

2024-2025
KIRK ACADEMY

Athletic Handbook: Grades 6 – 12



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Kirk Academy Mission Statement

Kirk Academy strives to provide students the best possible Christian-based, college preparatory education while instilling in them respect for God, our nation, parents, and proper authority.

Kirk Academy Athletics Mission Statement

At Kirk Academy, we expect our student athletes to compete and conduct themselves according to the following principles.

- Kirk Academy student athletes will compete with strength and courage.
- Kirk Academy student athletes will overcome adversity.
- Kirk Academy student athletes will be humble and honorable in their actions.
- Kirk Academy student athletes will honor God with the physical training of their bodies.
- Kirk Academy student athletes will work as a team recognizing all parts are necessary for the body.
- Kirk Academy student athletes will demonstrate a respect for proper authority.

Kirk Academy student athletes are often the only representation of our school that others see. With that in mind, our student athletes are expected to be ambassadors for Kirk Academy and to be representatives of our school mission and our athletics mission at all times. This includes in the classroom, on campus, at practice, participating in games, and in the community. Failure to represent Kirk Academy in a positive manner in any of these areas can result in the athlete being suspended from participation in athletic events.

I AM A KIRK ACADEMY RAIDER.

I AM A WINNER. THIS IS MY CREED.

Kirk Academy and winning will become synonymous terms principally because of my efforts.

Winning will not be automatic; neither will I win simply by wanting to win.

Wanting to win is not enough. I, the individual Raider, will become a winner and will help my school become a winner because I realize that any worthwhile endeavor requires personal commitment.

I realize that regardless of my talents, I have an important contribution to make to my team and that the deeper meaning of being a Raider is my own willingness to make personal sacrifices for the good of my team and my teammates.

I deeply believe that regardless of whether I am the least or the greatest athlete on my team, I have an important part to play in my team's success. Every time I give my best effort on and off the field or court, in practice or in games, I make my team a better team.

Every time I take it easy and do less than my best, I hurt myself and my team with both my attitude and my actions.

I realize that my team is no stronger than I - the individual athlete. Therefore, I make the following personal commitment:

I will keep faith with my God, my teammates, and myself. I will pay the price of heat and grime, sweat and fatigue, aches, and blisters so that my teammates may keep faith with me. I will expect to win, but will not demand that winning be easy.

I strongly believe that I will be a better person because of this personal commitment and that the world will be a better world because of me.

I will not forget that even though I may sometimes lose, I will never become a loser, for

I AM A WINNER IN THE TRUEST SENSE.

I AM A KIRK ACADEMY RAIDER!

Eligibility for Athletics

The Kirk Academy Athletic Department strives to uphold the high ideals of success in academics, self-discipline, sportsmanship, morality, and respect for law and authority in all extracurricular activities. Therefore, the following guidelines are in effect for all students participating in athletics at Kirk Academy.

The Administration and coaches at Kirk Academy strongly believe that student-athletes should remain drug, alcohol, and tobacco free. Use of these substances not only hinders performance, but also threatens the health and welfare of the student. To assist in the administration of this policy, a committee has been formed to discuss any incident where drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco are involved. The purpose of this committee is to reinforce the importance of abiding by our training rules and to impose fair and consistent discipline for violations. The committee will consist of the Athletic Director, the Administrator, and the Head Coach of the player involved in the violation. Any athlete who is caught violating the policy on the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco will be required to appear before this committee.

Eligibility Guidelines

- Students using or found in possession of illegal drugs will face severe disciplinary action by the Administration.
- Students who must leave school early due to an inter-school event are expected to take any regularly scheduled tests before they leave. They are also expected to turn in any assignments due on that day and be prepared for the class the following day. This includes turning in assigned work and taking tests.
- Academic averages will be checked at 4.5-week intervals and at the end of each 9-week grading period. Any student failing more than one class at the aforementioned intervals, will be placed on probation. Any student on probation and failing more than one class during the next grading interval will be ruled ineligible for games. Students will be allowed to continue to practice with the team. Eligibility can be regained by no longer failing more than one subject at the next or any following grade check.

