



The *Athletic Manual* of the Alabama Christian Athletic Association (ACAA) provides the framework for sanctioned interscholastic athletic competition between participating ACAA member schools. It is vitally important that the purpose, philosophy, rules, and procedures be always respected and followed. Your cooperation and support are appreciated.

Revised December 2022

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# **Alabama Christian Education Athletic Association Constitution and By-Laws**

## **ARTICLE 1.0 – NAME AND LOCATION**

**1.** The name of this organization shall be the Alabama Christian Athletic Association (ACAA). Its principal place of operation is 2534 Decatur Highway ♦ Gardendale ♦ AL ♦ 35071. The mailing address is P.O. Box 559 ♦ Gardendale ♦ AL ♦ 35071.

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## **ARTICLE 2.0 – PURPOSE and PHILOSOPHY**

**2.1** The purpose of the Alabama Christian Athletic Association (ACAA) is to provide a framework for athletic competition between member schools. Establishing, maintaining, and enforcing regulations that govern such events shall be a necessary function of the ACAA. Setting standards that contribute to the spiritual, academic, and physical needs of the students will be carried out as a necessary purpose of the ACAA.

**2.2** The philosophy of athletics for ACAA is Bible-based. We believe that sanctioned competition can be a useful tool in the physical and spiritual development of the participants. Life lessons of hard work, fair play, teamwork, and respecting authority can be taught and learned. As Bible believing Christians, we believe in a system of absolutes in how we live. Situation ethics too often is the practice for Christians when it comes to athletics. Our motive to win is often vindictive and personal. We forget that Jesus taught us to “do unto others as you would have them to do unto you” (Matthew 12:7). Paul wrote to Timothy saying that if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. We are again taught by Paul in I Corinthians 10:31 that “Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

## **ARTICLE 3.0 – MEMBERSHIP**

**3.1** Every school that is a member of the Alabama Christian Education Association (ACEA) and is in good standing has ACAA membership privileges. Schools that do not meet ACEA membership requirements may be a member of the ACAA if they are a like-minded Christian school and meet membership requirements and pay the required fees. The ACEA Executive Director must recommend membership for such schools to the ACAA Committee who then makes the final decision. Non-ACEA schools must commit to a two-year membership and meet other requirements determined by the ACAA Committee to be eligible for post season play in any sport.

Schools that meet the membership requirements to be a member of the ACEA cannot choose to only be a member of ACAA. However, as previously state ACEA member schools are ACAA members and have ACAA athletic privileges.

**3.2** By signing the membership application, each administrator binds himself and the members of his faculty to familiarize themselves with these rules and standards as enumerated herein. Administrators, coaches, and athletic directors that are new to this Association must sign a statement verifying that they have read this manual. Also, they are obligated to instruct the student body in them, especially those who are candidates for interscholastic activities; to keep on file detailing academic, athletic, medical, and attendance records of all students who participate in any sanctioned activity; to forward promptly to the Executive Director or his designee all eligibility lists, reports, and records required; and to enforce the rules and standards herein mentioned within his school. Failure to understand or appropriately apply these rules is not justified.

**3.3** Schools and administrators who wish to maintain membership in this Association shall sign membership renewal applications each year and send their membership fee with the application to the Association office. Upon receipt of the school's membership in the ACEA, said school's membership in the ACAA is automatic.

#### **ARTICLE 4.0 – STANDARD OF DRESS AND APPEARANCE**

**4.1** The Alabama Christian Athletic Association believes that schools participating in the various activities sponsored by this organization should meet standards of dress and grooming for participating students. Dress and appearance should be modest according to conservative Christian standards as taught in the Bible.

ACAA makes no attempt to govern the standards of the local school, but we feel it necessary to have a common standard for sanctioned competition between participating member schools to avoid conflict and create a comfort level for everyone involved. Therefore, all students and athletic personnel who participate in any activity sponsored by and sanctioned by ACAA are required to meet the following basic standards.

**4.2 Female Athletes: Volleyball, Basketball, Softball, Track and Field, and any new sport added to the league.**

- Shorts that are loosely fitted with the inseam being no less than seven inches.
- Mid-thigh length spandex/compression shorts the same color of shorts, must be worn. If spandex/compression shorts extend beyond short length, they should be black, white, beige or the predominant color of the shorts. Shorts (as noted above) must be worn over spandex/compression shorts. Spandex should be a solid color.
- Athletic bras are required.
- The uniform top should be long enough that when the arms are raised above the head the midriff does not show.
- Shirts worn under basketball uniform top should be the same color as the uniform color.

- It is the responsibility of the coach and administration to make sure players are not “rolling” waistbands.
- Refer to the *National Federation of High Schools Rules* regarding hair, nails, jewelry, etc.

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#### **4.3 Cheerleaders:**

- Cheerleader uniforms may be either skirt or cheer pants.
- The hem of the skirt should not exceed two inches from the top of the knee. If skirts have side “kick slits,” the opening should not exceed two inches.
- Cheer pants should be modestly fitted.
- Athletic bras are required.
- When wearing skirts, mid-thigh length spandex/compression shorts the same color of skirt, must be worn. Spandex/compression shorts should be a solid color.
- The uniform top should be long enough that when the arms are raised above the head the midriff does not show.
- It is the responsibility of the coach and administration to make sure players are not “rolling” waistbands.
- Refer to the *National Federation of High Schools Rules* regarding hair, nails, jewelry, etc.

#### **4.4 Male Athletes:**

- Shorts should have an inseam no less than seven inches.
- Mid-thigh length spandex/compression shorts the same color of the shorts, must be worn. If spandex/compression shorts extend beyond short length, they should be black, white, beige or the predominant color of the shorts. Spandex/compression shorts should be a solid color.
- Shirts worn under basketball uniform top should be the same color as the uniform color.
- Hair should be neatly cut, preferably not touching the collar, eyes, and ears. Mustaches and beards may be worn, but must be neatly trimmed, groomed, and not excessive in length.
- It is the responsibility of the coach and administration to make sure players are not “rolling” waistbands.
- Refer to the *National Federation of High Schools Rules* regarding hair, jewelry, etc.

