



*Athletic handbook*

*2019-2020*

## *Athletic Statement*

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Participation in athletics at Berean Christian School is a privilege which carries with it a degree of character, integrity, responsibility and sacrifice. Since it is a privilege and not a right, those who are given the opportunity to participate are expected to follow these policies established by the Administration of Berean Christian School as well as the individual policies established by the coaches for their respective teams.

This handbook is designed to inform student-athletes and their parents of the policies and regulations that are used to govern the Department of Athletics of Berean Christian School. Coaches and Administration will enforce all of the policies outlined in this handbook; therefore student-athletes and their guardians are expected to read and familiarize themselves with its contents.

In order to participate in athletics at BCS, student-athletes and their guardians are required to sign the Athlete/Parent Agreement which is a commitment to follow the policies outlined in this handbook.

## *Mission and Philosophy*

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The Mission of Berean Christian School is to “**EMPOWER** students to walk as Jesus walked, **ENRICH** students with academics enveloped in a Biblically-based Christian world view, and help students **EXPERIENCE** their God-given and unique giftedness for success in the future.”

The heart of this mission is to develop students that will represent Christ with excellence in whatever capacity He may call them to serve and we believe that athletics can be a useful tool to fulfill this mission. BCS strives to provide an athletic program that is an extension of the classroom. We believe that interscholastic youth sports are the vehicle that God has called us to use to teach life-long values such as Christlikeness, dedication, hard work, sacrifice, perseverance, and teamwork to the student-athletes that participate on our teams.

With this in mind, the following core values will define our Department and guide our approach to interscholastic athletics:

1. **Christ-Centeredness**
  - The Athletic Department will exist primarily for the purpose of glorifying Christ and will place Him first in all of our decisions.
2. **Christ-Likeness**
  - Our first concern will be the heart of the student-athlete and their relationship with Christ.
  - Our personnel and coaching staff will maintain the highest level of godly character and integrity.
3. **Competence**
  - We will strive to create a departmental culture where coaches want to coach, players aspire to get better, and parents receive a first-class customer service experience.
4. **Commitment**
  - Our athletes and staff will be held to an expectation of relentless pursuit of personal growth and development.
  - We will strive for excellence and do our best, as unto the Lord.
  - We will be relentless, passionate and determined in our goals.
5. **Cause**
  - We will measure our success on the spiritual growth of our student-athletes.
  - We will actively seek to share Christ through our athletic program.

### *Memberships*

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BCS belongs to the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA). The school follows all policies and bylaws set forth by the Association regarding eligibility, transfer requirements, contest limitations, etc. All student-athletes and their parents are expected to be familiar with and follow all policies set forth by the FHSAA. Information is available online at [www.fhsaa.org](http://www.fhsaa.org).

Additionally, BCS belongs to the Sunshine State Athletic Conference (SSAC) for Varsity Football, Varsity Basketball and Beach Volleyball and the Palm Beach Independent Schools Athletic Conference (PBISAC) for middle school sports.

### *Sportsmanship Code*

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All interscholastic contests in which BCS participates are a reflection of our school community. On the court/field we as coaches, student-athletes, and parents are representing ourselves, our team, our families, our school, and- ultimately- Christ. As such, all coaches, student-athletes and fans are expected to display good sportsmanship and honor the following sportsmanship code:

- We will honor Christ with our conduct and give God glory in both victory and defeat.
- We will show love and respect to athletes and fans.
- We will respect the judgment of the officials and the decision-making of our coaches.
- We will support and encourage athletes during contests.

Failure to honor this code may result in parents and fans not being allowed to attend athletic contests in which BCS participates and/or may hinder the privilege of student-athletes to be involved in the interscholastic athletics program at BCS.

## *Student-athlete Code of Conduct*

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While associated with the Athletic Department of BCS, student-athletes are expected to adhere to the following set of guidelines:

