



AACA
Athletic Handbook
2023-2024

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AACA Athletic Program Philosophy

The AACA Athletics Program is dedicated to educating students mentally, physically, and spiritually. Our athletic program is an integral part of the educational program of the school. AACA views the athletic activities on the playing fields and courts as an extension of the classroom.

AACA believes that athletics are an invaluable tool in the development of students. In every athletic event, certain values and ideals are being taught, directly and indirectly. Athletics should offer a chance for the students to enjoy both the excitement of sports and the relaxation that it brings to the body and mind. Athletics also present the opportunity for the development of many necessary social-emotional skills: cooperation, empathy, resilience and communication with fellow athletes. These are important, not only in athletics, but as an integral part of the students' day-to-day experience as they develop and grow at AACA.

Athletics offers a chance for students to assume and develop leadership roles, especially in the area of team sports. This leadership is not limited to the fields and courts, but becomes a valuable asset to student's personal development beyond the four walls of school.

As an extension of the students' education, AACA Athletics are not intended to serve as a training ground for developing elite athletes. In today's society, students seeking that level of training and intensity have multiple outlets and opportunities to expand their specialization. Instead, AACA Athletics are opportunities for our students to experience the joys of participating in sports within their school community.

While winning is often perceived as important and can be emphasized at the appropriate age levels, more important than winning is using the sports experience to help our students learn valuable life lessons and develop social-emotional skills that will lead them to be successful in their lives both in and out of the school environment.

AACA Athletic Program Mission

To expand and enhance AACA's Athletics programs, communications, and overall physical, spiritual, intellectual and emotional experiences for students on and off the playing field.

AACA Athletic Program Goals

1. Providing the opportunity to have fun playing and learning the game(s) of choice.
2. Instilling a knowledge of the sport's rules, regulations, and skills necessary to actively participate and to improve over time.
3. To show appreciation and respect for the efforts of teammates and opponents.
4. Participating in an environment where coaches and parents are supportive and serve as positive role models.
5. Learning valuable life lessons and skills that have value beyond the game.
6. Being encouraged to develop and foster a positive self-image through team and individual accomplishments.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Alphonsus Academy and Center for the Arts does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national, or ethnic origin in its admission or hiring policies, educational programs, loan or scholarship programs, athletics, or any other school-administered programs.

Sports Registration

During our Spring Sports Week, in May, parents have the opportunity to register their son or daughter for the upcoming school year. Communication will be sent via e-mail and Rocket Report with a link to the registration form.

This allows the Athletic Director to gauge the interest of our athletes. This also determines the number of teams, coaches, and uniforms that are needed for each sport.

Registration Timeline

1. Parents and students are asked to register for the upcoming school year through our online registration form. Parents are asked to register their child even though they are not sure if their child wants to participate. This allows the Athletic Director to include your contact information to the distribution list.
2. A few months before the season begins, the Athletic Director will send a communication in order to confirm their son or daughter's participation in the upcoming sport. Information in this communication includes: practice information, coach's name and contact information, season updates, skills assessment dates (if necessary), etc.
3. Once all athletes are confirmed, reminders will be given regarding practices, game schedule, uniforms, registration forms and fees, etc.

Student-athletes who register after the registration deadline may still register for an athletics program if they do so no later than the first week of practices for that team or if divisions of teams are not affected.

Athletic Program Forms and Fees

The Athletic Program at Alphonsus Academy and Center for the Arts are set to allow as many students as possible to participate. Registration and waiver forms are required before the start of participation.

The following forms are required before the start of participation and are needed yearly: IESA Physical form, Archdiocese waiver, Parent Code of Conduct, and Student-Athlete Code of Conduct.

The fees collected will be due for a particular sport at the start of each season. Uniforms will be delivered once registration forms and fees have been received. The monies will be deposited in the Athletics account in order to specifically cover operating expenses, a sampling of which is outlined below. No child will be excluded from athletic participation due to family budget restrictions.

As in previous years, the Bidy Sports program will remain fee-based.

