



**BANNER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK**

Rev. 2017

In His

STRENGTH

AND

for His

HONOR

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I. Mission Statement of Banner Christian School (BANNER)

Banner Christian School is a K4 through 12 program that is consistent with the Word of God. Considering paramount every child's academic, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual needs, Banner Christian School is dedicated to developing and educating the whole person for the glory of God.

II. Athletics Philosophy

The Athletic Department has adopted the motto "Strength and Honor", i.e., in His (God's) strength and for His honor. This is the goal when participating in athletics at Banner. There is no doubt God has blessed students at Banner with athletic talents and abilities, but where others might promote self-glorification, at Banner we seek to give glory to the gift giver – our Heavenly Father. Through this type of attitude we have a great opportunity to be a witness for Christ through athletics. We realize that it is "in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). At Banner we seek to be the best in all we do in order to give glory to God.

Athletics are considered a vital part of the overall curriculum of Banner. Every student is encouraged to explore the capabilities God has given him/her through the various athletic opportunities offered at Banner. We view the competition of athletics as a healthy educational and physiological activity that challenges each student to excel, discover his or her physical limits and work cooperatively with team members. While winning is a natural goal and outcome in the pursuit of excellence, Christ-like sportsmanship and the enjoyment of competition are considered equally important goals.

III. Objectives

Participation on an athletic team can be a rewarding and meaningful experience that enhances a child's education. Our coaches seek to challenge our athletes to perform to the best of their abilities and honoring God in all we do. This is accomplished by:

- Providing instruction and guidance in both physical skills and application of spiritual principles
- Providing an exceptional training facility through which the athlete can exercise Christian disciplines
- Involving the student body, parents, and faculty in developing school spirit and unity
- Having an abundantly clear Christian testimony to the opposing team through words and actions. Christian values and Biblical principles are to be upheld while striving for the utmost in athletic performance.

Specific objectives as they relate to a student athlete:

- To help instill traits such as confidence, cooperation, courage, decision making, dedication, discipline, enthusiasm, initiative, loyalty, persistence, resourcefulness, respect, self-control, sportsmanship, unselfishness, and proper response to pressure.
- To teach the student to work diligently toward reaching personal and team goals
- To ensure physical, mental and emotional growth and development.
- To develop an understanding of team play, rather than personal glorification
- To develop respect for rules and properly placed authority
- To maintain academic integrity for the school by diligent application of study habits

IV. Sports Programs and Offerings

BOYS

Fall Sports

Varsity Soccer
Middle School Soccer
Lower School Soccer (co-ed)
Cross Country

Winter Sports

Varsity Basketball
JV Basketball
Middle School Basketball

Spring Sports

Golf
Track & Field

GIRLS

Fall Sports

Varsity Volleyball
JV Volleyball
Middle School Volleyball
Cross Country

Winter Sports

Varsity Basketball
JV Basketball
Middle School Basketball
Cheerleading

Spring Sports

Golf
Track & Field
Varsity Soccer
Middle School Soccer

V. Conference Affiliation

Banner is a member of the Virginia Colonial Conference (VCC) which includes the following schools: Amelia Academy, Blessed Sacrament-Huguenot, Brunswick Academy, Kenston Forest, Richmond Christian, Southampton Academy and Tidewater Academy. Banner is also a member of the Virginia Independent School Athletic Association (VISAA)

VI. Levels of Play

Middle School

At the entry level of athletics at Banner, athletes and their parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized:

- Develop fundamental skills
- Provide sufficient practice opportunities for all participants
- Have the coach evaluate an athlete's attitude, skill and team role, to determine playing time with the goal of working toward equitable playing time for all participants.
- Learn the rules of the game
- Develop an orientation toward and appreciation for team effort in each athlete
- Demonstration of sportsmanship and fair play
- Develop the ambition to achieve at the next level of competition
- Prioritize skill and character development over winning

Playing Time Policy - At the middle school level, coaches are to choose a starting team, but to give an opportunity for every team member to play in the game when dressed out.

