

Blue Ridge Christian School

Athletic Manual

2016-2017

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Athletic Director: Sean Tapley

Volleyball
Boys Soccer
Coed Cross Country
Golf
Girls Basketball
Boys Basketball
Girls Soccer
Baseball
Track and Field
Tennis
Softball

It is worthless to have the whole world if they lose their soul. Mark 8:36 (NCV)

Introduction

This handbook establishes procedures for the Athletic Department at Blue Ridge Christian School. It should serve as a convenient reference for coaches, players, and parents concerning policies and procedures governing the Athletic Department. While it is not possible to find answers to every question in this handbook, you should find it to be a useful reference guide.

All questions pertaining to student eligibility and Athletic Department policy should be brought to the attention of the Athletic Director. Questions regarding a specific sport or team can be directed to the head coach.

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Mission

The mission of Blue Ridge Christian Athletics is to provide an excellent sports program that will allow and encourage our student athletes to develop their God-given abilities. We want our student athletes to honor and glorify God in all that they do (I Corinthians 10:31), understanding that athletics is something that God allows us to do, not something that defines us. God alone should have first place in our lives (Matthew 6:33).

Philosophy

In all aspects of life, whether occupation or recreation, Christians are called to glorify God and to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Athletes and coaches are therefore encouraged to strive for Christ-likeness in all of their activities, whether training or competing. The Blue Ridge Christian School athlete will be challenged to do their very best with his or her God given talents, not for selfish gain but for the glory of God and the good of the team. Competing to win is strongly emphasized, without sacrificing the display and the development of Christ-like character. Athletic training and competition provide numerous opportunities to instill the practice of Biblical principles, such as developing an appropriate approach to authority, working together as members of a team, and learning self-control in the midst of competition.

These Christian character qualities are the goal for all of our athletes:

- **Faith** –Every student-athlete should believe that the Lord empowers them to compete for His glory. They should understand that the Lord knows what's best no matter the circumstances (Proverbs 3:5-6).
- **Hard Work** - The Lord did not bless everyone with the same abilities. We cannot control our abilities, but what we can control is how much effort we give toward a task (Proverbs 13:4).
- **Sportsmanship** - Our goal in any level of competition is to try our best to be champions, but it does not always work out that way. BRCS student-athletes will show class in any result of competition and be examples of Christ in their speech and conduct at all times (Philippians 2:3).
- **Diligence** – Use all your strength and ability to complete each part of a task, whether in practice, in a game, or anywhere else. (Col. 3:23)
- **Endurance** – Withstand stress, hard work, and the situations that Christian athletes experience. (Galatians 6:9)
- **Boldness** – Be strong and courageous. The Christian athlete cannot be one who is timid or gives up. (Acts 4:29)
- **Obedience** – Be obedient both to the Lord and to those He has placed in authority over you. Jesus was always obedient to His Father's will (I Peter 2:13, Hebrews 5:8, Mark 14:36)
- **Humility** – Show the attitude that God is the one responsible for your abilities, talents, and success. (Proverbs 22:4)
- **Dependability** – Be at all practices and games on time and do what is expected of you in all situations.

Middle School Athletics

The Middle School Athletic program is the foundation of all BRCS athletics. This stage of development is the most important level of learning:

1. Spiritual emphasis (developing Christian character)
2. Respect for authority (coaches, teachers, parents, etc.)
3. Developing a consistent work ethic
4. Preparing athletes to work together as a team (team concepts)
 - a. Encourage
 - b. Motivate
5. Fundamentals (individual skills)
6. Learning the game (terminology)
7. Prepare BRCS athletes for Junior Varsity programs
8. Teaching healthy competition (learning how to be aggressive within the rules of the game)
 - a. Competing for a position
 - b. Competing for playing time

Middle school athletics give us an opportunity to introduce and teach the

fundamental aspects of a particular sport. When our athletes reach the next level, they will be ready to learn more advanced aspects of the sport. We want to encourage our athletes to have fun while doing their very best. The wins and losses will take care of themselves. “You can win a game and still be a loser. You can lose a game and still be a winner.” We want to provide all of our players with as much real- game experience as possible. Decisions related to playing time are made solely at the coach’s discretion.

Junior Varsity Athletics

Our focus for junior varsity athletics is to refine the concepts learned in middle school. However, the demands of excellence, competition, and the complexity of the game will intensify. Therefore, the athletes must be prepared to compete for positions and playing time. We encourage our athletes to do their very best. Our goal is to prepare our athletes for the demands of our varsity programs. We want our athletes to make the transition from junior varsity to varsity as smoothly as possible. Our athletes should know the system and be ready to contribute immediately. Decisions related to playing time are made solely at the coach’s discretion.