Sport	Registration Fee
Cross Country	\$125
Flag Football	\$150
Fall Volleyball	\$150
Basketball 4th - 6th Grade	\$200
Basketball 7th - 8th Grade	\$225
Cheer	\$125
Spring Volleyball	\$150
Track and Field	\$125
Baseball (5th-6th)	\$150

The athletic fees cover the costs of the following, **but aren't limited to:**

- League entrance fee
- Referee Compensation
- Athletic Banquet
- Awards
- Administration and coaching Stipends
- Equipment
- Uniforms

Athletic Program Structure

The AACA Athletic program strives to provide opportunities for participation for students at all grade levels. Programs in the early grade levels offer the chance to try out different types of team sports and grow into opportunities for skills development. In the upper grades, competitive team play is offered. A summary of programs at each stage is summarized below.

Competitive Teams

AACA participates in competitive leagues of play in grades 4 – 8. The competitive teams work at developing skills and teamwork while enhancing their individual talents as athletes. Competitive teams afford all students interested the opportunity to play an organized sport. AACA offers a three-season interscholastic sports program. All students are encouraged to participate in these programs as offered for their grade level. All students interested will be afforded the opportunity to participate in athletics.

Fall Season

Cross Country

- 4th Grade girls and boys team
- 5th – 6th Grade girls and boys team (Junior Varsity)
- 7th – 8th Grade girls and boys team (Varsity)

Practice: After school during the week

Meets: Weekdays and Weekends

Varsity Flag Football

7th – 8th Grade Boys

League: Chicago Catholic Flag Football League

Practice: Weekday

Games: Saturdays

Volleyball

4th – 6th Grade Girls Developmental

League: Northside Catholic Academy Girls Volleyball League

Practices: Weekday and Weekends

Games: Weekday

7th – 8th Grade Girls Competitive

League: Queen of Angels Fall Volleyball League

Practices: Weekday and Weekends

Games: Weekday

Winter Season

Basketball

4th – 6th Grade Girls and Boys Developmental

League: Chicago Catholic Youth League

Practices: Sundays and weekday

Games: Saturdays and some Sundays

7th – 8th Grade Girls and Boys Competitive

League: Chicago Catholic Youth League

Practices: Weekday

Games: Weekday and Weekends

Cheerleading

2nd – 8th Grade Girls

Practices: Weekday

Games: Saturday Home Games

Spring Season

Track and Field

6th – 8th Grade Girls and Boys

Practice: After school during the week

Meets: Weekdays and Weekends

Volleyball

5th – 6th Grade Girls Developmental

Practices: Weekday and Weekend

Games: Weekday and Weekend

7th – 8th Grade Girls Competitive
League: Eagle Invitational
Practices: Weekday and Weekend
Games: Weekday

6th Grade Boys Developmental
7th – 8th Grade Boys Competitive
League: Queen of Angels Spring Volleyball League
Practices: Weekday and Weekend
Games: Weekday

Baseball

5th – 6th Grade Boys Developmental
Practices: Weekday
Games: Weekday

New Sports/Team Offerings

If a person believes there is enough interest for a new sport or a grade level team that is not offered for a current team, they are to contact the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will gauge interest and determine if there is interest to move forward.

Non-Competitive Teams

These teams are composed only for AACA students, and designed to provide a solid foundation of skills and development for the younger students. The main purpose is to allow our students the opportunity to learn and develop their athletic skills in a non-competitive environment that stresses fun and prepares our athletes for the competitive league.

- **Biddy Sports:** Biddy Sports is held for athletes in Preschool through 3rd grade. Sessions are held once a week after school from 3:00pm to 4:00pm. It is an instructional program that provides students the opportunity to develop their skills. Sports that are taught during these sessions are soccer, basketball, volleyball, and mixed sports. This program is fee based, and registration forms will be sent with program dates. Depending on gym availability biddy sports will take place on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

Uniforms

AACA uniforms are distributed to the players at the beginning of the season and collected at the end of the season. Student athletes will receive their uniforms in a large Ziploc bag with the athlete's first and last name, grade, and jersey number. Athletes are asked to keep this bag to return the uniform at the end of the season.

- **Baseball:** A jersey, socks, and belt, and cap will be distributed to each player. Players are able to keep the socks, belt, and cap at the end of the season to use again in the future. Baseball pants, bats, gloves, etc. are to be purchased under the discretion of the coach.
- **Basketball:** A jersey and shorts will be distributed to each player. A practice jersey will be provided to each player before the new season, which they are able to keep when the season concludes.