Junior Varsity

This is a transitional level for high school athletics, athletes and their parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized:

- Reinforce and refine fundamental skills
- Have the coach evaluate an athlete's attitude, skill and team role to determine playing time
- Demonstration of sportsmanship and fair play
- Develop more sophisticated athletic strategies
- Specifically define an individual athlete's role within the team concept
- Refine and reinforce the concepts of commitment and team play
- Focus on physical conditioning and development
- Develop the ambition to play at the next level of competition
- Prioritize skill and character development over winning

Playing Time Policy – At the junior varsity level coaches choose a starting lineup but are encouraged to substitute as much as possible. Substitutes will play when a player is injured, tired, not performing well or when the outcome of the game, in the opinion of the coach, is no longer in question. There is no “must play” rule at the JV level.

Varsity

At the highest level of competition in high school athletics, athletes and parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized:

- Develop a high level of proficiency in the physical skills of the sport
- Have the coach evaluate an athlete's attitude, skill and team role to determine playing time
- Develop sophisticated strategy, situational analysis and other mental aspects of the sport
- Specifically define an individual athlete's role within the team concept
- Foster maximum commitment to the team
- Look for ways to continually improve
- Understand and value the physical conditioning components of one's sport
- Understand the importance of individual sacrifice for the good of the team
- Winning within the rules of sportsmanship and fair play

Playing Time Policy – At the varsity level, coaches choose a starting lineup and play the best players. These players are chosen on ability and their performance at practice. Substitutes will play when a player is injured, tired, not performing well or when the outcome of the game, in the opinion of the coach, is no longer in question. There is no “must play” rule at the varsity level.

It is assumed that parents will instruct and prepare their children for a competitive interscholastic program at Banner. The students need to be prepared for the fact that they may not make the team, they may not make the starting line-up, and they may not be the “star.” Success is not synonymous with playing time; success is understanding your role and contributing to the overall team's benefit.

It is clearly understood that each coach will have full responsibility and authority to determine which players enter the games and for how long. The coach's determination in this area will be made on the basis of what will best benefit the team as a whole. This does not mean that there will be absolutely no consideration given to the individual needs of a player, but it does mean that instruction and guidance on making total team effort is of paramount importance in this particular educational experience at Banner.

VII. Cutting a Team

While our ultimate goal is to promote the greatest athletic participation possible at Banner Christian School, it may be necessary in some sports to cut a squad. This may occur due to limitations of our facilities, regulations specific to some sports, travel restrictions, amount of players trying out, and other factors.

Every coach has the responsibility and authority for selecting his or her team. The criteria for selecting the team is developed by the coach.

It is also important to remember that there are no guarantees. Players from the previous year's JV team, for example, do not automatically make either the JV or varsity squad the following year. Having been a member of a team during the previous year or even being a senior does not ensure that a student-athlete will make the squad.

Parents should expect that every candidate is treated fairly and given every consideration. Coaches are sensitive to feelings of disappointment, will handle the task as positively as possible, and be available to answer student-athletes' questions.

While we understand that being cut is disappointing for many student-athletes and even for their parents, anyone cut from a team is welcome to try out again next season or to try another sport. When parents and student-athletes understand and support the coach's decision, this difficult process becomes a less painful experience for all.

VIII. Quitting a Sport

If a student must drop out of a sport, it must be done in the proper way. The reason for dropping must be made known to the coach personally and all equipment must be turned in. If the sport is dropped after the first interscholastic competition in that season, or the team has been selected, the student may not participate in another sport for 365 days unless he or she obtains a written release from the Athletic Director.

IX. Standards for Participation

Because participation in co-curricular activities is viewed as a privilege, participants are required to meet the standard in all eligibility areas. Students who are behaviorally ineligible may practice but not participate in competitions or performances during the ineligibility period. Academically ineligible students are not permitted to participate in practices, competition, or performances until their eligibility is restored. In all instances, students may not participate in practice or competitions if he/she does not attend four academic subjects on the day of the practice or event. Under unusual circumstances, the Principal may waive this requirement. Further, a suspended student is always ineligible from any participation for the duration of the suspension. As a member school of the VCC and VISAA, Banner Christian student-athletes must adhere to all VCC and VISAA eligibility guidelines and the eligibility guidelines set forth in the Banner Christian Athletic Code.

Behavioral Eligibility/Code of Conduct

Every athlete is expected to maintain a good Christian testimony. At any time, an athlete not maintaining a Christian testimony on or off the field or in the classroom may be suspended or dismissed from the team.

An athlete who receives a detention that forces him to miss practice must serve that detention on the day it is assigned. Additionally, coaches may discipline players who are late or miss practice for detentions.

