

UNITY'S HANDBOOK

FOR

STUDENT-ATHLETES AND PARENTS

“Developing followers of Jesus to be leaders.”

SCHOOL YEAR 2016/2017

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A. UNITY'S MINISTRY PLAN FOR ATHLETICS

1. Unity's mission is to develop followers of Jesus to be leaders in all aspects of life.
 - ◆ We believe extracurricular opportunities are essential to achieve this mission.
 - ◆ We believe athletics provide opportunities to develop Christian athletes.

2. Unity's Core Values guide how the mission for athletics will be achieved.
 - a. The student-athlete will have individual and team coaching.

 - b. The student-athlete, in the judgment of the coach, will play...
 - at the Varsity level fitting a role based on skill and performance.
 - at the Junior Varsity level in every game based on skill.
 - at the Freshman level in every game to develop skills.

 - c. The team, athlete, and coach will aim to win every athletic event within Unity's core values and the official rules of the game.

 - d. The student-athlete and coaches will develop trusting relationships.
 - The coach will communicate the athlete's role on the team, the athlete's status with the team, and ways the athlete can develop knowledge, skill, and character.
 - The student-athlete will communicate concerns, thoughts, suggestions, etc., regarding individual or team play.

 - e. The coaches and parents will develop supporting relationships through open communication. However...
 - If a parent has concerns about an athlete's playing time or a coaching style, the parent is to call the Athletic Director to discuss the concerns. The Athletic Director will discuss the concerns and how to proceed with the parents.

3. Unity's athletic targets for individual and team coaching are that...
 - ◆ each student-athlete has grown in his/her relationship with Christ.
 - ◆ each student-athlete has increased in athletic ability.
 - ◆ each student-athlete has increased in skill and knowledge for the sport.
 - ◆ each student-athlete has demonstrated appropriate relationships with teammates, coaches, and officials.
 - ◆ each student-athlete has played effectively as a member of a team.
 - ◆ the team has played competitively in each competition.

B. PARTICIPATING IN ATHLETICS

1. PHYSICAL EXAM

Physical exams are required of all student-athletes before they may participate in Unity tryouts, practices, and games. A physician's statement for the current school year is interpreted as any physical examination given after April 15 of the previous school year.

These physicals must be obtained by the student. It is recommended that you go to your own family doctor because he/she knows you the best. Local med centers are also available.

The MHSAA physical exam cards may be picked up in Unity's office or printed from Unity's website under "Crusader Headquarters." You must present this card to your coach, the school office, or the athletic director prior to pre-season practice.

2. **INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR ACCIDENT INJURIES**

- a. The student’s family health insurance is primary.
- b. The school’s accident insurance coverage is excess coverage. That is, the school’s insurance will potentially pick up only what is not paid by the primary coverage. Members of HMO (Health Maintenance Organization) or PPO (Preferred Provider Organization) must use the authorized medical vendors from the list provided them by their HMO or PPO.

Therefore, the parents or guardians, (not the school or its coaches) determine the medical attention (choice of hospitals, doctors, treatment, etc.) given a student-athlete.

Students whose family does not have insurance or has “My Child” insurance must contact the Athletic Director who will provide information about temporary insurance during the athlete’s sport season.

3. **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR UNITY ATHLETICS**

Students participating in Unity athletics must meet basic academic, Christian citizenship, and athletic training standards.

These eligibility standards apply to all students in Unity athletics. The following are given as examples, and may not include all Unity sponsored athletics: team members, statisticians, managers, etc.

STANDARD I: Academic: *“A student is expected to be in attendance and prepared to learn whenever school is in session. In order to be eligible for extra-curricular activities, the student shall meet minimum academic achievement and attendance standards.”*

- a. A student must be passing at least 66% of full credit for a full-time student.
 - 1) Academic eligibility checks of not more than ten (10) weeks are required. If a student is not passing at least 66% of full-credit load potential for a full-time student when checked, that student is ineligible for competition until the next check, but not less than for the next Monday-Sunday. If the next eligibility check reveals the student is still not passing in at least 66% of full-credit load potential for a full-time student, that student is ineligible for competition for not less than the next Monday-Sunday, and so on, until the student is passing 66% of full-credit load potential for a full-time student, from the start of the semester through the most recent eligibility check.
 - 2) A student is ineligible for the next semester if he/she has not earned credit for at least 66% of a full-credit load for the previous semester.
- b. A student may be declared ineligible if the student’s attendance pattern indicates that extra-curricular activities are keeping the student from regular class attendance or from minimum academic achievement.
- c. A student may be declared ineligible if the student’s attendance includes excessive tardies, unexcused absences, or truancies whether or not related to extra-curricular activities.