Eligibility Guidelines for new students

If a new student, entering grades 10-12, registers and is accepted as a student at Kirk Academy the following policy will be used to determine their eligibility to participate in athletics:

- A new student, in grades 10-12, enrolling from an MAIS member school without a bona-fide move, according to MAIS regulations, cannot compete in an athletic contest for one year.
- A new student enrolling from a non-MAIS member school must be registered for a period of one week before they can compete in an athletic contest but will be allowed to practice.
- A new student enrolling from an MAIS member school or a non-MAIS member school with a bona-fide move:

If the student is registered after the first athletic contest of the season has been played but prior to the final date an athlete may be added to a roster under the MAIS regulations: The coach of the team the athlete wishes to join along with the Athletic Directors and Headmaster will determine if the athlete will be allowed to become a member of that team and participate in athletic contests for that sport.

Academic Requirements for all New Students that want to participate in athletics:

- Must have passed 4 (Four) academic subjects the prior semester.
- If transferring during the semester student must be passing 4 academic subjects.

Sportsmanship Guide

Our Philosophy

- The athletic program at Kirk Academy is student centered and is an integral part of the student's total educational experience.
- Athletic achievement requires sincere commitment from all athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators. For all of us to be successful, effective communication must occur.
- The school athletic department and administration strongly believe in being accessible to parents and supportive of the coaching staff.
- We constantly strive to improve communication with the students and parents. For our program to be successful, it is necessary that everyone understand the focus and direction of the program.

The Responsibility of the Athlete

An athlete is often respected and admired by the student body, spectators, and the children in the community. The role is filled with responsibility. Good sportsmanship can be shown by the following:

- Remember that you are representing God, your family, your school, and your community.
- Respect the integrity and the judgment of the officials.
- Live up to the standards of the Kirk Academy Mission Statement and the Kirk Academy Athletic Mission Statement.
- Display positive actions in public at all times.
- Athletes that engage in conduct that causes them to be removed from a game by the officials or by the coaches or actions that reflect poorly on Kirk Academy in the opinion of the administration are subject to discipline by the coaches as well as by the administration. **All fines incurred by actions of an athlete or by an athlete's parent(s) will be paid by the parent.**

The Responsibility of the Fan/Parent

Spectators at an athletic contest play an important role in displaying good sportsmanship. As a group, your actions may have the biggest impact on how others view our school.

Fans should:

- Compliment student-athletes in their attempts to improve and learn.
- Respect both players and fans of opposing teams.
- Refrain from speaking negatively about coaches in the presence of student athletes.
- Know and understand the rules of the game and cheer good performances.
- Cheer for our athletes, not against athletes on opposing teams.
- Never confront an official/umpire before, during, or after a game. Please use discretion when reacting to a call with which you disagree.
- Never confront players, coaches, or fans at any time. Physical or verbal abuse of a Kirk Academy employee may result in a \$500.00 fine and a one-year ban from all Kirk Academy athletic events.
- Kirk Academy Administration reserves the right to ask a student or fan to adjust conduct, refrain from remarks, or leave an event to maintain the positive image or integrity of our team and school.
- Any fines incurred by a parent or by an athlete will be paid by the parent.
- School rules regarding conduct apply at school-sponsored events.

Violations of these rules of conduct could lead to forfeiture of the contest, the school being placed on probation and fined, or the parent/fan being denied access to future contests and or fined by the MAIS.

Athletic Lines of Communication

Parent/Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging responsibilities. By establishing and understanding each position, we are able to accept the actions of others, thus enhancing effective communication. As parents you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from your coach.

Communication You Should Expect from the Coach

- When and where practices and contests are held.
- Expectations the coach has for your child and the team.
- Procedure if an injury occurs during participation.
- Team requirements/rules for participation.
- Notification whenever any disciplinary action results in your child being denied participation in a practice or game.
- Monetary costs of participation
- Coaches will be required to have a meeting with parents prior to the season.

Communication Coaches Expect from Parents

As students become involved in athletics, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand at times students may also experience various challenges as well. At these times, student-initiated discussion with the coach is recommended and encouraged.

Parents/Students should notify the Coach regarding:

1. Any schedule conflict well in advance.
2. Any special health concerns.
3. Any injuries, treatment, or rehab.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

1. Any unhealthy mental or physical strain you detect in your child at home.
2. Ways you can contribute to your child's skill improvement and development.
3. Any dramatic changes you detect in your child's behavior.
4. Treatment of your child, mentally and physically.

Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches

1. Team strategy or play calling.
2. Playing time
3. Other student athletes.

Procedure to Follow If You Have a Concern to Discuss with a Coach:

1. Reach out directly to the respective coach to request a meeting.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, make an appointment with the Athletic Director to set up a meeting with the coach.

If the meeting with the Athletic Director and the coach does not result in resolution of the problem, the following steps should be taken:

1. Call and set up an appointment with the Head of School to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

It is of utmost important that we insist that parents or fans do not confront a coach immediately before, during, or following a contest or practice. These can be busy and emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. Instead, follow the previously mentioned procedures in order to seek assistance with your concern.

General Information

Conduct

The conduct of athletes must reflect the fact that they represent Kirk Academy. In the athletic and academic arenas, athletes' behavior must epitomize a positive attitude and a strong work ethic. According to this code, athletes must:

1. Play hard and play for the love of the game.
2. Respect officials and accept their decisions without question.
3. Win without boasting and lose without excuses.

Forms

Each student must have a current physical, a permission to participate form, a permission to treat form, and insurance information on file with the Athletic Director before he or she begins practice.

Physical Strength and Conditioning

The philosophy of the strength and conditioning department is to ensure that each athlete is given the proper training to prevent injury. Athletes will challenge their power, speed, strength, and flexibility and will receive mental and nutritional training. Each athlete will use the safest and most effective programs to reach set goals. The girls' and boys' weight room is located in the field house. All athletes will participate in year-round strength training (in-season and out-of-season).

Practice

Specific guidelines concerning practice times and schedules are outlined with each sport. General practice information includes the following:

1. Days and times of practice are communicated through individual coaches.
2. With prior notice, a coach may call a special practice session.
3. A storm does not necessarily cancel practice. There are inside athletic areas where teams can practice.
4. Holiday practices must be scheduled by the coaches with at least two weeks prior notice. These practices are approved through the athletic director.
5. The coaches distribute summer practice and weight training information before summer vacation. Summer practices follow MAIS guidelines.

Sunday Practice

Any Sunday practice must be approved by the Athletic Director. These practices cannot be mandatory and must not interfere with church or family obligations. Athletes will not be punished in any way for missing a Sunday practice.

Furthermore, Sunday practice cannot begin before 1:00 p.m. and must be over by 5:00 p.m.

School Attendance

Athletes must attend at least half of their scheduled class periods during the day in order to participate in athletic contests. The only exception to this is if the absences is a documented excused absence.

Travel Dress

When students report to games, they should be appropriately attired. Coaches will determine appropriate attire.

Game Day Dress

Athletic teams may wear a special “Game Day” uniform in lieu of the school uniform. Athletes will be able to wear this shirt only on days they are participating in an athletic event. All members of the team must wear the approved “Game Day” top or the entire team may forfeit this privilege. Again, the Game-Day uniforms may be worn only on game days or a specific day that has been approved in advance by the administration. Athletes will always be required to dress in a manner consistent with the spirit and values of Kirk Academy - obscene language, symbols, or symbols of sex, drugs, or alcohol on clothing are expressly prohibited.

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a discipline notice. (See Student Handbook: Dress Code.)

Awards Ceremonies

Athletic award ceremonies are held to honor the athletes. An award ceremony will be hosted by the Athletic Booster Club. The date/s and time/s of this ceremony will be communicated by each coach to their teams. Appropriate dress will be determined by the coach.

Communication

Student athletes are under the direct supervision of the coaching staff. It is important that the athlete communicate directly with the coach. If a parent would like to talk with the coach or has a concern, he or she may contact the specific coach or by calling the office: 662-226-7577. If you are unable to reach someone, we will do our best to return phone calls as soon as possible.

General Athletic Rules

- School attendance is mandatory the day after the game unless the athlete has a doctor’s excuse or prior permission from the Administrator. Athletes must be in school.
- Any player that are suspended will also be ineligible for practice and competition on the day of the suspension. There may also be additional penalties administered by the athletic director or the

coaching staff.

- Smoking, drinking, dipping, chewing, use of nicotine pouches, and vaping by players are prohibited. Use of alcohol, nicotine, and tobacco is destructive to the training process. The use of these substances can result in game or practice suspension or dismissal from the team.

