

Athletic Program Support **General Information & Resources**

General Considerations

- **Choosing which programs to support** (coaching, training, meals/snacks, attendance at games or events, facility access, transportation, booster, etc.):
 - **Student needs:** What do students actually need? Fit together what the church has to offer with what the greatest student needs are. It can be powerful to offer something as simple as attendance support for games and events.
 - **School needs:** While student needs are at the heart of a church–school partnership, school needs drive connection and ability to serve, and schools have the best long-term perspective on where the holes are in their athletic programs.
 - **Volunteer availability:** This is simply realizing the realities of your people. The after-school hours when sports training happens are often difficult ones for volunteers to be available.
 - **Resource availability:** Being realistic about the resources available, and committing to something appropriate, is important. Starting small and being consistent is key.
 - **Obstacles:** Will there be special training required for volunteers to be able to serve? Are there other obstacles to service? Finding out ahead of time will help with decision-making.
- **Important relationships to build:**
 - Athletic director
 - Coach
 - Vice principal
 - Principal
 - Custodian
 - Office staff

Mistakes to Avoid

- **Overcommitting:** *Every sports program at the school may soon want to tap in to the resources that you are making available, but recognize that those resources will soon be diluted and ineffective if you try to do too much.*
- **Overstepping bounds:** *If a sports program already exists, it's probably because a head coach is already running it. We recommend deferring to coaching staff in decision-making and leadership, unless they request otherwise.*
- **Only providing support where volunteers have knowledge:** *There are many general ways that a person without any knowledge of a specific sport can provide support for coaches and student athletes.*