



ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

2009-2010



HERITAGE SCHOOL

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Letter to Parents and Student-Athletes

Fall 2009

To the Parents and Student-Athletes:

Welcome to the 2009-2010 athletic season at Heritage School! You are now part of the Eagles athletic program which consists of 14 teams across 7 different sports in grades 7 through 12. The Athletics program at Heritage School, if viewed appropriately, is as much part of the Heritage education as all our other programs, and indeed we refer to athletics as “co-curricular.” The athletic program complements our overall mission at Heritage. In the course of training and playing a sport, the student-athlete learns valuable lessons of commitment, teamwork, and perseverance. He/she also learns, under the direction of godly coaches, the importance of excellent sportsmanship which reflects to all—other players, the opponents, the fans, the younger students who observe them—the humility and service of Christ. The true “team player” realizes he/she is simply part of a larger community which comes together to play to the best of their ability, to play fairly, to demonstrate Christianity in action, or simply to enjoy the fellowship of watching a game played well.

This handbook contains the philosophy, policies, and guidelines which govern the Heritage Athletics Program, as well as some of the important rules and regulations required by the school and governing leagues. Although it is intended to be comprehensive in nature, there will inevitably be situations that occur that are not outlined in this handbook. Having a common understanding of the rules and regulations that govern athletics will assist in significantly reducing concerns and unforeseen problems.

We request that both parents and student-athletes read through this handbook thoroughly. The Athletic Director must have a current, signed “**Acknowledgement Form**” (located at the end of the handbook) on file before a student-athlete can participate.

We look forward to another great year of sports. *Go Eagles!!!*

Nancy Hierholzer, Head of School
Garrett Kunz, Athletic Director

ATHLETIC PROGRAM PROFILE

Mascot – Eagles

Colors – Green and White

Motto – *Hypomone* [hoop-ah-mah-nay'] <Greek: 'υπομονη'> - *perseverance, patient endurance, steadfastness*

Leagues – Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) for grades 9-12

Classification – TAPPS 1A – District 5 / Division II 6-Man Football

Sports – Grades 9-12: football, volleyball, basketball, golf, tennis, baseball, track & field
Grades 7 & 8: volleyball, basketball, golf, tennis, track & field

STATE CHAMPIONS

6-Man Football- 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008

Boys track- 2005, 2007, 2008

STATE RUNNERS-UP

Boys track – 2006, 2009

Boys basketball – 2008

STATE SEMI-FINALISTS

Football – 2006

Boys basketball – 2005, 2006, 2009

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ATHLETIC PROGRAM

PURPOSE

The Athletic Program exists to help fulfill the goal of Heritage School, which is the development of physical, spiritual, moral, and intellectual maturity for every student. The athletic program fosters not only the obvious physical development of our student-athletes, but provides unique opportunities for spiritual, moral, and intellectual development as well. The primary purpose of the Athletic Program at Heritage School is, put very simply, the discipleship of young men and women.

PHILOSOPHY

The Athletic Program at Heritage School affords coaches and student-athletes alike an opportunity to witness and share their faith in a unique venue – one that society in general deems worthy of their attention. It also provides a powerful discipleship opportunity for molding the lives of young men and women.

Participation in athletics can be a positive addition to the lives of those who are preparing for the Christian life in a world that thrives on competition and rewards excellence. Student-athletes who strive for excellence in athletic competition and learn to deal with both success and failure in a graceful manner are establishing life patterns for their future.

We seek to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ in every athletic endeavor and make the experience a positive one for each student-athlete that chooses to make the commitment to participate.

In some ways, the philosophy of Heritage athletics could be summed up in one word – **HUPOMONE!** This term was adopted by the 2004-05 Heritage Eagles football team and has become the motto for Heritage student-athletes and fans alike. The term is from the Greek, used in the Bible: ‘**υπομονη**’ with the English transliteration spelled as shown above. The word means *perseverance, patient endurance, steadfastness*.