Purpose of Guidelines

- Reinforce commitment to finishing what you start.
- Reinforce loyalty to teammates and the program.
- Prevent athletes from changing sports for inappropriate reasons.
- Prevent quitting toward the end of an unsuccessful season just to start a new sport.
- Reinforce to players that may have taken a limited spot on the team that there is an obligation that goes along with being selected to a team.

Athletes Participating in Multiple Sports

Two Seasonal Sports

Athletes may participate in more than one sport during a season. In this case, athletes need to communicate with their coaches to keep them informed of their participation in multiple sports. In some situations, it is impossible to play two sports in the same season due to conflicting schedules of practice and events. Athletes playing two sports must fulfill the obligations of each team as set by the coach in order to participate in both.

If conflicts in schedules occur, the coaches, with approval from the athletic director, will determine in which activity the athlete will participate.

Participation in Overlapping Sports

If an athlete is participating in a sport and another sport in which he/she plans to participate begins prior to the conclusion of the first sport, the athlete's primary responsibility is with the first or seasonal sport. No athlete will be taken from one sport at the expense of another sport at Kirk Academy. The head coach of the in-season team has the right to deny or grant permission for the athlete to participate in some activities on a limited basis.

Points of Emphasis

It is important for the involved coaches to work together for the benefit of the entire athletic program and not put the athlete in the middle of the controversy.

The end of a sport is obviously the most important time due to playoffs and tournaments. Coaches need athletes focusing on advancing as far as possible without the added pressure of starting a new sport.

Athletes that know they will be involved in overlapping sports must accept the circumstances and take responsibility.

- The athlete should take responsibility and work outside the seasonal sport on an individual basis to condition and improve skills required in the next sport.
- No athlete will be penalized for participating in another Kirk Academy sport.

Termination from a Team after the Season Begins

Once an athlete begins the playing season in a sport and his/her team membership is terminated by the athlete or the coach, for a reason other than being cut due to lack of ability- he/she is ineligible to begin participating in another sport that season. This may be appealed to the athletic director. An exception will require mutual consent of both coaches involved and the athletic director.

Note: The playing season is considered the beginning and ending dates of interscholastic competition.

Athletic Teams

Football

- Eligibility: Kirk Academy offers football to students in grades 7 through 12. The teams are made up of a junior high team and a varsity team.
- Practice: The junior high team practices during the school day. Varsity teams practice after school.
- Games: Please check the schedule. Varsity home games begin at 7:00 p. m. Jr. High home games begin at 6:30 p.m.
- Equipment: The school will provide pants, practice jerseys, helmet, shoulder pads, knee and thigh pads, girdle pads, mouth pieces, and game jerseys. Team members are responsible for providing any other equipment deemed necessary by the coach.
- Weights: Varsity and Jr. Varsity teams have an off-season and an in-season weight program.

Baseball

- Eligibility: Boys in grades 7 - 12 are eligible to try out for the team. Tryouts are held in early spring. Players are evaluated on their defensive skills, pitching ability, speed/quickness, hitting, and the intangibles that make a good competitive ball player and are placed on the varsity or jr. high team based on their level of skill.
- B Team: The B Team plays between 12 and 15 games each season. This group is made up of those players who have made the squad but need to develop with more game experience. These players

practice each day and are on the varsity squad. The goal for the B Team is to continue to develop potential and talent on a daily basis along with the enjoyment of playing and the competition the sport gives to each player.

- Practice: Practice will be after school each day during baseball season.
- Season: The first game will be played February. The regular season can include 25 baseball games. Playing in a tournament counts as one game. The regular season spans from February to the end of April. The following two weeks are for the playoff games.
- Equipment and uniforms: The school provides all equipment except gloves and shoes.
- Field: The baseball team takes pride in the upkeep of the baseball field. Players are expected to help with upkeep when needed.

Fast Pitch Softball

- Eligibility: Girls in grades 6 - 12 are eligible for varsity. If possible, a B Team will be formed and play as many games as can be scheduled.
- Practice: Practice will be after school each day during softball season.
- Season: Girls softball season begins in July and runs through early October.
- Equipment: The school provides uniforms and equipment. Athletes provide gloves and cleats.

Track and Field

- Eligibility: Kirk Academy track and field is offered for all students. Students participate on the junior high team or the varsity team for both boys and girls. The junior high team is for students in grades 6 – 9.