- Student-athletes will display Christian character both on and off the court/field.
- Student-athletes will familiarize themselves and follow all bylaws and policies set forth by BCS and the FHSAA regarding eligibility, compliance, and participation in interscholastic athletics.
- Student-athletes will follow all school rules, guidelines and policies as outlined in the school and athletic handbooks as well as any individual team policies.
- Student-athletes will display the highest level of sportsmanship at all times before, during and after a contest. They will treat teammates, coaches, game officials, opposing team members, and parents with the utmost respect at all times, and, will refrain from participating in any activity that may be considered detrimental and/or demeaning.
- Student-athletes will commit to maintaining adequate grades and behavioral standards in the classroom and will refrain from any academic impropriety (cheating, plagiarism, etc.).
- Student-athletes will be held responsible for public behavior including social networking, websites, and other public forums.
- Student-athletes will avoid and help prevent the intentional destruction of athletic equipment and school property.
- Student-athletes will refrain from using profane, foul, lewd, or suggestive language or conduct.
- Student-athletes will not use or possess any illegal drugs, alcohol, weapon or tobacco products.
- Student-athletes will commit to attending all team activities on time, and will give their coach plenty of advance notice and adequate reasoning for failure to do so.
- Student-athletes will commit to one team for an entire season and will not leave or join another team unless it has been cleared by the coaches for both teams and the Director of Athletics.
- Student-athletes will not partake in any activity that may undermine team harmony or chemistry.
- Student-athletes will refrain from any form of hazing, bullying, or sexual harassment.
- Student-athletes will agree to pay all fees associated with their respective sport .
- Student-athletes will accept full responsibility for, and adequately maintain, all uniforms and equipment issued to them at the beginning of the season and will return it in satisfactory condition at the end of the season. Failure to do so will result in the student-athlete's school account being charged to replace the lost or damaged equipment.

The privilege of participating in athletics can be revoked at any time by the Coach, Athletic Director and/or school administration.

The student-athlete should understand and acknowledge that should they fail to meet these expectations, disciplinary action may be administered in the form of suspension or dismissal from the team.

Lastly, the student-athlete and his/her guardian should understand and acknowledge that should the student-athlete leave or be dismissed from an athletic team for violating the stipulations of this contract they will not be allowed to participate in interscholastic athletics at BCS for the remainder of that season and up to 50% of the contests of the next season in which they participate.

Like student-athletes, parents should understand and acknowledge that participation in athletics at BCS is a privilege, which demands that certain expectations should be met in order to be involved. Parents are expected to help the Administration and coaches of BCS hold the student-athletes accountable for their actions while associated with a sports team. In order to do this they must first model the character and behavior that is required of the student-athletes. With this in mind, parents are expected to maintain the following standards:

- Parents will display Christian character both on and off the court/field.
- Parents will display the highest level of sportsmanship at all times before, during and after a contest. They will treat game officials, student-athletes, coaches, and opposing team members and fans with the utmost respect at all times, and, will refrain from participating in any activity that may be considered as demeaning and/or critical towards them.
- Parents will assume responsibility to make sure all FHSAA policies regarding eligibility and compliance as well as any BCS policies regarding academics and discipline are followed by the student-athlete.
- Parents will assume responsibility for the public behavior of their student-athletes while involved in athletic participation at BCS including social networking websites and other public forums
- Parents will commit to making sure their student-athlete attends all team activities on time, and will give their coach plenty of advance notice and adequate reasoning for failure to do so
- Parents will hold their student-athlete accountable to commit to the team for the entire season.
- Parents will take responsibility for their student-athletes' use of illegal substances and will allow their student-athlete to submit to on-the-spot drug testing.
- Parents will not partake in any activity that may undermine team harmony or chemistry.
- Parents will agree to pay all fees associated with their respective team.
- Parents will hold their student-athletes accountable to adequately maintain all uniforms and equipment issued to them at the beginning of the season and to return it in satisfactory condition at the end of the season. Parents agree that failure to do so will result in the student-athlete's school account being charged to replace the lost or damaged equipment.

The privilege of participating in athletics can be revoked at any time by the coach, athletic director and/or school administration.

Parents should understand and acknowledge that should they fail to meet these expectations, disciplinary action may be administered in the form of their student-athlete being suspended or dismissed from the team, or in the parent being banned from attending games.

Lastly, the parent should understand and acknowledge that should the student-athlete leave or be dismissed from an athletic team for violating the stipulations outlined in this handbook they will not be allowed to participate in interscholastic athletics at BCS for the remainder of that season and up to 50% of the contests in the next season in which they participate.

## *Eligibility and Participation*

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In order for a student to participate in any athletic program at Berean Christian School, they must be in compliance with all eligibility and participation bylaws and policies set forth by the BCS, any associations to which BCS is a member, and coaches for their respective teams.

Additionally the student-athlete must complete all necessary eligibility forms required by the FHSAA and BCS and turn those forms into the Athletic Office before they may begin practicing with any teams.

### **Academic Requirements**

All student-athletes at BCS will be governed by the FHSAA policy on academic eligibility. Students who are removed from a team for academic reasons will be removed from the team roster. If they are not able to return to that team before the end of the season they will be considered to have not finished the season with that team in good standing and will therefore not be afforded the same privileges as athletes who do finish a season in good standing.