**4.5** The appearance of participants in ACAA Athletic events should be inoffensive, appropriate, and should represent the goals and objectives of ACAA member schools. Students recognized publicly receiving awards at ACAA sponsored championship events should either be dressed in their uniform or dress that meets the ACAA Standard for Dress (Article 4.0 – 4.5).

**4.6** ACAA considers tattoos unacceptable particularly on high school aged students. However, it is not our desire to prevent students that have tattoos from participating in ACAA events. ACAA, therefore, requires temporary tattoos, at a minimum, to be removed and permanent tattoos to be covered in compliance with *National Federation of State High School Associations Rules* that govern uniforms.

Waivers may be considered by a committee of three, appointed by the Executive Director, for benign or non-offensive tattoos that cannot be covered. It would be the responsibility of the requesting school to provide pictures to the committee at least ten days preceding the first game. The request must be made in writing and will require a \$50 non-refundable fee before the request will be considered; otherwise, the tattoo should be covered.

## **ARTICLE 5.0 – ATHLETIC COMMITTEE AND ITS DUTIES**

**5.1** The Athletic Committee shall consist of the Executive Director, and at least five other members appointed by the Executive Director. Terms shall be served indefinitely. The committee will work with the Executive Director to develop programs, coordinate events, attend to details of ACAA sponsored events, and resolve disputes pertaining to athletics.

Additionally, the Committee will act on business as brought before it by the Executive Director.

**5.2** In the event that a school of which a member of the Committee is the administrator makes an appeal or becomes a party to a controversy, that member shall excuse himself from participating in the hearing and in rendering a decision on the matter. In the event two or more Committee members become involved in an appeal or controversy, the Executive Director shall appoint two temporary members to hear the matter along with the remaining members of the Committee.

**5.3** The Athletic Committee shall act as a final court of appeal in all matters unless the ACEA Executive Committee or Board is consulted.

## **ARTICLE 6.0 – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND HIS DUTIES**

**6.1** The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Board of the Alabama Christian Education Association. The Executive Director has the following duties:

1. To manage and direct the affairs of this Association.
2. To prepare an activities calendar for the school year on or before May 1 of each year.
3. To receive all funds of this Association; to disburse all funds within the budget fixed by the Executive Committee; to keep an accurate record of all funds received and disbursed; and to make such reports as may be required by the Executive Committee and/or the Board of Directors of the ACEA.
4. To issue an updated membership list of this Association annually.

5. To prepare and issue to members necessary forms and other supplies.
6. To receive and check all reports from members.
7. To pass upon eligibility of all students whose activities fall within the scope of the authority of this Association.
8. To form a committee to investigate all alleged violations of the rules of this Association which come to his attention and recommend penalties for violations.
9. To review all controversies between member schools and render decisions subject to the approval of the Athletic Committee in case of appeal.
10. To approve all tournament schedules and to have general supervision over such tournaments under the rules and regulations of this Association.
11. To work with the Athletic Committee in developing and implementing a plan leading to league realignment and reorganization every two years with a championship format for each sanctioned sport.
12. The Executive Director may at his discretion pass any of the above duties to his designee as deemed necessary.

## **ARTICLE 7.0 – MEETINGS**

**7.1** The ACAA shall meet as needed to conduct business or schedule games as required for league play. The Athletic Committee in conjunction with the Executive Director shall prepare the agenda. The Executive Director shall notify all members at least ten (10) days in advance as to the exact time and place of the meeting. Representation at the meeting shall be the administrator, athletic director, or their appointed representative. Each school shall have one vote. There shall be no voting by proxy at this meeting. Agenda items receiving a majority of votes taken by the ACAA members shall not determine policy or actions but will direct the matter to the ACAA Athletic Committee that will make the final decision on any matter brought by all members.

**7.2** The Athletic Committee shall meet as necessary to consider undue hardship appeals and other business as may be necessary. The Executive Director may call meetings as needed. Unless otherwise directed by the ACEA Board of Directors the Athletic Committee working with the Executive Director shall make all decisions pertinent to Association sponsored athletics.

## **ARTICLE 8.0 – DUES**

**8.1** The cost of annual dues and related fees shall be determined by the ACEA Board of Directors. Annual dues for continuing membership in the ACEA are due by October 1. Fees will be set on or before May 1, of each year.

**8.2** Any member administrator who fails to pay his annual dues before October 10, may be dropped from membership and cannot participate in ACAA sponsored athletic events until the dues are paid and the published late fee paid. Renewal of membership shall not be without additional penalty if the school of which he is the administrator has violated any of the

provisions of these by-laws during the lapse of his membership. For purpose of this Association, the membership of the administrator and the school are synonymous.

## **ARTICLE 9.0 – AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF ADMINISTRATOR**

**9.1** The term administrator as used in these by-laws refers to the chief executive officer of the school, the one who signs the membership renewal application, regardless of the title. He is held responsible by this Association for the enforcement of its rules and regulations in his/her school.

**9.2** All funds received from the sale of tickets to any regular season athletic event shall go to the host school.

**9.3** Disbursements of funds derived from hosting Association sponsored play-off, sub state or championship events shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director or his designee. Trophies, awards, and game officials constitute legitimate expense. Funds that remain after all expenses shall be placed in the ACEA account. Host schools will keep monies derived from the sale of tournament paraphernalia (shirts, programs, etc.) and concession. The host school shall be responsible for submitting an ACAA Game Financial Summary Form (GFSF) and proceeds to the ACEA office within the time frame as stated on the GFSF.

**9.4** The administrator shall sign all contracts for interscholastic athletic competition and shall be responsible for compliance with contracts signed by him or his predecessor.

**9.5** The administrator shall sign each Team Eligibility List (TEL) and correspondence concerning eligibility and be responsible for their accuracy, regardless of who compiles the information. The assistant administrator or other designee of the administrator may sign eligibility lists or correspondence; however, it will be interpreted by the Executive Director or his assistant that the administrator is aware and responsible for such representation by others who sign in his behalf.

