

## **MHA Athletic Code of Conduct** (Biblical principles for appropriate behavior)

### **1. Seek to glorify God in all your behavior and language.**

- MHA family members (coaches, staff, volunteers, athletes, parents, and students) should seek to be above reproach in all they say and do as representatives of MHA and of Christ himself.
- Our appearance should also be glorifying to God. MHA athletic uniforms must be neat (not in need of mending) and clean and modest. MHA family members also must be modestly clothed.
- *Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* (1 Cor 10:31b)
- *Therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering ...* (Col 3:12)

### **2. Continually strive to do your best with the talents God has given you.**

- MHA athletes should be examples of diligence in practice and perseverance in the competition.
- *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.* (Phil 3:13-14)
- *For everyone to whom much is given, from him much shall be required.* (Luke 12:48b)

### **3. Do not willfully violate the rules of the game.**

- MHA coaches and athletes must strive to thoroughly understand the rules of the game and commit themselves to obedience of the spirit of the “law” as well as the letter of the “law.”
- Coaches and athletes must hold themselves and each other accountable to not cheat, nor bend the rules, nor even appear to do so. The consequences for cheating should be stern and immediate once the impure motive is confirmed.
- *Therefore, submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.* (1 Peter 2:13a)
- *Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.* (1 John 3:10b)

### **4. Treat others with respect—encouraging them in love.**

- No MHA coach, athlete or parent should make any disparaging comments about any participants from MHA or opponents, including officials, coaches, athletes, volunteers or parents. This includes “boo-ing.”
- MHA coaches, athletes and fans should respect the officials and their decisions.
- MHA fans should encourage good plays on both sides.
- *You shall love your neighbor as yourself.* (Matthew 22:39b)
- *Honor all people.* (1 Peter 2:17a)
- *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.* (Hebrews 10:24)

**5. Put off anger and filthy language.**

- All MHA participants and fans should exhibit good sportsmanship and self-control. Tempers must be kept in check.
- No profanity or vulgar language is permitted, nor should it be tolerated without consequences. All MHA participants should strive to keep their language at the highest level of propriety – above reproach.
- *But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and filthy language out of your mouth. (Colossians 3:8)*
- *The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to overlook a transgression. (Proverbs 19:11)*

**6. Have an eager, positive attitude; do not complain or argue.**

- MHA athletes and parents should not complain about practices or coaching decisions. Genuine concerns should be handled in accordance with guidelines in Matthew 18.
- No one from MHA should dispute or discuss any call with the officials except the head coach.
- *But let all those rejoice who put their trust in You; Let them ever shout for joy, because You defend them. (Psalms 5:11a)*
- *Do all things without complaining and disputing that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world. (Philippians 2:14-15)*

**7. Put the team's interests ahead of your own.**

- MHA athletes should not strive for their own glory, but for the glory of God through the excellent performance of the team as a whole.
- In analogy to the church as the “body of Christ,” each team member should be encouraged to contribute his gifts to the team.
- *Now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? (1 Corinthians 12:18-19)*
- *And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. (1 Corinthians 12:26-27)*

**8. Be humble.**

- No MHA participants or spectators should boast or gloat over opponents – verbally or through derogatory or excessive celebration or gestures.
- *Be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. (1 Peter 5:5b)*

## Expectations of Coaches and Other Volunteers

### 1. *Exemplary Behavior*

- All men and women who are placed in a position of authority *in loco parentis* as MHA coaches must agree in principle and in the particulars with the philosophy and Athletic Code of Conduct listed above, as well as with the MHA Foundational Documents that provide the broader theological and philosophical parameters within which all MHA athletic programs should operate.
- The coaches must exercise proper authority over their athletes, engendering respect and honor from them. They must be exemplary models of godly behavior, as described in the Code of Conduct, even in the midst of strenuous competition, and they must expect that their athletes to do likewise.
- Head coaches must encourage the other coaches and volunteers and spectators to follow the Code of Conduct.
- Coaches are encouraged to lead the team in prayer and in submission to God's authority and sovereignty.

### 2. *Striving for Excellence*

- MHA coaches must hold themselves to a high standard of excellence to be as prepared as possible for every practice and competition.
- MHA coaches must encourage vigorous competition in their athletes, expecting them to do their very best at all times, and in all places.
- MHA coaches must strive to develop **all** of the athletes to their highest potential.

### 3. *Communication of expectations to parents and student participants*

- Prior to the beginning of each season, each team's coaches must hold a public meeting (parental attendance required for student participation) where the general and specific expectations for the season will be discussed, including the MHA Athletic Code of Conduct. Questions about philosophy, practical details, etc. should be discussed at this time.

## Expectations of Student Athletes

### 1. *Athletes will follow the MHA Athletic Code of Conduct*

- Athletes will read and sign a copy of the MHA Athletic Code of Conduct at the beginning of each season.
- Athletes will agree to hold themselves and each other accountable for the Christian behaviors described in the Code of Conduct.

### 2. *Respect the Coaches*

- Athletes will obey and respect the team's coaches, unless doing so would violate biblical instructions or the MHA Athletic Code of Conduct.

### 3. *Commitment*

- Athletes will make a commitment to participate in the team's practices and competitions for an entire season, barring injury, academic probation, or extenuating circumstances.
- This commitment should not override the athlete's commitment to obey his/her parents.

## **Expectations of Other MHA Students**

### ***1. MHA student spectators will follow the MHA Athletic Code of Conduct***

- MHA students will be informed of the biblical expectations contained in the MHA Athletic Code of Conduct by the Headmaster.
- All MHA students are expected to hold themselves and each other accountable for the Christian behaviors described in the Code of Conduct.

## **Expectations of Parents**

### ***1. Parents will follow the MHA Athletic Code of Conduct***

- At the beginning of each season, parents will read and discuss the MHA Athletic Code of Conduct and its practical implications with the Head Coach of the team at a parent meeting.
- Parents should help explain and interpret the Code of Conduct's requirements and biblical foundations to their participating athlete(s).

### ***2. Support the coaches and athletes***

- Parents should demonstrate an exemplary supportive attitude toward all the coaches and all the athletes participating in the team.
- Parents should refrain from disputation and gossip—choosing to resolve disputes through the biblical guidelines in Matthew 18.
- Parents should refrain from second-guessing the coaches, especially within hearing of the athletes and other parents. Parents should feel free to give coaches private input after first examining their own motives (Matthew 7:1-5, Matthew 18), but keep it out of the public domain.
- Parents should support their athletes in keeping the commitment they have made to the team.

### ***3. Be good ambassadors of MHA and Christ***

- Parents should represent the church of Christ and Mars Hill Academy in a winsome and godly manner, with behavior and language that are above reproach.