Athletes serving an In-School Suspension may participate in tryouts for a team, but may not participate in practices and games until he/she has served his/her suspension.

The use of profanity, vulgarity in any form or other inappropriate remarks will not be tolerated. This type of language on or off the field may result in a suspension or other disciplinary action to be determined by the Coach, Administration or Athletic Director.

Fighting during athletic events may result in a suspension and/or other discipline to be determined by the Administration and Athletic Director. More severe discipline actions may be enacted depending on the circumstances.

Athletes are to be good representatives of Christ and Banner at all home and away games. This includes their travel to and from the game location as well as any eating establishments the team stops at during transportation to or from a game. Failure to do so may result in a suspension and/or dismissal from the team or other disciplinary action.

If there are multiple indoor games at one location, players who are either waiting to play their game or who have already played their game must stay inside the immediate gym area. Players are not allowed to go outside or roam around the inside of the school or gym facility unsupervised. This applies to both home and away games. Failure to do so may result in suspension and/or dismissal from the team or other disciplinary action.

Any permanent removal of a player from the game by an official due to an attitude or language may result in an automatic one game suspension. The Athletic Director and Administration may review and make final decisions regarding game suspensions.

Athletes are not only required to avoid the behaviors prohibited in the *Athletic Handbook*, but are further required to avoid any behavior that supports or encourages the misconduct of other students.

Academic Eligibility

Only full time students will participate in athletic functions. A full time student is defined as one who takes a minimum of four academic courses. An exception may be allowed for a senior needing less than four credits to graduate.

Academic eligibility is determined by quarterly grade reports. For a student athlete to remain eligible, he/she must maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average. Interims may not cause a student to lose eligibility. If a student is declared academically ineligible at the end of a quarter, he/she is ineligible to participate in athletics the following quarter.

Participation in fall sports is determined by the student's academic performance of the previous spring quarter. A student may attend summer school or summer tutoring in an approved program to regain eligibility. Final decisions of all eligibility issues will be made at the discretion of the Athletic Director and/or Head of School.

Students who are ineligible for tryouts may not play that entire season even if eligibility is restored part way through the season.

An incomplete may disqualify an athlete from further participation or trying out. An athlete has two weeks from the end of a reporting period to make-up the missing work or the athlete loses his or her eligibility until the next quarter report.

The eligibility policy applies to transfer students entering the school at any time. To determine athletic eligibility, the quarterly grades from the previous school will be considered.

Students may participate in only one sport during the season unless the athletic director gives prior approval. Banner athletes will take precedent over any outside teams. Please refer to the practice guidelines on page 10.

Rules of eligibility apply to all support members of Banner teams. Statisticians and students managers must meet the requirements (except the physical examination).

Implementation – Based on the nine week grade reports, the school will publish a list of all ineligible students and place them in every teachers' mailbox. The Athletic Director will also notify each student of his/her ineligible status through the distribution of a "Notice of Ineligibility Form". It is, however, the responsibility of the coach and parent to make sure that ineligible students do not participate in practices or competitions during the ineligibility period. Participation of an ineligible student will result in forfeiture of the game participated in and an extension of the ineligibility period. The period of ineligibility will begin on the day that quarterly grades are given to the students and extend until the next quarter's grades are given out.

Physical Eligibility

Before participation in any athletic team practice and/or games, an athlete must have on file in the Athletic Director's office a completed approved "Physical Examination Form". A separate examination is required for each school year May 1 of the current year through June 30 of the succeeding year. The approved "Physical Examination Form" and other required forms can be found in the Athletic Director's office, school office or on the bannersports.org website. Other required forms to be completed:

- Application for Athletic Participation
- Acknowledgement of Assumption of Risk (one for each sport played)
- Transportation Forms

Age Requirement

Any student who turns 19 years old before August 1 of the academic year in question is ineligible for VCC and VISAA Events.

Grade Level Requirement.

Students in grades 8-12 are eligible for VISAA Events. Students below the 8th grade level are ineligible for VISAA Events.

Senior Status Requirement.

Attending academic classes while classified as a senior at any school marks the student's last year of eligibility for VISAA Events. A student who has been classified as a senior at any school, who then transfers to another school, is eligible for VISAA Events during that transfer year only. The student may not gain additional eligibility thereafter. Post-graduate students are ineligible for VISAA Events.