- Cheer: A uniform top, skirt, undergarments, bow, and poms will be distributed to each member of the squad. The bow can be kept when the season concludes.
- Cross Country: A jersey will be distributed, and players must wear their AACCA P.E. shorts.
- Flag Football: A jersey will be distributed, and players must wear their AACCA P.E. shorts.
- Volleyball (Girls): A jersey will be distributed to each player. Girls in 4th through 6th grade must wear their AACCA P.E. shorts. Girls in 7th through 8th grade have the option of wearing spandex instead of their AACCA P.E. shorts.
- Volleyball (Boys): A jersey will be distributed, and players must wear their AACCA P.E. shorts.
- Track and Field: A jersey will be distributed, and players must wear their AACCA P.E. shorts.

No eye black can be used at any time for indoor games. Eye black may be used for outdoor games, but are limited to a small line on each cheek.

If the guidelines and uniform care instructions are not followed, a fee will be charged to replace damaged or lost uniforms. Fees will also be charged for uniforms that are not returned at the end of the season. Uniforms must be returned within the allotted time, which typically is one week of the end of that sports season. Notices will be sent out via e-mail and school newsletter with the deadlines for uniform returns.

Student athletes are able to modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modest in clothing or attire in accordance to religion, cultural values or modesty preferences. If a student or family chooses to modify his or her athletic or team uniform, they are responsible for all costs associated with the modification of the uniform and the student shall not be required to receive prior approval from the school for such modification.

While it is acceptable for parents of a particular team to purchase warm-ups or accessories for a particular team, it is encouraged that if one team has warm-up attire or accessories, then every participant in the program across all age levels, male and female, be awarded the same opportunity. This must be approved by either the Principal, Athletics Director, or Athletics Administrator before ordering.

Team Snap and Other Apps

Team Snap is an app that allows the AACCA program to communicate with families and players regarding their season. Families are able to view their practice and game times as well as communicate with other teammates and coaches on the app.

Team Snap is a school paid platform that is used to communicate athletic items. Team Snap should be only used for team communications regarding practices, games, and other logistics between families, athletes, and coaches. All other communication is strictly prohibited. Inappropriate use of Team Snap will result in consequences by the Athletic Director and administration.

Any other apps that are not school sponsored may be used by teams. Pictures of athletes for their profile should be uploaded by each family under their discretion.

Non-School Sponsored Activities

The school name (Alphonsus Academy and Center for the Arts, AACA, etc.) and any Athletic Program uniform may not be used for any event that is not sponsored by the school. Rockets is an acceptable name to be used. Any non-school sponsored accomplishments will take place in their classroom.

Accommodations and requests for non-sponsored activities will not be made towards our sports programs.

Coaching Recruitment Process

The coach has the greatest responsibility as well as the greatest opportunity to guide and influence the student athlete. Coaches assume the role of teacher, mentor, and minister to the athletes in their charge. A coach's attitude and spirituality are critical to modeling good Christian faith-based sportsmanship, both in word and deed. The careful selection of coaches is vital to ensure our Athletics Philosophy and Mission is accomplished.

Successful coaches help athletes master new skills, enjoy competition with others, and help young athletes grow in their confidence as athletes and individuals. They also understand how to effectively teach those skills through age appropriate exercises and drills.

Parents may volunteer to be a head or assistant coach for any AACA Athletics Program in 4th through 6th grade. The Athletic Program strives to have outside sources (non-parent coaches) be the head coach of any of our competitive 7th and 8th grade teams. Parents may volunteer to be an assistant coach for any of our competitive 7th and 8th grade teams. **No more than 2 coaches (parent or outside source)** are allowed to coach one team.

Coach Recruitment

- All sport program positions will be posted in the parish bulletin, local universities, etc.
- Candidates will be asked to submit a resume and, if selected, asked to come in to interview for the position.
- The Athletic Director, in consultation with the Athletic Administrator and Principal, will review the applicants, interview, and ask candidates to join our coaching staff.
- The Athletic Program will carefully select coaches no later than one month before the start of the season.
- The Principal, alongside the Athletics Director and Athletic Administrator, must approve all coaches.