- **Perseverance**

- “And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about **perseverance**; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope...” Romans 5:3-4
- “Now may the God who gives **perseverance** and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus...” Romans 15:5
- “But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, **perseverance** and gentleness.” 1 Timothy 6:11
- “Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your

knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, **perseverance**, and in your **perseverance**, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love." 2 Peter 1:5-7

- **Patient Endurance**

- "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**. And let **endurance** have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing." James 1:2-4
- "For you have need of **endurance**, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised." Hebrews 10:36
- "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with **endurance** the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." Hebrews 12:1-3

- **Steadfastness**

- "...so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all **steadfastness** and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light." Colossians 1:10-12
- "May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the **steadfastness** of Christ." 2 Thessalonians 3:5
- "You therefore, beloved..., be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own **steadfastness**, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." 2 Peter 3:17-18a

PRIORITIES

The Heritage Athletic Department acknowledges the following order of priorities in our school:

- 1) God 2) Family 3) Academics 4) Athletics

When this order is followed, it gives student-athletes the opportunity to be balanced spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally.

GOALS

Based on our philosophy, our athletic department and team goals are to strive for:

- *Character* – programs focused on discipleship, holding student-athletes to high moral and ethical standards stemming from a Biblical worldview, and holding them accountable to these standards by both coaches and peers.
- *Excellence* – programs focused not only on excellence in character, but programs that honor God through proper preparation (conditioning, training, etc.), solid execution, and good management.
- *Success* – programs striving to reach maximum potential for both individuals and teams.

We will also emphasize the individual goal of Academic All-State to all of our students in grades 9 through 12. To achieve the TAPPS recognition of “Academic All-State” an athlete must keep a high grade point average in addition to receiving 1st Team All-District honors. Being a great student and a great athlete is a difficult task, an admirable goal, and a worthy accomplishment.

It is our desire that our entire athletic community – not just coaches and players, but parents, families, and fans – participate in such a way that honors God and conveys a positive witness to those around us. We will be modest and gracious in both victory and defeat. We will always strive to win, but not at the cost of compromising our values or our witness. When outscored or beaten, we will take advantage of yet another opportunity to teach and learn life lessons about Christ-like behavior.

TEAM LEVEL PHILOSOPHY

We recognize the normal stages of a child’s development and provide appropriate training opportunities in the athletic program. Just as with each academic subject, each sport in athletics has its **grammar, logic, and rhetoric**. We will strive to teach the *grammar* of the game first (fundamental skills and techniques, basic rules, etc.), building on what is learned toward the *logic* of the particular sport (offensive and defensive plays/sets, strategies, schemes, etc.). Finally, student-athletes, typically at the varsity level, will be presented with opportunities to express themselves in creative decision-making at the *rhetoric* level of their game.

Logic School Athletic Program (7th-8th grades) – At this level, we strive to further a love for the game, continue to develop fundamental skills, and help athletes begin to understand and execute strategies and schemes particular to each sport. Try-outs are for the purpose of team placement based on skill and ability. Cuts are discouraged but permissible if based on facility or resource limitations. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach. At this level of competition, coaches are encouraged to give ample playing time to each athlete as opportunities present themselves; however, equal playing time for each team member is not mandatory.

Rhetoric School Athletic Program (9th-12th grades) – Once a student-athlete achieves this level, he/she strives for the best performance possible with a focus on excellence in execution. Players are put in positions to derive the most from their athletic talent, cultivate leadership skills, and understand their responsibility to the team. Each head coach will put the collective efforts of the team ahead of individual achievement and will take knowledge, ability to execute, attitude, conduct, and safety into consideration when it comes to playing time.

Athletes should not assume that they are guaranteed a spot on a varsity team simply because they participated on the same team in previous years. Creation and size of teams is determined by many factors including but not limited to the number of participants interested in a sport, facility availability, safety, and coaching resources. Whatever we do we want to do it well. Decisions will be made on a season-by-season, team-by-team basis with the goal being to provide a healthy experience for all parties involved.

MULTIPLE SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

We encourage athletes to be well rounded, participating in different activities both athletically and otherwise. Different sports challenge athletes in different ways, and the skills and techniques developed through the training methods used in one sport will often help the athlete in another sport.

Regarding multiple-sport participation, student-athletes may participate in *no more than two team sports at the same time*. Also, to participate in two sports simultaneously, they must have permission from parents as well as the head coaches of both sports. If a student's academics suffer, the student-athlete will meet with the parents and the head coaches of both sports to come up with a solution. Good, open communication between the student-athlete, his/her parents, and the two coaches involved are invaluable.

