DAKAR ACADEMY SCHOOLS

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ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

2026-27




DAKAR ACADEMY


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

04	**ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY**
05	**CODE OF CONDUCT**
05	Athletic Values
05	Hazing
06	**ELIGIBILITY & ATTENDANCE**
06	Conduct Eligibility
06	Suspension
06	Athletics Dress Code
06	Academic Eligibility
07	Attendance and Playing Time
07	Activity Conflicts
07	Quitting Team
08	**HEALTH & SAFETY**
08	Risk of Participation
08	Health Screenings
02	Return to Play
09	**PLAYING GUIDELINES**
09	Athletic Fees
09	Tryouts and Levels of Competition
09	Junior Varsity/Middle School
09	Varsity
10	Age Restrictions
10	Practices and Game Times
10	Facilities, Equipment and Uniforms
11	Athletic Awards
12	Communication with a Coach
12	Communication Process
13	Be a Good Fan

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of this handbook is to aid coaches, student athletes, and parents in understanding the policies and procedures which guide the operation of the athletic program at Dakar Academy Schools.

The athletic program at DA Schools is an integral part of the total curriculum. A comprehensive program of athletic activities, therefore, is vital to the educational development of students. As a result, the DA Schools' athletic program provides a variety of experiences to aid in the development of favorable habits and attitudes in students that will prepare them for adult life. These experiences are designed to serve Christ and the school, develop respect for self and others, promote fellowship and goodwill, advance spiritual and physical growth, and encourage good sportsmanship. The purpose of DA Schools' athletics is to bring glory to God by developing Christian character through focusing on these core values:

- Christ-first attitude
- Academic development of the student
- Respecting authority
- Sportsmanship by the players and the fans
- Teamwork-responsibility and accountability
- Dealing with adversity in competition
- Discipline, desire and dedication
- School spirit
- Athletics as a ministry



CODE OF CONDUCT

Athletic Values

The athletic program at DA Schools is an integral part of the total curriculum. A comprehensive program of athletic activities, therefore, is vital to the educational development of students. As a result, the DA Schools' athletic program provides a variety of experiences to aid in the development of favorable habits and attitudes in students that will prepare them for adult life. These experiences are designed to serve Christ and the school, develop respect for self and others, promote fellowship and goodwill, advance spiritual and physical growth, and encourage good sportsmanship.

We expect the behavior of our student athletes to reflect the following DA Schools' values:

Choose Christ and Be Ready

- Realize your behavior is observed on and off the field. It will also be emulated by many who are younger.
- Be respectful toward officials, opponents, teammates and coaches.
- Model grace after a loss and humility after a win. Congratulate the opposing team either way.

Grow Strong and Know Truth

- Use every opportunity in practices and games to improve in technique, strength and conditioning, and sportsmanship.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly.

Be Challenged and Be Flexible

- Be mentally tough. Honor the calls of the officials at all times and don't let that change your attitude or performance on the field.
- Be a good teammate by encouraging and lifting up your teammates. Work hard for them and not just for yourself.
- Embrace the responsibility and the privilege of representing DA Schools, your community and Christ on and off the field of play. Use your platform to be a positive role model.

Hazing

Under no circumstances will any type of hazing and/or inappropriate initiation be tolerated. The term "hazing" means any conduct or method of initiation by any student organization, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Violation of this policy may result in strong disciplinary action, including suspension from the athletic team.

ELIGIBILITY & ATTENDANCE

Conduct Eligibility

Participating in athletics at DA Schools is a privilege and NOT a right. A student can earn (and keep) this privilege by maintaining satisfactory conduct on and off the field/court. DA Schools' student athletes are expected to abide by the school's behavioral expectations and code of conduct, and there will be measures of accountability (at the coaches' and/or Athletic Director's discretion) for students who fail to meet these expectations. For example, missing or showing up late to practices due to repeated detentions may result in loss of playing time during games. For student athletes involved in serious breaches of conduct that require a disciplinary committee as outlined in the DA Schools' Discipline Policy, the Athletic Director will participate in the committee and any athletic consequences will be issued as part of the student's overall disciplinary actions.