**9.6** The administrator shall keep on file all records required to be kept by members of the ACAA.

**9.7** Any administrator, pastor, or school official who is guilty of gross unsportsmanlike conduct or who fails to control the conduct of his student body, faculty and/or followers within reasonable bounds shall be subject to a penalty not to exceed suspension from membership in this Association. However, it shall be the goal of the ACAA, the Executive Director, and the Athletic Committee to pursue strategies that solve and prevent problems. Member schools are expected to be proactive in educating their coaches, fans, parents, students, players, and faculty in good sportsmanship behaviors. Removing a team from a contest because of dissatisfaction with the officiating will be considered gross unsportsmanlike conduct.

**9.8** Unchristian, adverse, untruthful, or inappropriate remarks made through standard media sources including social media by any person(s) representing an ACAA member school that is known by any member school must be reported to the ACAA office. It shall be the responsibility of the school administrator of the offending school to address and correct the problem to the satisfaction of the Executive Director.

**9.9** All phases of interscholastic competition shall be under the administrator's careful supervision as he is responsible to see that the testimony of his school and the ACAA is always prioritized.

**9.10** Recruiting and scholarshiping of student athletes shall be considered a violation of the spirit and philosophy of the rules and regulations of the ACAA. Each member administrator shall be held accountable for recruiting infractions by any member of his faculty or athletic support group. Except for transfer students (see rule 14.21 for definition) this does not hinder any athlete from having financial assistance which is a normal policy of the school and offered in like manner to all other needy or qualifying students. Any school offering financial assistance shall be required to complete a reporting form for each sport played. This provision is not applicable to students attending school on a scholarship paid by a legally operated Scholarship Granting Organization as defined by the Alabama Accountability Act.

## **ARTICLE 10.0 – ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOLS**

**10.1** A high school may be a four-year high school, a three-year senior high school or a six-year junior-senior high school. A junior high school may be a two-year junior high school (seventh and eighth grades), a three-year junior high school (seventh, eighth, and ninth grades), but not a junior high extending through the tenth grade. However, for ACAA competition purposes junior high (frequently called "junior varsity") consist of grades six, seven, eight, and nine; senior high (varsity) consist of grades ten, eleven, and twelve. Students in grades seven, eight, and nine may compete in varsity play; however, students in grades ten, eleven, and twelve may not compete on junior high teams. Sixth graders may compete on the junior high level only, regardless of the sport. Junior high teams may not compete in varsity league or varsity post-season play. Teams having at the least one varsity level player (tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade) must compete on the varsity level only.

## **ARTICLE 11.0 – CONTRACTS**

**11.1** Contracts are recommended, but not required, for all interscholastic athletic contests between schools whose administrators are members of this Association. The choice to not use contracts does not exempt a school from playing all league required games, both season and post-season. To be valid, the contract shall be executed upon the regular forms provided by the Association. Mutual consent of both parties is required to cancel a contract. If there is no agreement, the school canceling the game will forfeit the event and pay the other school \$100 plus expenses and will not be eligible for any post-season play or any other ACAA sanctioned

competitions until the fine is paid. An appeal can be brought to the Executive Director and Athletic Committee within three days following the scheduled game. The decision of the Executive Director and Athletic Committee is final. (Schools choosing not to use contracts limit the appeals process by not having documentation available to settle disputes).

**11.2** Contracts between member administrators of schools shall be subject to cancellation, whenever either party to the contract shall propose to use, or shall propose to allow to be used, as a member of his competing team any student whose eligibility has not been approved by the Executive Director or the Athletic Committee upon approval to it from the Executive Director's ruling.

**11.3** When a member school is suspended from athletic play all contracts which he has signed shall be null and void. However, other schools who are parties to contracts with him may hold the dates for games contracted open and renew the contracts when the suspended school has been re-instated. No game played with a suspended school shall count in a school's win-loss record and may result in sanctions against the member school.

**11.4** No contract may be entered into by member schools which purport to bind them for interscholastic competition longer than two years from the date on which the contract is signed.

**11.5** Details of contracts must be specific. Definite dates, sites, financial arrangements, arrangements regarding the selection of officials and other items of interest to both parties should be specified. Indefinite terms, such as "corresponding dates" are not binding on either party.

## **ARTICLE 12.0 – OFFICIALS**

**12.1** Officials used in games sanctioned by the Association must be members of a bona-fide officials' organization and may not have any personal connections with either team. No parent, near relative, or near friends may be engaged by the home team as officials. The names of officials and their association as well as contact information must be submitted to the Executive Director for a permanent record at the beginning of each season. (Failure to send this information will limit the appeals process should a problem occur).

**12.2** The arranging for approved officials for each contest is the responsibility of the home team. Officials shall be contracted using the following guideline:

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Preferred</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Referees</b>
Junior High Volleyball	(2) Two referees, plus a scorer, timer, libero tracker, and line judges.	1
Varsity Volleyball	(2) Two referees, plus a scorer, timer, libero tracker, and line judges.	2
Junior High Basketball (Boys and Girls)	(2) A referee and an umpire or a referee and two umpires, plus a scorer, and timer.	2
Varsity Basketball (Boys and Girls)	(2 or 3) A referee and an umpire or a referee and two umpires, plus a scorer, and timer.	2 or 3 for regular season play. 3 for post season play.
Baseball and/or Softball	(3 or more) Umpire-in-chief and one, two, three or more field umpires.	2

**12.3** The arranging of officials for ACAA sponsored championships and all-star contests shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director or his designee in consultation with the Athletic Committee when necessary. Participating schools will be assessed a fee to cover the costs if gate receipts do not cover costs incurred.

**12.4** Clock Operators: Basketball clock operators should be certified either by the ACAA or the official's association as defined in 12.1. The ACAA office will provide applicable information upon request. If the school uses an uncertified clock operator and one of the on the floor officials issues a complaint about the clock operation the effected school should report such problems to the league office.

