

Millennium Charter Academy

2019-2020
Athletic Handbook



MCA ATHLETICS
FIERCE COMPETITORS WITH FIRST-CLASS SPORTSMANSHIP

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Student-Athlete and Parent Handbook

Overview of MCA Athletics

As an outgrowth of MCA's vision of classical education, which addresses the whole person (body, mind, and soul), our athletic program proceeds philosophically from our beliefs about humanity and education. Athletics, therefore, are integrated into school life to develop further virtuous citizens, who pursue the embodiment of truth, goodness, and beauty through sports. Because we teach the mind, shape the will, and train the body toward excellence in all things, athletics at MCA are not for the sake of athletics but for the sake of a good life.

Sports properly conducted form fierce competitors who are gracious victors and noble losers. They develop tenacity and courage in the face of adversity, as well as respect for individual and for the common good. When done well, not only do sports develop the body, but they also convey a healthy esteem and reverence for the body and for the necessary interaction of body, mind, and well. Sports knowledge, physical prowess, and virtue together yield a healthy life on and off the court.

Our goal is to use athletics to that end, that is, toward the promotion of human flourishing - being all one is intended to be - so that our students are compassionate, respectful, responsible, trustworthy, and courageous, living happy lives as they find their place in this work.

I am a LION.

I am strong and noble.

I am endowed with worth and value.

I respect my opponents on and off the field of play.

I place hard to win with valor and honor.

I lose with dignity and grace.

As a school committed to the growth of its students in mind, body, and heart, as well as to the student's understanding of self and his/her relationship to others in the community, Millennium Charter Academy's athletic program is a natural and necessary outgrowth of the school's philosophy and understanding of humanity. Furthermore, MCA student-athletes are to be fierce competitors with first-class sportsmanship. MCA is committed to excellence in athletics as part of a larger commitment to excellence in education.

The Athletic Department is dedicated to providing opportunities that enhance the intellectual, physical, social, and moral development of the student-athlete, conducting all activities in accordance with good sportsmanship and ethical conduct, specifically the principles of MCA's Expectations and Habits. While safeguarding their physical welfare, MCA provides Upper School student-athletes with enriching opportunities to develop their athletic abilities to full potential through local, conference, and state-level competition. MCA athletics also promote high academic standards, teamwork, self-discipline, and leadership development.

Athletics are extracurricular activities conducted after the regular school day, and participation is strictly voluntary. The student-athlete earns the privilege of team membership through dedication, desire, discipline, and demonstrated skills.

To ensure a stable infrastructure for participation, Millennium Charter Academy provides participants with:

- the best administration, supervision, and instruction available,
- quality facilities and equipment that are both safe and student-friendly,
- safe and quality transportation to and from all competitions and activities, and
- a conference well suited to MCA's philosophy and goals.

Millennium Charter Academy (MCA) sixth through eighth-grade athletic teams are a member of the Central Carolina Conference for Academics, Athletics and the Arts (CCC). Millennium Charter Academy ninth through twelfth-grade sports teams are an independent member of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA). MCA's interscholastic athletic programs are governed by the policies established by the MCA School Board, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the Central Carolina Conference, and the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.

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This handbook contains rules, regulations, policies, forms and other information for coaches, student-athletes, and parents/guardians to make the athletic program a wholesome, successful, and meaningful experience. A solid understanding of these rules and regulations is vital to ensure that the athletic program runs effectively and efficiently. Please understand this handbook is not exhaustive. There are rules and regulations not included, and each coach has the right to make reasonable rules that are more stringent than those outlined in this document. It is important that the student-athlete understand and agree to the basic requirements (listed on the following pages) before making a commitment to participate.

Student-athletes are expected to adhere to the Student-Athlete and Parent Handbook. Those that do not are subject to consequences. The coach, athletic director, upper school director, and headmaster, as well as the athlete's own parents, may be involved in the discipline of a student-athlete. Before a student-athlete is allowed to participate in any sport, the student-athlete and parents/guardians must sign the Athletic Participation Requirement Form (located in this handbook), which states that the student-athlete has understood and has agreed to abide by all parts of this handbook.