If a parent or outside source coach has been designated, they must complete the following documents **before the start of the season**:

- Complete an eApps online criminal background check application
- Attend Virtus Training within 60 days of beginning service
- Read and sign the Code of Conduct for Church Personnel

- Complete the Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System Form – CANTS (yearly)
- Complete Mandated Reporter Training (employees only)
- Concussion Certification (every 2 years)

Failure to complete these requirements will result in inability to coach for the season.

In order for coaches to assume the role and responsibilities of the team, they must be able to attend no less than 80% of practices and games.

Coaching Responsibility

Coach Responsibilities

1. Each coach shall be required to comply with all rules and regulations set forth by AACA including by not limited to Virtus training, fingerprinting, and background checks.
2. Each coach shall attend a preseason training seminar designed and run by the Athletic Director to:
 - a. Establish program goals
 - b. Establish practice requirements and schedules
 - c. Be briefed on league rules and regulations
 - d. Participate in an abbreviated training on Responsive Classroom and Positive Discipline approaches to teaching/coaching
3. The Principal and Athletic Director may immediately suspend or terminate a Coach and/or an Assistant Coach during the school year for good cause, which shall include, but is not limited to: immoral or unprofessional conduct; dishonesty; failure to provide a suitable role model for student athletes; neglect of duty; chronic tardiness and unexcused absences; excessive personal phone use; unfitness for service; physical or mental incapacity; falsification of information on background check form; conviction of a crime involving immoral or unprofessional conduct; any conduct tending to reflect discredit upon the school or to impair the employee's usefulness or effectiveness as an employee or volunteer of the school.

Training and Evaluation of Coaches: Coaches are asked to attend coaching workshops when available and are provided with sport and grade specific guidelines and expectations for practices and games. The Athletics Council will work with the Athletic Director to periodically survey and gather feedback for coaches on methods to continue improving the program.

Playing Time

The amount of playing time for all sports will vary depending on the grade level of the team. Teams comprised of multiple grade levels will abide by the rules set forth for the eldest team member:

Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth grade teams: The coach will do his/her best to ensure that everyone plays an equal amount of time. Equal time will also take into consideration attendance, attitude, and participation of practices.

Seventh and Eighth grade teams: The coach will do his/her best to ensure that everyone plays meaningful time. The amount of time will be determined by the size of

the team and the player's attendance, attitude, position played and participation at practices. The team will practice and play to win, but not the point where a player does not play due to lack of skill. Discipline, hard work, focus, and teamwork will be stressed throughout the year.

No one should be excluded from play because of ability; one can only be excluded for disciplinary reasons. This also pertains to the amount of playing time by player for their respective grade level according to the above guidelines.

Missing practice without cause or excessive absences can result in reduced playing time. Playing time may also be reduced as a disciplinary action, most especially when a player loses self-control or engages in another conduct unbecoming a Christian student athlete. Generally, however, every eligible athlete plays in every game.

A child is not eligible to participate in a practice and/or a game the day of a school absence due to illness. A child is eligible to play in a weekend (Saturday or Sunday) game after a Friday absence if they are well enough to participate.

Roster Minimums and Team Splits

Flag Football: A minimum of sixteen players is required on one team roster.

Volleyball: A minimum of sixteen players in each grade level is required to split into two teams.

Basketball: A minimum of sixteen players in each grade level is required to split into two teams.

Certain circumstances and exceptions can be made towards the roster minimums and team splits, but must be approved by the Athletic Director and the Athletic Administrator.

Dividing Teams According to Skill Level

Dividing teams according to skill level is highly discouraged. However, when AACA has a large number of participating student athletes in the same grade level, it may be necessary to create two teams for the sole purpose of ensuring a significant amount of playing time for all.

Deciding who plays on which team must be made by the Athletic Administrator and Athletic Director. Student athletes in grades 4th through 6th will be divided evenly regardless of skill level. Student athletes in grades 7th through 8th can be divided based on skill level under the Athletic Administrator and Athletic Director discretion.

Conducting Skills Assessments

Grade School athletic programs throughout the Archdiocese are not encouraged to cut a player based on athletic ability. Because the focus of Archdiocese athletics at the 4th-6th grade level is more on development, rather than winning, the program should find a spot for everyone who shows the willingness and desire to be a part of a team. Being a part of an interscholastic

athletic team is a major component to the school experience; preventing any aspiring student athlete from participating denies them of this right.