STANDARD II: Health, Safety, and Physical Fitness: *“A student is expected to care for his/her body as a trust from God – maintaining health and safety and, for athletics, becoming more physically fit.”*

- a. Physical exams are required of all student-athletes and must be turned into the office before they may participate in athletics. Students may use the MHSAA physical exam cards, which are available in the office or on Unity’s website, or a card provided by your doctor.
- b. When, due to a student’s medical condition, participation in an athletic activity could create a risk of harm to the student or others, the student must disclose this immediately to his/her coach and athletic trainer. If the student desires to participate in an athletic activity, the student must be cleared by the athletic trainer and may be asked to submit a doctor’s note verifying that he/she can safely participate in the athletic activity.

A female or male student involved in a pregnancy must disclose this to the Principal. In the case of the female, she must submit a doctor’s note verifying that she can safely participate in the athletic activity without restriction.

- c. The possession, use, or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or prescription drugs not prescribed for the student, and non-prescription drugs misused are violations of this eligibility standard for maintaining body health and safety and for becoming physically fit.
 - 1) This is an in-athletic season commitment for the student-athlete. The student-athlete is to be committed to maintaining excellent physical health and conditioning as part of his/her athletic training.
 - 2) Violation consequences:
 - (a) Each time a student-athlete violates this standard, he/she will be ineligible for one-third (1/3 or the next whole number) of the contests scheduled for the first sport in which the athlete participates.
 - (b) 1st violation consideration:

A student-athlete who has violated this rule may have his/her ineligibility period waived for the first violation providing the student-athlete is enrolled in a tobacco/drug/alcohol assessment, completes the prescribed program, and serves six (6) Saturday school hours during the next Saturday schools.

The Principal and Athletic Director must approve the prescribed program prior to enrollment, will waive the ineligibility period upon enrollment, and will monitor the student-athlete’s progress in completing the prescribed program. The Principal and Athletic Director has a list of available programs.

A student-athlete who does not follow the prescribed program approved by the Principal and Athletic Director will be ineligible immediately as defined under section 2)(a) above and is subject to additional disciplinary action if, in the judgment of the Principal and Athletic Director, the student-athlete purposefully took advantage of the waived eligibility option.

STANDARD III: Christian Citizenship: *“A student is expected to demonstrate respect for God, for others, and for property at all times.”*

A student who conducts himself in a manner that is detrimental to the school or in a manner that discredits himself, others, or in a manner that disrespects God, others, or property may be declared ineligible.

Examples of this include, but are not limited to: negative attitude toward school (staff or students), theft, vandalism, swearing, poor sportsmanship at event or practice, violation of civil and/or criminal law, school smoking violation, truancy, etc.

Appendices to Eligibility Standards I, II, and III:

- a. A suspended student may not participate in any extra-curricular activity, practice, or contest during the time of his/her suspension.
- b. An ineligible student may try out for, practice with, and be a member of an extra-curricular group, but may not participate in a contest or performance.

After the ineligible period has been completed, an ineligible player must meet with the Athletic Director in order to be declared eligible.

STANDARD IV: Unity will follow the generally accepted medical practices as its protocol for dealing with injuries and concussions.

- a. Health Assessment and Impact Testing
Unity Christian’s athletic trainer uses a web-based electronic medical record keeping system called Sportsware Online. Sportsware Online is HIPPA approved and greatly improves the efficiency of the athletic training facility by allowing access from PC or tablet and can be used for tracking injuries, updating records, allergies, medical alerts, and so much more. Parents and athletes can log on to update information each year, gain access to injury reports if needed, and make contact with the athletic trainer.