**ARTICLE 13.0 – TEAM ELIGIBILITY LISTS AND REPORTS**

**13.1** It shall be the duty of each member administrator to file annually with the Executive Director information concerning the status of each prospective athlete. The information shall be furnished on a form prepared by this Association. Each list shall contain all information required, including the legal names of the students written exactly as they appear on their birth certificates.

**13.2** All requirements as to forms and eligibility apply to girls as well as boys.

**13.3** No student is eligible, regardless of his eligibility in other respects, until his name, transcript and a copy of his birth certificate has been submitted and approved by the Executive Director or his designee. Member ACAA schools playing sanctioned games before eligibility has

been certified by the ACAA office shall bear the responsibility for participation of ineligible players. A student/athlete is considered a participant if his/her name appear on a game roster, score book, or other documentation indicating that he/she is a member of the team.

**13.4** Eligibility is by semester. When a student has been reported for a semester and declared eligible, he may participate in all sports during that semester.

**13.5** Additions to the original eligibility list submitted to the Executive Director must be approved by the Executive Director or his designee before eligibility is declared. Failure to comply with this requirement shall subject a member to a twenty-five dollar (\$25) fine for each instance and shall result in forfeiture of games in which the name appeared on the eligibility list. Chronic failure shall result in more stringent penalties not to exceed suspension of the school and administrator from the Association. Names may not be added after the published date each sport.

#### **ARTICLE 14.0 – ELIGIBILITY OF ATHLETES**

**14.1** A bona-fide student is one who is regularly enrolled, taking a minimum class load that includes the core four subjects (Mathematics, Social Studies, English, and Science) plus Bible, and is in regular attendance - who meets, in addition, the requirements as set forth in other sections of this article. To represent a school in any branch of athletics or academic activities, a student must be a bona-fide student at that school.

**14.2** All students that participate for member schools must be an undergraduate.

**14.3** Students enrolled in the home school division of any member ACEA/AACS school are not eligible for ACAA sanctioned competition. However, if a student is enrolled in the home school division of an ACEA/AACS school and the school is the “school of record,” meaning that the school prescribes the academic program and keeps the records for the student just as it does for traditional on campus students, and will graduate from that school if he/she remains enrolled, then the student may participate in the following ACAA sports: Golf, Cross Country, Track and Field, Archery, and Bass Fishing.

**14.4** Any student who becomes nineteen years of age on or before August 1 shall be ineligible for further participation. For junior high participation age limit, substitute 16 for 19 years of age.

**14.5** The first time a student's name is submitted to the Executive Director for eligibility, it shall be accompanied by a copy of his birth certificate, issued by an authorized agency, which shall not be based upon a recent delayed registration, and a copy of his/her official transcript for all work done from grade six to the present. A copy of the students’ birth certificate will be kept on file in the ACEA office.

**14.6** When no birth certificate is available, as evidenced by a statement from the authorities of the state in which he/she was born that there is no record of the date of his/her birth on file, age shall be established by:

1. Attending physician's affidavit properly notarized.
2. Submission to the Executive Director of original school records, which records shall be of long standing and accompanied by such affidavits as, may be required.
3. Other old records sufficient for the purpose of establishing date of birth.
4. And, if applicable a valid driver's license.

**14.7** The Executive Director may extend the time for filing complete information for establishing date of birth, when in his judgment such extension is justified; and provided, the administrator submitting the information shall be held strictly accountable for the accuracy of the date of birth given as it may affect his/her eligibility because of age.

**14.8** The limit of opportunity for each student shall be as follows. Students entering the ninth grade for the first time shall have eight semesters (four consecutive years) of athletic eligibility if all other requirements are met, including academic and age requirements as set forth elsewhere in this manual. Junior high students shall have three consecutive years of athletic eligibility starting when the student enters seventh grade for the first time, unless he/she played as a sixth grader, in such case he/she shall have an additional year if all other requirements are met. However, if a player is retained in the seventh or eighth grade, he/she may not play junior high as a ninth grader, but must play varsity, therefore having four consecutive years of eligibility so long as academic and age requirements are met. Sixth graders may compete as junior high students only. Under no circumstance may sixth graders compete on the varsity level for any sport.

**14.9** A student must pass four full unit subjects per semester. Subjects passed must include three of the core-four subjects (Mathematics, Social Studies, English, and Science). Of the four full unit subjects three must have been passed with the class on first impulse and requirements for credit in the fourth shall have been met before the opening of the current school year. A student who failed to meet the above requirement shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition for the first semester.

All students participating in ACAA activities must be enrolled in a Bible course offered as a regular part of the school's curriculum. If full credit is given for Bible, then it may satisfy the unit requirement mentioned above. The requirements for the fourth full unit must be met under one of the following conditions: 1) attendance in a regularly organized summer school under the direction of or approved by the students' school; or 2) through the extension division of a university; 3) through a program of instruction approved by the Executive Director.

**Definition:** A unit subject, as the term is used in eligibility requirements consists of a subject for which a full unit's credit toward graduation is regularly given by the school for 185 days of successful work, or a half unit's credit for 92 days, whether consecutive or not, of successful schoolwork.

**Definition:** The term "first impulse", as used in eligibility requirements, means completion of the work required for credit before the last day of school, without any extension of time. Exceptions to this rule are for courses like agriculture which have projects which cannot be completed until late summer. Such projects must be completed before the first day of the following school year. Other exceptions can only be approved by the Executive Director.

**Definition:** Students earning non-traditional credits may meet academic requirements for athletic participation if the credit earned is comparable to the Carnegie unit. Credits earned via video, satellite link, on-line, or through programs of individualized instruction or other alternative systems of instruction must meet comparable time and content requirements. A Carnegie unit consists of 140 hours of classroom instruction. Content of the subject must be that which is ordinarily considered as sufficient to meet high school graduation requirements.

**14.10** A student who was ineligible because of his previous second semester record at the beginning of the school year may not become eligible until the end of the first semester of school. His eligibility for the first grading period of the second semester shall depend upon the student passing four full unit subjects from the first semester (Three of the subjects passed must be a part of the core-four requirement). That is, he must have earned a ½ credit in four subjects and be taking Bible to regain athletic eligibility for the second semester of the school year.