Regarding multiple-activity participation, student-athletes may participate in a non-athletic activity (i.e. drama, debate, etc.) and on an athletic team at the same time if leadership from both activities gives permission to do so. Leadership from both activities will work closely together to minimize conflict; however, they reserve the right to require, on rare occasion, sole commitment to their activity. Where there is dual commitment and schedule conflict, there must be a declared priority and agreements made between student, parents, and team or department leadership. The decision to participate in multiple sports or multiple activities should ultimately be decided by the parents and student in consultation with the leadership of those activities.

GENERAL POLICIES

SPORTSMANSHIP

Sportsmanship embodies everything expected from the Heritage student-athlete, including character, integrity, work ethic, attitude, respect, humility, and honor. The ideal at Heritage is to strive to be the type of competitor against whom we would want to compete. We want our athletes to exhibit a Christ-like character even within the bounds of stringent competition.

During home contests, we serve as hosts to the visiting team, its students, and spectators. They are our guests, and they should be treated accordingly. At away contests, we are expected to act as invited guests. We will treat the home school's personnel and facilities with care and respect. As participants and spectators, we want to cheer for our team, not against the opponent, being modest and gracious in both victory and defeat. Officials will be treated with respect, and we will accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official.

Any member of the Heritage community who is a participant or spectator at an event, who uses profanity, engages in inappropriate behaviors such as fighting or similar misconduct will be dismissed from the event and is subject to disciplinary action by the school.

SCHEDULING

The athletic department does its best to schedule games and practices well in advance of the season. Because we cannot control league changes or changes made by an opponent when we travel to their home court/field, changes to schedules will inevitably occur. Additionally, since many of our coaches are part-time volunteers, there will most likely be a few changes throughout the season due to their work and family commitments.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL

All athletes must travel in designated vehicles to games. Most travel will consist of parent transportation, or occasionally taking the school's bus. After a game, an athlete may leave with his/her parents or another family as long as the coaches and the driver who brought the student-athlete are notified. It is a violation of school policy for a student to drive another student(s) to any school event.

SEVERE/INCLEMENT WEATHER

Any changes to published schedules due to bad weather will be updated at our school office and on our website (www.heritage-school.net) as soon as a definite decision can be made. If lightning is present during an outdoor event, all parties must be moved indoors. The event can be resumed only if 30 minutes has passed since the last visual evidence of lightning. For outdoor practices, heat and humidity are monitored. When possible, especially during warmer months, practices will be scheduled in the coolest times of the day.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The school vigorously opposes student use, possession, or distribution of tobacco or alcohol in any form, on campus or off campus. Violation subjects a student-athlete to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by administration. Penalties could include multiple-day suspension, permanent removal from the team, or expulsion from school. Students are not permitted to use, possess, purchase, or distribute illegal drugs, including athletic performance-enhancement drugs. Violation subjects the person(s) involved to disciplinary action and may lead to the involvement of local law enforcement. Athletic performance-enhancing drugs are detrimental to the health of the student-athlete and are never an acceptable alternative to hard work.

HAZING

Hazing is defined as subjecting someone to an indignity, fright, abuse, or threat and is not tolerated. Violation subjects the person(s) to disciplinary action.

LOST AND FOUND

Coaches expect athletes to be good stewards of all school-issued and personal articles, uniforms, equipment, and facilities. Should a school-issued item be lost or misplaced, it is up to the student-athlete to replace it or reimburse the school for the item lost. The coach will determine any consequences associated with such an incident.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Each Heritage student-athlete desiring to participate in Heritage athletics must have the following completed and signed documents on file with the Athletic Director before the first day of participation in any given sport:

- Acknowledgement of reading the *Athletic Handbook* (see last page)
- **Physical Examination form** clearing the athlete for participation
- **TAPPS Acknowledgement of Rules form** (grades 9-12)

If all forms have not been turned in before the first scheduled day of participation, the student-athlete cannot begin practicing with the team. All of the aforementioned documents can be found on the Heritage website, in hard copy form in the Athletics Office, or by contacting the Athletic Director – Coach Kunz.