When an athlete participates in his/her first sport at Unity, he/she will take a baseline test for concussion administered by the Athletic Trainer.

Parents of first time athletes must go to this site to update general information, contact and insurance information, and health history.

- b. Injuries
 - 1) What is an injury?
 - Any medical condition that causes an athlete to no longer participate in practice, games, and normal day-to-day activities at the same level as prior to his/her medical condition.
 - 2) Injury Prevention
 - Unity will use the best practices during and out-of-season to help individuals perform injury free.
 - By participating in sports, athletes are at risk of injury. While Unity prepares individuals to participate in athletics, all injuries are not 100% preventable.

3) Injury Management

- All injuries must be reported to the Athletic Trainer.
- Unity's certified Athletic Trainer will evaluate all injuries.
- Unity's certified Athletic Trainer will communicate injury care with the athlete, parents, coach, and athletic director.

c. Heat Acclimatization and Conditioning in Hot Weather

Exertional Heatstroke (EHS) is the leading cause of preventable death in high school athletics. Heat and humidity management is the latest step in the Michigan High School Athletic Association's ongoing focus on health and safety issues. The MHSAA's new model policy proposes actions based on the heat index and is designed to minimize the risk of heat-related illness during practice and competition. Their policy states that temperature and humidity readings should be taken 30 minutes prior to the start of the activity and then 60 minutes after it has begun. Recommendations for hydration and levels of activity are suggested for each of four levels of heat index readings.

Unity Christian's athletic trainer will monitor the heat index, follow the guidelines given by the National Federation of State High School Associations, and communicate with the coaches if competitions or practices should be altered.

d. Concussions

The State of Michigan signed into law, effective June 30, 2013, Public Acts 342 and 343. This law requires immediate removal of an athlete from physical participation in an athletic activity who is suspected of sustaining a concussion. The student athlete must then receive written clearance from an appropriate health professional before he or she can return to physical activity.

Unity Christian is required to provide educational materials on the signs/symptoms and consequences of concussions to each athlete and their parents and obtain a signed statement acknowledging receipt of this information.

We are committed to ensuring the health and safety of our student athletes and add in addition to this policy, that our athletes must follow the Injury Protocol/ Return-to-Play Procedure explained in the following pages. Final determination for return to play will be made by the UCHS athletic trainer.

Our concussion policy utilizes the latest in medical research to prevent and treat head injuries as well as comply with the State of Michigan law and the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Concussion Management Protocol

1) What is a concussion?

- A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that alters the way the brain functions. Effects are usually temporary, but can include problems with headache, concentration, memory, judgment, balance, and coordination.

- Although concussions usually are caused by a blow to the head, they can also occur when the head and upper body are violently shaken. These injuries can cause a loss of consciousness, but most concussions do not. Because of this, some people have concussions and don't realize it.
- Concussions are common, particularly if you play a contact sport. Every concussion injures your brain to some extent. This injury needs time and rest to heal properly. Fortunately, most concussive traumatic brain injuries are mild, and people usually recover fully.

2) Why is education and care needed?

- The effects of a concussion are cumulative over time.
- Younger athletes require a longer recovery period than older athletes due to development of brain.
- Bleeding in the brain may occur immediately but more often after several days.
- If returned too soon, Secondary Impact Syndrome (SIS) may occur which can result in permanent injury or death.

3) If you suspect a concussion:

- (a) **SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY** – A health care professional (M.D., D.O., or Certified Athletic Trainer) will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to regular activities, including sports. Don't hide it, report it. Ignoring symptoms and trying to "tough it out" often makes it worse.
- (b) **KEEP YOUR STUDENT OUT OF PLAY** – Concussions take time to heal. Don't let the student return to play the day of injury and until a health care professional says it's okay. A written note of clearance signed by a M.D. or D.O. is mandatory to return after a concussion. A student who returns to play too soon, while the brain is still healing, risks a greater chance of having a second concussion. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults. Repeat or second concussions increase the time it takes to recover and can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage affecting the student for a lifetime. They can be fatal. It is better to miss one game than the whole season.
- (c) **TELL THE SCHOOL ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION** – Schools should know if a student has had a previous concussion. A student's school may not know about a concussion received in another sport or activity unless you notify them.