ATHLETIC INFORMATION

Philosophy of Middle School Athletics

At this level, the focus is on learning athletic skills and game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, physiologically appropriate demands of the adolescent body, and healthy competition. We want our teams to experience winning and losing while always being challenged to work hard to improve in the future. In many cases, athletes will be playing the sport in an organized setting for the first time. This program is available to all students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades that have not turned 15 before September 1 of the current school year.

For all team members, meaningful contest participation will exist throughout a season. However, a specified amount of playing time is never guaranteed. Participants at this level are preparing themselves for six-days-a-week commitment that is expected at the high school levels. While contests and practices are rarely held on Sundays and holidays, practice sessions are sometimes scheduled during school vacation periods.

Goals of Middle School Athletics

Each player will have a positive experience in an encouraging environment that pushes him/her to work hard to pursue excellence in that sport through high school.

Keys to Middle School Athletics:

1. The goal is to provide all athletes the opportunity to play, but this is not required, and may not occur in close games or tournament games.
2. Emphasis and coaching will be on fundamentals as determined by the head coach for that sport.
3. A high value is placed on winning, but a high value is still placed on game experience and skill development.
4. Middle School students, in grades 6-8, are eligible to compete as long as they have not turned 15 before September 1.

High School Goals:

High School sports teams will compete at the Varsity level in all NCHSAA contests during the school year. As the High School expands, junior varsity levels will be added.

Philosophy of Varsity Athletics.

Varsity athletics should be preparing students to take on the full responsibilities of life. Varsity athletics is the highest level of athletics that most students will reach. Normally, seniors and juniors make up the majority of the roster. Occasionally a sophomore and infrequently a freshman may be included on the team, providing that evidence of advanced levels of physical development, athletic skill, and appropriate social-emotional development have been demonstrated.

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Varsity may require a six-day-a-week commitment. This commitment is often extended into vacation periods for all sports season. While contest and practices are rarely held on holidays and Sundays, the dedication and commitment needed to conduct a successful varsity program should be taken seriously. STUDENTS TURNING 19 PRIOR TO AUGUST 31 OF THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR ATHLETICS.

Goals of Varsity Athletics:

1. We are competing to win every game.
2. We expect a larger commitment from our athletes both during the season and in the off-season.
3. Not everyone will have the opportunity to participate.
4. The coaching emphasis is on team concepts and strategies and not on fundamentals that should already be mastered by the athlete.
5. Players are expected to take on a larger role in the leadership of the team.
6. Players will be expected to take full responsibility for equipment.

DRESS

Student-athletes are to dress at practice and all games in an appropriate manner in accordance with the dress code as described in the MCA Family Handbook. Coaches may stipulate game day dress code.

INSURANCE

By its nature, participation in interscholastic athletics includes risk of injury; therefore, participants have a responsibility to help reduce the possibility of injury. Student-athletes must obey all safety rules and warnings, report physical problems to their coach/coaches, follow a proper conditioning program, and inspect their equipment daily. All student-athletes must show proof of medical or accident insurance.

OBLIGATIONS

All student-athletes are required to replace lost uniforms or intentionally damaged equipment either by payment or restitution. Student-athletes are responsible for clearing all obligations with the primary coach before participating or practicing with another sport. If a student-athlete fails to take care of his/her financial responsibilities to the athletic department, then he/she may be ruled ineligible.

PHYSICALS

All student-athletes must have a current physical on file with the athletic director before participating in a sport, including tryouts and out of season workouts / open gyms. The physical is valid for one calendar year and must be current until the end of a specific sport season. We **only** accept the North Carolina High School Athletic Association "Sport Pre-participation Examination." A licensed physician, a nurse practitioner, or a physician's assistant must complete this form.

TEAM SCHEDULES

Schedules will be available on MCA Lions TeamAPP (downloadable from apple store or google play) <https://mcalions.teamapp.com/> and the coach will give each student-athlete and parent a copy of the schedule.

SELECTION OF SPORT BY ATHLETE

Students are encouraged to tryout in as many sports as he/she can. Once a student-athlete begins the in-season, training period of a sport, he/she should remain a dedicated member of that team until the season's end. Should a student-athlete quit during the season, he/she must obtain permission from the Athletic Director to participate in another sport during that same season.

