# ASHLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



# ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

May God help us to: build character through competition, passionately inspire a devotion to excellence, and develop champions for Jesus Christ.

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# THE ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY OF ACS

The chief end of every athletic endeavor at Ashland Christian School (ACS) is "to glorify God and to enjoy him forever". This simple goal enlightens every aspect of our sports program. Although we always compete to win, our highest goal, which overarches our every endeavor is to please our Heavenly Father in all that we do. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul frequently used athletic competition as a metaphor for the rigors of the Christian life:

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? **Run in such a way as to get the prize.** Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but **we do it to get a crown that will last forever**. Therefore I do not **run** like a man running aimlessly; I do not **fight** like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish **the race** and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me --the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. Acts 20:24

He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. Proverbs 2:7-8

Everything done on the field of competition by ACS athletes, parents, coaches, spectators and all other participants should "testify to the gospel of God's grace". It has been said, "Preach the gospel always, and when necessary, use words." As such, in our athletic pursuits we seek to reflect our gratitude that "the Father has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light." Colossians 1:12-14. This gratitude should be shown in a love of competition and a pursuit of athletic excellence, in good sportsmanship towards opposing teams, in a respect for the authority of officials, in a willingness to sacrifice individual aspirations for the good of the team, and in a multitude of other ways that bear witness to Christ before the world.

ACS provides a God-centered education through the teaching of Christian principles. ACS is committed to excellence in athletics. The educational benefits of an excellent athletic program develop a balanced lifestyle in the spiritual, mental, physical, and social dimensions of one's total being.

Athletics provide the means for the student to grow spiritually, physically, emotionally, mentally, and ethically. Each student involved stands accountable for their actions in how they represent themselves, their school, team, and Christ. A measure of self-discipline must be maintained in order for the individual to remain a positive Christ-like member of the ACS team. Ashland Christian School believes that all of these character qualities can only be achieved through a personal relationship with Jesus

Christ. The study of scripture and prayer are essential in daily growth and maturity in Christ.

Ashland Christian School athletics provide an opportunity for ACS students to experience real-life situations that can help them to deal with life according to God's Biblical principles. As young Christian students, the reaction to difficult situations should be different from non-Christian students. (Isaiah 55:8,9)

Ashland Christian School supports the efforts of all athletic participants to be a winning team. We also recognize that winning is not the only way to measure success. ACS coaches are expected to place an emphasis on all aspects of athletics.

Our hope is that God would bless our athletic program. We want every participant to use their gifts to the best of their ability. We pray that God is pleased with every aspect of our athletic program.

Coaches, players, parents and our fans represent Jesus Christ and Ashland Christian School to the other teams. People are watching to see if we ARE different. God's people have a responsibility to "witness" at all times. Athletics is a great platform for impacting the culture for Christ. We must role-model behavior that exemplifies Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior at all times.

# GENERAL BELIEFS

Ashland Christian School believes that athletics are an integral part of our total education program.

- We believe that the whole program is important.
- We believe that each sport provides an activity through which students may express themselves physically, emotionally, and mentally.
- We believe that coaches have the unique opportunity to direct and encourage students in the development of their life.
- We believe that the Head coach is the department head of the sport for which he/she has been selected. The Head coach is responsible for the organization of the staff associated with his/her sport. He/she must work closely with the Athletic Director and School Administrator.

# GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Our athletic program is a part of Ashland Christian School. All students who take part in ACS athletics are accountable to Ashland Christian School rules and

- 2. In conjunction with the Student Handbook, student athletes will refer to their coach(s), Athletic Director, and any adult they make contact with, using their proper name, ie: Mr., Mrs., Miss or Coach.
- 3. All athletes are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. Proper rest and diet are strongly encouraged.
- 4. Inform your coach as soon as you know of any injury to yourself or another teammate. Prompt care of all injuries results in quicker recovery to full health. The coach is the only person authorized to administer material from the medical kits. No student should be permitted to freely open and use first-aid material.
- 5. Use of or possession of tobacco, alcohol, or non-prescription drugs will not be tolerated. Proved use or possession of these substances will result in removal from any athletic team.
- 6. All student athletes who complete the season in good standing will be recognized at the awards banquet at the end of the season. Awards will be given to each student athlete for his/her accomplishments throughout the season. Awards will normally include: Lion Heart award, Most Improved, Most points scored and Most Determined. These awards may be modified to better represent the character of a team by the coach after inferring with the Athletic Director.
- 7. ACS participates in the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), Ohio River Valley Region, North Region. ACS will comply with the ACSI rules, regulations, policies and tournament requirements. The ACSI Student Expected Outcomes are in Attachment A.