**14.11** A student who was eligible at the beginning of the school year because of his second semester record shall be eligible during the first marking period except for lack of attendance, improper conduct, or other valid reasons which may cause his administrator to declare him ineligible before the end of the grading period. To be eligible during any subsequent grading period, he must have a passing grade in each of four full unit subjects (Three of the subjects must be a part of the core-four requirement) for the grading period just closed.

**14.12** It shall be the duty of the administrator to have each athletic participant's record checked at the end of each semester and declare him eligible or ineligible for the following semester upon the basis of the record as originally reported by the student's teachers.

**14.13** A student participant must maintain a conduct record satisfactory to his/her administrator and in accordance with the standards of the Alabama Christian Athletic Association at all times. A student who is ineligible at the time of transfer, because of disciplinary problems or an unsatisfactory conduct record shall not be considered for eligibility at the school to which he transfers until he has been in that school one full marking period not less than six weeks or more than nine weeks. A student who has been convicted or adjudged guilty of a crime by a Juvenile Court, or the judge of any other Court, shall be declared ineligible for the duration of his sentence or the period of his probation.

**14.14** A student who was not in attendance during any part of the last four weeks of the previous school year, or who was in attendance during part or all of the last four weeks but failed to pass three full unit subjects with his class, on first impulse, may not make up the

deficiency to regain athletic eligibility. He is ineligible for the first semester of the current school year, regardless of the cause of his absence, or failure to pass the required three units. However, if the school administrator believes an undue hardship exists that requires further consideration the ACAA Executive Director will hear an appeal and render a decision within seven days.

**14.15** No student who is fifteen years of age, and entering the seventh grade for the first time, may represent his school in junior high sports.

**14.16** A student must reside with his parents, or with the same one parent or other designated guardian with whom he has continuously resided for a full calendar year in his school community. However, circumstances may exist that would allow the Executive Director to waive this requirement. Divorce, separation, or death of one or more parents or other reasons ruled to not be for the purpose of gaining an athletic advantage would be acceptable reasons. However, this residence requirement is in effect until an appropriate appeal is filed and decision rendered by the Executive Director.

**14.17** The fact that guardianship papers have been issued, placing a student under the control of a person or persons other than his parents, does not establish eligibility. Residence with and support by any individual or individuals for a period of one calendar year does establish the residence of the individual or individuals as the residence of the student. However, this stipulation can be waived under the same circumstances as stated in Article 14.16.

**14.18** A student who moves into a school community with his parents, or with the same one parent or individual with whom he has been living continuously for one year, shall be eligible the following week so far as residence is concerned.

**14.19** Exception to the Residence Rule: A senior (12th grader) may continue to represent the school which he attended a full year as a junior under the following conditions:

1. His parents move their residence during the senior year.
2. His parents move their residence during the summer preceding his senior year, provided they were residents of the school community at the end of the previous year, and he was living with them.
3. He is receiving no compensation to play for his school, such as free room and board, etc.

**14.20** A transfer student may represent the school to which he transfers five school days following the date of his entry into that school, provided his transfer has been recorded by the Executive Director and the administrator so informed, and it is before the published date for adding students to the roster for that sport, providing that all other eligibility conditions are met.

**14.21** A student who transfers his attendance from one school to another school who has been reported to this Association on a team eligibility list during the current or previous school year shall be ineligible to represent the new school he is attending until he has been in attendance a full year. This rule shall not apply if the change of attendance from one school to another is accompanied by corresponding change in residence as outlined in Article 14.16 and 14.17. However, it must be determined that a bona-fide change of residence occurred without intent of gaining athletic privileges. Families may not maintain the previous residence as a means of utilizing a loophole. A bona fide change of residence requires at the minimum the movement of furniture and completely vacating the previous residence by all family members.

**14.22** Students transferring on or after September 1 of each year and added to any Team Eligibility List for athletic eligibility purposes shall be considered scholarshipped if they receive any financial assistance from the school, persons representing the school, or any non-guardian of the student. If the transfer is after September 1, athletic eligibility may not begin until March 1 of the school year, providing all other requirements are met. Students receiving financial assistance as stated above who transfer in, on or after October 1 may not be eligible for six months from the date of the transfer or until the next school year, providing all other requirements are met. Each student and/or school may be required to provide appropriate notarized financial and related documents for each effected student verifying that these rules are being followed. Non-transfer students may receive financial assistance based on the normal policy of the school and offered in like manner to all needy students. This rule became effective August 1, 2011.

**14.23** A student who changes residence from the home of one parent to that of another parent but within the same community shall be eligible to continue to represent the school which he previously represented but shall not be eligible to represent a different school because of the change of residence.

**14.24** A student, eligible at the beginning of the school year, who is ineligible at the time of transfer according to the records of the school from which he transfers shall be ineligible in the school to which he transfers until he has been in that school a full nine-week grading period. He must not be allowed to participate in interscholastic athletic competition until the record has been filed and approved by the Executive Director and the administrator so informed.

**14.25** Junior High Eligibility: A sixth grade student may compete on the junior high level only.

**14.26** A seventh grade student is eligible under the following conditions:

1. He must be regularly promoted from the sixth grade.
2. He must be in regular attendance.
3. He must be carrying a normal class load and doing satisfactory classroom work, with a satisfactory conduct record as determined by the faculty of the school, and the standards of the ACAA.
4. He may participate as a seventh-grade student one year only.

**14.27** An eighth-grade student shall be eligible under the following conditions:

1. He must be regularly promoted from the seventh grade.
2. He must be in regular attendance.
3. He must be carrying a normal class load and doing satisfactory classroom work, with a satisfactory conduct record as determined by the faculty of the school, and the standards of the ACAA.
4. He may participate as an eighth-grade student one year only.

**14.28** A ninth grade student shall be eligible under the following conditions:

1. He must be regularly promoted from the eighth grade.
2. He must be in regular attendance.
3. He must be carrying a normal class load and doing satisfactory classroom work, with a satisfactory conduct record as determined by the faculty of the school, and the standards of the ACAA.
4. He may participate as a ninth-grade student one year only.

