



SHEKINAH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

2024-2025

ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

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Mission and Vision

Each extracurricular activity at Shekinah presents another opportunity for students to grow in Christ-like character and to discover God-given abilities that are useful beyond school (leadership, communication, strong work ethic). In this way, while the athletic endeavors of Shekinah are extracurricular to the academic aspect of school, they are cocurricular with Shekinah's discipleship focus.

Shekinah Christian School believes that a Biblical worldview, positive leadership development, and sportsmanship are core values of a God-honoring successful athletic program. Thus, the promotion and practice of these values is essential to the athletic programs of Shekinah.

Role of the Athletic Director

The Shekinah Christian School Athletic Director (AD) oversees all aspects of the Athletic Department under the direct supervision of the Head of School and ensures its operation in accordance with Shekinah's mission and vision. The Athletic Director's responsibilities include but are not limited to: selecting coaches for each athletic team, scheduling and coordinating all athletic activities, and providing the oversight and items needed for each school-sponsored team. As Shekinah's coaches are responsible for the student-athletes, the AD is responsible for the coaching staff. Coaches report to the AD who reports to the Head of School.

Student Code of Conduct

Shekinah places the following expectations on all student-athletes and managers:

1. Ensure that their teams promote the development of Christian character.
2. Support the value of academics and the educational process.
3. Advocate, model, and promote spiritual growth through the development of Christian character including:
 - a. Trustworthiness
 - b. Respect
 - c. Responsibility
 - d. Fairness
 - e. Caring
 - f. Citizenship
4. Respect peers, coaches, officials, opponents and others associated with the event.
5. Promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
6. Model appropriate Christian behavior at all times.
7. Engage in a healthy lifestyle.
8. Attend sport-specific meetings to learn about updates to OHSAA rules and bylaws and SCS policies and processes related to the athletic department.

9. Assist in promoting and assisting with fundraisers as necessary to support the school. This includes fulfilling assigned shifts at the concessions stand & admissions. Students must find their own qualified replacement if they cannot work an assigned shift.
10. Recognize that outcomes are not guaranteed, but they will be held accountable for their character and effort.

Athletic Department Offerings

Shekinah offers the following sports every year:

Fall Sports (6-12th grade)

Girls' Volleyball – Junior High, Junior Varsity & Varsity

Boys' Golf – Varsity

Winter Sports (6-12th grade)

Girls' Basketball – Junior High, Junior Varsity, & Varsity

Boys' Basketball – Junior High, Junior Varsity & Varsity

Spring Sports (7-12th grade)

Girls' Softball – Varsity

Boys' Baseball – Varsity

Sports offered are based on the interest of current students and are subject to change.

Shekinah is currently a member of the Ohio High School Athletic Association and participates in the Mid-Ohio Christian Athletic League (MOCAL).

Student Guidelines

Student Eligibility to Participate

Student-athlete eligibility guidelines exist to ensure that students' primary focus is on their education. Shekinah uses a points system to determine student-athlete eligibility. Any student receiving three or more points at the end of the quarter will be deemed ineligible until the next grading report, including a mid-term (4 ½ weeks) grading report.

Students will receive 1 point for each D grade (60-69%) in any course, including electives and 2 points for each failing grade (<60%) in any course, including electives. If a student is academically ineligible at the end of a quarter (9 weeks), that student remains ineligible until the next mid-term grading period (4 ½ weeks), provided that the student does not still receive a total of three points at the time of mid-term reporting. Students will not be newly deemed ineligible due to a mid-term report, but they may become eligible based on the mid-term report.

Students who are academically ineligible may continue to practice with their team and participate in team activities, including sitting with their team during games, but they may not participate in any games during their period of academic ineligibility. Eligibility from the 4th quarter of one school year carries over to the first quarter of the following school year.

If a parent or guardian deems a student to be ineligible over and above the guidelines set forth in this policy, Shekinah Christian will support families in an effort to strengthen partnership and work toward the disciplining of that student. (e.g., If a student who typically receives all As earns a C in a course, parents may make the decision that their child is ineligible.)

No Zeros Policy

Shekinah has a no incomplete work policy for student-athletes and managers. Students with incomplete work will receive a report from the principal each Friday. Students will have until the following Monday at the end of school to complete the missing homework and return the report, signed by the teacher, to the office. If these steps are not completed, the student will be ineligible to participate in practice or games until the homework is completed.

Expectations

As a Christian school, SCS values Christ-like character and academic responsibilities above athletic participation. Students who participate in extracurricular activities, especially athletics, set an example for the rest of the student body. Thus, their participation is viewed as a privilege, not a right.