Suspension

An athlete who is suspended for disciplinary reasons from school is ineligible to participate in contests or practices during the period of suspension. Athletes involved in a suspension will also be required to miss a minimum of one game.

Athletics Dress Code

DA Schools' athletes are expected to abide by the school dress code at all practices and games. Violations of dress code, on and off the field/ court, will have consequences for a student athlete's conduct eligibility. It should be noted, however, that official uniforms may be slightly out of dress code for some students, as they are purchased in team sets and custom/individual sizing is not available.

Academic Eligibility

Student-athletes are expected to maintain passing grades in their classes. High School Students will need to maintain a current year GPA of 2.3 or higher, as well as not have any "F's". When a Middle School student-athlete receives one "F" or two "D's" on a report card, mid term progress report, or eligibility check, they will be placed on academic probation, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

While on Academic Ineligibility, athletes will be expected to practice, but not allowed to play in games until they raise their grades to the acceptable level.



Attendance and Playing Time

Attendance at practices and games is vital to a team's success. Players are expected to be at all practices even if they are injured, unless they have received advance permission from their coach. Failure to attend practices may result in punishment up to removal from the team. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to ensure that there are no conflicts with practice or game times and to communicate with his or her coach if a practice will be missed. Parents, please make every effort to schedule doctor's appointments, family gatherings, etc. around the team's practice and game schedule.

The athletic department also recognizes the importance of being present in class on a student-athlete's academic success. As such, student athletes must be in class for periods 6 through 8 in order to participate in after school practices or games, with the exception of excused absences for emergency or medical reasons (i.e., doctor's appointments).

Activity Conflicts

Athletes who attempt to participate in several activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. Athletes have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about participating in too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the advisors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise. When a conflict arises the advisors/coaches will work out a solution. If a solution cannot be found, the Athletic Director or his designee will make the decision based on the following:
Is one of the activities co-curricular?

- The relative importance of each event
- The importance of each event to the student
- The relative contribution the student can make
- How long each event has been scheduled
- Talk with athlete and/or parents

Quitting Team

Being a part of an athletic team requires hard work, time commitment and dedication to the group. As each individual member of a team is vital to the success of a team, it follows that someone who quits a team hurts that team. Students who are offered and accept a spot on a varsity level team are expected to follow-through on their commitment. If a student has not communicated his or her withdrawal from the team by the time tryouts are over, the coach will assume that the student has accepted a spot on the team, and any withdrawal after that point will be considered a quit. Any student who quits a varsity team after accepting a spot on the team will be ineligible to try out for any other varsity sport until the next season for the sport they quit begins again (i.e., if a student quits the varsity basketball team, they may not try out for any other varsity sports until the FOLLOWING basketball season begins). Exceptions may be made for illness, season-ending injuries, extended absence from DA Schools, etc.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Risk of Participation

Participation in any athletic activity carries with it the potential for serious injury. By allowing their student(s) to participate in DA Schools' athletics, parents agree to not hold the school liable for any injuries that may occur due to athletic participation. Every student athlete must have a signed permission and liability release form on file in order to participate in DA Schools' athletics.

Health Screenings

All student-athletes in Grade 6 and up must have a health screening or physical in order to participate in any DA Schools' athletic programs. While we strongly recommend a complete physical performed by a qualified doctor at the beginning of each year, parents may opt to have the school nurse perform their student's health screening free of charge. Please note that any abnormalities or concerns noted by the school nurse will REQUIRE a physician's clearance before a student can participate in athletics. Student athletes may not practice, or play until the health screening form has been signed by the student's parents and physician (or the school nurse). Forms are available in the school office, or on FACTS.

Return to Play

If a student athlete is injured in practice and/or competition, the nature of which requires medical attention, the student athlete will not be permitted to return to practice and/or competition until the coach receives written permission from the student's parents. It is the responsibility of the parent to make any necessary medical follow-ups and ensure that the student is cleared by his or her physician to resume athletic participation.

PLAYING GUIDELINES

Athletic Fees

There is an annual athletic fee of 10.000 CFA per student for Middle School, Junior Varsity and Varsity athletes. This is a once per year fee that is paid during the first season of athletics the student is involved in. If the fee is not paid to the business office by end of the second week of the season, the student must sit out of competition until the fee is paid. For families of three or more children that will be competing in the specified levels of athletics, you will only have to pay for the first two children.