X. Sports Fees

A sports fee is required for each sport a student plays. Currently, the fee for playing a varsity sport is \$100, a JV sport \$75 and a middle school sport is \$50. This fee helps offset the cost of providing interscholastic sports. Sports fees will be charged to the family's RenWeb account.

XI. Practice

Practice is vital to the development of an athletic team. Practice attendance is mandatory. Strict enforcement of this policy will be followed. Whenever a coach holds practice, the athlete will be there unless absent from school or has permission from his/her coach to be absent.

The Head Coach of each varsity sport may require that athletes practice or participate in contests on Wednesdays, weekends, holidays, or vacation days.

Athletes are not encouraged to get outside jobs during a season, so as not to have conflicting practice/game and work schedules. Athletes will not be excused from practice because of outside work responsibilities. This would be unfair to the other team members participating in the sport.

Athletes are not encouraged to play on recreation or travel teams during season, so as not to have conflicting loyalties and forcing players to choose when schedules conflict. Athletes will not be excused from practice or games because of participation with an outside team. This would be unfair to the other team members participating in the sport.

Any varsity player with an unexcused absence from practice may not be allowed to play in the next game. Any varsity player who has two unexcused absences may be dismissed from the team.

Any middle school or junior varsity player who has two unexcused absences may not be allowed to play in the next scheduled game. Any middle school or junior varsity player who has four unexcused absences may be dismissed from the team.

Excused absences from practice or a game are as follows:

- Death in the family
- Illness
- School activities such as field trips, ACSI participation, etc.
- Unavoidable medical appointment (Please schedule all regular check-ups or dentist appointments on Wed.)
- Extenuating circumstances (discretion of coaches)

XII. Training

We encourage athletes to get eight or nine hours of sleep to be prepared to meet the demands of practice and competition.

We expect an athlete to maintain a well-balanced diet.

We demand all athletes to refrain from using any performance enhancing substances.

Coaches of particular sports may make additional training rules with the approval of the Athletic Director and/or the Head of School.

XIII. Winning and Losing

As 1 Corinthians 9:24 says, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize."

Banner intends to develop champions in our athletic program.

Every champion's passion is to win, but satisfaction comes in knowing he/she gave their very best.

Winning should not be used for personal glory or pride. Humility and gratitude are the characteristics of champions.

Christian graces should be exhibited by our player whether the game was won or lost.

XIV. Dress Code

Banner expects student athletes to be a representative of Jesus Christ. Therefore, each individual should take pride in his personal appearance.

Each coach will establish a team dress code approved by the Athletic Director. This dress code will be adhered to at all home and away games (before and after games).

XV. Scheduling Conflict Policy

In scheduling athletic events and other school activities, every attempt will be made to avoid conflicts. Scheduling conflicts, however, will occur from time to time. In the event of such a conflict, the coaches and/or sponsors affected will meet to determine what is best for both the school and the individual student. The student will be informed of the decision in advance. If the coaches and/or sponsors are unable to reach an agreement, the Principal and the Athletic Director will make the decision.

XVI. Transportation to Games

When Banner provides transportation to away athletic events outside of Chesterfield County, student-athletes are required to ride that transportation. The Athletic Department feels it is in the best interest of team unity that everyone travel together and share the same game experience and so the athletic staff can account for the whereabouts of all student-athletes.

Players may ride home from away athletic events with their parent/guardian. In order to do this, the parent/guardian (not the athlete) must present themselves to the coach and inform the coach that their student is leaving with them.

A player may only ride home from away athletic events with another parent/guardian if there is written permission from the player's parent/guardian. The parent/guardian that is driving (not the athlete) must present themselves to the coach and inform the coach that another student is leaving with them.

Players are not to ride home with any non-family student driver at any time unless the proper transportation forms have been filled out, signed and are on file with the Athletic Director.

When there are home games or "away" games inside of Chesterfield County, and there is Banner provided transportation available, players are not required to take the Banner provided transportation if they can arrive at the game location at the appropriate time.

When traveling, team members are to remain in their seats and conduct themselves in a manner that will promote safety. Any misconduct may result in disciplinary action including up to dismissal from the team, if warranted.

When male and female athletes travel in vehicles together, they will be separated by gender.

XVII. Music, Videos and Electronic Devices

The coaching staff is responsible for all music, videos and games played in school vehicles or at home games. The school will provide/approve any videos that are played in school vehicles.