4) Signs:

- Appear dazed, stunned, confused, and forgetful
- Move clumsily or wobbly
- Slowed speech
- Unable to recall events, the score, or the opponent
- Any loss of consciousness
- Unable to repeat 4 random numbers backwards (Ex. 2598)
- Mood, behavior, or personality changes

Symptoms:

- Confusion
- Headache or pressure
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Sensitive to light or sound
- Balance problems
- Double vision
- Not feeling “right”, irritable
- Confusion, memory problems
- Sleep problems
- Slow reaction time

Concussion Danger Signs:

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. A student should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body he/she exhibits any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Drowsy and cannot be awakened
- Headache that gets worse
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Cannot recognize people/places
- Increasingly confused, restless, or agitated
- Unusual behavior
- Lost consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously.)

A student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion by the athletic trainer, or thought by the coach or official to have sustained a concussion in case the athletic trainer is not on site, shall not return to physical activity for the remainder of that day. If the athletic trainer is not on site when the injury occurs, the coach is required on the same day of the injury to directly inform the athletic trainer of the incident. Medical clearance is determined by the student-athlete’s physician (M.D. or DO only) and/or UCHS athletic trainer. **Clearance by a physician’s note means that the student-athlete is ready to begin a gradual progression into full participation and does not mean the athlete is ready that day for full competition.**

5) Concussion Management Program

All Unity Christian student-athletes are required to use the ImPACT Concussion Management Program in order to participate in athletics. Administered by the Athletic Trainer, ImPACT is a state-of-the-art computer based program developed to help clinicians evaluate recovery during a concussion. Our goal is to create a safer environment for our student athletes through education, awareness, and clinical care.

6) Criteria for return after a concussion (must complete all of the steps):

- (a) Written clearance from a medical professional. Unity Christian's athletic trainer has the final decision regarding return to play.
- (b) Completely asymptomatic – no symptoms at all.
- (c) Normal ImPACT testing (return to individual athlete's baseline).
- (d) Completed supervised graduated return to play protocol. Each step will take 24 hours.