# PURPOSE OF ACS ATHLETICS

- 1. To recognize that each individual student is a unique creation of God, and to provide the opportunities for maximum participation for all students in a variety of activities and play.
- 2. To develop within each athlete the individual and team skills necessary to compete successfully and reach for that individual's God given potential.
- 3. To provide opportunities for athletes which encourage self-confidence, sociability, initiative, and a feeling of belonging.

- 4. To build mentally, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and ethically strong young Christian people. (Psalms 138:3, 73:26, 27:1)
- 5. To have fun and enjoy sports. (Ecc. 2:10)
- 6. To teach and encourage sportsmanship to team members, parents and fans.
- 7. To teach and assist team members, parents, and fans to encourage one another and build each other up. (I Thess. 5:11)
- 8. To know how to possess and use the proper spirit in victory and defeat. (John 15:12)
- 9. To teach and foster self-discipline. (II Tim. 1:7, Gal 5:22,23)
- 10. To teach persistence and steadfastness. (Heb 6:11)
- 11. To aid the growth of school spirit and school loyalty throughout all grades and ages.
- 12. To teach the students how to be a part of a team. (I Cor. 12)
- 13. To teach game skills, rules, and strategies.

# THE EXPECTATIONS OF ACS STUDENT ATHLETES

ACS student athletes are given the high calling of bringing honor to Christ in all that they do while engaged in athletic competition. In a culture which idolizes athletic prowess and accomplishment above the development of Christ-like character, we expect ACS students to seek "the crown of glory that will never fade away" by:

- Competing to the best of their ability for the sake of their team.
- Treating opponents with the utmost of dignity and good sportsmanship.
- Respecting all the decisions of the coach.
- Treating game officials with the utmost of deference and respect.

The development of God-given abilities through practice and hard work are strongly encouraged. All student athletes are expected to know and understand the rules of their particular sport. It should be expected that those students who exhibit greater abilities and work hard to develop those abilities through faithfully attending practices, maintain a supportive and positive attitude toward other teammates, and show respect for the decisions of the coaches and officials will likely earn more playing time than others. This is never meant to diminish the contribution of every team member, but is a reflection of the reality that the Creator has distributed talents and abilities differently among his people. Athletes should be on time for all of their practice sessions and team meetings. Practices are mandatory for an athlete to participate in the ACS athletic program. A player should not be tardy or absent from a practice or a game without prior communication with his/her coach.

# THE EXPECTATIONS OF ACS PARENTS

The parents of ACS student athletes are the key to our school establishing a distinctively different, distinctively Christian sports program. Their leadership and examples will be watched by our students and coaches, along with the parents, students and coaches of opposing teams.

The parents of ACS student athletes are expected to positively encourage athletes from both sides of a competition, to show the utmost of respect and gratitude to game officials, and to support the coach in the choices they make. At no time should parents or other ACS spectators engage in any action that would undermine the authority of officials or in any way diminish the dignity of coaches or players on either team.

Parents with a complaint against the coaching staff must never air their grievances with other parents or students but are strongly encouraged either to remain quiet or to seek a private one-on-one meeting with the coach using the guidelines of Matthew 18:15-17. If such a meeting is not satisfactory to the parent, they may appeal their complaint first to the Athletic Director, and next to the School Administrator.

#### **Parent Participation Expectations**

ACS is committed to operating in partnership with the parents of our students. It is expected that the parents of any ACS student participating in a school sport will participate as well. The only way we can grow our sports programs both in quantity and quality each year is with the support of parents working hard alongside each other to handle the multitude of jobs that need to be done for a team to be successful.