Varsity: The varsity team is made up of students in grades 7-12. It is possible for a junior high student to participate on the varsity team. A junior high student may also improve enough during the year so that he or she can be added to the varsity team after the junior high season is completed.
- Practice: Track practice begins in February. The number of events in which a person participates will determine the length of practice. Practice begins at the end of the academic day after the athlete has completed off season workouts.
- Season: Track meets begin the first week in March. The junior high season ends in late April and the varsity season ends in early May.
- Equipment: Athletes provide their own shoes and practice clothes.

Girls Soccer

- **Eligibility:** Any girl in grades 7-12 may try out for girls' soccer. The players chosen for the "A" team will be selected on the basis of soccer skill, dedication to the team, work ethic, and attitude. The players who do not make the "A" team will be able to compete on the "B" team. The "B" team is a training ground and feeder program for the "A" team. The "B" team players are encouraged to take their roles seriously, as this is the way we build a strong "A" team in the future.
- **Practice:** Practice for the soccer team is Monday – Friday after school. All players are expected to be present at every practice. If for some reason a player cannot make a practice, she must clear it with the coach before the practice begins. The amount of time at practice will strongly influence the amount of playing time in a game.
- **Season:** The girls' soccer season begins in July and ends in October. Practices will begin in the summer.
- **Equipment:** The school provides uniforms.

Cross-Country

Cross-Country is middle-distance running. In the MAIS high school events, the boys run 3.1 miles and the girls run 3.1 miles. Cross country race courses utilize natural terrain and may include hills, creeks, and other natural barriers.

- **Eligibility:** Any student in grades 6-12 may be on the cross-country team and run in team meets.
- **Practice:** Practices are held after school. All players are expected to be present at every practice. If for some reason a player cannot make a practice, he or she must clear it with the coach before the practice begins.
- **Season:** The team runs in 4 to 6 races each season beginning in early September and continuing through the MAIS state meet, which is generally held in late October or early November. Most meets are on Mondays.
- **Uniforms:** Athletes provide their own practice clothes and running shoes. Uniforms will be provided for each runner.

Basketball

Junior High Basketball

- **Eligibility:** Students in grades 6-9 compose the junior high basketball teams.
- **Practice:** Athletes practice during designated periods. With prior notice, an additional practice may be called.
- **Season:** Teams play a schedule of games with a conference tournament at the end of the season.

- Equipment/Uniforms: Kirk Academy provides game uniforms. Athletes provide shoes and practice uniforms.

Varsity Boys' and Girls' Basketball

- **Eligibility:** The varsity basketball teams are made up of students in grades 7 - 12.
- **Practice:** Practice times will be set by the coach.
- **Season:** Basketball season begins in October and ends with the Overall Tournament in late February. The varsity basketball teams play 24-28 regular season games along with 3 invitational tournaments. There are also 4 tournaments at the end of the season; the District, the North, the State, and the Overall.
- **Equipment/Uniforms:** Kirk Academy provides game uniforms. Athletes provide shoes and practice uniforms.

Tennis

- **Eligibility:** All students in grades 6-12 may try out for the Kirk Academy tennis team. The top 7 girls and the top 7 boys play on the "A" team.
- **Practice:** Practice days will be determined by the Coach.
- **Season:** The tennis team competes in March and April. The State tournament is in May. Players are required to wear the appropriate tennis clothes for both practice and matches.

Golf

- **Eligibility:** All students (girls and boys) in grades 6-12 may try out for the golf team.
- **Practice:** Golf practice begins in March.
- **Season:** The team will play 6-10 matches.

Athletic Facilities Use Policy

Any outside group desiring to use any athletic facility must have permission from the athletic department. They must also have an employee of the school at the event. This employee will be responsible for unlocking the facility, making sure it is cleaned up after the event, and locking everything up after the event is over. Kirk Academy reserves the right to deny use or to charge a rental fee to outside groups wanting to use any athletic facilities for games, tournaments, matches, etc. This rental fee can include payment of faculty and/or maintenance staff for additional time and responsibilities on campus during the event. The outside group may be responsible for providing and paying for security during the event.

This handbook is designed in an attempt to provide information to parents and athletes concerning the athletic policies and procedures of Kirk Academy. While many areas have been addressed, there is little doubt that issues and circumstances could arise that are not covered in this handbook. Any questions on interpretation of policies and procedures or any issues or circumstances that arise which are not covered in this handbook will be decided upon by the administration.

