

CDS Athletic Strategy

I. Philosophy

Development and Discipleship

Covenant Day School (CDS) seeks to minister to and equip the whole student spiritually, mentally and physically. The purpose of the athletic program at Covenant Day is to help in the development and exercise of Christ-like behavior including self-discipline, obedience, discipleship, stewardship, grace and compassion. The athletic program seeks to nurture these spiritual characteristics while developing the physical body in a competitive environment. Participation on any athletic team at Covenant Day is considered a God-honoring privilege.

Perspective

As students practice and compete, it is the expectation that parents and fans will be an encouragement to CDS teams, players, coaches and officials. While emotions may be intense in the midst of competition, athletes, parents and fans are to be supportive and not boo, yell, or criticize the officials. The officials' decisions may only be questioned by a coach who will do so in an appropriate manner. Fans are to respect all opponents and treat them as we would have them treat us, considering every visitor, opponent, or official as a partner in Christ or potential partner in Him. In victory, we desire to be gracious to the loser, and not be boastful. In loss, we will not demean the achievement of the opponent nor criticize the coaching or officials.

Team Selection

All teams will have a published tryout period to be determined by the head coach and, following the tryouts, the coach will decide the method of communicating the final team roster. The coach will follow up personally with those that did not make the team. Players will be selected based on attitude, grades, athletic ability, game skills, and potential. The number of players on a team will be determined by the coach in consultation with the Athletic Director (AD).

Balance and Eligibility

The school's desire is that student athletes be well rounded and not focused solely on athletic pursuits. Eligibility requirements for membership on a team speak to the need to maintain academic standing and to that end academic responsibilities will take priority over extra-curricular activities. (See athletic handbook for eligibility standards) There are some students who, because of diagnosed learning differences receive academic accommodations through CDS. The eligibility standard for these students is to have no grades below 60 and no more than two grades below a 70. Practice times for all teams occur according to a set schedule that has been made available to team members.

II. History and Demographics

Founded in 1989 as a kindergarten through fifth grade school, Covenant Day School added a grade level each year until it was a kindergarten through ninth grade school. CDS began offering athletic team opportunities, having only a middle school, in about 1992. In 2004-2005, after adding up through 11th grade, CDS joined the North Carolina Independent School Athletic Association (NCISAA) as a 1A school. Based upon high school enrollment, CDS became a 2A school in 2006-2007 and moved to the 3A classification in the 2008-2009 school year.

A significant number of students participate in the athletic programs of the school. In 2008-2009 at the high school level, 32% participated in fall sports, 32% in winter sports, and 49% in spring sports. At the middle school level, participation was 33% in the fall, 29% in the winter, and 32% in the spring. The numbers of students on the various teams were as follows:

Fall:	Soccer (Boys):	MS-19; JV-16; V-16
	Volleyball (Girls):	MS-13; JV-11; V-11
	Tennis (Girls):	MS-12; V-9
	Cross-Country (Co-ed):	MS-25; V-17
Winter:	Basketball (Boys):	MS-12; JV-12; V-12
	Basketball (Girls):	MS-12; JV-9; V-11
	Swimming (Co-ed):	MS-23; V-24
	Cheerleading (Girls):	MS-13; V-12
Spring:	Soccer (Girls):	MS-18; V-20
	Track and Field (Co-ed):	MS-19; V-57
	Baseball (Boys):	MS-17; V-16
	Tennis (Boys):	MS-12; V-12
	Golf (Co-ed):	MS-1; V-6
Softball	V-12	

We project that over the next 5 years, as there is increased student interest and various teams are added, the following programs will be offered:

Fall:	Soccer (Boys):	MS, JV, V
	Volleyball (Girls):	MS, JV, V
	Tennis (Girls):	MS, V
	Cross-Country (Co-ed):	MS, V
Winter:	Basketball (Boys):	MS, JV, V
	Basketball (Girls):	MS, JV, V
	Swimming (Co-ed):	MS, V
	Cheerleading (Girls):	MS, JV, V
Spring:	Soccer (Girls):	MS, JV, V
	Track and Field (Co-ed):	MS, V
	Baseball (Boys):	MS, JV, V
	Softball (Girls):	MS, V
	Tennis (Boys):	MS, V
	Golf (Co-ed):	MS, V

III. Role of the Athletic Director

The AD fulfills the lead role in the athletic program. He is accountable to the Head of School for the vision and long-range direction of the overall athletic program and its tactical execution. Furthermore, his purpose is to see athletics used as a means to support the overall purpose of the school and to grow and nurture strong Christian character which is developed through testing and adversity as well as through triumphs. Offering a strong competitive athletic program is important to fulfilling the school's emphasis on excellence.