**14.29** Participation or non-participation in the seventh grade or eighth grade shall not affect a student's eligibility after entering the ninth grade.

**14.30** Any seventh or eighth grade student who fails his/her work and must repeat either grade may be eligible during the second semester of the second year he/she is in one or both of these grades, if he/she passes the required work. However, if a student takes three years to complete their seventh and eighth grade eligibility, they may not play junior high as a ninth grader (see rule 14.8).

**14.31** Any student who becomes sixteen years of age on or before August 1, shall be ineligible for further participation in junior high school.

**14.32** A student that has academically advanced beyond the grade that he would otherwise be in can for athletic purposes compete in his/her chronological grade. For instance, a student that would ordinarily be in the ninth grade but has completed or is working to complete tenth grade subjects can compete as a ninth grader. The administrator must bear the responsibility of reporting athletic eligibility to reflect the athlete's playing status. If a student is working in tenth grade subjects and is reported for athletic purposes as a tenth grader, then he can only play as a tenth grader.

**14.33** Once a student has graduated, completed subjects for graduation, or ceased to be a full-time student – taking a minimum of four credits – he/she has no more athletic eligibility.

**14.34** Parental Consent: Each player shall have a statement of parental consent on file in the school office each year before participation in any interscholastic athletic event.

**14.35** Health and Physical Form: Each player must secure each school year and file in the school office a health and physical form prior to the beginning of practice to the effect that he is physically fit for interscholastic athletic competition.

**14.35.1** While only one certificate is required each school year, additional examinations should be required by the administrator and/or coach for their own protection, as well as that of the student, immediately upon detection of the slightest indication of undue fatigue or other ill effects during competition.

**14.35.2** It is the responsibility of each school to have internal policies and procedures to deal with health/injury issues pertaining to athletes in games and practices.

**14.35.3** Each school should always have a defibrillator available for games and practices with persons appropriately trained in its use.

**14.35.4** The school administrator should make sure coaches are trained in administering first aid, dealing with concussions, and the appropriate way of dealing with blood or body fluids.

**14.36** Ineligible Participant: A student who participates in interscholastic athletic competition after being ruled ineligible to participate shall be subject to the following penalty: 1) if he is a senior, he shall be ineligible for the remainder of the school year; 2) if he is not a senior he shall be ineligible for the remainder of that sport's season and its corresponding season for the following school year.

**14.37** Amateur Status: A student may not participate in any athletic activity of this Association unless he is an amateur. A student who has accepted remuneration, gift, or donation for participation in a sport or participates under an assumed name becomes a professional and is thereafter disqualified for further participation in any sport in high school for a period of one year. Reference to "gift or donation" is not intended to preclude the acceptance of medals, trophies, pins, or ribbons of small intrinsic value, if presented by the sponsoring organization. Sweaters or jackets may be accepted by students provided they are presented by the school which they represent.

**14.38** Willful Violations: A school that knowingly and willfully violates the eligibility provisions of these by-laws shall be subject to sanctions deemed appropriate by the ACAA Athletic Committee, not to exceed permanent loss of athletic privileges.

**14.39** National Federation rules governing unsportsmanlike conduct as well as rules adopted by the ACAA are in force. ACAA requires self reporting of misconduct by coaches and players that require certain penalties. These rules are reviewed and published annually.

**14.40** Ineligible Student at Game: An ineligible student shall not be allowed on the player's bench, on the field of play, or in athletic uniform during an athletic contest.

**14.41** Any school which is determined to have played an ineligible player as set forth in these rules shall:

1. Forfeit all conference and non-conference games played against ACAA member teams in which the ineligible student played.
2. Return any awards received in the event the violation is discovered after tournament play is concluded, so long as such violation(s) is/are reported prior to conclusion of that sport in the next year.

**14.42** A school that has a subsequent eligibility violation within a two-year period will be fined \$100 for each instance plus the sanctions of **Article 14.38**.

#### **14.43 Gender Athletic Eligibility Requirements**

Pursuant to Alabama law and clear biblical teachings how a person may “identify” his/her sex does not determine whether he/she competes on a male or female athletic team. Our athletic teams are based on gender specific guidelines and genders based on their biological sex as determined at birth. Boys will participate on boys’ teams and girls will participate on girls’ teams.

## ACAA State Track and Field Meet

### I. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Open to boys and girls in grades six through twelve who meet the age and grade level requirements set forth in the ACAA handbook and whose school is a current member in good standing of the ACEA.
- Each student must be determined by their school to be physically able to participate.
- Junior High – grades six through ninth
- Senior High – grades ninth through twelfth
- Ninth graders may choose to participate as either a junior high or senior high contestant, but not as both and are subject to the limitations of whichever category they choose.

### II. DRESS REQUIREMENTS

#### Male Athletes:

- Shorts should have an inseam no less than seven inches.
- Mid-thigh length spandex/compression shorts the same color of the shorts, must be worn. If spandex/compression shorts extend beyond short length, they should be black, white, beige or the predominant color of the shorts. Spandex/compression shorts should be a solid color.
- T-shirt or track shirt may be worn.
- Spiked track shoes may be worn; metal cleats are not permitted.
- No jewelry may be worn.
- Hair should be neatly cut, preferably not touching the collar, eyes, and ears. Mustaches and beards may be worn, but must be neatly trimmed, groomed, and not excessive in length.
- It is the responsibility of the coach and administration to make sure players are not “rolling” waistbands.

#### Female Athletes:

- Shorts that are loosely fitted with the inseam being no less than seven inches.
- Mid-thigh length spandex/compression shorts the same color of shorts, must be worn. If spandex/compression shorts extend beyond short length, they should be black, white, beige or the predominant color of the shorts. Shorts (as noted above) must be worn over spandex/compression shorts. Spandex/compression shorts should be a solid color.
- T-shirts may be worn and should be long enough that when the arms are raised above the head the midriff does not show.
- Athletic bras are required.
- Spiked track shoes may be worn; metal cleats are not permitted.
- No jewelry may be worn.
- It is the responsibility of the coach and administration to make sure players are not “rolling” waistbands.