In addition to the above required documentation, a student-athlete must not have any outstanding athletic fee payments or unreturned uniform/equipment items. **IMPORTANT** – no student-athlete will be allowed to go to his/her next sport if either fees or uniforms have not been turned in.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

CODE OF CONDUCT

Being a Heritage athlete is a student's choice and, thereby, a privilege. Student-athletes shall conduct themselves in a way that brings positive recognition to God, Heritage School, their team, their sport, themselves, and their community. In some ways, the student-athlete is held to a higher standard than the typical student due to the increased exposure to the public through sports competition. A Heritage student-athlete reflects the mission and identity of the school no matter where he/she is. Student-athletes are expected to behave at all times with consideration for others in thoughts, word, and deed, and student-athletes must abide by the school's stated rules and any others stipulated by athletic department staff members.

AGE/GRADE ELIGIBILITY

For participation in 7th or 8th grade sports, students must be enrolled full-time at Heritage. For participation in TAPPS sports (grades 9-12), students must be less than 19 years old on September 1st. Eighth grade students are not eligible to participate on varsity teams; however, an eighth grade student may participate on a sub-varsity team.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Our athletic program exists in order to help balance and extend academics, never in place of or in competition with the academic curriculum. Since work habits and conduct relate to character development and are standards of the Word of God regardless of one's individual talents and abilities, these are the areas in which we place the greatest emphasis for eligibility. Academic achievement in the various subjects is also very important, and if a student is not achieving above failure a priority should be placed here. Therefore, the following qualifications have been set down:

1. In order to participate in athletics, a student must maintain the majority of work habits/conduct/character grades in the E, S, or I categories. Also, a student must not have any academic grade below 70.
2. The student's academic eligibility is reviewed at the end of each quarter. Any needed progress reports for student will also be forwarded by the Head of Upper School to the Athletic Director, who will contact the appropriate coach concerning a student's lack of academic achievement. If a student has received a progress report at mid-quarter, it will be up to the student, the parents, and the coach to determine if action is merited.
3. If a student-athlete receives a failing grade on his/her report card, he/she will be ineligible to participate in practice or games for two weeks. At the end of two weeks, if the student's academic achievement is satisfactory (meets the criteria outlined in #1 above), eligibility will be reinstated.

4. If at the end of the two week period the student is still failing, he/she will remain ineligible until mid-quarter progress reports are issued. If passing at that time, the student will be reinstated. If still not passing, the student will be ineligible for another two weeks, and then until the end of the next quarter, when the next report card is issued.

A student who misses school to participate in an athletic competition is responsible for keeping up with his or her schoolwork. Any work that is due during a period that the student will miss should be turned in before the class period. (See planned & unplanned absences in the *Parent-Student Handbook*.) Any tests that the student will miss should be taken ahead of time if possible. Otherwise, the student is responsible for working out an arrangement with the teacher ahead of time for making up the test. *Under no circumstances should a student fail to talk—at least a day ahead of time—with a teacher whose class he or she will miss.*

PARTICIPATION

Participating in athletics is a privilege and is contingent on the following:

- ***Clearance from Previous Sport*** – Student-athletes must be cleared from their prior sport before they can begin competing in a new sport. This includes, but is not limited to, being current on athletic fees, uniform and/or equipment maintained in good condition and checked in, post-season forms completed, etc.
- ***In good academic and moral standing*** – Student-athletes may not participate in practices or games if they have failed to achieve the minimum academic requirement or are suspended from school.
- ***Practice and Game attendance*** – Student-athletes must attend at least half of a school day in order to practice or play in a game on that day. [The student, however, must not attend classes if he/she has fever.] The only exception to this rule is if the absence is caused due to a school event (field trip, college visit, etc.). Parents and student-athletes need to recognize that absences from practices will hinder skill development and physical conditioning as well as jeopardize team unity. Time missed from team practices will adversely influence an athlete's performance and often his/her position with the team. When a personal or social event conflicts with a practice or game, we expect students to honor their commitment to the athletic program and their teammates. When a family event causes the student-athlete to be absent from a practice, the situation should be communicated to the coach at the earliest possible moment, preferably at the beginning of the season and not the same day of the conflict. (This does not include family emergencies, which are unpredictable and managed differently.)

TRYOUTS

Tryouts allow coaches to place like-skilled players together which aids in each player's development. If a student misses tryouts, he/she will be placed on the lower level team.

Coaches reserve the right to pull players up from lower level teams at any time. Important – a roster spot on any one team in a previous year does not guarantee the same spot on the same team in the current year.