The AD serves as an ambassador and spokesperson for the CDS community. In addition to representing the school at various functions, he meets regularly with conference ADs and also attends numerous athletic functions, both at home and away. Furthermore he is frequently introduced to families as they inquire about the school in order to learn how athletics is integrated into the overall purpose of the school. On top of this, he is expected to develop and maintain a strong relationship with the church operations department as well as the SOAR ministry. The AD has the responsibility to oversee the Booster Club. He is accountable to both represent and also articulate the mission of the school and of the athletic program.

The AD, MS AD, Head of School, and High School principal create plans for the athletic program in general. Although Varsity conference schedules are generated by the conference, changes are worked out between individual schools at the initiation of the AD, with the AD scheduling all non-conference events. JV and MS games are likewise scheduled by the AD or the MS AD.

Personnel who interact with and have opportunity to impact the students are integral to a solid program. The AD is held accountable to select, assimilate, train, and evaluate all V and JV coaches; the MS AD evaluates all MS coaches. In addition to the coaching staff, the corresponding programs are informally evaluated by the same people.

While a coach may have input into scheduling, all games are actually set by either the AD or MS AD. In some cases, a coach will schedule events. As stated above, conference schedules are provided by the conference, and then non-conference games are chosen based on proximity, schedule availability, and level of competitiveness. While we seek to play non-conference teams that present a challenge, stronger consideration is given to proximity and schedule availability. CDS does not yet tour any teams, but will travel for tournaments to give the athletes exposure to other programs and to be involved in mission outreach.

IV. Coaches

Critically important to offering a dynamic program is providing a superb coaching staff. A candidate will apply for consideration utilizing the standard school employment application. After an initial screening of applications, viable candidates for Varsity coaching positions have a personal interview with the AD, the HS principal and the Head of School. For JV coaches, the HS principal and AD participate; for MS coaches, the AD, MS AD and MS principal are present. For assistant coaches, the applicant is interviewed by the AD and MS AD. To be considered, an applicant must give credible profession of faith as a Christian. He or she should be gifted in working with students, share CDS's philosophy of sports, and be highly qualified as a coach in the particular sport. The AD utilizes networking, word of mouth, personal references, and job postings to recruit coaching candidates.

Working with CDS families and athletes is attractive to coaches. For compensation, they receive a stipend comparable to that offered by other local schools of similar size. After consulting with other schools in the community, the AD sets a stipend for the various coaching levels and budgets this amount for the upcoming year, upon approval of the Head of School.

Prior to the beginning of each season, the AD directs a meeting of coaches to provide them with the philosophy and overview of CDS expectations, as well as guide them through the CDS coaches' handbook. Mentoring of new coaches is provided by the AD, the MS AD, or another experienced coach on staff. The AD or MS AD conducts a performance review using the coach's evaluation form and meets with each coach to discuss the review. This evaluation also includes input from the parents of their team members.

It is important that all CDS coaches remember that they are representing Christ, themselves, their teams, the athletic department, and the school at all times. A coach's words and actions are closely watched by students, parents, alumni, faculty, and the community at large, and they reflect either positively or negatively on the program and on the name of Christ. Coaches must refrain from the use of profanity and insist that the athletes do likewise. Coaches are responsible for the conduct and the care of the team from the beginning to the end of the game or away trip. This includes such mundane tasks as making sure that bench areas, dressing rooms and team vehicles are left in good condition.

V. Athletic Booster Club

While the athletic program is sponsored, supported, and directed by the school, CDS is blessed to have an active Athletic Booster Club. The purpose of the Booster Club is to help cultivate school community through our athletic program and provide support for the athletes and the CDS Athletic Department. Boosters seek to encourage a healthy program specifically by providing financial support, collecting gate admissions, and providing concessions at athletic events.