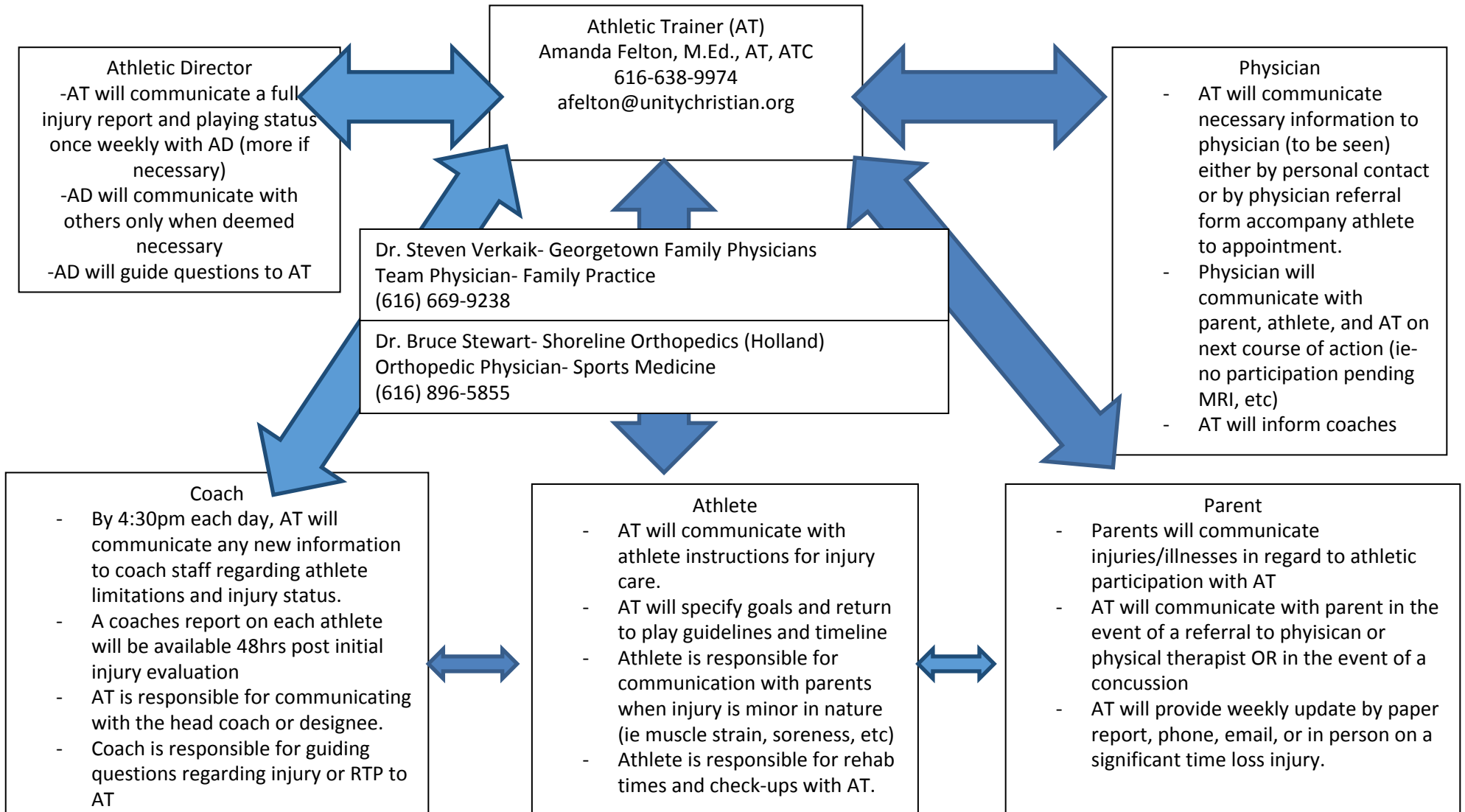
The steps must be completed without return of any symptoms. If any symptoms occur, the athlete returns to the previous asymptomatic step, after 24 hours has passed.

- (a) Light aerobic activity (no lifting, low impact) – less than 70% max heart rate. Examples include: walking, biking
- (b) Sports specific exercise – no activities that include head hitting. Examples include: skating, running drills for basketball or soccer.
- (c) Non-contact drills – more complex than step 2. May start lifting at this step. Examples: passing drills for football, shooting drills for soccer, basketball.
- (d) Full Contact Practice – must have a medical professional's clearance and a normal ImPACT test to progress to this step.
- (e) Return to game play.

e. Injury Protocols/Return-to-Play Procedures (see next page)

Injury Protocol/Return-to-Play Procedures

- if at an away contest, coach notifies athletic trainer of injury
- if at practice-athlete reports directly to the athletic trainer
- if athletic trainer is not available injury will be assessed the following day after school
- evaluations are done from 2:28-3:15 unless otherwise noted.



Injuries that cause an athlete to miss participation in practice or contests will require a return to play (RTP) action.

Any athlete requiring Dr.'s treatment must be cleared by the Dr. before RTP action is taken.

Final RTP decision will be made by the UCHS Athletic Trainer.

C. ATHLETIC AWARDS

1. General Awards:

- a. The Athletic Director and coach will issue a certificate to every athlete as he/she completes a season of athletics at Unity.

2. Special Awards

- a. The **Five Athletic Award** is given to seniors who have participated in varsity athletics and have earned a minimum of five varsity awards with at least one letter being earned in the senior year.**
- b. **OK Conference Scholar/Athlete Awards** are given to seniors by the OK Conference who have at least a 3.5 gpa and four varsity athletic seasons with at least one season being in the senior year.**
- c. **The Huizinga/Elling Athletic Awards** are given to seniors who have participated in varsity athletics and have earned seven or more varsity awards.**
- d. **The Distinguished Athlete Awards** are given to seniors who have been recognized by the OK Conference as an “Honorable Mention” or “All Conference” athlete at least three times during their career at Unity. At least two must be as 1st team all conference.**
- e. **Triple Crown Awards** are given to seniors who have earned varsity awards in three difference sport seasons in their senior year.**

**An athlete may be declared ineligible for any of these athletic awards as a result of violations of the Eligibility Standards for Unity Athletics.

