



ASCENT CLASSICAL ACADEMY
OF FORT MILL

ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

2025-2026

Philosophy of Athletics

At Ascent Classical Academy of Fort Mill, our foremost purpose is the pursuit of truth through rigorous academic study. Athletics are a valued cocurricular opportunity – an extension of the classroom that allows students to cultivate the habits of virtue such as courage, perseverance, humility, temperance, and teamwork in a new setting.

While we delight in competition and strive for excellence, athletics remain secondary to the central aim of our school: the formation of intelligent and virtuous young men and women. Participation in athletics is a privilege extended to students who uphold our academic and behavioral expectations. Student-athletes are ambassadors of our school and are expected to model integrity, self-discipline, and respect both on and off the field.

Registration and Participation Requirements

Before participating in any athletic activity, students must:

1. Complete the ACA Fort Mill Athletics Application
2. Submit the following forms:
 - Current Physical Exxamination form (dated within the past 12 months)
 - Liability and Medical Release
 - Concussion Awareness Form
3. Pay the required sport-specific fee via the secure Square payment link provided by the school prior to the first practice
4. Be enrolled as a full-time student at Ascent Classical Academy of Fort Mill in grades 6-9

Students who have not completed all forms or paid applicable fees are not eligible to attend practices or participate in competitions.

Eligibility

Academic Eligibility

- Students must be enrolled in a full academic course load and maintain passing grades in all subjects. Any student earning below 70% in one or more classes will be ineligible until the next eligibility check.
- Formal eligibility checks will be conducted after the first four weeks of each semester and will continue weekly, on Fridays at noon, for students participating in cocurricular during the school year. The eligibility window runs from Monday to Monday each week.

- Ineligible students may not participate in practices or games/competitions until they regain eligibility.
- Students serving a suspension on the day of a practice or game/competition may not participate in the activity that day. Repeat suspensions may deem a student ineligible for the remainder of the athletic season.

Attendance

- Students must attend at least half of the school day to be eligible to participate in a competition that day.
- Absences on game days require a doctor's note to remain eligible to play.

Conduct Expectations

Student-athletes are expected to:

- Strive for excellence and give full effort at all practices and competitions;
- Demonstrate humility in victory and grace in defeat;
- Be punctual, prepared, and attentive to instruction;
- Treat coaches, officials, opponents, and teammates with respect;
- Refrain from profanity, taunting, or any unsportsmanlike behavior;
- Follow all safety rules, use equipment appropriately, and report injuries promptly; and
- Observe team dress codes and school standards of appearance.

Failure to uphold these standards may result in loss of playing time, suspension, or removal from the team.

Parents are expected to:

- Support their child, the team, and the coaching staff;
- Allow students to advocate for themselves by first addressing any concerns directly with their coach;
- Wait at least 24 hours after a game before contacting a coach regarding a concern;
- Refrain from interrupting practices or approaching the bench during games;
- Demonstrate respect toward all officials, players, and opposing fans; and
- Understand that playing time is at the sole discretion of the coach.

Disrespectful, aggressive, or disruptive behavior from a parent may result in removal from an event or a ban from future attendance.

Resolving Concerns

Our athletic program seeks to foster open and respectful communication. If concerns arise, students and parents are encouraged to bring them forward thoughtfully, beginning with the

coach. Our athletic director and headmaster are also available to support families as needed. We believe that approaching concerns in a spirit of goodwill strengthens relationships and sets an example of virtue for our students.

Practice, Games, and Logistics

- Students are expected to attend all practices, meetings, and competitions unless excused for a documented medical appointment or significant family event.
- Unexcused absences may affect playing time.
- Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to and from all off-campus competitions.
- School-issued uniforms and equipment must be cared for and returned clean within seven days of the end of the season. Families are responsible for the cost of lost or damaged items.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Coaches and staff generously dedicate time beyond the school day to provide athletic opportunities for our students. Out of respect for their time and other professional obligations, students must be picked up promptly at the stated end time of practices, games, and competitions.

Families are expected to arrive for pick-up no later than **15 minutes after the stated dismissal time**. If a student has not been picked up by that point, a late fee will be assessed as follows:

- **\$5.00 for the first minute** after the 15-minute grace period has ended
- \$1.00 for each additional minute thereafter

Late fees will be reported by the coach to the school office and a bill sent to the student's guardians. Repeated late pick-ups may result in suspension or removal from the team.

Consistent punctuality demonstrates respect for the time of our staff and sets an important example of personal responsibility for our students.

Acknowledgment

Participation in athletics at Ascent Classical Academy of Fort Mill is a privilege, not a right. All athletes and their families must read this handbook and submit signed acknowledgment through the Athletics Application prior to the start of each season.