Students are allowed to use iPods, iPhones, or other similar electronic devices when traveling to and from athletic events or in the locker room. However, these may not be used at playing fields, gymnasiums or in school buildings.

Music, games and videos on a student's electronic device can not contain crude, profane or vulgar language, gestures, or sexual innuendos. Coaches have the right to request electronic devices at any time to check it's contents as to its alignment with this policy. A student's electronic device used inappropriately will be taken and disciplinary action may result.

XVIII. Facilities

All athletes are expected to treat both home and away facilities with respect.

All damages to facilities must be reported immediately to the Coach or Athletic Director.

Any damage to facilities, due to negligence or vandalism, will be billed to the parents of those responsible.

XIX. Uniforms and Equipment

Laundry Care for Team Uniform

- each athlete is required to clean and maintain all equipment. Lost or stolen equipment is each athlete's responsibility.
- machine wash cold with mild detergent (no bleach).
- hang dry (helps to keep the numbers from coming off).
- do not dry clean
- athletes are responsible for avoiding color fading and properly maintaining the uniform issued to them.

Dates of Use for Team Uniform

- athletes will be issued a uniform by their particular coach before the first contest of their season.
- athletes are responsible for the uniform that was issued to them. Any changes made or switching of uniforms are the athlete's responsibility to communicate with their coach. Failure to do so may result in having to pay for lost, stolen or damaged uniforms.
- the complete uniform must be washed then turned in to the athlete's particular coach or Athletic Director within one week after the final contest of the season unless otherwise directed by the Head Coach or Athletic Director.
- any missing or damaged uniform pieces will be directly billed to the athlete's parent/guardian for replacement.

Places of Use for Team Uniform

- the only acceptable place for a uniform to be worn is for school athletic contests
- athletes will not wear the team uniform for physical education classes.
- wearing team uniform jerseys or jackets (**not shorts or pants**) during the school day is permitted on "dress down" days or on game days (if approved by Head of School and/or Athletic Director). White t-shirts must be worn underneath sleeveless jerseys.
- it is the athlete's responsibility to be prepared with proper clothing and equipment on game and practice days.
- uniform requests for senior pictures should be made to the Athletic Director.

XX. Weather

Lightning

Outdoor activities will be suspended with athletes sent into school building, outdoor shelter, bus or other vehicle until the lightning subsides. Practice or a contest may resume after the officials or coach issues an all clear.

Tornado Watch/Warning

If before a practice or contest, events will be canceled unless there is an "all clear" two hours before the scheduled starting time.

If during a practice or contest, events will be suspended and athletes may be released to leave.

At the sound of the warning siren during a practice or game, take cover in the nearest building on the east and north sides if at an outdoor facility or in the designated areas within the school if indoors. Practices or a contests may resume following the warning, if the officials or coaches issue an “all clear”.

Snow

Practice or contest may be held at the discretion of the Principal. Absences from practice or contest under these conditions will be excused.

If school is cancelled due to inclement weather, all practices and games will be cancelled as well.

XXI Awards System

Student Athletes can earn a letter for participating in a varsity sport. Receiving a letter is an honor by every recipient. The coach of each varsity sport will make recommendations as to which of their players have earned a letter. Letters will be awarded on the basis of the player's contribution to the team. The minimum requirements are the following:

- An athlete has to play in 50% of contests and must abide by the practice guidelines. Rare exceptions may be considered by the coach with approval from the Athletic Director.
- A letter and a pin will be given to each player who letters. Pins will be given to a returning lettermen. A silver service bar will be given to three year lettermen and a gold service bar will given to four year lettermen.
- Seniors who have played a varsity sport for four years or more will be recognized for their achievement and receive a “Senior Award” at the Athletic Awards Ceremony.
- A certificate of recognition will be given to varsity players who do not letter.
- Junior varsity players will receive a JV pin, if they meet the same requirements as the varsity letter.
- A certificate of recognition will be given to JV players who do not pin.
- If a student is dismissed from the team, he is not eligible for any awards or letters for that sport.
- As an integral, non-playing member of a team, managers may also be recognized for the valuable role they play. In order to be considered for a letter, managers, must adhere to all the rules and regulations of student athletes and fulfill all their duties as outlined by the coach.

Any awards for JV/Varsity athletes will be given out at the Athletic Awards Ceremony at the end of the year.

