

Gilbert Christian Schools



Athletics Handbook

2015-2016

“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.” 1 Corinthians 9:24

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Gilbert Christian Schools Athletic Handbook

Philosophy of GCS Athletic Program

As a Christian school, we have the unique opportunity to promote Christ in everything we say and do. Relying on His grace and believing in His gospel, we strive to uphold the highest standards in our athletic program. We acknowledge that student athletes, coaches, parents, fans, and administration all have important roles to play to insure that we please God and represent Him well to a fallen world that needs to hear the Good News about Jesus Christ.

Student athletes at our school, whether or not they personally profess Christ as Lord, are expected to be good examples to others. Discipline, dedication, courage, teamwork, and humble service towards others are to be the character qualities of all our coaches and players. The apostle Paul wrote to his son in the faith Timothy these words “Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set for the believers an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity” 1 Timothy 4:12.

To this end, each person in the program serves others for the greater good. The athletic director oversees the spiritual climate of the athletic program, develops coaches, and communicates the vision and goals of the program. Each and every coach in our program maintains a strong Christian testimony while training individual athletes and the team as a whole to compete with excellence in their sport. Coaches balance truth and grace (John 1:17) in the way they engage students. Remembering that students need both challenge and encouragement, coaches connect with student athletes in a way that engages the heart and mind of students in order to bring out their best. Student athletes always give their best effort (1 Corinthians 9:24), show respect to their coaches and fellow players, and follow the code of conduct. Parents take responsibility for the behavior of their children (Ephesians 6:1-4), support school policies, and volunteer in the athletic program as they are able. GCS fans use godly speech and behavior when cheering our teams along in their athletic contests (Ephesians 4:29). Administration develops policies and procedures that are in line with Scripture, support the mission of the school, and seek the good of every student athlete.

Our athletic program is integral to the educational goals of GCS. Student athletes are given the opportunity to grow in confidence, skills, and Christ-like character through our teams. Sports bring excitement and school spirit to our community. We thank God in advance for all He will do in our athletic department this year

GCS Sports Calendar

Gilbert Christian High School participates in sports as a member of the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA). In accordance with the AIA's regulations, enforcement of the athletic rules is the responsibility of the school, parents, and athletes on a year-round basis. High school student-athletes and competitions must meet the rules and regulations set forth by the AIA.

Gilbert Christian 7th and 8th-grade students participate in the Valley Christian School League (VCSL). Student-athletes and competitions must meet the rules and regulations set forth by the VCSL. Sixth graders will be asked to participate in the season only when there is a need to complete a team for competition.

5th and 6th-grade participation is through an independent elementary league. Student athletes and competitions must meet the rules and regulations set forth by the independent elementary league. Additional sports will be added as competition and facilities allow.

	Fall Sports	Winter Sports	Spring Sports
High School (AIA)	Boys- Football, Cross Country, Swim	Boys- Basketball, Soccer	Boys- Golf, Baseball, Track
	Girls- Volleyball, Cross Country, Swim, Cheer	Girls- Basketball, Soccer, Cheer	Girls- Golf, Softball, Track
Middle School (VCSL, Great Hearts)	Boys- Football, Soccer (Coed)	Boys- Baseball, Cross Country	Boys- Basketball
	Girls- Volleyball, Soccer (Coed), Cheer	Girls- Softball, Cross Country	Girls- Basketball, Cheer
Elementary	Boys- Soccer (Coed)	Boys- Basketball	
	Girls- Soccer (Coed), Cheer		

Participation Requirements for GCS Athletics

GCS strongly encourages every high school and middle school student to participate in the athletic program.

All students Grades 6 - 12 are required to have a current physical on file by the first day of school.

Student-athletes that join a team after the first permissible day of practice must receive eligibility from the Athletic Director. Once eligibility is established, the head coach will be notified by the Athletic Director. Coaches are instructed that no athlete is allowed to participate without proper clearance.

Any student who participates is expected to be at all practices, study sessions, meetings, games, and award ceremonies unless otherwise stated by the coach. Students are also expected to be respectful to their coaches, teammates, competing teams, officials, and fans. Students are always to put forth their best effort in all practices and games.

Rosters will be closed once a team participates in their first regular season competition. If a student wants to join a team after the first regular season competition, they will need approval from the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director may place restrictions on their first permissive date of competition for late participation.

Individual and team sports may require participation on Saturdays and during fall, winter, spring, and summer vacations. Students and parents are encouraged to discuss with coaches the commitment required. GCS and the AIA do not allow practices and games to be scheduled on Sundays.

Parents should notify coaches if a sports practice interferes with a family-required, mid-week church activity. The coach will determine if the practice is "excused" for the player, and there will be no penalty for missing practice.