### **III. MEET RULES**

- Junior high students (6-9) may compete in only one long distance event and two middle or short distance events in track. There is no limit on field events. This does not include relay events.
- Senior high students (9-12) may enter unlimited number of events in both track and field.
- Schools may enter two entries per individual track or field event.
- Keep eyes and ears open for announcements regarding each event heat and finals. Once runners are in place at the starting line, no late comer will be permitted on the line.
- Teams must bring their own blocks, poles, discus, shot put, and batons.
- Starter and judges will have final decision on disqualifications and place finishes.
- In the event of a tie for the Team Trophy, the tie will be broken based on:
  - 1) Most first places, or that failing.
  - 2) most second places.The team with the lesser first or second place finishes will be declared Runner-Up. Team points will be determined by all other places. Ties for the other places in the team awards will not be broken.

### **IV. ENTRY FEE**

To cover awards and any rental costs - amount will be published annually.

- V.** Each student should bring a sack lunch, snacks, and drinks for the day...and sunscreen.

### **VI. AWARDS**

- Ribbons or medals will be given to the top three places.
- Trophies will be given to top teams in four divisions:
  - Junior High Girls
  - Junior High Boys
  - Senior High Girls
  - Senior High Boys.

## Coaches ~ Code of Ethics

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student should be treated with the utmost respect and the student's welfare should be considered in decisions by the coach at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches have been adopted by the NFHS Board of Directors and the ACAA.

- **Coaches** shall be aware that they have a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.
- **Coaches** shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with students, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the ACEA/ACAA, the media, and the public, coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
- **Coaches** shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse.
- **Coaches** shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products.
- **Coaches** shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct the program in harmony with the total school program.
- **Coaches** shall master the contest rules and shall teach them the rules to their team members. Coaches shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.
- **Coaches** shall exert their influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.
- **Coaches** shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
- **Coaches** should meet and exchange cordial greetings with the opposing coach to set the correct tone for the event before and after the contest.
- **Coaches** shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student special consideration.
- **Coaches** shall not scout opponents by any means other than those adopted by the league and/state association.

## ACAA Rules of Conduct for Athletic Events

- Each school shall respect the posted and stated rules of his opponent when visiting.
- The rules governing each event shall always be followed and respected. With little exception, the rules published by the *National Federation of State High School Associations* shall be followed.
- ACAA regulations regarding game officials shall be followed to ensure compliance with Federation and ACAA rules. This includes the clock operator.
- Coaches must comply with the "Code of Ethics" as adopted by the *National Federation of State High School Associations*.
- Administrators, faculty, staff, parents, or other fans must take great care not to indulge in conduct that can conceivably incite players or spectators against the officials. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical and cannot be tolerated by ACAA.

Unchristian, adverse, untruthful, or inappropriate remarks made through standard media sources including social media by any person(s) representing an ACAA member school that is known by any member school must be reported to the ACAA office. It shall be the responsibility of the school administrator of the offending school to address and correct the problem to the satisfaction of the Executive Director.

Such problems will be solved between member schools in conjunction with the ACEA office and the Athletic Committee.

Note: This statement will be posted in gyms and as appropriate in other areas where athletic competition occurs.

## **Game Management Procedures**

- An administrative person or his designee, other than the coach, should attend every athletic event to assure appropriate Game Management. The designee will have complete responsibility and authority to deal with any problem that may arise.
- Each school should have a stated and posted "Rules of Conduct." A copy should be sent to the ACEA office and to each member opponent at least seven days prior to the opening of each athletic season.
- The Administration of each school should send a letter to the parents that state their rules and expectations for fans. The ACAA "Rules of Conduct for Athletic Events" should be sent as well.
- If a parent or a fan has a complaint, it should be made to the administrator of his/her child's school, not to the administration of the other team.
- Guest should graciously and willingly comply with the expectations of their host. The administration of each school should emphasize this.
- Every school should fill out ACAA-furnished game reports for at least 2 games during the season.
- The ACAA "Rules of Conduct for Athletic Events" will be followed at all times.

## **Recruitment and Scholarshipping of Athletes Explained and Defined**

### **Recruiting**

Initiating contact with or seeking to influence a student's enrollment for the purpose of improving your school's athletic program or to advance a student primarily for athletic purposes is prohibited. Athletic recruiting is not allowed by any school/church employee, volunteer, parent, or any other person associated with or representing your school.

School administration and athletic departments are responsible to carefully monitor the enrollment of new students to ensure that no student enrolls in any ACEA school as an athletic "recruit."

School administration and athletic departments are responsible to educate their people regarding the unethical practice of athletic recruitment in high school amateur sports.

Penalty – minimum – player ineligible; maximum – player ineligible and school forfeits games where ineligible players participated.

### **Scholarships**

Any incentive offered to any student athlete, monetary or otherwise, that is based on participation or performance in any athletic program is clear violation of the ACAA athletic policy. This includes, but is not limited to, cash or monetary payments, reduced or free tuition, stipends for travel or performance, or other enticements to enroll in school, participate in school's athletic program, or perform at a certain performance level in an athletic contest.

In cases where schools provide some form of tuition assistance, all students should be considered on an equal basis. No preference shall be given to athletes or athletic students. Schools will be asked to apprise the ACAA of its policy and adherence to said policy.

No parent, alumni, church member, or any party with an interest in a member school may provide any tuition assistance, monetary gifts, or incentives for athletes. The school should monitor who is paying for a student's tuition and fees.

School administration is responsible to educate their people regarding the unethical practice of providing athletic scholarships to amateur athletes participating in sanctioned play.

Penalty – minimum – player ineligible and school forfeit any games where ineligible players participate; maximum – same as minimum with school potentially being sanctioned. These provisions are not applicable to students attending school on a scholarship paid by a legally operated Scholarship Granting Organization as defined by the Alabama Accountability Act.