Students are expected to attend school on-time regardless of how late an athletic contest lasts the prior evening. Athletic participation is not an excusable reason for tardiness or absenteeism, for late or missing academic work, or for avoiding disciplinary consequences.

No exceptions in behavior or academic standards are allowed for those who compete in athletics or other extracurricular activities.

Students must attend school for at least 4 full class periods during the school day to be eligible to participate in practices or contests taking place that same day. In the case of an excused absence, the student must still be present at school for four class periods. Parents should avoid scheduling appointments on a game day. If a student leaves for an unavoidable medical appointment, he or she must return to school immediately following the appointment to remain eligible for extracurricular activities for that day.

Required Forms

Each student-athlete must have a current sports physical on file with the school office to participate on an athletic team. Sports physicals are valid for 12 months from the date of completion.

Before the first day of practice, all forms listed below must be signed in Final Forms and a sports physical form must be provided to the school office or uploaded to the student's Final Forms account. If a student-athlete is missing any required paperwork or signatures, that athlete will remain ineligible for practices and games until the necessary documentation is completed and present in their Final Forms account.

Required documentation includes:

- ✓ Parent Information and Athletic Commitment
- ✓ Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement
- ✓ Insurance Waiver for Athletics
- ✓ Athletic Transportation Permission Form
- ✓ OHSAA Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation Form (pg. 1-5)
- ✓ OHSAA Eligibility & Authorization Statement (pg. 6 of PP Physical Evaluation Form)
- ✓ ODH Concussion Information Form (pg. 7-9 of PP Physical Evaluation Form)
- ✓ Sudden Cardiac Arrest/Lindsey's Law (pg. 10 of PP Physical Evaluation Form)
- ✓ Athletic Code of Conduct Agreement for Parents
- ✓ Athletic Code of Conduct Agreement for Students
- ✓ Athletic Handbook Signature
- ✓ Weight Room Liability Waiver Form

Transfer Students

The OHSAA has specific requirements that determine whether a transfer student is eligible to play. It is the responsibility of parents and their child(ren) to verify that all requirements for eligibility have been met.

Dress Code & Uniforms

School Dress

Students must, at a minimum, meet the regular dress code during the school day game days. Coaches may require team members to dress up on game days provided that it is a more professional dress code than required for school. Teams may wear Shekinah shirts on game days, but no jeans or sweatpants are permitted during the school day.

Practice Attire

Shekinah's dress code and personal appearance standards are meant to uphold a standard of consistency and excellence. Student-athletes and managers at Shekinah Christian School should remember that they represent Shekinah Christian School and their testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ when involved at sports and outside of sports. The Bible calls believers in Jesus Christ to not use outward appearance to selfishly or pridefully attract attention. All clothing worn during practices, games, or travel for events should be modest, neat, and clean. For this reason, oversized, tight, or short styles are not permitted.

- Shorts used for PE or athletic events should be modest. The school is aware that it has become increasingly difficult to find shorts that reach the knee. While athletes may choose their practice attire, students whose shorts are deemed immodest will be asked to change.
- No tight clothing should be worn without something over the clothing (e.g., biker shorts, leggings, or compression wear).
- No razorback tank tops, cut off, or crop tops.
- No shirtless practice or workout activities.
- Shoes should be appropriate for the sport in which the athlete is participating.

Uniforms

The Athletic Director will provide team uniforms to each coach to disperse to the team. Uniforms will be collected after every season by the AD and coach. The schedule for uniform collection will be announced in the Spark Sports Edition. All uniform pieces must be turned in no later than a week following the announced schedule. Players who do not return uniforms or who return a uniform that has been damaged beyond normal wear and tear will be charged for the replacement of the uniform.

The official colors of Shekinah are navy blue, white, and orange. To ensure the correct colors and styles are used, all athletic uniforms and apparel (including warm-ups and team shirts) must be approved by the AD before purchasing.

Finances

Athletic event admissions fees, athletic participation fees, donations, and the shared concessions profits are designed to cover the essential costs for each sport (e.g., officials, sport-specific equipment, uniforms, gameday workers, etc.). Shekinah's athletic department maintains funds through school funds, athletic facility rentals, and the Student Activity Booster Club. These funds are provided to meet specific objectives which include paying coaches' stipends, athletic-wide equipment and services, association dues, media expenses, and other related expenses. The Athletic Director reserves the right to reallocate funds when necessary to accommodate emergencies and immediate needs.