In order to ensure that each and every parent participates in an organized and efficient manner, an official parent "Team Leader" for each sport will be elected to help coordinate parent involvement. Whenever possible, this election by the parents should be held before the season starts. All parents who have children participating in a sport will be scheduled to work at some point during the season in one of a variety of capacities. The parent Team Leader will identify the specific tasks that need to be done and assign them to each team parent early in the season to allow for sufficient planning on their part.

It is the responsibility of parents to know where to pick up their students and at what time.

#### Parental Encouragement

Parents are expected to be supportive of the players, coaches and referees on the field or court before, during and after the actual competitive event. Anytime we participate with our children in athletic competition, it provides excellent opportunities to teach lifelong lessons. We will inevitably have referees who make calls that we don't agree with or perhaps our children may not get as much playing time in a game as they feel they deserve. As parents we must learn to seize the opportunity in which these incidents afford, capitalizing on them as teachable moments.

#### **Countenance and Game Display**

It is important to remember that your child represents the name of Ashland Christian School anytime they are in a school uniform. In the same manner, parents sitting on the sidelines, also represent ACS, and more importantly, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our students and coaches, as well as the parents, students and coaches of opposing teams will witness the behavior of ACS parents. To that end we ask that you agree with the following:

- I will encourage my child to have a good attitude and do his or her very best at all times, whether at a practice or in a game.
- I will be supportive of the coach and assistant coach in all of their decisions.
- At no time will I engage in any action that would undermine the authority of officials or in any way diminish the dignity of players or coaches from either team.
- If at anytime I believe a coach, the AD or another parent has wronged my child or me, I will follow the grievance policy noted above.

# THE EXPECTATIONS OF ACS COACHES

The coaches of every athletic team officially sanctioned by the school must agree with The Athletic Philosophy of ACS and with the school's Statement of Faith. Although the objective of competition is always to win, the more important overarching goal is to compete in a manner that brings honor to the name of Christ. Coaches are expected to use the opportunity of competition to draw the attention of children to the more important "crown that will last forever", the prize of competing in a manner that pleases our Heavenly Father. The coaches will have a supportive role in the spiritual growth of each athlete. Team devotions will be regularly conducted.

ACS coaches are strongly encouraged to allow all team members playing time throughout the season. However, it should be expected that those students who exhibit greater abilities and work hard to develop those abilities through faithfully attending practices, maintaining a supportive and positive attitude toward other teammates, and showing respect for the decisions of the coaches and officials will likely earn more playing time than other team members. Coaches should welcome the opportunity to communicate with students and parents about the criteria for gaining more playing time.

#### Vision for ACS Coaches

ACS expects coaches to love their athletes and to work hard for them in practice, game preparation and strategic improvement. Coaches are expected to treat parents with respect and to represent Christ's character towards opposing coaches, opposing athletes, and game officials.

#### The Coach's Role

ACS's philosophy of athletics holds that the Head coach has primary responsibility over their sports program, and each subsequent coach in that sport is subordinate to them. Subordinate coaches take their strategic direction and lead from the Head Coach in their sport. Each coach is directly accountable to the Athletic Director and ultimately to the School Administrator.

The Assistant coach is underneath the direction of the Head Coach as it relates to program approach, strategy, and player selection for both teams. This includes the oversight and evaluation of players (including which team each player will play on and any mid-season changes), development of program strategies, encouragement/ training of all coaches and players in the program, and handling of minor team discipline problems. Assistant coaches are responsible for assisting the Head Coach of their respective sport and report directly to them.

The coach of each ACS team is the individual given the broad responsibility of developing the character and athletic skills of each athlete on the team. Coaches should not make winning their only goal, either stated or regularly implied by their actions. They are to serve the parents by providing an environment of discipline and opportunity for the athletes to grow in character and to experience quality competition.

Coaches at each level are challenged to abide by the policy on playing time spelled out in this handbook. There is room for interpretation for the coach, but each coach must understand the objectives and be willing to explain to any parent their decision-making process. Obviously, parents who ask to discuss playing time with a coach are expected to do so in a Christ-like spirit of appeal and self-control seeking to give the coach the benefit of the doubt. If they are not satisfied, they may request a meeting with the Head coach. Further appeals are detailed in this policy statement.