Tryouts And Levels Of Competition

All students must attend the official try-out time conducted by the coaches. No one will be automatically placed on a team unless they are arriving on campus after tryouts have been scheduled.

Junior Varsity/Middle School

These teams fall between our middle school developmental squad and competitive squad. Efforts will be made to see that all players will see some playing time throughout the season.

Varsity

The objective of our varsity level teams is to help athletes to grow spiritually while participating in a competitive atmosphere. Team placement and playing time will be based on attitude, development of skills, team play, hustle and practice and game presence. An athlete must earn his or her place on the varsity team as well as a starting position. Just because a student is in his junior or senior year does not mean they will be given a place on the varsity team.



Age Restrictions

The following GRADE restrictions apply to DA Schools' athletics:

- Lion Cubs: Grade K-2
- Junior Division: Grades 3-5
- Middle School: Grades 6-8
- JV/Varsity: Grade 9-12

Any student wishing to play outside their designated age level, can only do so with permission from the Athletic Director.

Practices and Game Times

All Varsity sports will receive as many practices and games as possible depending on coach and schedule availability. The athletic department will strive to give Varsity sports a minimum of 3 practices per week. Middle School, JV, and Junior Sports will also receive practices and games depending on coach and schedule availability, with an effort to have a minimum of two slots per week.

Conditions:

All tryouts and practices must be approved by the Athletic Director to avoid scheduling conflicts.

Facilities, Equipment and Uniforms

Athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued (on a loan basis) to them. If equipment/ uniforms are furnished by the school, it is to be worn only for contests and practice or when authorized by a coach. We are all expected to be good stewards of our facilities and equipment.

- Always leave the field and courts cleaner than you found them.
- Keep the school vehicles clean and neat. Please pick up after yourself
- The coach will issue the athlete a team uniform (when necessary). It is the student's responsibility to keep the uniform washed and in good condition.
- Failure to return a uniform in good condition and in a timely manner will result in a fine up to the cost of the uniform.

Athletic Awards

If anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules.
— 2 Timothy 2:5

Varsity competition: Players meeting the requirements of playing in 50 percent of games and attending all practices, will receive a six-inch letter for the initial award; additional letters earned in the same sport or a different sport may be awarded a pin representing that sport. All varsity letter award winners may receive a varsity letter certificate. Only High School students are eligible for Varsity letters. A coach may seek permission from the Athletic Director, to award a letter to a student that does not meet the requirements but is believed to be deserving.

Junior Varsity competition: All team members who finish the season may receive a participation certificate. JV awards may be given to designated JV teams only and are based on the same criteria for awarding varsity letter awards.

Middle School competition: all team members who finish the season may receive a participation certificate.



COMMUNICATION MATTERS

Communication with a Coach

Parents are an important part of the athletic program at DA Schools, and their support and encouragement of our coaches and student athletes are highly valued. Parents represent DA Schools to the community just as much as coaches and athletes.

During the course of a season, there may be some questions, concerns, or conflicts that arise. The following steps of communication should be followed when that happens. Concerns or conflicts should be escalated to the next level of communication only if the conflict cannot be resolved. Please remember that talking to a coach right before, during or immediately following a game is not a good idea.

Communication Process

Player — Coach

1. Ways to improve your performance
2. Questions about your playing time
3. Team strategy or dynamics

Parent(s) — Coach

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Specific concerns regarding a coach's expectations
3. Ways to help your child improve
4. Concerns about your child's behavior
5. Scheduling conflicts

Parent(s) — Athletic Director

1. Unresolved conflicts or concerns with coach
2. Parent(s) — Principal (and Athletic Director)
3. Unresolved conflicts or concerns with coach and Athletic Director



Be a Good Fan

1. Be a fan, not a fanatic! Cheer loudly, cheer hard, have fun, but always maintain a Christian attitude and good sportsmanship.
2. Respect decisions made by officials
3. Refrain from booing or heckling an official's decision
4. Be courteous to opponents, both players and their fans
5. Treat opposing fans with respect
6. Leave coaching to the coaches during games and practices

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