Varsity Athletics

It will be a privilege for an athlete to wear a BRCS varsity uniform. The athlete must be prepared to compete for a position and playing time. Once an athlete has solidified his/her position he/she must work to keep it. Seniority of a player is not a factor. Players will be judged on athletic ability, work ethic, attitude, and knowledge of the coach’s strategy/strategies when determining playing time. Competing to win is strongly emphasized, without sacrificing the display and the development of Christ-like character. The athletes are expected to act accordingly to their roles on the team, and the coaches expect athletes to contribute unselfishly in accordance with their abilities. Playing time will be determined solely by the coach/coaches.

Association

The Blue Ridge Christian Athletic program is a member of the VACA (Virginia Association of Christian Athletics). We adhere to the policies and rules governed by them. We must notify the VACA at the beginning of each school year of all teams participating in the end-of-season tournament.

All athletic contests are operated under the rules and regulations governing the Virginia High School League and the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Sports Offered

BRCS will look to field the following sports for the 2016-2017 school year: (Open to 5th grade through High School)

Fall:

**Middle School Volleyball
Varsity Volleyball
Middle School Soccer
Varsity Soccer
Coed Cross Country**

Winter:

**Middle School Girls Basketball
Varsity Girls Basketball
Middle School Boys Basketball
Junior Varsity Boys Basketball
Varsity Boys Basketball**

Spring:

**Junior Varsity Girls Soccer
Junior Varsity Baseball
Track and Field**

Sports Academy (2nd-5th grade Developmental Sports Program)

Fall: Boys and Girls Soccer

Spring: Boys and Girls Basketball, Tennis, Golf, Baseball, Track and Field

The BRCS Sports Academy will be our all-new developmental sports program for grades 2nd through 5th. Emphasis will be placed on technical and tactical (actions planned to gain a specific end), age-appropriate skill training, along with integration of skill application. This format benefits the younger athletes by providing skills and fundamentals training for game conditions while providing more “touch time” with the ball, etc. All skill levels will benefit from the academy format. While this is not promised, the athletic department will reach out to other schools and try to play their 2nd-5th graders. If those plans do not work out, we will try to schedule a scrimmage against each other.

Summer Camps (6th grade and above)

Here is a tentative list of possible summer camps (more details will be given closer to summer time):

Volleyball
Soccer
Basketball
Baseball
Track and Field

New 2016-2017 Installments

- 1) **Game Film** – A few games will be recorded to give coaches an opportunity to coach athletes on errors during a game. Visuals are always easier to learn from than words. This will help our athletes grow mentally in their sport.
- 2) **Game Jerseys To Class for Away Games** – Being an athlete is a privilege at BRCS and student athletes will have the honor to wear their jerseys to class on away game days to establish school pride.
- 3) **Duffle Bags and Professional Dress for Away Games** – Student Athletes will now dress professionally when traveling to away games. Boys are expected to wear appropriate shirt and ties, khakis or dress pants, and casual or dress shoes. Girls are expected to dress in appropriate casual shirts, dresses or skirts and casual shoes. We want to represent BRCS in the right way. BRCS student athletes will now have duffle bags that they can place their belongings into when traveling.
- 4) **Parent Shop** – This shop will be available to the public to buy BRCS athletic gear such as hats and shirts. It will be located on the BRCS Website.
- 5) **Fall, Winter and Spring Pep Rally** – Athletes and Coaches need to be recognized and motivated before the season starts. A pep rally will introduce our BRCS Athletes to the school and faculty.
- 6) **Fall, Winter and Spring Banquet**- To have a more exciting and bigger celebration, multiple sports in the same season will gather together to be recognized for their accomplishments.
- 7) **Pre-Game Meals for Home Games** – Parent Volunteers will be needed for each sport to prepare pre-game meals for home games. The athletic department highly encourages parents to reserve a home game with their coach and prepare their own meals with their own money for student athletes. For parents that can't afford to, there is \$30/Home game in the athletic budget to use. It is also encouraged that these meals are done the day before the game. These meals will be light meal ideas (sandwiches, spaghetti, hotdogs, etc). The athletic department will have a Crock Pot, George Foreman and Rice Cooker available at the school to use, if needed.
- 8) **Game Photography for Home Games** - Parent Volunteers will be needed

for each sport to take a few pictures from a camera throughout the course of Home Games. Parents will not need to bring their camera, for we will have an Athletic Department Camera.