Adopted June 2004

## The Case for Sportsmanship, Ethics, and Integrity in High School Athletics

*“Good sportsmanship is viewed by the National Federation of State High School Associations as a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities that are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. The ideals of sportsmanship apply equally to all athletic disciplines. Individuals, regardless of their role in athletics, are expected to be aware of their influence on the behavior of others and model good sportsmanship.”*

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### Who Is Responsible?

Ten target groups have been identified within the high school communities that are responsible for conducting themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Following are expectations of these groups:

#### Expectations of COACHES, DIRECTORS, AND SPONSORS

- Always set a good example for participants and fans to follow, exemplifying the highest moral and ethical behavior.
- Instruct participants in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship and ethics No. 1 priority.
- Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the event and display no behavior that could incite fans.
- Treat opposing coaches, directors, participants, and fans with respect. Shake hands with officials, opposing coach in public.
- Develop and enforce penalties for participants who do not abide by sportsmanship standards.

#### Expectations of STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

- Treat teammates with respect.
- Treat opponents with respect: shake hands prior to and after contests.
- Respect judgment of contest officials, abide by rules of the contest, and display no behavior that could incite fans.
- Cooperate with officials, coaches, directors, and fellow participants to conduct a fair contest.
- Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing school and community; always display positive public action.
- Live up to a high standard of sportsmanship established by coach or director.

### **Expectations of PARENTS, STUDENTS AND OTHER FANS**

- Realize that a ticket is a privilege to observe a contest and support high school athletics, not a license to verbally assault others or to be generally obnoxious.
- Respect decisions made by contest officials.
- Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting teams in every manner possible, including content of cheers and signs.
- Respect fans, coaches, directors, and participants
- BE A FAN ... NOT A FANATIC

### **Expectations of SPIRIT GROUPS**

- Stimulate desired crowd response using only positive cheers, signs and praise without antagonizing or demeaning opponents.
- Treat opposing spirit groups and fans with respect.
- Recognize outstanding performances on either side of the playing field or court.
- Know rules and strategies of the contest to cheer at proper times.
- Maintain enthusiasm and composure, serving as a role model.

### **Expectations of MEDIA**

- Promote ideals and fundamentals of good sportsmanship.
- Report acts of sportsmanlike behavior without giving undue publicity to unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Refrain from making negative comments toward participants, coaches, officials, or judges.
- Recognize efforts of all who participate in the contest.
- Report facts without demonstrating partiality to any team or school.

### **Expectations of CONTEST OFFICIALS**

- Accept role in an unassuming manner. Showboating and over-officiating are not acceptable.
- Maintain confidence and poise, controlling contest from start to finish.
- Know rules thoroughly and abide by established Code of Ethics.
- Publicly shake hands with coaches of both teams before a contest.
- Never exhibit emotions or argue with participants and coaches when enforcing rules.

### **Expectations of SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS**

- Develop a program for teaching and promoting the ideals and fundamentals of good sportsmanship within the school, the league, conference, and state.
- Provide appropriate supervisory personnel for each interscholastic event.
- Support participants, coaches and directors, and fans and spectators who teach and display good sportsmanship.
- Recognize exemplary behavior and actively discourage undesirable conduct by participants, coaches, and fans.
- Attend events whenever possible.

### **Expectations of STATE ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE**

- Provide leadership and information to member schools.
- Act as a liaison to other educational associations within the state.
- Use statewide visibility to actively promote good sportsmanship.
- Interact with leaders of non-school activity programs to enhance good sportsmanship.
- Acknowledge commendable displays of good sportsmanship.

### **Expectations of BOARDS**

- Adopt policies that promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, ethics and integrity.
- Serve as a positive role model and expect the same for parents, fans, participants, coaches, and other school personnel.
- Support participants, coaches, directors, school administrators and fans who display good sportsmanship.
- Recognize the value of school athletics as a vital part of education.
- Attend and enjoy school athletic events.

### **Expectations of PUBLIC-ADDRESS ANNOUNCERS**

- Treat visiting and home teams comparably.
- Consistently display neutrality during contest.
- Offer no personal comments or criticism of players, officials, or coaches.

### **Suggestions for TICKET WINDOW-ADMISSION GATE DISPLAY**

- In the game or in the stands, BE A GOOD SPORT.
- At today's contest, BE A FAN, NOT A FANATIC.
- Be a good audience member.

### **ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

- Applause during introduction of players, coaches, and officials.
- Players shaking hands with opponent who fouls out while both sets of fans recognize player's performance with applause.
- Accept all decisions of officials.
- Cheerleaders lead fans in positive school yells in positive manner.
- Handshakes between participants and coaches at end of contest, regardless of outcome.
- Treat competition as a game, not a war.
- Coaches, players search out opposing participants to recognize them for outstanding performance or coaching.
- Applause at end of contest for performances of all participants.
- Everyone showing concern for injured player, regardless of team.
- Encourage surrounding people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.
- During the National Anthem, students, participants, and fans should remove any hats, face the flag, not talk, place right hand on the heart, and remain still until the end of the anthem.
- During the National Anthem, when singing, follow the music and lyrics precisely.

- **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

- Yelling or waving arms during opponent's free throw attempt.
- Disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs, or gestures.
- Booming or heckling an official's decision.
- Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official's call.
- Yells that antagonize opponents.
- Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances.
- Blaming losses on contest officials, coaches, or participants.
- Laughing or name-calling to distract opponent.
- Use of profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game or activity.
- Doing own yells instead of following lead of cheerleaders.

**WAYS TO PROMOTE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP**

- Develop code of conduct and enforce it.
- Develop sportsmanship awards program and honor those individuals who exhibit outstanding sportsmanship, ethics, and integrity.
- Hold preseason meeting and assemblies before contest to encourage students to exhibit proper conduct.
- Work with local radio and television stations to air public-service announcements on sportsmanship.
- Display message on good sportsmanship throughout school hallways and in gymnasium or on playing field.
- Have coaches, players and administrators speak to local clubs and organizations to stress need for good sportsmanship in the community.
- Conduct clinics for parents and others to discuss playing and contest rules, ethics, and good sportsmanship.
- Formulate a committee to work toward improvement of conduct at contest.