TIME COMMITMENTS

Logic School sports (7th -8th grades) – four days a week commitment consisting of two practices and two games or three practices and one game. (EXCEPTION – tournaments are typically two to four games over one to three days.) Practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays depending on league scheduling. No teams will have mandatory practices over school holidays with one exception – if a game is scheduled on a Tuesday immediately following a Monday holiday, practice can be held on Monday evening. Playing a game immediately after several days off without any practice can become a safety/health issue for the kids.

Rhetoric School sports (9th -12th grades) – five to six days a week commitment. No games will be held on Sundays. Practices and/or games may be held on Saturdays and across some school holidays depending on the sport and season. No games will be played during semester or final exams. No practices or games of any kind will be held during five consecutive days including December 24-26, and during Good Friday through Easter Sunday.

DEPARTURE FROM TEAM

There are three types of departure from a team. Please note that no athletic fee refunds will be given for any type of departure.

- **Leaving a team** – season-ending injury, poor health status, family emergency or academic performance all may lead to permissible departure from the team only after being discussed between the parents and the head coach and/or Athletic Director. A student-athlete will still be eligible for his or her next season sport.
- **Quitting a team** – regardless of the reason, any player quitting a sport after he or she has started the sport will not be eligible to participate in the next sport of his choice. The only exception to this rule is if the student-athlete and head coach have clearly communicated up front that a quit might be in play. For example, if the Head Coach has agreed to let a student-athlete try a sport out for a week to see if he'd like to play it and the student-athlete then quits within the agreed upon time, that would not render him ineligible for the next season's sport.
- **Being dismissed from a team** – regardless of the reason, any player who is dismissed from a team for conduct, rules infractions, or disciplinary reasons will not be eligible to play in the following season sport.

INJURIES

Injured athletes must be examined by a doctor (volunteer doctor assigned to the team) for evaluation before being released for participation, and no treatment and/or rehabilitation program will be discontinued until authorized by the doctor with a signed release to the Athletic Director.

Injured athletes, regardless of grade, are still required to attend practice unless treating and/or rehabilitating an injury, or as approved by the Head Coach. Athletes missing a practice or a game for training must first get permission from their coach. It is the player's responsibility to communicate with the coach.

STEWARDSHIP

All student-athletes are expected to be good stewards of all equipment, facilities and uniforms entrusted to them. Locker rooms, weight room, and training room are expected to be kept clean and orderly at all times. Student-athletes should use only assigned lockers to store their uniform, equipment, and personal items.

ATHLETIC UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE

Student-athletes are issued team uniforms and are expected to take good care of the uniforms. If a student-athlete is missing a uniform or uniform piece the day of a game, another uniform will not be issued—no exceptions. If a uniform is lost and cannot be found, another uniform will be issued (if available) once the lost uniform has been paid for in full. Damaged uniform pieces will need to be replaced at the expense of the student-athlete. The athlete will be notified of the cost to replace the uniform. Each coach will determine team dress code when traveling to an away game.

STRENGTH TRAINING AND CONDITIONING

We cannot have successful athletic programs without a strong commitment to strength training and conditioning. High school student-athletes are expected to work hard on improving strength, speed, and agility throughout the school year, whether they are in or out of season. Varsity Head Coaches will, in accordance with league rules, provide both voluntary and/or mandatory opportunities for student-athletes to train in the weight room, gym, and on the fields throughout the year.

OUT-OF-SEASON EXPECTATIONS

During the school year, student-athletes are expected to give the in-season sport in which they are participating first priority. Any organized training for another sport during the season in which an athlete is participating (such as an open facility or league) should be cleared with the current in-season head coach. Regardless of in-season versus out-of-season status, an emphasis

will be placed on strength and conditioning, both of which will be required of all 9th-12th grade student-athletes throughout the school year.

During the summer, all 9th-12th grade athletes are expected to work on and develop their athletic abilities. Understanding that family and personal time take first priority during the summer, the athlete should avail himself/herself of various opportunities to train when possible. If a student-athlete is in town and not committed to a family activity, it is assumed that he/she will be engaged in some sort of personal strength and conditioning program.

PARENTS

Without a doubt, parents are the most influential models for young athletes. From a parent's conduct to the place sports plays in the family order of life priorities, parents make the biggest impact on a young person's athletic experience. Not only are parents influential, they are critical to the success of our athletic programs. The athletic department needs parents to come alongside all sports' teams to serve in one or more of a variety of volunteer positions throughout the year. Team moms, travel coordinators, drivers, overnight chaperones, statisticians, videographers, concessions, admissions, field/gym preparation or close-down are just a few of the opportunities that provide much needed help and good community time between parents. Serving the athletic department also sets a good example for our student-athletes. The guidelines that follow are an attempt to provide a foundation for our joint effort to guide your sons and daughters through the challenging yet wonderful experience of Heritage School sports.