4th through 6th Grade Developmental: Coaches will run the skills assessment similar to a practice where they will focus on sport specific skills while the Athletic Director will be present. After the skills assessment, coaches are asked to provide their feedback in writing to the Athletic Director. From there, the Athletic Director will make the final determinations of the rosters and communicate that information with the parents/guardian.

7th through 8th Grade Competitive: Coaches will run an open gym session for the student-athletes before the skills assessment. The skills assessment will follow the open gym session where it will be run by an outside source (if available) or by the coaches. From there, the coaches will provide feedback in writing and the Athletic Director will make the final determination of the rosters and communicate that information to the parents/guardian.

Attendance is mandatory during skills assessments. For grades 7th to 8th grade, placement to the Blue team will occur for being absent during a skills assessment. Exemptions will be made based on certain circumstances and will be determined by the Athletic Administrator and Athletic Director.

Playing Up

Talented athletes should never be asked to play up with other players unless he/she is needed to play with the older team due to a lack of participating athletes at that level. As indicated, younger athletes can be placed on a roster with older players if there is a lack of participants at the older level. In such cases, athletes can be on the roster for two different teams, the older team and the player's age appropriate team.

Student-Athletes that are interested in playing on a different grade level team will fill out a form expressing their interest.

- The head or assistant coach should contact the Athletic Director on a game to game basis if they find the team's availability to fall below six players.
- The Athletic Director will contact the parents of the lower grade players (who have signed off on playing up) to ask if they are interested in having their child help the upper grade for that specific game. The choice of which player to borrow on a game to game basis will be determined by the Athletic Director and the needs of the team.
 - With the focus of development, student-athletes in 4th through 6th grade will be determined by availability and all lower grade players will have the opportunity to play up (if necessary).
 - With the focus of competitiveness, student-athletes in 7th through 8th grade will be determined by those athletes that are developmentally ready to participate. These athletes will be hand selected based on their skill level and availability.
- The Athletic Director will contact the head or assistant coach to report which player will attend the game as well as the parent's contact information.
- The borrowed player may practice with the upper grade team the week they play for the upper grade team.

- There is no guarantee of equal playing time for the borrowed player as the priority should be to the upper grade student-athlete.

Without exception, the same athlete cannot be rostered on two different teams within the same grade level or may play up for two older grades. In other words, if AACCA has two 5th grade boy's teams, the same athlete cannot compete for both 5th grade teams. Also, a 5th grade player may not be able to play up on the 7th grade team. This will result in disqualification of the team by the sports league.

Practices Procedures and Dismissal

Each team is allowed to have 2-3 practices per week (not to exceed three hours per week). Practices are scheduled in conjunction with the coaches. Earlier practice times are given priority to younger grades and availability of coaches. The Athletic Director or coach via e-mail or Rocket Report will communicate practice information.

An athlete will not be allowed to exit the gym or practice until an adult picks the athlete up at the designated location. Exceptions may be permitted for 7th and 8th grade students to leave on their own. All other players must have a written confirmation on file from their parents/guardians to be dismissed.

Here is the protocol regarding practice protocol:

- **3:15 Practices:** Grade level teachers release athletes to their designated area at the end of school dismissal. All coaches will be at the designated meeting area to meet the athletes. Teams will then practice. At conclusion of practice, all coaches are responsible for making sure their players are picked up safely. Pick up is from the gym. Coaches are responsible for physically or visually seeing parent/guardian present picking up their child. All players and coaches will wait inside the gym for safety purposes.
- **4:00 – 8:00 Practices:** Players may be dismissed at the end of school dismissal or Homework Club, then return to the gym. Another option is for players to stay at the after-school program until their practice time. Students need to be registered for After School and picked up before 6:00pm. Coaches are expected to pick up the students from After School. Teams will then practice. At the conclusion of practice, all coaches are responsible for making sure their players are picked up safely. Pick up is inside the gym. Coaches are responsible for physically or visually seeing parent/guardian present picking up their child. All players and coaches will wait inside the gym for safety purposes.
- **Sunday Practices:** During the basketball season, grades 4th through 6th may have a Sunday practice due to gym availability. No practice may start before noon.
- **Holiday and No School Day Practices:** These practices are optional to have and will not count towards the student-athletes participation and playing time. If a coach does decide to hold a practice on one of these days, it must be approved by the Athletic Director.