#### **Pre-Season Parent Meetings**

It is mandatory that each coach, with the assistance of the AD, hold a meeting with the parents and prospective players for their team in the pre-season. This will afford the player's parents the opportunity to get to know each other, the coach, and the support staff. This will also provide the AD and the coach an opportunity to communicate any special rules or guidelines he/she may have for their team and anticipated expenses for the parents in that sport. This meeting is usually the best time to elect the parent "Team Leader" who will help coordinate parent involvement for the team.

#### **Playing Time Policy**

The coach will choose a starting team for each game based on attitude, ability, performance in practices, and in past games. The goal is for all members of the team to participate in a game, and each athlete should be given time to play. All coaches are encouraged to be as equitable as possible in playing time, but the playing time is solely the decision of the coach, and may differ at times. The minimum, however, should be one quarter for each player in a game.

Athletes must know that "success" is in no way synonymous with playing time only, but success is contributing to the team's benefit with the abilities God has given them.

#### Games Expectations

The coach will be responsible for all home game preparations (field, court, balls, etc.). He/she should assign players specific duties in order to accomplish this. Games are excellent evaluative times. Coaches should lead the team immediately after every game in a brief evaluation of team performance and begin the next practice with a more detailed examination. Player input should be encouraged.

#### Athletic Discipline and Conduct Requirements

The discipline of an athletic team is the responsibility first of the coach, then the Athletic Director, and finally, where it relates to school policy, the School Administrator. Respect for authority and peers, is critical. Praise from coaches should be frequent, personal, and public. Whenever possible, correction should be done privately and quietly, one on one. When the coach makes an expectation clear, he/she must be careful to observe and hold the players accountable.

#### General

The coach is responsible to ensure each student athlete has turned a Sports Physical Form (OSHAA), Emergency Medical Sheet, Team Commitment Agreement (Attachment B) and Informed Consent Agreement (Attachment C).

The Sports Physical Form will be turned into the office. The coach will ensure copies of the Emergency Medical Sheet are available at all contests. The originals will be turned into the school office. The Team Commitment and Informed Consent Agreements will be retained by the office as well.

# THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE ACS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

The Athletic Director is responsible for every aspect of the ACS Athletic Program. This includes, but is not limited to: hiring the coaching staff, setting the schedules for each athletic team, establishing and enforcing all policies herein, creating a fun, fair and competitive environment for ACS Athletics. He reports directly to the School Administrator.

Game schedules will be published prior to the start of every season. Some changes will occur from time to time. Changes to games will be avoided as much as possible. Every effort will be made to keep parents and players informed of all changes as soon as possible.

Directions for away games will be available to all parents.

# RULES AND REGULATIONS

#### Preseason Responsibilities

- 1. All student athletes, including cheerleaders, must have a current sport's physical and emergency medical sheet on file in the school office prior to starting mandatory practices. Those not having this current information on file will not be permitted to practice or compete until they do so. It is the responsibility of the student and their parents to obtain a sport's physical and complete an emergency medical sheet prior to their involvement in Ashland Christian School athletics. This is a formality required each year to insure the safety and health of students.
- 2. The sport activity fee has been implemented to help defray the cost of running an athletic program. This fee is paid prior to the student's involvement in any ACS scheduled sport, including Cheerleading. It is required for each sport. The fee is typically \$50 and is paid before the first practice.
  - a. This fee also allows you and your immediate family to enter all home regular season contests without having to pay the admissions fee at the door.
  - b. This does not apply to any ACSI Tournament contests we may host at ACS.
  - c. Sport activity fee refunds will occur only within the first three weeks of mandatory practice and if the student has not been asked to leave the team due to problems resulting from poor behavior.

- 3. Participation in sports at ACS is a commitment. To reinforce this, the Team Commitment Agreement (Attachment B) will be signed by each student athlete during the first day of practice.
- 4. All student athletes and the parents or guardian of the student must sign and date the Informed Consent Agreement (Attachment C). This agreement must be turned into the school office prior to the first day of practice. One signed agreement is required per school year.