PRESENCE AT GAMES AND PRACTICES

It is important to student-athletes that, if possible, parents attend games, both home and away. Parents' attendance tells the child that the parents care and that they want to share in the joys and frustrations which are a part of competition. It also gives parents an opportunity to develop a bond with their child and other parents, and to observe the progress their child achieves throughout the season.

Unless specifically requested by the coach to be on the sideline or bench, family and/or fans are requested to remain in the stands, encouraging and cheering on the team. Although practices are not considered to be closed practices, the same basic guidelines apply as with games. Family and/or fans sitting off to the side to watch practice are welcome.

PRESENCE AT TRYOUTS

Tryouts, which are also considered valuable instructional and evaluation time, are closed to all non-team or program personnel, unless previously approved by the Head Coach. Invited

guests are expected to refrain from disrupting tryout sessions and from interacting with players and/or coaches.

COACH AS LEADER

Each coach is prayerfully and thoughtfully considered, recruited, interviewed, and approved by the Athletic Director and/or Head of School and therefore has the authority over our children in each given sport. Parents and student-athletes must trust that coaches try to make the best decisions for the team as well as the individuals that make up the team. Coaches are with the team on a daily basis in practice and in competition, evaluating character and performance, and therefore will make judgment decisions based on what they believe is in the best interest of the team. Playing time, players' positions, and strategy should be left to the discretion of the coach. Parents should help their child understand that being a team member means maturely accepting the coach's decisions even when he or she does not agree with them.

It is also important to remember that neither coaches nor parents are infallible evaluators of talent, nor are either perfect play-callers. A team does not function well with non-coaches trying to coach. Parents should not place a child in the very difficult position of having to decide who they are going to listen to, their coach or their parent. Yielding to authority is a biblical lesson that our children will learn for years to come. The coach's classroom is the court or field, usually with undefined walls, which makes it easy for parents to naturally move close to the action. Parents should be interested, supportive observers from a distance. The coach needs room to be able to instruct and the player to perform without distraction from the stands. Distraction only yields poor results. Cheer them on, yes! Coach or yell at them, no!

COMMUNICATION – INTERNAL

Direct communication between the coach and players is very important, and is usually the best way for any questions to be answered or conflicts to be worked through. Inevitably, there will be times when a meeting between a parent and coach is warranted. Please call or e-mail the coach to arrange a convenient time for a phone conversation or meeting. Try to exercise the 24-hour rule – wait 24 hours before placing that call or sending that email. Too often our emotions get the best of us. And remember, before or after practices or games is never an appropriate time to approach a coach. Coaches will be happy to meet with you, but it may be a few days before a convenient time can be arranged.

A meeting with the coach is an opportunity to exchange information and respectfully discuss any concerns or questions that you may have. Hopefully the meeting will promote better understanding and communication, but the meeting should not be viewed as an opportunity to convince the coach that your child should be playing more, playing a different position, or that the coach should be employing a different strategy. After the meeting, just as before the meeting, your support of the team and the coach is expected.

If there is a significant issue that you believe requires additional discussion, then the Athletic Director, coach, and parents can meet together to resolve the issue.

If issues cannot be resolved after meeting with the Athletic Director, then a meeting involving the Head of Upper School, along with the Athletic Director, coach, and parents should take place. Any remaining unresolved or escalated issues should be taken to the Head of School as a last resort.

COMMUNICATION – EXTERNAL

All press releases must be approved by the Athletic Director or his/her appointed contact person within the athletic department (calling in box scores to the local newspaper is not considered a press release and should be the responsibility of the Head Coach or his/her appointed contact person). Please do not damage the relationship our school has with media outlets by harassing them for lack of press coverage of our athletic events.

Parents should never contact opposing schools, officials, or the TAPPS office to voice complaints over athletic contests, opposing players, coaches or fans, or officials. All concerns and/or opinions should be communicated directly with the Heritage Athletic Director.

FINANCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Expenses for athletic programs fall into two categories – hard costs and soft costs. Hard costs include the athletic fee for the sport and any additional equipment, garments or shoes that the student-athlete may want in order to participate. For some larger team sports, travel costs may be a hard expense as well. Soft costs are non-mandatory costs and include things like snacks/meals for players, end-of-season coach's gifts, yard-signs, post-game celebrations, and overnight travel. Athletic fees are billed to each individual family's account.

COACHES

Successful athletic programs start with quality coaches. We believe coaches are one of the most significant components to the athletic program and therefore seek to hire Christian role models who are committed to fulfilling the mission of the school, desire to disciple our student-athletes and serve their families, and who are knowledgeable in their sport. School athletics are an integral part of each student's overall education and development, and coaches shall assist each student-athlete toward developing his or her full potential. Mentoring, development, care and safety of our student-athletes are the most important responsibilities of our coaches.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Because the behavior of a team can reflect the coach's own manner, attitudes, temperament, and approach to athletics, coaches shall conduct themselves in a way, both on and off the court, that brings positive recognition to God, Heritage School, their team, their sport, and themselves. Instruction and correction, while demanding and critical, should be positive.

Coaches should never embarrass or demean student athletes. The same high standards of preparation, organization, dedication, hard work, self-discipline, sacrifice and godly behavior that coaches expect of players is expected of coaches.

Coaches shall model good sportsmanship and respectful attitudes toward officials and opposing teams in victory and defeat. All coaches are expected to know the rules of the game and the rules/policies of the leagues in which we participate – TAPPS.

TRAINING

All coaches will be provided with opportunities for growth via clinics, workshops, seminars, and coaching books and videos. New coaches to Heritage will meet with the Athletic Director and possibly other coaches to discuss philosophy, policies, and procedures.

COMMUNICATION

Coaches must communicate with student-athletes and parents on a regular basis. Coaches must communicate to parents at the start of the season the expected commitment to the team and the anticipated practice and game schedule. Regular communication from the Head Coach to parents is expected.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Varsity Head Coaches are responsible for their respective sport, and they will partner with the Athletic Director, overseeing all teams and all levels in their sport. This provides a firm foundation for program development. The coach will strive to motivate and assist athletes, both in-season and out-of-season, to achieve their full potential as players.

TAPPS

Heritage participates in the Texas Association of Private and Parochial (TAPPS) for grades 9-12 in the sports of football, volleyball, cross country, basketball, track, and tennis. TAPPS, which just celebrated its 30th year, is one of the largest state associations of private schools in the nation with over 250 member schools that compete in five classifications. The purpose of TAPPS is to organize, stimulate, encourage and promote the academic, athletic, and fine arts programs in an effort to foster a spirit of fair play, good fellowship, true sportsmanship and wholesome competition for the 38,000 boys and girls in its member schools.

Parents must provide the school signed consent each year to allow their son/daughter to participate in any TAPPS event. This consent is provided on the “**Acknowledgement of Rules**” form given to each family during the school’s registration process.

Parents may film or videotape any game in which their son/daughter participates, but the film/videotape may not be viewed by the athlete or coaches until the game is over. Parents may not film or videotape any contest in which their son/daughter is not participating.

No member of the Heritage community should engage in the inducement of non-Heritage students for the sole purpose of athletic participation. Inducement includes but is not limited to providing or arranging the payment of tuition, lodging, transportation, payments of cash or promise of a college scholarship.

School coaches may not transport, register or instruct students in grades 9-12 from their school in baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball or volleyball, except during the TAPPS season, or approved athletic period from August 1 until TAPPS activities end in the spring, usually mid-May.



HERITAGE SCHOOL

2009-2010 PARENT & STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of RULES

(PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE ATHLETIC OFFICE)

I/we have received, read, and understand the *Heritage School Athletic Handbook* for the 2009-2010 school year, and I/we agree to abide by its rules and guidelines.

PRINT NAME (Student-Athlete)

Grade

SIGNATURE (Student-Athlete)

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

Acknowledge of Rules (Athletic Handbook) signed/dated by student-athlete? __ Yes __ No

Acknowledge of Rules (Athletic Handbook) signed/dated by parents? __ Yes __ No

Physical Examination on file (cleared for participation)? __ Yes __ No

TAPPS Acknowledgement of Rules on file – signed and dated? __ Yes __ No

Approved by _____ Date _____