Dispute Resolution Process

It is AACA policy that any dispute between parents/student athlete and coaches be resolved promptly, amicably, and fairly.

1. If a parent or student athlete believes the coach is not complying with the Code of Conduct, the parent or student should first attempt to resolve the issue by approaching the coach. In no case, should a dispute be discussed during a practice or game, or in a public situation, in particular in front of student athletes. In order to promote self-advocacy to our 7th and 8th grade students, it is recommended that both the parent and student-athlete be in attendance during the meeting with the coach.
2. If the parent or student athlete feels comfortable about discussing the matter with the coach, the school recommends a written or verbal, information discussion with the Athletic Administrator or Athletic Director.
3. If there is not a satisfactory resolution, a parent or student may submit a formal complaint to the Athletic Administrator or Athletic Director. This complaint should be in writing and signed.
4. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Athletic Administrator or Athletic Director will:
 - a. Confer with the coach for his or her perspective on the issue
 - b. Discuss the issue with the AACA Athletic Council, who will attempt to explore the legitimacy, accuracy, and severity of the complaint.
 - c. In consultation with the AACA Athletic Council, determine whether the complaint shall be considered valid, and all parties will be notified.
 - d. If the complaint is deemed valid, design and require a mitigating solution for the coach, parent, and student athlete.

Volunteer Hours

All families of students playing on a team are required to perform a total of 8 hours of service to the athletic program. These hours are not included in the family service hours. These service hours must be completed either as gym duty, scorekeeping, operating the gym concession stand, athletic banquet preparation and cleanup, etc. For parents with multiple students on a team, additional service is encouraged but not required. Any additional hours after fulfilling the 8 required athletic hours can be counted towards your family service hours.

Failure to fulfill 8 hours of service to the athletic program will result in a monetary payment. Each hour that is not fulfilled will be charged \$25.00 per hour.

Concussions

A concussion is a complex injury that causes a disturbance in brain function. It usually starts with a blow to the head, face or neck, and is often associated with temporarily losing consciousness. If a suspicion of a concussion has occurred on our facilities, this must be reported to the Athletic Director and Assistant Athletic Director to file a report with the Archdiocese. The concussion oversight team includes the Athletic Director, Assistant Athletic Director and school nurse. This team is supervised by the school principal.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) states the following information:

What is a concussion? Concussion, a type of traumatic brain injury, is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth – causing the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull. This sudden movement of the brain can cause stretching and tearing of brain cells, damaging the cells and creating chemical changes in the brain.

What should I do when a concussion is suspected? No matter whether the athlete is a key member of the team or the game is about to end, an athlete with a suspected concussion should be immediately removed from play.

1. Remove the athlete from play. Look for signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head or body. When in doubt, sit them out.
2. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. As a coach, record the following information: cause of the injury, any loss of consciousness and how long, any memory loss following the injury, any seizures, and number of previous concussions (if any).
3. Inform the athlete’s parents or guardians.
4. Keep the athlete out of play. An athlete should be removed from play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health care professional says they are symptom-free and it’s okay to return to play. After you remove an athlete with a suspected concussion from practice or play, the decision about return to practice or play is a medical decision.¹

Signs and Symptoms

Signs Observed by Coaching Staff	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appears dazed or stunned ● Is confused about assignment or position ● Forgets an instruction ● Is unsure of game, score, or opponent ● Moves clumsily ● Answers questions slowly ● Loses consciousness (even briefly) ● Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes ● Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall ● Can’t recall event after hit or fall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Headache or “pressure” in head ● Nausea or vomiting ● Balance problems or dizziness ● Double or blurry vision ● Sensitivity to light ● Sensitivity to noise ● Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy ● Concentration or memory problems ● Confusion ● Just “not feeling right” or “feeling down”

Return to Play Protocol

Returning to play following a concussion involves a stepwise protocol and progression once the individual is symptom free.

- No student-athlete should return to play while symptomatic.
- Student-athletes are prohibited from returning to play the day the concussion occurs.

¹ Reference: Center for Disease Control: Heads Up Concussion Youth Sports Fact Sheet

- When in doubt, have them sit out.