Recognition of middle school and lower school athletes will be given out at team get togethers/parties after their season has been completed.

XXII. Emergency / Injury Situations

Injured athletes can be tended to by the coach if it is a non-emergency, basic first aid procedure. If the injury appears more serious, the parents will be contacted as well as 911, if the need arises. The parents are primarily responsible for the medical treatment of their child. Coaches must fill out an injury report and give the report to the Athletic Director.

Injured athletes must obtain written medical clearance from a practitioner stating when the athlete can return to sports participation. A medical note stating “may return to school” is not sufficient. The note must indicate “cleared to participate in sports” and give the effective date.

XXIII. Important Emergency Phone Numbers:

Ambulance, Fire and other Emergency	911
Paul Ivill – Athletic Director	804-397-9061
Banner Christian School	804-276-5200

XXIV. Sportsmanship Guidelines for Spectators

It is important that **all** spectators at athletic events demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as Christ-like role models for our athletes and students. This means:

- There can be no vulgar or inappropriate language from our fans or spectators.
- Yelling, taunting, booing, or trash talking at our opponents and their cheerleaders cannot be tolerated.
- Spectators cannot leave the bleachers or enter onto the court or field during a contest.
- Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheering should be done for our team in conjunction with our cheerleaders and not against our opponent.
- We should not impede or interfere with our opponent’s cheerleaders from leading their cheers.
- No disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs, or gestures.
- No show of disrespect toward the officials.
- At appropriate times, cheer with enthusiasm. We should avoid anything that tends toward destructiveness or misuse of property.
- Be silent and respectful during prayer and the national anthem.
- Pick up and properly dispose of all trash.

If you see or hear something, that is inappropriate, please help us by saying something to the offending individual.

Remember, that purchasing a ticket provides you with the opportunity and privilege to watch a contest. It is not a license to verbally assault others or to be obnoxious.

Failure to abide by spectator guidelines’ may result in removal from the event.

XXV. Responsibilities and Standards of Conduct for the Parent/Guardian

Love one another

- John 13:34-35 (NIV) – “A new command I give you: love one another: as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one to another.”
- John 15:12-13 (NIV) – “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”

Respect each other

Romans 12:10 (NIV) – “Be devoted to one another with brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.”

Pray for each other

- Ephesians 6:18b (NIV) “....be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.”
- James 5:16b (NIV) “....the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”
- Philemon 1:4 (NIV) “I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers.”
- I Thessalonians 5:25 (NIV) “Brothers pray for us.” Heb. 13:18a (NIV) “pray for us.”

Parents/Guardians:

- Please pray for the athletic department of Banner Christian School.
- Support your student’s team and the rest of the athletic program in whatever way possible by:
 - Attending as many games as possible
 - Volunteering to help at contests/events
 - Be willing to meet any other needs that come to your attention
- Work within the established communication guidelines with coaches and/or athletic department (see section on Parent/Coach Communication guidelines).
- Aid in helping his/her child attend practices and games, arriving and getting picked up from practices and games on time. (Students who are picked up habitually late from practices and/or games may be removed from the team).
- Encourage his/her child to be involved in individual and/or off-season workouts/conditioning.

Behavior

Parenting and coaching are both challenging at times. It is our desire to make this a team effort to benefit the student, family, and community. As your children become involved in the athletic programs at Banner, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. These experiences, when handled well by all, can be excellent “life lessons” for our children.

The parent is expected to display Christian sportsmanship that reflects positively on the Banner Christian School community. It is important that respect for opponents and officials be shown at all times. Please refer to the athletic spectator guidelines on page 16 for appropriate actions during sporting events.

The Player-Coach Relationship:

Unfortunately, through televised games and the more recent proliferation of cable TV, many adults feel that they understand or perhaps know more than many coaches. Everyone becomes an expert. While this newfound expertise may heighten your appreciation of a sport, as a sport-parent, however, you are not the coach.

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics. A sport-parent can have a pronounced effect on this very important and delicate relationship. While you may not agree with all decisions of a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a decided effect upon your child. If you express a negative opinion in front of your child, you need to remember that he or she will return to practice the next day and may carry with him or her your convictions.

Receiving technical or strategic instruction at home may interfere and conflict with the instructional process at practice sessions and games. This may ultimately impede your son or daughter's progress and affect their playing time or whether they win a starting position.

