of poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated. Any athlete that receives a technical, red card, or ejection must meet with the Athletic Director to discuss the behavior.



4. **Dropping from a Team:** Students who do not finish a season damage their team and affect their potential future participation. On occasion, however, an athlete may and it is necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. If this is the case the following procedure must be followed:
 - a. Consult with the head coach.
 - b. Consult with the Athletic Director.
 - c. If the final decision is to stop participating, check-in all equipment.
5. **Travel:** Parents are responsible for all transportation to and from practices and contests. Parents are encouraged to carpool and rideshare, provided they submit the Auto Agreement Form. Athletes will remain with their team under the supervision of the coach until the end of the contest. Unless there is an exceptional situation athletes are not to leave a contest early.
6. **Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs:** Any student using and/or possessing alcohol, tobacco, or drugs shall be in violation of the School Code. This rule is in effect twelve months of the year.
7. **Penalty for Violation:** The Athletic Director and Assistant Headmaster shall meet to determine the penalty according to the degree of the infraction. Other consequences may be implemented due to the seriousness of the infraction.
8. **Grooming and Dress Policy:** An athlete shall dress presentably at all times, such as on trips, at assemblies, and banquets. Only uniforms issued by the school will be worn for contests. Athletes must follow sport-specific jewelry and uniform rules.
9. **School Attendance:** Students must be in attendance at least four periods in order to participate in a contest or practice, unless the absence is excused. Students leaving school early for athletic events must follow school procedure for early dismissal. All missed work should be made up at the discretion of the teacher. If a detention is assigned on the day that conflicts with a game or practice, the student may request to move the detention, but there is no guarantee their request will be granted.
10. **Reporting of Injury:** All injuries should be reported to the head coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor, the athlete must obtain the doctor's written permission to return to the activity. Concussion protocol will be followed for all diagnosed concussions.
11. **Social Media:** All school or personal use of social media should be conducted in a responsible and respectful manner, as it reflects on the athletic program and school as a whole. Parents must fill out a media consent form.



Philosophy of Winning and Participation

High School: Winning is one of the goals of the Ascent Classical teams, within the guidelines of the different levels of the program. Ascent Classical will make every effort to provide every student a chance to participate on a school team. Being awarded a roster spot on any team should be seen as a privilege, and playing time is a reward earned through commitment and effort, along with ability and skill.

Middle School: Participation in middle school athletics is an introduction to interscholastic sports. Skill development, sportsmanship, and team philosophy are important goals at this level. Ascent Classical will attempt to provide an opportunity for all students to participate. Coaches will do their best to create playing time for all eligible team members during each contest.

Resolving Athletic Issues With Coaching Staff

If an athlete or parent has a concern to discuss with a coach:

1. The athlete is encouraged to solve his or her own problems first with the coach.
2. Do not attempt to confront a coach immediately before, during or after a contest. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach, so a minimum of 24 hours is required to have passed after a contest before a parent can speak with a coach about it.
3. Call/email the coach to set up an appointment.

If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution:

1. Set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

Rosters

It is the goal of Ascent Classical to provide as many quality athletic opportunities as possible within our resource constraints (coaches, eld/gym space, funding, etc.). Occasionally, when interest in a sport exceeds roster constraints, tryouts will be necessary. In these cases, tryout information will be published and multiple coaches will be present during the evaluation process. Final authority for all team rosters lies with the Athletic Director, regardless of whether tryouts were held.



Physical Education and Participation

All student-athletes who are in P.E. must participate in all activities during class, regardless of after-school practices or game commitments. If a coach or student would like modifications to be made, the coach or student should speak with the P.E. instructor in advance, then abide by the instructor's decision.

Uniform Policy

All school-issued uniforms are to be used for athletic contests only. These items are not to be worn in P.E. class, in school, in the community, at home, or even at practice. The only exception is if an entire team wears their school-issued apparel for a special occasion approved by the coach. A student-athlete will not be allowed to play in a future season until all school-issued uniforms, warm-ups, equipment, etc. have been returned. Lost or damaged items may result in a fine and/or cost of replacement fee.

Ascent Classical athletes will be uniform in appearance. All uniforms will comply with sport-specific rules and these rules will not be altered to bring attention to an individual.

Expectations

For Coaches

APPROPRIATE COMPETENCIES FOR MAKING SPECIFIC COACHING ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD INCLUDE:

Physical aspects - The athletic program should be conducted so as to insure the health, physical well-being and safety of the student participant. Appropriate competencies here would be:

Has knowledge and understanding of physical fitness and its relationship to the overall health of the student.

- Prepares students for activities by developing optimal fitness levels.
- Follows physician's recommendations concerning physical activity for the student.
- Has knowledge of safety and injury prevention.
- Identifies and relates basic safety information pertaining to sport.
- Can administer appropriate first aid.