Once a student-athlete is symptom free at rest for at least 24 hours and has a signed release form from the treating physician, she/he may begin to return to play with the following progression:

Phase 1: Light Aerobic Activity (walking or stationary biking, no resistance training)

Phase 2: Sport- Specific Activity (running – resistance training may begin)

Phase 3: Non-Contact Training Drills (sport specific skill drills)

Phase 4: Full Contact Practice

Phase 5: Return to Play

Return to Learn Protocol

The Athletic Director, Assistant Athletic Director, and school nurse will function as a case manager and will advocate for the student's needs and serve as the primary point of contact for the student and family.

- The student must be evaluated by a licensed healthcare profession and documentation must be provided to the school.
- The protocol emphasizes the student to participate in school in a modified fashion.
- The student should be granted adequate time to complete missed academic work.
- The student should report to the case manager daily in order to monitor symptoms and assess how the student is tolerating the accommodations.

Phase 1: No School/Cognitive Rest

In this phase, the student may be experiencing high levels of symptoms that prohibit the student from attending school and may cause symptoms to worsen. During this stage, physical symptoms tend to be the most prominent and may interfere with basic tasks. Emphasis should be on cognitive and physical rest to allow the brain and body to rest as much as possible. No physical activity, tests, quizzes, or homework.

Phase 2: Part Time School Attendance with Accommodations

In this phase, the student's symptoms have decreased to manageable levels. Often students can do cognitive activities but only for very short periods of time (5-15 minutes) so frequent breaks to rest and recharge are needed. The initial goal is a re-introduction to school and ensure that the student can tolerate the school environment without worsening symptoms. This means that the first few days often include just sitting in class and listening (no note-taking or reading). Once the student can tolerate this, she/he can try short intervals of cognitive work per class. Some intervention examples include, but are not limited to: Limiting screen time, part time school attendance for core classes, eliminating non-essential assignments, providing class notes, no tests/quizzes, managing homework load, no physical activity, frequent breaks, etc.

Phase 3: Full Day Attendance with Accommodations

In this phase, the student's symptoms are decreased in both number and severity. They have intervals during the day where they are symptom free. As the student improves, gradually increased demands on the brain by increasing the amount, length of time, and difficulty of academic requirements, as long as this does not worsen symptoms. Some intervention examples

include, but are not limited to: prioritizing assignments, limiting tests, providing extra time to complete assignments/tests, prioritizing in-class learning, accommodations are reduced, no physical activity unless prescribed by a medical professional.

Phase 4: Full Day Attendance without Accommodations

In this phase, the student may report no symptoms or experience mild symptoms.

Accommodations are removed when the student can fully participate in academic work both at school and at home without symptoms. Intervention examples include, but are not limited to: plan to complete any missing academic work, provide extra time to complete those missing assignments, physical activities based on medical professional recommendations, etc.

Phase 5: Full School and Extracurricular Involvement

in this phase, no symptoms are present. The student is constantly tolerating full school days and typical academic load with triggering any symptoms. No accommodations are needed. Before returning to physical education and/or sports, the student should receive written clearance and complete a step by step plan to return to play progression as indicated by the licensed healthcare professional.

Sports Awards

Awards and trophies are given to all student athletes for program participation at our Athletic Banquet at the end of the season. Each of the student athletes will receive a medallion recognizing their participation on the team. In addition, three players will be recognized during your team's presentation for individual awards. Individual awards are given to athletes in 7th and 8th grade.

- **Sportsmanship Award:** Given to players for each sport/team, these players represent respect for oneself, one's team and his/her competitors. He/she always has a positive attitude, no matter the situation, day or outcome. He/she always makes the extra effort to celebrate other player's success and lift up a player when he/she is down. Award recipients are recognized on team pages.
- **Most Improved Award:** Given to players for each sport/team, these players have shown the most growth and development throughout the season. This player's individual skills, confidence and understanding of the game have grown. Award recipients are recognized on team pages.
- **Honored the Game Award:** Given to players for each sport/team, these players have gone above and beyond in honoring the game. He/she is always giving his/her best, always pushing to become a better skilled player and team player. He/she raises the level of the other players on the court; although not necessarily the most skilled player, they bring the most to the field/court day in and day out. Award recipients are recognized on team pages.