A student is not permitted to practice or participate in competitions until the following items are on file in the athletic office:

- AIA Annual Preparticipation Physical Evaluation Form (see Form 15.7-A) – To be completed by the student and the student's parent or guardian. <http://aiaonline.org/about/forms>
- AIA Annual Preparticipation Physical Examination (see Form 15.7-B) –To be completed and signed by the examining medical provider. <http://aiaonline.org/about/forms>
- AIA Annual Preparticipation Acknowledgement Form (see Form 15.7-C) – To be completed by the student and the student's parent or guardian. <http://aiaonline.org/about/forms>
- AIA Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (MTBI) / Concussion Form (see Form 15.7-C) – To be completed and signed by the parent or guardian and student athlete. <http://aiaonline.org/about/forms>
- GCS Athletics Permission to Participate/Proof of Insurance Form – To be completed and signed by the student and the student's parent or guardian.
- GCS Athletic Code of Conduct Contract – To be completed and signed by the student athlete.
- GCS Athletic Handbook Agreement – To be completed and signed by parent or guardian and student athlete.
- Select Therapy Consent to Treat – To be completed and signed by parent or guardian.

Behavioral Eligibility

Athletes may be placed on Athletic Behavioral Probation at any time when the athlete's behavior is inconsistent with the conduct described in the **Athletics Code of Conduct**. The probationary period is implemented when the athlete's attitude and behavior in the school, on the playing arena, or in the community are contradictory to the purpose of the GCS athletic program goals and the goals of the school. The coach, Athletic Director, and the athlete's parents will meet with the athlete to discuss the pertinent information.

Attendance and Athletic Competitions

Student athletes absent from school the entire day of an event may not participate in a scheduled evening event unless there is a pre-approved excuse by the Athletic Director. Student athletes with a partial absence the day of an event must either present a note from a parent or doctor stating the medical reason for the absence or receive an approved excuse by the Athletic Director.

Attendance on Friday will not have a bearing on Saturday contests. Athletes arriving or leaving without proper permission will not be allowed to participate in that evening's contest. Athletes who miss school for any reason must make up the required work.

Quitting

Quitting is contrary to GCS philosophy. An athlete who requests to quit a team must *personally* inform both the coach and the Athletic Director. Once a uniform is issued, or the team has participated in a regularly scheduled contest, any athlete who chooses to quit forfeits his/her privilege to participate in the first five weeks of their next sport season of choice. All coaches are expected to enforce these guidelines. Any exceptions must be based on the most extraordinary of circumstances, be requested in writing to the Athletic Director, and are subject to approval of both the Athletic Director and Principal.

Injury

A student athlete can only receive a team award after successful completion of a sport season. An exception to the rule would be an injury, which would not allow an athlete to participate in contests for the remainder of the season and/or post season.

Uniforms

Once a season ends, each athlete must turn in all uniforms/equipment within the coaches' mandated timeline. No athlete will be allowed to participate in another sport until all uniforms/equipment are cleared by the Athletic Director. After timelines for return are past, the student can be subject to detention and/or fees for the cost of replacement.

GCS Insurance Policy

GCS carries a catastrophic accident policy as defined in the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) Bylaws Article 9.2.2, to insure students against injuries sustained while engaged in school sponsored interscholastic activities during the season of sport or activity. The AIA Executive Board shall determine the insurance carrier for said coverage.

Athletic Attire

Student athletes are to remain in school uniform while on campus. Students changing for practice or games must wear appropriate attire and report to the designated area for after school athletic activities.

Practice Shirts

T-Shirts of appropriate length are acceptable. No tube tops, spaghetti straps, or visible midriffs are allowed.

Practice Shorts

Fingertip-length shorts are acceptable. Spandex and bike shorts are only allowed when approved by administration as part of the uniform. Spandex may be worn during volleyball practice time; however, prior to entering or when leaving the gymnasium fingertip-length shorts must be placed over the spandex.

Game Day Travel Attire

Athletes traveling to away games may wear warm-ups or the team-approved dress code. When time permits, teams should dress in their athletic uniform at GCS, prior to leaving for an away event.

Athletic Uniforms

All athletic uniforms are issued by the Athletic Director and coach. Athletes are expected to clean and maintain their uniform during the course of the season. Athletes who lose or damage their uniform will be expected to purchase a replacement uniform. Athletes will turn in their uniforms and school equipment at the designated time and place. Late return charges and/or detention may be assessed to athletes who are late.

School-issued athletic uniforms are to be worn only while participating with school teams during scheduled contests. School-issued athletic uniforms are not to be worn throughout the regular school day unless approval is given by the Athletic Director. Required school uniforms must be worn during the school day unless prior approval is given by the Athletic Director.

Team Statement Shirts

Teams may design one statement shirt per season for their sport. The design must be approved by the Athletic Director. Students and fans may purchase a team statement shirt at the designated cost. Additional shirts (such as league champs, tournament champs, etc.) must be approved by the Athletic Director. The high school dress code policy allows for team statement shirts (spirit shirts) to be worn on Fridays only.