#### Practice

- 1. Practice plays an important part of each team's success. Each participating athlete will be expected to attend all scheduled practices. If a practice has to be missed, the athlete is responsible for communicating with the coach when the practice will be missed and why they will be unable to attend.
- 2. Each participating athlete will be expected to bring all required equipment to practice. If the athlete does not bring the proper equipment, the coach has the authority to exclude the athlete from participation in practice.
- 3. The coach has the authority to release the student from practice if the student demonstrates poor language, a disrespectful attitude, or is unwilling to cooperate with the practice agenda.
- 4. All practice schedules will be made available to the athletes by the coach or AD. Whenever possible, practice sites will remain a constant; however, any changes will be announced by the Athletic Director.
- 5. The parents are responsible for making sure the student is picked up promptly after practice is completed.
- 6. No athlete is permitted off school grounds before or during practice unless accompanied by his/her parents.
- 7. An athlete who serves an after school detention, out-of-school suspension, or inschool suspension the day of practice cannot participate that day.
- 8. There will be no drinking of pop before or during practice.
- 9. All student athletes must report to practice or study hall immediately following school.
- 10. Student athletes will not go back to their lockers after or during practice. All school material must be taken to practice or study hall after school. If this rule is violated you will be given a cleaning responsibility at school.

- 11. Wednesday practices will be limited. Wednesday practices will be held only if necessary. The practice will be voluntary only to those players who are attending Wednesday evening church. If you aren't gong to church, practice is required.
- 12. If school is cancelled due to snow or dangerous roads, there will not be practice for any team. If a contest is scheduled for that day, it will be cancelled.
- 13. Practice Attendance definitions:
  - a. Attended practice
    - i. On time and attended the full practice
    - ii. On time but were excused early from practice for a permitted reason
  - b. Excused practice practice was missed or partially missed due to one of the following:
    - i. Absent from school due to illness, family emergency.
    - ii. Doctor's appointment which could not be scheduled around practice.
    - iii. Death or illness in the family.
  - c. Unexcused practice
    - i. All or part of practice was missed for reasons not listed under an excused practice. Unacceptable examples = shopping, babysitting, homework, other practice conflicts.
    - ii. The coach was not informed as to the reason for a missed practice, before the practice.
    - iii. Dismissed from practice due to an attitude or behavior problem (ie: criticizing teammates, disrupting practice, disrespect to the coach).
- 14. If practice is to be excused the athlete must notify the coach as to the reason for the missed practice and the reason must be excusable. The athlete must notify the coach in person, by phone, or by a note from the parents.
- 15. Consequences for an unexcused practice:
  - a. The athlete will not participate in at least one-half of the next scheduled contest.
  - b. Additional conditioning will be assigned to make up for missed practice conditioning.
  - c. After 3 unexcused practices, the coach will consult with the Athletic Director reviewing the pattern of missed practices and determine if that athlete's continued participation is beneficial to themselves, the team and ACS.

# Competition

1. All team members and the team coach will be expected to show total respect to the game officials and persons in charge of the event. Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated from any athlete, coach, or ACS fan.

- 2. Any athlete receiving a technical foul or card for demonstrating unsportsmanlike behavior will be prohibited from participating in the next athletic contest.
- 3. The locker room should be left free of trash and all personal belongings picked up.
- 4. No student is permitted to leave the school grounds at any time during an away contest.
- 5. Locker room behavior should be under control and not destructive in nature. Respect for school property whether at Ashland Christian School or a host school must be maintained.
- 6. An athlete or student manager must attend school at least one-half of the day of competition in order to compete in the athletic contest.
- 7. An athlete who serves an after-school detention, out-of-school suspension the day of competition cannot compete in the contest.
- 8. In an effort to not affect the athlete's high school eligibility, ACS will comply with all Ohio High School Athletic Association rules, which apply to the number of contests an athlete can compete in during the competitive season. OHSAA rules and bylaws will be followed.
- 9. Academic eligibility is explained in detail in Attachment D from the ACS Student Handbook.