TRYOUTS / SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Each coach has his/her policies for team selection and will explain those policies to candidates before the season practice begins. Skill development sessions and open facilities (open to all, required for none) are allowed, but shall not be held during any tryout period of an in-season sport, during trimester or year-end exams, or during the last 5 (five) days of school. All skill development sessions must be voluntary and open to all eligible students. Insurance and a current physical are required for those involved in skill development and off-season sessions, including camps.

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SPORTS OFFERED

Fall Sports			
Boys Sports	Eligible Grade	Girl's Sports	Eligible Grade
MS Cross Country	6-8	MS Cross Country	6-8
HS Cross Country	9-12	HS Cross Country	9-12
MS Soccer (CoEd)	6-8	MS Soccer (CoEd)	6-8
HS Soccer (CoEd)	9-12	HS Soccer (CoEd)	9-12
		MS Volleyball	6-8
		HS Volleyball	9-12
		MS Tennis	6-8
Winter Sports			
Boys Sports	Eligible Grade	Girl's Sports	Eligible Grade
MS Basketball	6-8	MS Basketball	6-8
HS Basketball	9-12	HS Basketball	9-12
HS Indoor Track	9-12	HS Indoor Track	9-12
		MS Cheerleading	6-8
		HS Cheerleading	9-12
Spring Sports			
Boys Sports	Eligible Grade	Girl's Sports	Eligible Grade
MS Baseball	6-8	MS Softball	6-8
HS Baseball	9-12	HS Softball	9-12
MS Golf	6-8	MS Golf	9-12
HS Golf	6-8	HS Golf	9-12
MS Track	6-8	MS Track	6-8
HS Track	9-12	HS Track	9-12
MS Tennis	6-8		
HS Tennis	9-12		

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TRANSPORTATION

The MCA Athletic Department will provide transportation to and from the athletic contest as long as we have enough buses and drivers to do so. When bus transportation is limited parents may be asked to help carpool athletes to away contest. Parents asked to help with a carpool must be on the approved MCA drivers list. All student-athletes must travel with the team to athletic events held away from home. Parents/guardians may transport their child to an away contest if the coach has been informed and if the parents/guardians agree to have their child at the contest at the time the coach designates. Student-athletes will be allowed to travel home with parents/guardians, grandparents, brothers, or sisters (18 years or older) after the away contest.

No athlete may ride home with a friend or another family without permission from Athletic Director Rodney King or Head Master Kirby McCrary. A written note or email from the athlete's parents must be submitted 24 hours before the scheduled away games to obtain permission. Parent/guardian, grandparent, brother, or sister will sign the athlete out on a sheet provided by the coach.

If an athlete returns from an away contest by the MCA bus, parents must pick their child up from school within 10 minutes of the bus' arrival to MCA. Athletes that ride the bus back to MCA will call their parents on the way back to school to inform their parents of the arrival time.

WEATHER

During the fall and spring seasons when temperatures reach 90 degrees and with high humidity practices for outdoors sports will be moved to 6 pm or practices will be moved inside. When school is closed due to inclement weather conditions, all school activities shall be suspended unless the headmaster or athletic director grant special permission. This rule applies to all games and practices; under **no circumstances** should student-athletes be penalized for failure to attend practices or games when school is closed, even when special permission to compete or practice has been granted.

ATTENDANCE AT PRACTICE AND GAMES

A student-athlete must be present at school for a minimum of 50% of the school day in order to practice or compete in an athletic event.

Each coach will have his/her attendance policies. However, each student-athlete is EXPECTED to be at practice each day and every scheduled game as long as they have been present at school 50% of the school day. If a student has committed to be a part of the team, it is crucial that he/she is at practice every day to learn the skills, drills, plays, etc. This is a team, and if a member of the team is missing, it affects the whole team. If a student-athlete misses a game, it could hurt the team's chances of improving and being competitive. If a student-athlete knows he/she is going to be absent from practice or will not be able to attend a game, that student-athlete or parent must inform the coach as soon as the absence is foreseeable. That student-athlete may be dismissed from the team if absences become habitual. Acceptable absences from the above are illness, doctor appointments, a student seeking academic assistance, and religious holidays. **The school team is the athlete's priority. An athlete may not miss any school athletic activity as listed above to participate in a non-school athletic event (i.e., Travel teams, AAU, Recreational teams, etc.).**

OUT-OF-SEASON WORKOUTS / OPEN GYMS

Sports that are out of season can hold workouts / open gyms. Student-Athletes are not required to attend out of season / open gyms workouts but are strongly encouraged to do so if their schedule allows it. Student-Athletes will not be penalized if they do not attend these types of workouts in the offseason.

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MILLENNIUM CHARTER ACADEMY ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

A student-athlete must:

1. Adhere to MCA's behavior policies
2. Sign the Athlete's Honor Code
3. Maintain an average of "C" (70) or higher in each subject, grade being checked every two-weeks
4. Have no more than three (3) unexcused absences thus far in the school year
5. Have no more than three (3) suspensions in this academic year.
6. Be present for a minimum of 50% of the school day on the day of an athletic contest to participate in the event
7. Have received a medical examination by a licensed physician within the past 365 days. The physical form must be submitted to the Athletic Director yearly. (If you miss five or more days due to illness or injury, you must receive a medical release before practicing or playing.)
8. Be in 6th – 12th grades and no more than fifteen years old on or before September 1 to participate on middle school competitive teams and not have turned 19 years old on or prior to September 1 to participate on high school competitive teams.
9. Be within the stated age parameters for all sports and club level activities, e.g., in grades 6-12 to participate in cheerleading or in grades K-5 to participate in spirit squad, etc.
10. Be within the stated grade or age parameters, determined at the foundation of each club, to participate in athletic club activities.

HIGH ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The previous quarter grades determine eligibility for all athletic tryouts. Specifically, all final grades must be C or higher. Should the season cut across a change in quarters, the grades from the previous quarter are used to measure eligibility for two weeks, or until the class has a reasonable number of scores recorded to modify the past quarter.

Furthermore, student-athletes are required to maintain a C average in all subjects throughout the sports season. The athletic director will review students' grades every two weeks. The AD, in turn, enforces an automatic two-week suspension from game play for any student-athlete with a D or F. The AD will notify the student-athlete, parents/guardians, and coach of the two-week game suspension. During the two-week suspension that student-athlete will attend tutoring sessions for any class in which he/she has a below C average. Once the grade is a C or better, the student-athlete may return to game play. Suspension does not initially affect practice. However, the AD, after getting approval from the headmaster, may invoke suspension from practice or dismissal from the team should the student-athlete appear to be abusing the intent of this guideline.

Before participation in any interscholastic athletic activity (including tryouts, practices, or competitions) the following must be completed:

- All MCA Athletic Participation Guidelines
- Student-Athlete Information / Parental Permission Form
- Sports Pre-participation Examination Form (physical)
- Student-Athlete Code of Honor Form
- Parent's Honor Code Form
- Concussion Fact Sheets / Concussion Statement Form
- Emergency Medical Form

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COLLEGE

Students that are interested in playing sports in college should communicate their intentions with the Athletic Director. Student-athletes will need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center to be aware of academic requirements to be eligible for NCAA athletics.

MEALS

The athletic department does not provide funds to purchase team, snacks, pre-game meals, post-game meals, or overnight accommodations unless covered by the NCHSAA or prior approval from the AD. Parents and coaches should work together to organize team snacks and/or meals.

AWARDS

School letters and certificates are awarded according to the policies listed below.

Awards will be presented for:

Most outstanding player - varsity and middle school

Most improved player - varsity and middle school

Coach's Award - varsity and middle school

The following criteria will be used in the selection process of the award winners:

1. Most Outstanding Player - the athlete who contributes the most to the total success of the whole team.
2. Most Improved Player - the athlete who makes the greatest strides progressing as a player in his/her sport.
3. Coach's Award - The athlete in his/her sport, who through leadership contributes significantly to the coach and team.
4. Athlete of the Year Award - An athlete who displays leadership, athletic accomplishment, team unity, total commitment to the school and athletic program. (This award will be presented to one male and one female athlete.)
5. Scholar Athlete of the Year - given to the senior who excels on the court/field and the classroom. The preference is to go to the student who excels in multiple sports, but it is not a requirement.

CONDUCT

Participation in extracurricular activities, including athletics, is a privilege, not a right. Millennium Charter Academy expects all student-athletes to represent MCA to portray the ten Habits and embody the five Expectations at all times. Student-athletes should speak, act, dress, and generally conduct themselves in a way that reflects positively on MCA. Each student-athlete is expected to be good citizens at all times.

Any student-athlete who fails to conduct himself or herself appropriately may have the privilege of participation limited or revoked. Taunting, poor sportsmanship, rudeness, dishonesty, mean-spiritedness, bad language, cruelty, insubordination, insolence, defiance of proper authority are examples of misconduct. A student-athlete in in-school suspension will not be allowed to practice, participate, or attend their athletic event on that day. He/she will be allowed to resume activities the day after the suspension ends. If a student has more than three (3) days of suspension in an academic year, he/she will not be allowed to participate in athletics until the start of the next school year.

Discipline is designed to fit each situation, depending upon numerous factors, including but not limited to severity, number of previous offenses, motivation, and student response. Coaches, the athletic director, and/or school administration will follow Millennium Charter Academy policies, the Family Handbook, and the Athletic Handbook to handle individual instances in a manner that seems best suited for the discipline of the student. Student-athletes and parents should note that appropriate responses by coaches, athletic director or school administration range from a verbal reprimand to suspension or dismissal from the team and or the school.

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CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY

Millennium Charter Academy recognizes that concussions and other head injuries may be serious and potentially life-threatening, and those injuries may result in serious consequences later in life if managed improperly. Therefore, the MCA athletic department directs all coaches to comply with the concussion safety requirements for interscholastic athletic competition established by G.S. 115C-12(23) as concussion amended in the Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Act of 2011 and to implement and follow all concussion safety requirements set by the NC State Board of Education rules and policies for high schools.

Each year, all coaches, athletic directors, first responders, volunteers, student-athletes and parents of student-athletes must be provided with a concussion and head injury information sheet that meets the requirements of the State Board. Before any students, coach, volunteer or first responder will be allowed to participate in interscholastic activities (including tryouts, practices, or competitions) he or she must sign the head injury information sheet and return it to the coach.

Any student-athlete who is exhibiting signs or symptoms consistent with a concussion must be removed from athletic activity immediately. Furthermore, the student-athlete must not be allowed to return to play or practice until he/she has been evaluated and has received written clearance for participation that complies with the requirements of G.S. 115C-12(23) and other applicable law or State Board policy.

COMMUNICATION

Expectation from the Coach

1. Coaching philosophy
2. Expectations of and season goals for the student-athlete and the team
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements, such as special equipment, strength and conditioning programs, etc.
5. Procedure for student-athlete injuries during participation
6. Team rules, guidelines, and potential consequences for infractions
7. Lettering criteria
8. Team selection process

Expectation from the Student-Athlete and Parents/Guardians

1. Express concerns directly to the coach
2. Provide contact numbers
3. Notify coach of any schedule conflicts in advance
4. Notify coach of special medical conditions
5. Notify coach of illness or injury as soon as possible

As your child becomes involved in athletic programs at the Upper School, he/she will experience some of the most rewarding moments of his/her life. There also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child may wish. If you remain troubled, bring your concerns to the coach. Civil discussion is welcome and important to understanding and resolution. If you are not satisfied, you are invited to appeal to the athletic director.

Concerns you may want to discuss with your coach

1. Treatment of your child
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior
4. Concerns about your child's academic performance
5. Safety of your child

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Often it is difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you had hoped. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe to be best for the team. The items below should be left to the discretion of the coach:

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Offensive/defensive philosophies

Some situations may require a conference between the coach and student-athlete, or between the coach and parent. These conferences are encouraged. It is important that all parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. Be willing to accept opinions and/or knowledge that you may not want to hear.

When a conference is necessary, the following procedure should be used to help resolve any concerns:

- Coaches maintain an open-door policy toward student-athletes
- Parents/Guardians schedule an appointment to meet with a coach. If the coach cannot be reached, please call the athletic director to set up a meeting.
- In deference to decorum and civil conversation, parents do not confront a coach immediately before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both, so please schedule a meeting time.

Steps to follow if the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution:

- Schedule an appointment with the athletic director. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.
- Should this meeting prove unsatisfactory, you may contact the headmaster.

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Rodney King, MCA Athletic Director
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Phone: 336-789-7570 ext 1614