Website

Blue Ridge Christian School will have an athletic calendar website that will keep you up-to-date and informed about all athletic try-outs, practices, and games. Please refer to the website before contacting the office with questions you may have concerning practices and games. Direct access to the website is through the school website: www.brcschool.org

Requirements for Participation

All athletes must be full-time students in order to participate in sports. Homeschoolers and Part Time Students will be considered in sports that are allowed through VACA. Please see the Home School Student Section.

Physicals

Every athlete (grades 5th through high school) that will play sports at BRCS must have a physical exam before the season begins. This is your responsibility. You may NOT compete or practice until you have a physical turned in and on file in the athletic office. A physical is good for 365 days from the date completed. We recommend that the physical be completed after May 15 for the upcoming school year. The physical will then cover the athlete for the entire school sports season.

Parent / Student Contract Form and Medical Release

Both parent and student are required to sign these forms in order for the student to participate in athletics. In addition, the minimum participation fees must be paid in order to play.

Team Participation

Being part of a team helps our athletes develop the Christ-likeness we strive for. We value each individual that collectively makes our team stronger. It is important that our athletes understand once they have tried out and made a team, their commitment (Luke 23 – 27) is for the entire season; even when the road may become weary. In the event an athlete makes the decision to quit a team, the consequence of that decision may consist of not being allowed to try out for any

other sport that particular school year or if it is the spring season, the following fall season will be jeopardized. Some circumstances may arise that are beyond the student's control; this will be taken into account by the Athletic Director.

Practices and Games – Attendance

The Christian athlete must learn to be accountable and to honor commitments. In order to participate on a Blue Ridge Christian School team, we will ask for both. Knowing that you can be counted on is just as important as your talent. All athletes who are on a team are expected to be at all practices and games for the duration of that sport's season. If you cannot make practices or games, you should not come out for the team. Unless there is an extreme emergency, you must be at both practices and games.

In-Season:

Middle School teams will have practices/games 3-4 days per week
Junior Varsity teams will have practices/games 4-5 days per week
Varsity teams will strive to have practices/games 5 days per week

Blue Ridge Christian School values the importance of the local church and the importance of being affiliated within the local body of believers. As BRCS is not intentionally trying to plan practices or games during weekly services, we cannot accommodate each church's weekly services, youth meetings or activities. We will always honor Sundays as having no practices or games during the school year, but other days of the week will be open to having practices or games. Practices may be scheduled on Saturdays. Practices scheduled over extended holiday breaks will be optional for those who will be traveling and out of the immediate area.

Unexcused absences from practice and games may be subject to the consequences listed below. Some circumstances may arise that will be taken into account by the Head Coach and Athletic Director.

- 1st: Discretion of the head coach
- 2nd: Half game suspension
- 3rd: One game suspension
- 4th: Two game suspension
- 5th: Dismissal from the team

Parents – please make every effort to schedule *routine* doctor/dentist appointments, etc. around the sports season. It is difficult to coach a team if players are missing practices. Leaving practice early must also be approved by the head coach. Please consult with the coach as far in advance as possible if you plan to miss a practice.

Attendance – School Day – Practices/Games

Athletes must be at school no later than 3 hours after school starts unless there are extenuating circumstances in order to be able to practice or participate in a game.

Playing Time

The amount of playing time an athlete receives on any level team at Blue Ridge Christian School is a privilege, not a right. While we are committed to developing all of our athletes, most of an athlete's development should take place during practice. Practice is where you prepare to play. Seniority of an athlete is not a factor in determining if a player will start or how much they will play. Players will be judged by their coaches on their athletic ability, work ethic, attitude, and knowledge of the coach's strategy/strategies when determining playing time.

Early Dismissal

Students are responsible for all work (notes, tests, quizzes, etc.) missed due to early dismissals. If an athlete is to miss a class, he/she must meet with the teacher to receive class assignments before leaving. Athletes may not decide the time at which they will be dismissed. The athletic department will provide this information to the teams and teachers.

Academic Eligibility

Please see Parent-Student Handbook for guidelines. Athletes who are on academic probation will not be allowed to dress at games.

Equipment and Uniforms

It is your responsibility to care for the equipment and team uniforms issued to you. If items are lost or damaged beyond what is considered normal wear and tear, you will be billed for replacement costs.

Check with your coach for the type of practice uniform he/she desires you to wear. No Game uniforms are allowed to be worn during the school day unless approved by the Athletic Director

Game / Practice Conduct

Athletes must always remember that they are representing Jesus Christ on the court / field so their behavior must demonstrate a Christ-like Spirit. Swearing or inappropriate language will not be tolerated and will result in prompt consequences.