### **Supervision**

Athletes may not use any athletic facilities or equipment unless they are supervised by a coach or school administrator.

### **Athletic Dress Code**

Proper athletic apparel must be worn to all athletic events (practices, contests, team outings, etc.). The following dress code has been established by the administration of BCS for student-athletes:

#### School Dress Code on Game Days

- Student-athletes that are participating in a home contest may wear their department-issued uniform jersey/top that they will be wearing in the contest to school on the day of the contest.
- Uniform tops that are tank tops must have at minimum a short sleeved t-shirt on under the tank top.
- All other school handbook policies apply to bottoms/pants and outerwear.

#### Practices and Other Non-Contests:

- All non-issued practice gear must be modest and appropriate for athletic participation at BCS.
- Clothing promoting items that may be considered morally questionable or politically divisive may not be worn.
- No half/cut-off shirts or low-cut shirts exposing either the midriff or bust line may be worn.
- Any compression shorts/pants must be covered before leaving athletic facilities.
- All piercings must be removed and tattoos must be covered.

### Contests:

- Athletes must be in their entire department-issued uniform to be able to participate in an athletic contest. This includes warm up gear, socks, belts, etc. Students may not borrow equipment from another student-athlete or be issued extra equipment by the coach for failure to provide their own equipment.
- If a coach does not issue shoes or socks as part of the team uniform, players must use footwear that is not distracting in color or nature. Socks must be predominantly black, navy, orange or white.
- Any items that were not issued by the department that the team would like to wear to support individual causes must first be approved by the AD (e.g. disease awareness, military causes, etc.).

### **Dual Participation**

It is acceptable for student-athletes to participate in multiple sports at BCS simultaneously during the same season as long as the coaches for both teams and the Athletic Director approve. In this situation the coaches will work together to determine a schedule for the athlete that mutually benefits both teams and the athlete.

If a student-athlete chooses to participate on two school teams simultaneously, he/she will be required to “declare” a primary sport to the Athletic Director so that if an issue should arise where a compromise cannot be reached between the coaches for the two teams then the athlete will have to attend the event for the primary team.

### **Overlapping Seasons**

In the situation where seasons overlap and team activities begin for a later sport before team activities for the first sport are completed a student-athlete will be required to complete the first season before they may begin activities for the later season.

Coaches for the first sport may allow the student-athlete to attend activities for the second sport, but the athlete must still be committed to the first sport until its completion.

### **Quitting or Being Dismissed From a Team**

Once a student is committed to a given team they will be required to remain with that team for the entirety of the season. For teams that host tryouts, a player will be committed once they have made the cut. For teams that do not have tryouts, the player will be committed once they participate in their first interscholastic contest.

If a player quits a team or is dismissed for disciplinary reasons before the end of the season they will not be allowed to participate in interscholastic athletics at BCS for the remainder of that season and up to 50% of the contests during the next season in which they participate.

If a student-athlete is assessed a suspension from the FHSAA or BCS for disciplinary reasons that carries over past the end of the season, that athlete will be removed from the roster, will be considered to have **not** finished the season in good standing and will not be eligible to participate with another team at BCS for one complete season following the season in which the suspension occurred. FHSAA supersedes any BCS consequences for infractions.

There may be non-disciplinary circumstances in which it is mutually beneficial for both a team and a student-athlete who is a member of that team for that student-athlete to be removed from that team without incurring a departmental suspension. This will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the Athletic Director and School Administration.

Athletes who are removed from a team, either voluntarily or involuntarily will still be assessed the participation fees for that sport if it was after the first contest. Likewise, if a spirit order cannot be canceled after the player is removed from the roster, those fees will also be charged to their student account.

### **School Attendance**

Student-athletes that do not attend school for at least five complete periods of the seven scheduled during the day may not participate in any athletic activities that day unless they have obtained special permission from School Administration.