Sociological - Psychological aspects — The program should be conducted with appropriate consideration for the impact of sport upon the behavior of the student athlete and his/her relationship with society. Appropriate competencies here would be:

- Understands the psychological, sociological and physical characteristics of adolescence.
- Identifies principles and techniques of officiating the sport being coached.
- Motivates athletes toward immediate and long range goals.
- Identifies and interprets the values developed from participating in athletics of a specified sport.
- Motivates a student to want to learn.
- Helps students to develop positive self-concepts.
- Helps students to accept self-responsibility.
- Helps students to accept and full responsibility to others.
- Recognizes and initiates procedures to resolve behavioral and emotional problems.
- Instruct players in proper sportsmanship, practice responsibilities, and demand that they make sportsmanship and teamwork their #1 and #2 priorities.
- Develop each player to his or her fullest potential, giving candid feedback on strengths as well as opportunities to improve.
- Develop creative, structured and fun practice sessions.

Professionalism — The program should be conducted by individuals with positive attitudes towards students, faculty and administration, and for the total competitive athletic program. Appropriate competencies here would be:

- Accepts the basic general philosophy of interscholastic athletics and coaching consistent with the role and policies of the school.
- Assumes professional responsibility within the school.
- Maintains normal ranges of self-control and emotional stability under stress.
- Understands the place of interscholastic competition in the educational program and does not place athletics above academics in the minds of athletes.
- Understands and applies ethical procedures in the sport.
- Maintains rapport with school staff, athletic director, and administration.
- Relates and interprets the program to co-workers, athletes, parents, and public.
- Displays sincere enthusiasm for sport being coached.
- Is knowledgeable of and conforms with league, state, and national rules and regulations pertaining to athletics.



- Has knowledge in regard to purchase, care, use, and storage of equipment and supplies.
- Has knowledge of evaluation procedures for student performance and/or evaluates student performance.
- Utilizes findings and interpretations from evaluations for revision of program.
- Always set a good example for players to follow, exemplifying high moral and ethical behavior in accord with the school's core virtues.
- Respect judgment of referees, abide by rules of the game and display no behavior that could provoke players or parents.
- Treat opposing coaches, players and fans with respect. Shake hands with officials and opposing coaches before and after each game.
- Communicate with parents as changes occur.
- Keep parents informed on practices, games, directions, etc.

Theory and Techniques of Coaching — The program should be conducted by qualified individuals with full respect for accepted educational principles, philosophies and practices of each competitive athletic activity. Appropriate competencies here would be:

- Selects appropriate strategies and tactics of teaching to facilitate learning.
- Analyzes skills, rules, theory and strategy of specified sport.
- Identifies and plans specific game strategies and tactics.
- Demonstrates ability to analyze following the contest.
- Demonstrates ability to formulate practice plans.
- Demonstrates ability to design drills to challenge individuals and teams to reach potential.
- Keeps current in sports techniques and theory.
- Has understanding of organizational techniques for practice in specified sport.
- Has knowledge of the use of teaching aids.
- Has knowledge of strengths and weaknesses of various offensive and defensive systems in a specified sport.
- Commit to the multi-sport philosophy for all athletics.
- Develop and enforce consequences for players who do not abide by sportsmanship and practice standards.



For Players

Act honorably and with integrity in all situations in accord with Ascent Classical Academy's core virtues.

- Seriously accept the responsibility and privilege of representing ACA—represent ACA in a positive manner in and out of school. Demonstrate respect for opponents, coaches and referees before, during and after games.
- Live up to high standards of sportsmanship.
- Treat opponents with respect: shake hands after games and take a knee quickly when they are injured. Clap when they leave the field.
- Respect judgment of referees, abide by rules of the games and display no behavior that could provoke fans (e.g., questioning calls, gestures, taunting, etc.).
- Show respect to teammates, coaches, opponents and officials.
- Accept favorable and unfavorable decisions, as well as victory and defeat, with equal grace.
- Come prepared to practice daily
- Maintain a “C” (70%) and above in all classes.
- Attend all practices. Report for all practices and games at the correct time
- Listen to coaching
- Hustle at all times
- Recognize that you represent your school and that your conduct is a reflection on your school. Keep good faith with your school, your coach, your teammates, and yourself. Follow your coach's instructions, be respectful to officials, and accept adverse decisions.

For Parents

- Pay athletic fee
- Pick up your athlete promptly
- Be flexible as game times, locations, dates and transportation are subject to change.
- Communicate concerns, change in contact information, schedule conflicts, and injury or illness as soon as possible.
- Do not express concerns to coaches during or immediately following a game.
- Wait until the next day to make contact with the coach to schedule a meeting.
- Conduct yourself with class during all sporting events. Failure to do so will result in your being asked to leave.



- Support the team and coaches
- Respect opposing fans, coaches and participants.

For Students

Remember you represent your school in the same manner as the athletes. Encourage

good sportsmanship, courteous treatment of visitors, and absolute fairness under all conditions.

We ask you to make your visitors feel welcome and to see that proper standards of sportsmanship are followed. Become familiar with the rules of the game and support your team.

For Spectators

Regard the playing of the game as an art and appreciate and enjoy it as such. Show respect for officials, respect for the young men and women participating and respect for yourself. These are essential for raising the standards of good sportsmanship. Become familiar with the rules of the game, and you will enjoy it much more. Leave coaching to the coach and officiating to the officials.

All questions and concerns can be directed to the Athletic Director, Mr. McWhorter at jmcwhorter@ascentclassical.org.