The athletic participation fees for the 2024-25 school year are as follows:

- High School: \$150 per athlete per sport
- Junior High: \$125 per athlete per sport

Families will typically be charged no later than two weeks into the season (once rosters have been finalized) and will have two weeks to pay any amount due. Following the two-week payment period, any student-athlete with an outstanding fee balance will be ineligible to participate until the balance is paid in full.

As a part of the Mid-Ohio Christian Athletic League, ticket costs are set at a rate of \$6 with a family maximum of \$20. “Family” constitutes parents and children living in the same household. Children ages 5 and under are free. Admission fees are waived for current Shekinah students to promote student attendance at athletic events.

Practices and Scheduling

Practices will be scheduled by the Head Coach of each sport and communicated with the Athletic Director, parents, and student-athletes promptly. Wednesday practices must end no later than 5:15 pm and all student-athletes must be out of the building by 5:30 pm without exception. Practices are permitted every day except Sunday and may occur before or after school hours ending no later than 8:45 pm. Practices, open gyms, or team events are not permitted on Sundays. Practice schedules will be made to alternate late schedules between boys’ and girls’ teams to ensure fairness of scheduling.

Because the athletic programs of Shekinah Christian are extracurricular to the academic programs, coaches should not schedule practices, events, team gatherings, etc. that would cause student-athletes to arrive home later than 9:30 p.m. on a school night. This includes team gatherings for meals after games and practices. In the event that an away game requires travel after 9:30 p.m., coaches are permitted to stop at a restaurant with their team after the game to eat provided that they do so in a manner consistent with the spirit of this policy.

Game scheduling is handled by the Athletic Director with the assistance and communication of Head Coaches. Games are scheduled every day but Wednesday and Sunday in observance of church services. The only exceptions to this are OHSAA tournament dates or if weather affects the original scheduled date and all other options have been assessed and deemed unusable.

When a season ends, a student-athlete must be granted up to 3 days off before starting the next season. A season ends when the team is eliminated from the OHSAA Tournament or, at lower levels, after the last scheduled game. Student-athletes may opt not to take advantage of this time off without penalty. Outside this 3-day buffer period, all athletes are expected to be at every scheduled practice (within the confines of the dates in which the OHSAA defines the sport’s season) unless absent from school or previously arranged with the coach. Parents or players should contact the coach if they are unable to participate in a practice or game.

Transportation

Transportation for games is to be coordinated by the Head Coach and Athletic Director. Shekinah provides two 15-passenger vans for the school’s athletic needs. Given the number of athletes, teams, and events, these vans are not always available to everyone. If

a van is not available, the Athletic Director, in conjunction with the Head Coach, will coordinate transportation to and from games.

Parents of student-athletes are responsible for transportation to and from practices and other team activities not including games. Pick-up from athletic events should be conducted by parents or immediate family members. If someone other than a parent or an immediate family member needs to pick up a student after an athletic event, parents must communicate the change to the coaches before the event.

Parents transporting students must submit a copy of their insurance declaration to the school office. Parents driving students to games will be subject to a background and driving record check.

Facility Use

Students are not permitted to enter the school building unless it is officially open on a school day, or they have been granted specific permission by an athletic coach, teacher, or administrator for purposes related to approved extracurricular activities. Access to Shekinah facilities is a privilege and not a right. This privilege may be revoked at any time at the sole discretion of the administration. Students who access the weight room or gymnasium before or after hours with permission should be sure to sign in and sign out. Only paid faculty, staff, and authorized coaches can authorize the use of the weight room or gymnasium.

Students may use the gym on their own if they are in 11th grade and up, have been given permission from the Athletic Director or coach, and a parent or Shekinah faculty or staff member is present in the building.

Students are not permitted to unlock or lock any doors at the facility unless directly told to do so by a staff member.

It is the Shekinah staff or coaches' responsibility to ensure the facility is properly locked when leaving, not the athletes.

Students may not use the "barn" on their own. Student-athletes wishing to work out in the barn or gym must have an adult present as a practice to limit the risk of injury and liability of Shekinah Christian. Any use of the "barn" required a liability waiver signed by parents or guardians.

Alumni over the age of 18 may use the "barn" once they have been granted access and given instructions by the AD but they may not work out alone.

Failure to properly secure school property or failure to clean up personal belongings in the gymnasium, cafeteria, bathroom or anywhere else may result in suspension of facility use privileges.

Any unauthorized entry at any time will result in a disciplinary referral.

Disciplinary action may include In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-Of-School Suspension (OSS), or expulsion. Discipline may also be combined with the removal of those involved from any co-curricular and extracurricular activities that would allow the student to represent the school publicly.