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### *Cautionary Statement*

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Athletic activities involve an inherent amount of risk. By signing the Athlete/Parent Agreement you are acknowledging that you and your student-athlete will accept that risk and make sure all of the necessary protocols are followed to reduce that risk which include, but not limited to:

- Properly conditioning and hydrating to be prepared for all practices and contests.
- Obtaining and properly wearing all necessary equipment, braces, and supportive undergarments for your respective sport and ensuring that it fits and functions properly.
- Ensuring that students with visual impairments that require corrective eyewear must use shatterproof lenses or contact lenses.
- Removing all jewelry, hair fasteners, etc.
- Ensuring that students with medical conditions have been properly medicated (under the knowledge of the coaching staff).
- Properly stretching and warming up before all athletic participation as well as properly cooling down at the end of all practices and competitions.
- Reporting any injuries or conditions that may result in further injury to your head coach.
- Buckling your seat belt on the way to all contests/practices that require vehicle transportation.
- Following all street laws when driving yourself to any contests or practices.
- Exhibiting extreme caution when crossing any streets or parking lots on the way to practices or contests.
- Remaining in areas designated for student-athletes under the supervision of a coach.
- Not climbing over or under any fences/barriers and only using proper access points to facilities.
- Familiarizing yourself with any barriers and obstructions (fans, retaining fences, goals, goal posts, foul poles, dugouts, officials, etc.).
- Knowing who to contact in case of an emergency.
- Being alert to slippery floors/surfaces and changes in floor texture or elevations.
- Keeping floors clear of debris; keeping belongings in locker.
- Refraining from rapid movements, rough housing, or horse play while in athletic facilities.
- Not wearing cleats inside buildings.
- Isolating and treating all skin infections.

### *Fees and Financial Information*

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Once a student commits to play a sport at BCS they will be assessed an athletic fee. The athletic fee for the 2018-2019 school year is \$140 for a varsity sport, \$210 for varsity football, \$50 for spring football and \$110 for a JV or JH sport.

Coaches may also assess “spirit fees” to their athletes to help pay for warm ups, team trips, spirit gear, meals, etc. These fees will be set by the coach for each team and will be made known to the student-athletes and their parents before the start of each season.

### *Selection of Team*

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Choosing the members of any athletic team is the sole privilege and responsibility of the head coach for that team.

#### **Tryouts**

Cuts are welcome to be made at any level of competition if the coach feels that it is necessary for the overall safety and success of the team. There is no such thing as a final cut; an athlete’s membership on any team is always subject to proper behavior and specified team guidelines. If cuts are to be made the coach will provide the athletes who are trying out for the team with information about how long the try-out period will be and what criteria will be used to select the team.

#### **Moving Athletes “Up”**

Head varsity coaches for a given sport have the sole privilege and responsibility to determine which student-athletes will play at the appropriate level and which athletes will be moved “up” and “down”.

### *Awards and Recognitions*

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In order for a student-athlete to letter in a sport at BCS they must finish have participated in at least 50% of all varsity contests with that team during that season and must have finished that season in good standing.

The first time that an athlete letters in any sport they will be given an actual letter that they may elect to put onto a letterman jacket (which can be purchased through the Athletic Office). Athletes that letter in a particular sport for the first time will be given a pin and bar for that sport. Each subsequent season they letter in that same sport, they will be given another bar.

Varsity athletes (and sub-varsity athletes) that finish the season with a team in good standing but do not meet the requirements to receive a letter will receive a certificate to honor their accomplishment.

The BCS Administration will hand out Athletic Department awards each academic year to student-athletes that have displayed excellence in one of four categories: Spirit, Christian Testimony, Academic, and Athletic Leadership. In order for a student to be eligible to win a department award they must have participated in at least two varsity sports at BCS during that school year, and must have completed that year in good athletic, academic, and disciplinary standing.

**Dawgsville Spirit Award**

The Dawgsville Spirit Award is given to the male and female student-athlete that exhibits a tremendous amount of school spirit and pride. This student is always available to help out and show up for school and department functions and is “all in” with Bulldog Athletics.

**Ambassador Award**

The Ambassador Award is given to the male and female student-athlete that most boldly and publicly lives out their Christian faith amongst their peers. The name of the award is taken from II Corinthians 5:20 which states: “We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us...”

**Scholar-Athlete of the Year**

The Scholar-Athlete Award is given to the male and female student-athlete that has maintained the highest overall cumulative weighted GPA during their high school years.

**Mr./Miss Bulldog (Athlete of the Year)**

Mr./Miss Bulldog is given to the male and female athlete that is regarded as the Department’s most outstanding athlete that year. It is an athlete who displays excellence in both ability and leadership.

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*Transportation Policy*

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BCS will provide transportation for all of our athletes to all interscholastic practices and contests. Student-athletes and student workers associated with the team are required to ride on team bus under the supervision of the coaching staff to all contests. In certain circumstances, exceptions to this policy may be approved by the Director of Athletics with parental permission and athletes may be allowed to drive themselves or ride with another parent. Anybody other than players or team personnel may not ride with the team to any contests without the approval of the Athletic Director or school administration.