An athlete who is ejected from a game for a flagrant foul or unsportsmanlike conduct will miss a minimum of one game; this does not include the game from which he/she was ejected from. This offense may also result in removal from the team. The decision will be made by the Head Coach and Athletic Director.

Players on the bench are to encourage their team and never belittle or make fun of players on the opposing team. If another player says something to you, do not respond by trying to put him down or get the last word. Learn mental toughness!

Student Conduct

As a member of an athletic team, you are high-profile representatives of Blue Ridge Christian School. You are expected to act in an appropriate manner. The following behavior is inappropriate and will not be tolerated:

- Fighting**
- Profanity**
- Use or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs**
- Destruction of property**
- Rude or disrespectful behavior**

Students who exhibit any of the above behaviors may be suspended from athletic competition, dismissed from the team, and face school disciplinary action. The rules of the school apply to all athletic contests.

Communication with Coaches

Athletes and parents are asked to communicate concerns following the Matthew 18 principles. If you have a concern or question, please contact the Head Coach first. If you need further assistance after communicating with the coach, please feel free to contact the Athletic Director. Communicating concerns with a coach during or immediately after a game is not acceptable. Please observe the 24 hour rule – we do not want the emotions of the game to impact your discussion. Please wait until the next day.

Transportation

Athletes will be transported to away games via school bus driven by a school-approved and CDL- licensed driver. In addition, athletes may be transported in private vehicles driven by parents/school staff when necessary. Parents – You must be school approved and on file in the office – please see the administrative secretary to fill out the proper documentation.

Players are to ride back to the school after a game with the team on the bus, unless the student rides back with his/her parents. If a student is to ride home with someone other than a parent or legal guardian, we must have written permission beforehand. Athletes are to let their coaches know if they are riding home with someone other than the coach on the bus.

Athletic Fees

\$35 per sport – Developmental Sports Program (2nd through 5th grade)
\$75 per sport (except cross country) – Full-Time Student – Middle School
\$80 per sport (except cross country) – Full-Time Student – Junior Varsity
\$95 per sport (except cross country) – Full-Time Student – Varsity
\$60 for cross country – Full-Time Student – All levels – Middle School/JV/Varsity
\$100 per sport – Part Time Student – All levels – Middle School/JV/Varsity
\$175 per sport – Home School Student – Middle School
\$200 per sport – Home School Student – Junior Varsity
\$225 per sport – Home School Student – Varsity

In order to help the athletic program operate with overall operational cost, some funding will need to come from Athletic fees. Additional funding for the sports program will be necessary, and will come in the form of contributions, concession sales, admission charges, and fund-raising. The BRCS athletic program will need your help in these areas. Expenses that the athletic department incurs include, but are not limited to: paying referees/officials, association dues, equipment cost, uniforms, season end awards, etc. The athletic fee covers only a small portion of our expenses.

Admission Prices 2016-2017

Regular season entrance to home volleyball and basketball games for the 2016-2017 year will be:

Adults - \$4

Students (grades K through 12) - \$2

Current BRCS Students and Faculty – Free

Sports Passes will be available to purchase for the season. The passes will be \$32 for 10 games. Please contact the athletic director for purchase.

Admission and Concession Help

The success of the BRCS athletic program rests, in large part, on parental help and support. Collection of gate receipts and serving in concessions help make this program thrive. We ask that parents of athletes who make a BRCS sports team volunteer to help out during that sport's season. You will be asked to volunteer to run gate one time and concessions one time during the season that your child plays.

Creation of Teams

Decisions and creation of teams (programs) will be decided upon within the athletic department and will be based on some of the following criteria: ones that are officially sanctioned by our conference, with a minimum number of BRCS participants (depending on the sport), programs that are sustainable, and ones that can be financially supported with having adequate and regulation sized fields.

Home School Students

Blue Ridge Christian School Athletics can partner with home school students and families for athletic participation. The following is a list of requirements and policies concerning our home school families and athletes.

- A Home School Participation Application form has been completed and submitted to the Athletic Director.
- Families and homeschool students for athletic participation will need to be interviewed by the Athletic Director.
- Home School student athletes may participate if the optimum number of roster spots has not been filled – this decision will be made by the Athletic Director in conjunction with the head coach for each sport.
- If try-outs are necessary to meet the optimum number of participants, a home school student cannot be placed ahead of a full time BRCS student.
- Once the team is established the home school student will be treated no differently than the BRCS student player and playing time will be solely at the coaches' discretion.
- Athletes that are in High School must attend at least 50% of the chapels during

the season - Currently they are scheduled on Thursday's from 10:35 – 11:23 – they are welcome to stay for lunch afterwards.