Sound System

Use of the sound system in the gym is only permitted to coaches, staff, and students when granted permission by the administration.

For any team wishing to warm up to music at home events, playlists and songs for the event must be approved by the Athletic Director at least 24 hours before the start of the game/competition. Songs with profanity or general themes of sex, alcohol, drugs, or anti-biblical themes will be prohibited. Clean edits of explicit songs are also prohibited. When in doubt, it is best to warm up to Christian music or instrumental music.

Family and Coach Guidelines

Families

Because Shekinah Christian desires to partner with Christian families for the education and discipleship of their children, parents are expected to exhibit Christlike behavior when attending athletic events. This includes, but is not limited to, attitudes, words, and actions towards players, coaches, and officials that would not be in keeping with biblical standards of decorum. Any spectator who fails to maintain proper behavior at an athletic event is subject to removal from that event by the Shekinah administration.

Shekinah's parents and families are expected to be involved in helping with concessions during the Fall and Winter seasons. Families may choose to work during an event where their child is not participating so long as they meet the minimum requirement. In the rare event that a family is unable to volunteer their time during the school year, they will be asked to donate \$50 worth of concessions supplies or food each season.

Required responsibilities include working admissions, concessions, scoreboard, line judging, etc. Families should sign up and work 2 slots for each child and sport in which they have children participating.

The Concessions Committee will be responsible for recruiting and scheduling volunteers to work concessions.

Coaches will be given access to parents' information through Final Forms before the start of the season. It is the coach's responsibility to provide clear communication to parents through email or the Remind app.

Coaches will organize a preseason meeting for families before every sports season. A parent or guardian must be present at this meeting. This meeting is meant to inform families of the team's expectations, requirements, and season details. If parents or guardians cannot attend the meeting, they must meet with a coach to discuss the content of the meeting.

Meeting with Coaches

Families desiring to meet with coaches should contact them by phone or email when possible to set up a meeting. Families and friends of coaches should not approach coaches with negative feedback about a game or practice until 2 days after that game or practice has ended. Concerns may be brought to the athletic director before the 2-day time period has passed. Parents should also demonstrate respect for coaches regarding the time at which they contact coaches.

Coaches Requirements

Coaches must be born-again believers in Jesus Christ who regularly attend a Bible-believing church. Shekinah seeks to hire coaches who are knowledgeable and experienced in teaching their sport and passionate about using athletics as a tool for developing Godly character and encouraging students to grow in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Additionally, coaches must abide by the same policies regarding respecting the theological position of the owning church and dealing with differences in doctrinal interpretation as all employees of Shekinah Christian School.

Shekinah's Varsity, JV, and Junior High coaches must obtain their Student Activity Permit from the Ohio Department of Education.

All coaches must have up-to-date BCI & FBI criminal background checks and have completed an NFSHSA Fundamentals of Coaching class, CPR training, First Aid for Coaches, concussion training, student mental health, and sudden cardiac arrest training.

As coaches are the leaders of their teams, their conduct on the athletic court or field should model Christlike character for both their players and the spectators at the event. Any coach whose conduct is deemed inappropriate or unbecoming of a Christian role model will face disciplinary action up to and including termination from the coaching position.

Coaches should also be conscious of their appearance and dress during athletic events to best represent Shekinah Christian School. To promote the appearance of professionalism within our school and athletic department, coaches must adhere to the dress guidelines outlined above. In addition to those guidelines, coaches are expected to wear clothing that represents the school well during athletic events (i.e., business casual – no denim). To this end, coaches will be provided with at least one Shekinah Christian shirt that they may wear

during athletic events. Athletic wear promoting other schools is not permitted. Dress attire is always acceptable during sporting events in lieu of Shekinah wear.

Concussion Symptoms & Reporting

The Ohio Injury Prevention Partnership has made available to parents *the Ohio Department of Health Concussion Information Sheet for Interscholastic Athletics*. Any parent who wishes to know more about what a concussion is, the signs and symptoms of a concussion, and the protocols for returning to school or to participation in physical activity may request this form from the school office. This sheet is required to be read and completed by parents on an annual basis when their child is participating in any sport.

Right to Amend

The Shekinah Christian School Board and school administrators reserve the right to amend any part of this handbook at any time without notice. Parents will be provided with written notice of changes to these policies made by the school board. While the school board strives to make decisions in the best interest of the school's vision, mission, and values to best serve all families, the approval of parents is not a requirement for changes in policy to take effect.