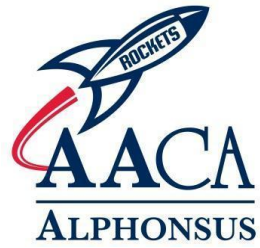
Towards the end of the season, players will have the opportunity to vote on who will receive these awards. Coaches will also have the opportunity to vote on who they believe should receive these awards.

Rocket Award

Given to one 8th grade boy and/or one 8th grade girl in recognition of their athletic participation throughout their career at AACCA, these students show enthusiasm by trying multiple sports and dedication in attending countless practices. These student-athletes represent the best of AACCA athletics and the spirit of “being a Rocket” both on and off the court. Student athletes will receive an application in March-April to be nominated for this award. The decision process is a compilation of input from multiple adults including administration that are involved in the AACCA Athletic program.

Each student is presented with an individual plaque, and his or her name is added to the Rocket Award banner that now hangs in the AACCA gym. 2010 was the inaugural year for this award.

AACA SPORTS PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT



The purpose of the following Sports Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct is to help define appropriate parental/guardian actions that support the mission of the athletic program. Parents/guardians should read, understand, and sign this form prior to participation.

The essential elements of character-building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these pillars of character.

As a parent/guardian, I therefore agree to the following:

I will not force my child to participate in sports.

I will remember that the game is for youth, not adults.

I will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the league.

I (and my guests) will be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy towards all players, coaches, officials, and spectators at all games and practices.

I (and my guests) will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct (booing, taunting, etc.) or any other form of harassment towards any official, coach, player, or parent.

I (and my guests) will not use any profane language or gestures.

I will not encourage any behavior or practices that would endanger the health and well-being of the athletes. *52 Handbook for Athletics in the Catholic Elementary School, 2011*

I will teach my child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.

I will demand that my child treat other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect.

I will teach my child the importance of hustle, playing fairly, and doing one's best.

I will never ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a competition.

I will emphasize the importance of skill development over winning or losing.

I will promote the emotional and physical well-being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire I may have for my own child.

I will respect the officials and their authority during games, and will never publicly question their decisions.

I will respect the coaches for the time they donate, and I will never publicly confront, question, or criticize them.

I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all sports events.

I will refrain from coaching my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am one of the official coaches for the team.

I will promote my son's/daughter's working to the best of their ability in school, prioritizing their academic work both in class and at home so that he/she maintain good academic standing at all times.

By signing this document, the parent or guardian agrees to follow the stated guidelines in the Parent Conduct and Athletic Handbook. Any parent/guardian who does not follow the guidelines will be asked to leave the sports facility and be suspended from the privilege of attending games determined by the Athletic Administrator.

Athlete's Name(s):

Parent/Guardian Name(s):

Parent/Guardian Signature:

AACA STUDENT-ATHLETE

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of the AACA Athlete Code of Conduct is to help define appropriate actions and behaviors that support the mission of the athletic program. All participating student-athletes should read, understand, and sign this form prior to receiving a uniform and participating in athletics.

As a student-athlete, I therefore agree to each of the following (initial each item):

- I will play the game for the game's sake.
- I will be generous in winning and graceful in losing.
- I will display good sportsmanship and respect towards all opponents.
- I will work for the good of the team.
- I will accept the decisions of the officials gracefully.
- I will conduct myself at all times with honor and dignity. This includes during and after school, games, practices, and trips to other schools and facilities.
- I will recognize, applaud, and encourage the efforts of my teammates and opponents.
- I will show respect for my coaches.
- I will show respect towards fans and personnel from other schools.
- I will commit to working to the best of my ability in school, prioritizing my academic work both in class and at home so that I maintain good academic standing at all times.*
- I will commit to obeying both the school and athletic program's rules and regulations.*

*When a pattern of misbehavior, missed class, homework assignments is noticed that negatively impacts a child's learning, it will be communicated by teachers to parents and our Athletic Administrator. A problem-solving approach involving the student, a student's teacher(s), parents, and our Athletic Program staff will be used to determine the focused support a student needs to successfully meet their responsibilities both as a student and an athlete.

By signing this document, the student-athlete agrees to follow the stated guidelines. Not meeting these expectations may result in loss of privilege to participate in AACA's athletic program, as determined by the Athletic Director, with consultation from applicable faculty.

Athlete's Name

Athlete's Signature

Date