#### **Uniform Policy**

- Athletes are responsible for the care of all school equipment and uniforms issued to them. The athlete is also responsible for the turning in of all school issued equipment and uniforms at the conclusion of the season. Any school issued equipment or uniform not returned or returned in an unacceptable condition will be the responsibility of the student.
- 2. The student must have all school issued equipment and uniforms turned in prior to the awards banquet in order to receive their award for the completed season.
- 3. The coach will arrange a convenient time and place for the student to turn in all school issued equipment and uniforms.

#### Transportation

Transportation to and from athletic contests is a vital part of our athletic program. Riding on the bus or van is a privilege. Students who cannot comply with the following rules will not be permitted to travel to away contests. The bus driver and the coach have the authority to prohibit a student from traveling to an athletic contest. The coach has the authority to discipline any individual who does not comply with bus rules.

- 1. The bus driver is the authority on the bus and is responsible for the bus and the safety of the riders.
- 2. The coach is responsible for his/her athletes when they are on the bus. The coach is responsible for enforcing transportation rules and any other requests the bus driver may have.
- 3. Students are expected to remain in their seats at all times. The aisles and exits will be kept clear.
- 4. In compliance with state law there will be no eating or drinking while the bus is in route to or from an athletic contest.
- 5. Students will not throw or pass objects in, from, or out of the bus.
- 6. Students must leave or board the bus at locations to which they have been assigned unless they have parental and administrative authorization to do otherwise.
- 7. Students will not put any part of their body out the bus windows.
- 8. Radios, CD players, or tape players usage is permitted with headphones and the coach's and bus driver's explicit permission.
- 9. It is strongly encouraged that all athletes be transported to and from away contests in the school bus or van. Parents should transport their child only in necessary circumstances.
- 10. If parents need to transport their child when returning from an away contest, the "Parent Transportation Request" form must be signed by an administrator the day before the scheduled event, and given to the coach before departing for the activity. Other athletes may not ride with that parent.
- 11. Parents are welcome to ride the school bus or van, only if there is adequate space.
- 12. When both boys and girls are transported on the same school vehicle, boys will sit in the back of the bus and girls in the front. This can be switched if the coaches agree.

When transportation is not provided by ACS, it will be necessary for parents of the athletes to drive their personal vehicles to the away contests. Each parent able to drive

is required to complete a "Volunteer Driver Application Form". This form does contain certain insurance requirements that must be met. The forms should be turned into the ACS office, signed by the school administrator, and kept on file in the ACS office.

# **TEAM COMMITMENT AGREEMENT**

# As a member of the Ashland Christian School team, I commit to the following:

- I commit to exemplary Christian behavior both on and off the field/court.
- I commit to being a leader in academics as well as athletics.
- I commit to being the best I can be with my God-given talents.
- I commit to hard work and team play.
- I commit to supporting and encouraging other players both on and off the field/court.
- I commit to inform the coach of any absence as soon as I am aware that I will not be able to participate on any given day.
- I commit to be a member of the team for the entire length of the season.
- I commit to support the team by having a positive attitude as a starter or sub.
- I commit to demonstrating respect, obedience, self-discipline and responsibility to my coach, players, officials, parents, fans and my school.

Student's Name	
Student's Signature	
Date	

Attachment B

# INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT

STUDENT NAME (Print) Grade

# **AS A STUDENT**

- I have read and understand the Expectations of Student Athletes and the Conduct Code and take full responsibility for following the expectations set before me.
- I understand that participation in ACS athletics is a privilege that can be taken from me if I choose not to comply.
- I understand the purpose of ACS athletics and will do my best, with God's help, to be an active part of my team.

Student Signature	Date
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# **AS A PARENT/GUARDIAN**

- I have read and understand the Expectations of Parents and the Conduct Code and understand the responsibility of my son/daughter as a participant in ACS Athletics.
- I understand the privilege my son/daughter holds in athletic participation at Ashland Christian School.
- I will strive to support my child in their athletic endeavors to the best of my ability, with God's help.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Attachment C