Once the contest is completed, the student-athlete will be required to return to the school with the team under the supervision of the coach unless the parent/guardian takes the student-athlete with them at the conclusion of the game. In this situation the parent/guardian must make contact with the coach to declare that they have taken custody of their child. At no time may student-athletes ride home with anybody other than the coach or the parent/guardian unless there is verbal or written permission from the parent. Individual coaches may require the student-athlete to return to the school on the team bus as part of their individual team policies.

**As declared on the FHSAA Form EL3 - students are required to complete the Concussion, Heat-Related Illness and Sudden Cardiac Arrest courses online at <https://nfhslearn.com>.**

Treatment at BCS is basic first aid designed to patch up minor injuries or help a student-athlete remain in competition. If an athlete needs greater care than we are able to provide, emergency personnel will be contacted or the student-athlete will be released into the care of his/her guardians. BCS does not administer medication to student-athletes.

If a student-athlete is removed from athletic participation because of an injury, illness, or other health reasons they must be removed by a certified trainer or licensed physician in order for the absence to be considered excused. If a trainer or doctor does remove an athlete from participation that athlete must submit a written note from that doctor to the Athletic Office. The student-athlete will not be allowed to return to athletic participation until they have been fully cleared in writing by a trainer or physician.

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to inform, in writing, the Athletic Department and the Head Coach of a team on which they participate of any medications they are taking and the potential risks and side effects from taking that medication. They are also required to alert the athletic department and coach, in writing, of any allergies, illnesses, and/or injuries that may hinder them from participation. Students that are diabetic, asthmatic, dangerously allergic to certain items, or that require the use of other frequent medications must alert the Head Coach in a written letter along with permission for the student-athlete carry their own medication with them in case of an emergency.

Head coaches will be certified in CPR, First Aid and trained in the use of an AED. Coaches are experienced to help the athlete condition and strength train both in and out of season in order to help reduce the risk of athletic injuries. However some injuries are unable to be prevented. It is the responsibility of the athlete to be in proper condition at all times to adequately compete. BCS will attempt to take every precaution to reduce the risk or injury or accidents and take the proper steps in case of emergency.

### **Emergency Response Plan**

In the event of an emergency at an BCS-sponsored athletic event, the following steps will be taken:

1. Immediate care of the injured or ill student-athlete.
2. 911 will be contacted if necessary.
3. Area will be secured to ensure safety of remaining student-athletes if necessary.
4. The head coach and school administration will be notified of the incident, if they are not already aware.
5. The student-athlete's guardians will be notified of the incident by school administration, if they are not already aware.

Once 911 has been contacted, BCS staff will comply with the instructions of the operator or emergency personnel.

BCS reserves the right for its coaches to administer basic first aid in the event of an emergency, or authorize medical treatment and release medical information to authorities.

## **Concussions**

BCS will follow the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) policy on concussions which states: "High school athletes in any sport who are exhibiting signs and symptoms of concussion such as headaches, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems should be removed from play and not allowed to return until cleared by an appropriate health-care provider."

## **Heat-Related Illness**

Most heat related illnesses occur within the first few days of outdoor practices before bodies have had a chance to acclimate. In order to help reduce the risk of heat related illnesses, coaches will slowly work the athletes into the grind of practice and will make sure that water is readily available at all practices and contests.

It is the responsibility of the athlete to be in the proper physical condition to begin a given season and be properly hydrated for practice each day. It is also the responsibility of the athlete to be educated on the warning signs of heat illness so that they can let the coach know in a timely manner should they begin to feel that they are the victim of a heat illness. Those warning signs include:

- a. Dizziness
- b. No sweat
- c. Slurring words
- d. Etc.

If a heat related illness occurs, the coach will immediately refer to the Emergency Response Plan

## **Sudden Cardiac Arrest**

Sudden cardiac arrest is the leading cause of sports-related death with signs and symptoms to include sudden collapse, no pulse, no breathing, heat stroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps.

## **Lightning Policy**

If BCS is participating in any athletic activity where a lightning detection system is not present the following lightning protocol will be followed:

- Once a contest has begun, it is up to the discretion of the contest officials to suspend and/or restart a game due to lightning. If there is no contest official present (e.g. practices, scrimmages, or non-officiated contests such as in cross country, golf or tennis, etc.) the head coach is responsible to determine if lightning is posing a threat. BCS will follow the guidelines set forth by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC):
  - Once thunder is heard or cloud-to-ground lightning has been seen then the storm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. In this situation immediate cover should be taken.
  - Once activities are suspended they will not resume until 30 minutes after the last lightning strike is seen or thunder is heard.