Athletic Facilities and Equipment Usage

No student is permitted to use an athletic facility or equipment at any time without authorized supervision of an adult or staff member. All facilities, including locker and shower rooms, must be left neat and in order. Valuables are not to be left unsecured and should be locked for protection. GCS is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Weight Room Policy

When using the weight room, student-athletes must have adult supervision. It is strongly suggested that the student-athlete work with their head coach in devising a weight training program. Users of the weight room must put all used equipment back and generally keep the weight room neat and orderly. Sanitization of the equipment may be required by the athlete after use.

Academic Eligibility

Our desire is for all student athletes at GCS to do their best and reach their potential. Academic eligibility is a standard put in place by the leadership of the school to help students keep focus on their grades and academic performance. A student is eligible to participate in athletics when he or she has met four academic requirements: course load, GPA, academic progress, and semester grades. Ineligibility requires a student to be withheld from all practices and games until eligibility is restored.

Course Load Requirement

A student who has participated in a contest at GCS has established his or her eligibility as a GCS athlete. In order to compete as a GCS Knight, a student must be enrolled in a minimum of two classes the season of sport. Any special provisions for an athlete to participate must be approved by administration.

GPA Requirement

A minimum current year and cumulative GPA of 2.0 must be maintained to keep academic eligibility.

Academic Progress Requirement

During the semester, grade checks begin at 4 ½ weeks of each semester and continue weekly throughout the remainder of the semester to determine eligibility. MS students must not be behind lessons and have all grades at C- or above to remain eligible. HS students with one F or more than one grade under C- will be considered ineligible for the sport until they bring their grades up. Students will be required to attend Z-hour until they become eligible again.

Semester Grades Requirement

At the end of a semester, students who fail a course or have more than one class under C- on their semester report card will be able to practice but will be academically ineligible for contests the first three weeks of the next semester.

Special Accommodation

Administration may allow a student to participate in athletics if there is sufficient warrant that a departure from the above policy is in the best interest of the student's academic progress. Students on this plan will at minimum be required to attend Z hour daily, along with other measures.

Transportation

Transportation to and from games and practices will be on GCS activity buses or school-provided transportation. Seatbelts are to be fastened on all passengers in all vehicles and the windows are to be up on the buses. Only Christian music will be played in vehicles transporting GCS students to and from athletic practices, games, and events. Personal cell phone use is permitted at the discretion of the coach/driver, but sharing of media (i.e music, pictures, videos) is not allowed. Students are not permitted to drive their cars to games or practices when there are GCS activity buses available unless approved by the Athletic Director or other administration. The Driving Parental Consent Form must be completed and in the Athletic Director's office 24 hours prior to an event for a student-athlete to be released from GCS activity bus transportation.

Permission may be granted by the head coach of the sport to travel home with a parent of a child who attends the game. Students are not permitted to ride with other students to or from games.

Parents should arrive to pick up their student-athlete before the team vehicle arrives at the school or prior to practice ending. The coaches have been instructed to remain on campus until all students are gone or to leave students properly supervised by an adult employee on duty.

Code of Conduct for Spectators

Respect should be shown to the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. No derogatory signs, banners, or cheers directed toward officials, players, coaches cheerleaders, or the opponents' fans. Those not complying with this request will be approached by the Athletic Director, the administrators, the coaching staff, or any GCS personnel, and they will be asked to cooperate. Those declining will be asked to leave the premises. It is possible to be suspended from attending future events.

Please help make our athletic program enjoyable for everyone.

Communication Procedures

The GCS Athletic Department is committed to communicating the goals and objectives of the athletic program, eligibility rules, and expectations of our athletes. If more information is required or should a concern arise during an athletic season, the procedures listed below should be followed:

1. The student-athlete should first speak directly with his/her coach.
2. If the student-athlete is not satisfied and further clarification is required, a parent should then contact the coach. *(It is advised that no contact between parent and coach be made until at least the day after the incident/event in question – the so-called “24 hour rule.”)*
3. If the issue remains unresolved, the parent should then communicate his/her concerns to the Athletic Director.
4. If there is no resolution to the matter after the Athletic Director has been brought in, the matter will then be brought to the Superintendent.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The treatment of your child mentally and physically
- Ways to help improve your child's performance
- Concerns about your child's behavior
- College options and recruiting

Issues NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling (offense or defense)
- Other student-athletes

Athletic Handbook Agreement

ALL athletes must have this signed and returned

to the Athletic Director before participating in Athletics.

I have read the Athletic Handbook and understand the responsibilities outlined in it for members of athletic teams representing Gilbert Christian Schools. I agree to follow these conditions and realize that participation on a Knights athletic team is a privilege that I must continually earn. I accept the challenge to help make myself, my team, and my school a place where God is the focus, and I will play for His honor.

Athlete's name: _____

Athlete's signature: _____

We have also read this handbook with our son/daughter and understand the responsibilities and commitment they will have to make to be a part of an athletic team at Gilbert Christian Schools. We are also making the commitment to support our son/daughter and the Knights athletic program in any way that we can.

Mother's signature: _____

Father's signature: _____

(Only one signature is required)

Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS SIGNED SHEET TO THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR