



## Immanuel Christian Secondary School Athletics Policy

**The Mission of ICS is to provide a Christian environment in which God calls all His children to develop their gifts for joyful service in His Kingdom.**

As Christians we believe that God is in all of life. He is our maker, His world is our laboratory, His word is our guide, His Son Jesus Christ is our Redeemer and we must live lives of love and service to Him. We want to pass along this philosophy to our children. To do that we need a school that is based on God's Word, one which incorporates the Bible's teachings into each subject area. Our children are God's children. Consistency demands that we send them to a school that meets our religious and philosophical objectives, a school where they may learn to know, love and serve God.

Interscholastic Athletics at Immanuel Christian Secondary School (ICSS) must fit in with our Christian world-and-life view. It should be viewed as an extension of the curriculum which attempts to meet the mission statement of the school. Each human being is created by God to praise and serve Him. Body, mind and soul are interdependent and form a whole which cannot be separated. The whole person is called to be an instrument of service to God and others. Athletics should be viewed as a response to that calling.

### **I. Policy Rationale**

A. to aid the athletic directors, coaches, athletes and parents in living out their calling as Christ's own and the mission statement of the school. Therefore, ICSS athletics will be a place where all involved may learn to know, love and serve God.

B. to allow for accountability on the part of the athletic directors, coaches, athletes and other participants, parents and fans.

C. to provide guidelines for athletic directors, coaches, athletes and other participants, parents and fans, by which that accountability can be measured.

D. to make certain that the focus of ICSS interscholastic athletic program is consistent with the mission statement.

### **II Purpose**

A. to pursue a godly character while participating in a sport since athletics is in God's domain of authority and through play spirituality and godliness are expressed, whether positive or negative.

B. to further equip students in developing an understanding of service to and growth in Christ through athletics.

C. to encourage team spirit that recognizes each athlete's contribution to the team; each athlete's responsibility to each other and to the team.

D. to encourage the development of sports-specific skills that help the athlete strive for personal excellence.

E. to build and develop Christian leadership.

F. to develop the goals for responsible action as outlined in "Interscholastic Athletics: Education for Expressive Play and Responsible Action," pages 14-17.

G. to humbly recognize that God uses our schools to reflect Christ to the secular community.

**Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not men. Col. 3:23**

**Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord. Col. 3:17**

### **III. Principles and Procedures**

#### **A. Athletic Director**

##### **1. Qualifications**

a. must be a teacher at ICSS

b. must demonstrate, through active commitment in a Christian Church, that Christ takes first place in his or her life.

c. must have an interest in, and knowledge of school athletics.

d. must demonstrate organizational skills.

e. must demonstrate a current and working knowledge in mentoring and devotional resources.

##### **2. Responsibilities**

a. to be accountable to the administration of ICSS.

b. to be familiar with all aspects of team sports relating to extracurricular and intramural activities.

c. to encourage the development of a resource bank of appropriate devotional material.

d. to organize an annual Athletic Department information night inviting coaches, parents, athletes and the school community to attend.

- i) Provide a ICSS school/coach agreement to coaches, and a school/parent/player agreement for athletes and parents to sign at the beginning of each season
- e. to prepare a season schedule prior to the start of each season. This schedule needs the approval of the administration. It will be recorded on the school calendar.
- i) Middle School teams may enter in a maximum of four tournaments, not including the LSAA finals.
  - ii) Senior Varsity Volleyball teams may enter five tournaments (JV-2) not including the pre-season or the zone tournament.
  - iii) Senior Varsity Basketball teams may enter six tournaments (JV-3), not including the post-season or zone tournament. Basketball is allowed one more tournament, because the season is two months longer than the volleyball season.
- f. to prepare a tournament schedule in the spring of each year for the following athletic year for Senior High, in fall for Middle School. These schedules need approval from the administration. They will be recorded on the school calendar.
- g. to register the school with the ASAA each fall and complete all zone registrations throughout the year.
- h. to recruit a qualified coach for each team and create a coaching assignment list in the fall of each year. All coaches need the approval of the administration and must meet the eligibility requirements of this policy.
- i. to ensure that a volunteer (responsible adult) is part of the team, as well as the coach, to monitor and ensure a positive, safe environment.
- j. to be sure the coaching staff reads and understands the ICSS athletics policy.
- k. to encourage professional development of the coaching staff through clinics and workshops.
- l. to administer appropriate disciplinary measures when necessary, and to make clear to the coaches the responsibility they have regarding discipline when playing away from ICSS.
- m. to ensure that proper first aid supplies are present at all home and away games.
- n. to organize all scorekeepers, referees, gate workers and supervisors for each game. Any costs should be included in the athletic budget.
- o. to book all buses and transportation as needed.
- q. to organize the annual senior high sports banquet in the spring of each year.
- r. to select the male and female athlete of the year awards which are presented at the year end school awards assembly.

- s. to attend all basketball league meetings (Deep South, LSAA), volleyball league meetings (SAIAC, LSAA), badminton, track and cross-country meetings, along with all ASAA meetings.
- t. to provide professional representation of ICSS as required in all leagues and associations.
- u. to create a yearly budget in the fall of each year which outlines all athletic costs.
- v. to create a fundraising plan/fee schedule in the fall of each year which will cover all the expenses of the athletic program.
- w. to organize all home tournaments.

## **B. Coaches**

### **1. Eligibility**

- a. it is desirable that all teams at ICSS have coaches that demonstrate through active commitment in a Christian church, a love for and commitment to Christ. Coaches that reflect this will be given higher preference over other community coaches.
  - i) understand and have read the ICSS Athletics Policy and will implement its expectations to the best of their ability and uphold and affirm our community and Christian faith values as outlined in the ICS Faith Statement that is part of our Master Agreement with Lethbridge School Division.
- b. must have an interest and knowledge of sport being asked to coach.
- c. High School students may be eligible to coach if placed in a qualified mentored co-coach position. Ideally the student should have attended NBC camp and/or appropriate sport clinics or camps.
- d. must be willing to submit to a criminal record check, a signed school/coach agreement, and fulfill the mandatory course requirements of the ASAA (Concussion Course, By-laws and Policies).

### **2. Responsibilities**

A coach is a leader and a mentor. Coaches are encouraged to, and should seek opportunities to model faith in Christ with their team players, parents and other sports contacts. This, in combination with teaching technical aspects of the sport, should serve to develop athletes who are committed to the Lord and to their team. A coach, because he or she is a mentor, must display the qualities of respect, honesty, humility, loyalty, integrity, responsibility, trustworthiness, and self control. (Col. 3:23)

- a. at the start of each season, to discuss with the athletic director how the development of the athlete in all aspects of his/her life (spiritual, emotional, social, physical, etc.) can be taught through the playing of the game.
- b. must recognize that prayer and devotions are critical elements of the athletic program.

- c. must be committed to developing every player on the team to his or her fullest ability realizing that each player has unique God-given talents.
- d. to develop the players into a healthy "team" reflecting what it means to be a Christ-centered community.
- e. to communicate and model appropriate Christian behaviour at home and when away.
- f. to administer appropriate curfews when away, realizing the team is there to play their best.
- g. to monitor players' behaviour and to be empowered to take appropriate action
  - i) foul language, mouthed or voiced, or displays of anger will not be tolerated, such an infraction will result in immediate benching until the player's attitude improves.
  - ii) any player caught smoking, consuming alcohol and/or using illicit drugs while representing the team will be suspended from the team. Any other behaviour contradictory to reflecting Christ may also result in suspension.
- h. to ensure that all warm-up music will pass the following tests:
  - i. Jesus should not be grieved by the music.
  - ii. ICSS would be proud to be identified with the music.

### 3. Professional Development

Coaches should pursue professional development in both skill and spiritual aspects of coaching, i.e. Christian athletics courses through Christian colleges and camps, clinics for specific sport , Christian sport clinics for athletes and coaches at ICSS, skill clinics at ICSS, with local college or university staff or players, arranged by the athletic director.

## C. Athletes

### 1. Eligibility

- a. must demonstrate an active participation in a Christian church.
- b. must accept that it is a privilege, not a right, for students to be involved in interscholastic sports.
- c. must demonstrate a healthy and positive attitude toward competition. Athletic competition may best be defined as challenging, intense play with a Christian response. Pursuit of the prize and excellence are honorable goals. Intensity of effort and pursuit of excellence are essential- but so are: "**Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.**" (Gal.5:22) The challenge for a Christian athletic program is not to win, but to build a higher quality of striving for the goal.

d. must demonstrate true Christian character and sportsmanship. Failure to do so may result in suspension from the game and the team. Christian athletes must be responsible for their actions, as individuals and as a team.

e. must attend team practices. Practices are to be given the same importance as games. Time spent together in practice is essential to building up the team, physically, spiritually and relationally. A poorly prepared team cannot positively represent its school.

f. must maintain their school work. Tournaments and games are not acceptable excuses for incomplete assignments and arrangements must be made with teachers ahead of time for missed work.

i. For Alberta Schools' Athletics Association (ASAA) eligibility, students must maintain a course load of 800 instructional minutes/per week. This equates out to two (2), five (5) credit courses, maintained throughout the school year.

g. must understand that participation in athletics may be withheld if deemed appropriate by the ICSS staff. Before any decisions are implemented concerning athletic eligibility, the administration and coaches involved must be consulted.

h. must follow the schools' policy regarding school attendance; if a player has an unexcused absence or has been absent from class on a game day because of illness, he or she may not play that day.

i. must follow the schools' policy regarding substance use. Any player caught smoking, consuming alcohol, and/or using illicit drugs while representing an ICSS team will be suspended from the team. Any other behavior that is contradictory to reflecting Christ may also result in suspension.

## **2. Responsibilities**

a. to exhibit Christ-like attitude and behaviour, at home and on the road. Foul language, mouthed or voiced, or displays of anger will not be tolerated; such an infraction will result in immediate benching. On the contrary, courtesy is expected from the players. This is paramount, as these athletes are ambassadors for Christ.

b. must be committed to the team in all areas, including games, practices, and devotions.

c. to inform the coach if they must be absent ahead of practices and games.

d. must be committed to improving their skills, which takes hard work, determination and dedication. Athletes should be committed to always do their best.

**"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." II Tim. 4:7**

e. to participate in fund-raising for athletic program.

f. to follow the dress code as outlined in the Student Agenda Book.

## **D. Teams**

Athletes are role models; being a team member brings about new responsibilities which must be respected. Many people will know the team members by their appearance at games, and by their actions. Their conduct should always be such that it brings credit to themselves, their team, their school, and ultimately glory to God. Their Christian witness should never be compromised to the secular community.

### **1. Team selection criteria**

a. The decisions involved in making team selections are not easy. The coach must spend a great deal of time in the decision-making process to ensure that the process is accurately and professionally handled.

**Although all students could possibly benefit from athletics, not all students have the intensity, skill mastery or time commitment to make the team. It is for these students that the physical education and/or intramural program is in place at ICSS.**

a. The entire student, not just his or her physical skills, is to be considered in the process of choosing the team. The team player criteria include the following:

i. skill level, skill potential and level of physical fitness

ii. attitude, behavior, work ethic and coachability

iii. leadership potential

iv. personal benefit to the student

v. time commitments of the athletes on non-athletic responsibilities that might be detrimental to either the individual or the team.

b. Athletes are to be made aware of their role and position on the team so that this is clear to them from the outset. Since there may be changes as players develop their skills, the communication from the coach must remain current.

c. It is expected that when cuts need to be made, the coach will speak with all players privately, encouraging each one in their strengths.

### **2. Homeschool/Joint School Athletes**

In situations of low interest/number of players for any given team from ICSS students, and in a Christian response to the desire for a student to participate in interscholastic athletics, consideration may be given to allowing athletes from homeschool or joint school programs participation in our athletics program.

While athlete-parent feedback and social/team dynamics will be considered, the final decision on homeschool player and joint school involvement will be made by the ICSS athletics director and/or ICSS administration in consultation with the team coach.

For these athletes, these requirements must be met in order to participate in ICSS athletics:

- i) Family of **Homeschool** athlete has their child enrolled in a Christian faith-based homeschool program and have current membership within the Society for Christian Education in Southern Alberta with associated fees paid in full. Homeschool athlete must also be registered with an ASAA registered homeschool program. Athlete will be subject to all transfer requirements as stipulated by ASAA.
- ii) **Joint School** must be a Christian School (Providence Christian, Coaldale Christian) and family of the athlete must be a member in good standing with their School Society. Joint School declaration must also satisfy the requirements of the ASAA and not jeopardize the classification of the team at a desired level.
- iii) Athlete and Parent/s must read, understand and sign all ICSS Sports Policy documents and Lethbridge School Division documents as required.
  - Student-Athlete must adhere to and abide by "Section C – Athletes" of our ICSS Athletics Policy as outlined above.
- iv) Athletes will pay all fees associated with participation on the team, set by ICSS administration.

### **3. Playing Time**

Athletes competing at the Middle School "B" level (grade sevens and eights) are introduced to the selection process. Equal participation time in practice and game situations are desirable. The goal is for students to have a good initial experience. At the Senior High "A" level (grade eight and grade nine) the selection process is more refined with increased emphasis on both individual athletic skills and team play. All players should receive substantial playing time in games and equal participation time in practice.

With athletes at the Senior High Junior Varsity (JV) level, equal participation time is desirable. Finally, at the Senior High Senior Varsity (SV) level, quality teams are the goal. A God-glorifying pursuit of excellence is clearly within the framework of Christian commitment. Decisions about team dynamic, priority of athlete, educational needs and goals must be constantly evaluated in each situation. Coaches will have full discretion in late-game situations, play-off games and tournament finals to play the athletes who best contribute to the team goals.

a. Generally, there are a number of criteria which determine who plays, and how much time each athlete receives.

- i. the effort of the athlete (energetic, enthusiastic, positive, exemplary attendance)
- ii the attitude and behavior of the athlete (humility, interest in game when not playing, demonstrates team spirit, co-operative)



- iii. the athlete's commitment to the team at practice and during competition
- iv. the athlete's leadership abilities to assist and lift up the team, (encouraging, Christ-likeness, helpful)
- v. the skill level of the athlete
- vi. the skill level of the opposing team

b. Coaches will evaluate their choice of playing time for each athlete with the athletic director during the season and just prior to play-offs.

### **E. Parents/School Community**

Parents and community adults are a valuable part of the ICSS athletic "team." They can offer help and support that will lighten the demands on the Athletic Director and coaches.

- a. could volunteer to co-coach a team.
- b. could offer to help drive Middle School and High School teams to games and/or tournaments.
- c. could be available to chaperone for game and/or tournament(s).
- d. should be willing to help in some way with hosting a hospitality room for coaches and officials at home tournaments, (organizing, providing food, serving).
- e. are encouraged to support their children's teams by attending as many games as possible, remembering to cheer positively from the stands but not coach.
- f. should encourage and show appreciation to their children's coaches and uphold them and the teams in prayer.
- g. should bring any questions or concerns directly to the coach, **after 24 hours has passed to allow for a reasoned and gracious face-to-face conversation.** If disputes between parents and coaches cannot be resolved, the athletic director will mediate the dispute. In all situations, the principles of Matthew 18 will be used to resolve conflict in the following steps:
  - Athlete communicates with Coach
  - Athlete and Parent communicate with Coach
  - Communication between Parent, Coach and Athletics Director
  - Matter will be forwarded to School Administration

### **F. Fans**

In the interest of Christian sportsmanship and positive Christian testimony, all fans are asked to observe the following:

- a. show proper respect to the players on both teams.

**September 3, 2024**

- b. show proper respect for the visiting crowd and to treat them as they would like to be treated in the visitors' gym.
- c. show proper respect for officials and their legitimate position of authority over the game.
- d. remember that the other teams' players, coaches, fans, and the officials are not their enemies. They are merely their opponents in a game.
- e. derogatory remarks to an official's decision or to a player's performance are not permitted.
- f. fans are encouraged to remember the Lord sees their actions and knows their thoughts and the intent of their hearts.