The Parent-Coach Relationship:

In your role as a sport-parent, you obviously love and are concerned about your child's welfare. You want the best for him or her. But a student-athlete can have only one coach. Allowing the coach to instruct and guide the team is crucial in many respects. With full recognition of and respect for parental responsibility under God, parents must yield to coaches as decisions are made during practice and games.

Parental coaching "from the stands" is detrimental. A coach needs the full attention and concentration of his/her players. Practice and game times are the coaches. Uninvited parental intervention during that time is a serious distraction and a tremendous detriment to the student athlete and others.

Parents approaching the coach or their son/daughter "on the bench" during the game or at intermissions will not be overlooked. A coach should be able to expect full support from both player and parent.

Should you have any questions or concerns, do not approach the coach immediately before or after a contest. At this time, coaches have other responsibilities and it may be an emotional time. Call and make an appointment for a later time and approach this meeting in a calm, courteous and logical manner.

One of the responsibilities, which a coach has at the conclusion of a contest, is to have a brief meeting with his or her players. Student-athletes should not pause to talk to parents or friends immediately after games. These brief meetings are essential to the learning process involved in athletics.

The Parent-Player:

Some sport-parents may try to live through their child's athletic efforts. Being positive and supportive is important, but adding pressure and unrealistic expectations can be extremely harmful. Allow your son or daughter to enjoy and grow from this valuable experience. In numerous national studies, it has been determined that most

student-athletes participate for enjoyment or fun. Excessive pressure or expectations can alter this most fundamental reason for playing.

When you do speak with your child after a contest don't dwell on his or her play, how many points they scored or if they started. Instead, first ask how the team did? Did your son or daughter play hard, give 100% and have a good experience?

Relationship With Officials:

There is an age-old refrain often used by irate fans, "How much are you paying the officials?" The home team does not get the officials. All officials are assigned by a commissioner or assigner of the particular sport and neither team has control of which officials are assigned.

Officials agree to and follow a code of ethics. They really do not care or have a vested interest in which team emerges as the victor. It is also important to understand that they are a very necessary part of a game. A contest cannot be played without them. So while you may not agree with all of their calls, please do not harass or taunt them. It is also important to remember that they are in charge of the contest and have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. In many sports, a team will see the same official several times during a season. Coaches, Athletic Directors, Administrators and schools often work hard to establish a rapport and good working relationship with officials, which can easily be damaged by spectators

Communication

The parent is also expected to encourage loyalty and dedication to the team and to the coach. If there are any scheduling conflicts that would cause a player to miss a game or practice, notify the coach as far in advance as possible.

Attitudes of parents have great impact on the attitudes of athletes. If concerns or conflicts arise during the season, please follow these "Matthew 18" guidelines:

- The athlete should first talk to the coach.
- If not resolved, the parent should contact the coach to discuss the situation. The coach may have additional information from practice and from other contact with the student. This discussion should be beneficial to both parents and the coach, keeping the welfare of both the student and team in mind.
- Never approach a coach immediately before or following a game. This is not the proper time or place for a discussion concerning your child or the team. Call the next day and set up a time to talk or meet personally.
- Once you have stated your question or concern, listen to the explanation. Often a sport-parent may be blinded by emotion and this overrides logic and reason. Listening receptively may really help you to understand any explanation that is given.
- If the conflict is not resolved, you may call the Athletic Director to discuss your concerns.

Communications parents should expect from the coach or Athletic Director:

- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all members of the squad.
- Locations and times of all practices, contests, and meetings.
- Team requirements (fees, forms, special equipment, conditioning, etc.)
- Procedure, should your child be injured during participation.
- Any discipline measures that result in the denial of your child's playing time or continued participation on the team.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches

- Concerns regarding your child's mental, physical and spiritual status.
- Ways to help your child improve in the activity.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches

- Team Strategy
- Play calling
- Playing time (asking how the student-athlete can improve his/her skill is welcome).
- Other student-athletes

Parents will not communicate with the coaches, referees, or fans of the opposing team before, during, or after the game in a negative manner. If a parent has a complaint, he/she can inform the Athletic Director who will investigate the matter at hand.

Coaches and parents all want the athletic experience to be positive and educational for each student to the greatest extent possible. Prayers for athletes, coaches, and teams are important and appreciated.