Over the past few years, the Booster Club has increased in size and scope. One of the responsibilities of the Booster Club is overseeing admissions to various athletic events. Ticket and concession sales in 2005-06 totaled \$6,016. In 2008-09 that number rose to \$19,399. All non-tournament revenue goes to the Booster Club, all conference tournament revenue goes directly to the conference and gate revenue from state tournaments, after expenses, is turned over to the NCISAA. Apparel sales have increased from \$5,337 in 2005-06 to \$8,955 in 2008-09. The golf tournament netted \$13,800 in 2005-06 and \$17,154 in 2008-09.

While no formal record of attendance has been kept in the past, we will begin to do so to measure the growth. Attendance at Varsity soccer and basketball has been strong; tennis, golf, cross country, baseball, track, swimming, volleyball and softball has had a lower turnout of spectators.

Booster Club membership increased from 168 in 2005-06 to 188 in 2008-09 and the income generated from that rose from \$12,615 to \$29,900.

VI. Facilities

Over the years we have developed various athletic spaces and currently have adequate facilities for soccer, basketball, volleyball, tennis, and cross country. There are facility needs for softball (specifically a larger outfield), V baseball, and track. We anticipate raising funds to facilitate the needs, and look to build out appropriate practice and playing space near the current fields at Warner Park. The hiring of a Director of Advancement and conversations with leadership at Christ Covenant Church are first steps to facilitate progress with the envisioned development.

As we continue to grow and offer an excellent athletic program we expect to provide a soccer stadium with track, baseball stadium, and increase the dimensions on the softball field. Because of gifts to the annual fund, we have up-fitted a location as the weight room and we currently offer weight training.

VII. Placement of students

Current athletic programs have contributed to increased interest in the HS. Because we now field a variety of teams every season, students have varied opportunity to participate. Due to early successes, such as winning the Wachovia Cup in 2006, 2007, and 2008 as the top school in the state at the 1A and 2A levels, we continue to attract students of stronger athletic ability.

As students complete their high school experience, a number of them have the ability to play sports at the collegiate level. The school is highly desirous of supporting our athletes in their pursuit of college acceptance. One of the most productive ways to assist is by building relationships with college programs. High performing athletes tend to get courted directly by colleges, often via a phone call to the athlete from the college coach. The HS coach will support a student's interest by writing a letter of recommendation when asked. Furthermore, our coaches will field calls from interested colleges, and will initiate calls to schools that a student is truly interested in and capable of matriculating at. Additionally, we will send game tapes when appropriate. Because our HS coaches are familiar with programs at particular colleges throughout the nation, they are best able to recommend those colleges with which they are familiar. Additionally, the school's guidance counselor provides excellent support as to further appropriate colleges to consider. Our coaches initiate calls to colleges as students express interest and when, in the opinion of the coach, the athlete has the ability to play in that program. The AD directs the coaches as they assist students in the college application process.

VIII. Finances

To support the quickly developing athletic program over the past eleven fiscal years (1999-2010), the athletic budget in the school's operating budget has increased significantly:

1999-2000	44,638.53
2000-2001	48,814.56
2001-2002	45,563.74
2002-2003	54,876.83
2003-2004	48,401.54
2004-2005	87,970.80
2005-2006	86,208.85
2006-2007	96,640.00
2007-2008	145,575.00
2008-2009	161,500.00
2009-2010	175,640.00

The current budget is needs driven, calculating coaching stipends, referee costs, uniforms, equipment, and facility rental. Coaches present additional requests for enhancements to the AD and also the Booster Club. Over the years the school has increased the budget and taken on expenses formerly met by the Booster Club (such as uniforms).

In addition, money from the Annual Fund campaign has been utilized to accomplish significant enhancements such as providing and equipping a weight room, providing a new middle school gym floor, funding new cheerleading uniforms, expanding the concession area in the High School, purchasing additional buses for team transportation, paving a work out area for the track team, purchasing a new batting cage net, replacing the sound system in the High School gym, providing a storage building, and installing restrooms at Warner Park.

The Long Range Planning committee of the CDS Board forecasts a need for enhanced facilities which includes developing Warner Park further. The prioritized list of facilities and infrastructure enhancements has been presented to the Long Range Planning committee of Christ Covenant Church.

It is the goal of CDS to utilize athletic programs as a means to provide a wonderful opportunity for a valuable Middle School and High School athletic experience, but even more to use this opportunity to grow solid character in the hearts and lives of the student athletes. To the extent that CDS student athletes develop God-honoring character and also life-long habits of caring for their bodies, athletics at CDS will have achieved its purpose.