- The Home School Athletic Fee must be paid before the athlete can participate
- All Home School Families and Athletes will be asked to follow the policies and procedures of the athletic manual and Blue Ridge Christian school policies.

Part Time Students

Blue Ridge Christian School Athletics can partner with part time school students and families for athletic participation. The following is a list of requirements and policies concerning our part time school families and athletes.

- Must be enrolled in at least one class at BRCS (1 credit) to be considered a part-time student
- Families and part time students for athletic participation will need to be interviewed by the Athletic Director.
- Part Time school student athletes may participate if the optimum number of roster spots has not been filled – this decision will be made by the Athletic Director in conjunction with the head coach for each sport.
- If try-outs are necessary to meet the optimum number of participants, a part time school student cannot be placed ahead of a full time BRCS student.
- Once the team is established the student will be treated no differently than the BRCS student player and playing time will be solely at the coaches' discretion.
- The Part Time school athletic fee must be paid before the athlete can participate.
- All Part Time School Families and Athletes will be asked to follow the policies and procedures of the athletic manual and Blue Ridge Christian school policies.

Athletic Awards

Male and Female Athlete of the Year – We want athletes to conform to the image of Jesus Christ and to have His character qualities. Therefore, this award will be based on how well the athlete shows these characteristics. This award will go to one male and one female athlete. The characteristics and requirements of the winner of this award are as follows:

- Participated in at least two sports at BRCS
- Demonstrated a proper Christian testimony at games and practices
- Showed intensity in his/her performance and displayed exemplary effort at practices and games
- Exhibited best all-around character, ability, and accomplishments
- Represented Blue Ridge Christian School in a way that honored the athlete's peers, teachers, family, and God.

This award will be presented at the end of the year.

Senior Male and Female Athlete Scholar - This award will be given to the senior athlete who participates in at least two sports seasons at BRCS and has the highest GPA through the end of the 3rd quarter. This award will be presented at the end of the year.

Team Awards

These three awards will be the main awards given within each team after their season is complete:

- *Most Valuable Player*
- *Most Improved Player*
- *Coaches Award/Matthew 6:33*: This award goes to the player that hustles and works hard at all practices and games. This player is always coachable and gives 100% at all times. The coach can always count on this player. He/she keeps God first in his/her actions on and off the court/field.

Parents - Final Thoughts

Parents support can be a strong and sustaining part of the success of an athletic program. Therefore, it is important to recognize certain attributes of “Do’s and Don’ts” that are important to the ongoing success of the program. Many of these have already been discussed in the content of the policy manual. Hopefully, this will serve as a quick reference for parents to better support the Athletic Department. **DO** help support the overall athletic program.

DO always encourage your athlete to do their best and to accept responsibly for their actions and omissions.

DO compliment your athlete’s efforts and not just the results of their efforts.

DO support your athlete when things are not going well for them, but **DO** it in such a way as not to undermine the coach or the program. If handled properly, a negative experience can become a valuable growth opportunity from which your athlete may learn a valuable lesson.

Though we want our coaches to maintain an “open door” policy to facilitate the best communication possible, **DO NOT** expect the coach to discuss an athlete’s playing time with his or her parents, game strategy or player’s position on the team.

DO NOT try to compare your athlete with someone else’s athlete when you do have a conversation with a coach.

DO expect coaches to be honest with you in their assessment of your athlete's ability and potential.

DO encourage your athlete to talk to the coach if they seem upset about the team or their role on the team. This is an opportunity for their personal growth through dealing with their own personal problems.

If you are having a problem with a coach, please DO talk to the coach first and, if you are not satisfied, DO use the proper chain of command. The chain of command in the Athletic Department is the Head Coach of that particular team, the Athletic Director, and last the Superintendent of the school. Normally problems are solved on the lower levels.

If you are upset with a coach DO NOT confront them before, during, or after a contest. DO call to make an appointment to have a conference with the coach in private.

DO expect the coach to try to aid you in dealing with your athlete's overall development. Quite often coaches, because of their relationship with the athlete, may be of great assistance to the parents.

DO NOT publicly criticize the athletes. This means your own athlete or anyone else's athlete.

DO NOT send unsigned letters to the coaches or the Athletic Department.

DO make sure that your child adheres to the transportation policies of the school to away contests. The coaches will inform them on those occasions when personal transportation vehicles will be used.

Please DO remember that all athletes are not equal in skill level, determination, assertiveness, or their ability to function as a team member. Just as no two students are equal in math where they do not receive the same grades, athletes are not equal and do not receive the same playing time. Interscholastic athletics are competitive. **School sports should not be identified with or measured against recreational, club, church, or intramural athletics activities.**