D. SUNDAY POLICY

Unity Christian High School’s policy is that it will not hold any athletic practices on Sunday, nor will it participate in any athletic contests or tournaments on Sunday. This policy applies to all Unity athletic teams and individuals and to all Unity club teams and individuals.

E. TEAM UNIFORMS

Preface: Unity students are to have equitable opportunity to participate in extracurricular athletics. The purpose of this policy is to 1) ensure no student or his/her family is forced into unaffordable athletic expenses, 2) meet the MHSAA requirements for uniforms and awards, and 3) meet Unity’s requirement for appropriately dressed athletes.

1. All athletic team uniforms and warm-ups are approved and purchased by the Athletic Director.
2. During events, games, matches, etc.:
 - a. Athletes may wear only uniforms approved and issued by Unity.
 - b. Uniforms must be worn according to the rules of the contest.
 - c. Coaches will be appropriately dressed.
3. Accessories to approved team and individual uniforms:
 - a. All accessories must be approved by the Athletic Director.
 - b. Any accessory, including but not limited to a team t-shirt, sweatshirt, duffle bag, etc., must not have a value greater than \$20. This means no more than \$20 may be spent by an individual athlete for an accessory to the school-issued

- c. uniform.
 - d. No accessory to the team uniform may be worn during warm-up time, before, or during the game.
 - e. Any accessory purchased commemorating the team's accomplishments must be approved by the Athletic Director in advance.
 - f. All accessories must follow the color code of navy blue, white, grey, or black.
4. Team uniforms and warm-ups:
 - a. May be worn by a student-athlete in school during the school day of the contest. Uniforms and warm-ups are not to be worn on non-contest days.
 - b. May not be worn by anyone other than the athlete, with one exception—an athlete's parent may wear a son's/daughter's jersey to the contest.
 5. Golf, tennis, bowling, and swim team uniforms are provided at a shared cost between Unity and the athlete. These are uniforms or uniform components an athlete keeps at the conclusion of the season. All school policies apply to the approval and purchase of these uniforms. The team uniform must identify with Unity school colors.
 6. All team and individual uniforms and warm-ups must be collected and properly stored at the end of the season.
 7. Equipment a student-athlete must purchase to participate in a sport which is not provided by the school is not a violation of this policy. Examples: golf clubs, tennis shoes, cleats, horses, etc.

F. TRANSPORTATION

Athletic teams will travel as a team to and from the event. The school provides transportation for school sponsored activities. In certain situations, the Athletic Director may determine it necessary to use personal vehicles for transportation.

When school transportation is used, the following rules are to be observed:

1. The coach, or an adult assigned by the Athletic Director, must travel with the vehicle.
2. All players are to travel to an event in the team vehicle and return the same way.
3. Personal transportation privilege may be granted by the head coach when the player is going to be transported by the parents, or an individual approved by the parents to avoid excessive travel. The request for this privilege must be made by the parent to the coach.

G. UNITY CHRISTIAN ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB

Unity Christian Athletic Boosters are all (parents and friends) supporters of Unity Christian athletics. You are a Booster by attending events, working in the concession stand, and supporting any of the other activities sponsored by the Athletic Boosters – SaderFest, sports program, Golf Outing, Sader 6v6, and sales, etc.

You are asked to support Unity by working in concessions or collecting admissions. Each family involved in Unity athletics will be asked to work at up to two events during the sport season.

We are always looking for more people to take a lead role in Unity's sports boosters. If you are interested in taking a larger role, please contact the Athletic Office at 669-1820. Thank you for your support and for joining our effort.

H. STUDENT-ATHLETE AND PARENTS COMMITMENT

Parents and athletes must complete an on-line form which includes agreeing to abide by what is stated in this handbook, transportation permission, and completion of health history. This form can be found at the following link:

<https://www.cognitofrms.com/UnityChristianHighSchool/UnityChristianAthleticsCommitmentForm>