



Athletic Handbook

Revised 08/2020

Table of Contents

I.	Athletic Theme Verses	2
II.	Purpose of Athletics.....	2 - 3
III.	Effective Coach / Parent / Player Relations	4 - 5
IV.	Description of GCS Athletic Program	5 - 6
V.	Facilities / Field / Equipment.....	7
VI.	Locker Room Conduct.....	7
VII.	Eligibility	8 - 9
VIII.	School Attendance	9
IX.	Guidelines for Away Trips.....	10 - 11
X.	Technical Fouls / Cautions / Ejections.....	12
XI.	Practices.....	13
XII.	Rosters / Schedules / Parent Meetings	14 - 15
XIII.	Athletic Spectator Guidelines	14 - 15
XIV.	Athletic Physicals / Emergency Data Sheets / Concussion Management	15
XV.	Selection of Teams / Squads.....	16
XVI.	Awards	17 – 18
XVII.	Athlete and Parental Agreement.....	19
XVIII.	Appendix A - Coaches.....	20 – 24
XIX.	Appendix B - Cheerleading.....	24 – 25
XX.	Appendix C - Forms and Deadlines.....	26
XXI.	Appendix D – Bus Drivers.....	27

I. Athletic Theme Verses

- A. Philippians 4:13- "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."
- B. James 1:20- "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."
- C. I Corinthians 10:31- "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

II. Purpose of Athletics at Grace Christian School

- A. The overall purpose of the athletic program at Grace Christian School is to assist the school in developing Christian character in students to do our best (Col. 3:23a) for the Lord (Col. 3:23b). The first part is our action, and the second is our motivation. The end result will ultimately be to bring honor and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ by:
 - 1. Providing instruction in the use of the body to reflect the glory of God through sports.
 - 2. Applying the principle of the "well-rounded" person illustrated in Luke 2:52 (mental, physical, social and spiritual) through the integration of academics, athletics and social activities.
 - 3. Promoting the Biblical definition of "Winning":
 - a) *Doing our best–Col. 3:23a–Action; For God’s Glory–Col.3:23b–Motivation.*
 - b) *Physical Winning (scoreboard)-- “So run, that ye may obtain.” (I Cor. 9:24b)*
 - c) *Testimony– Philippians 1:27*
 - d) *Acknowledge God in all areas (win or lose). (I Thess. 5:18)*
 - e) *Pray for His guidance in striving to be a true winner. (Phil 4:13)*

4. Involving the student body, parents, faculty and staff in developing school unity and spirit.
5. Maintaining a clear Christian testimony to opposing schools, officials and others in the public with whom we make contact through words and actions.

B. Individual Objectives to be Developed

1. Development of the physical body through the varied abilities granted to each individual athlete.
2. Development of the attributes of God which include integrity (II Cor. 8:21), self-control (Prov. 25:28), obedience (Eph. 6:5), humility (Luke 18:14), love (Gal. 6:10), dedication (Prov. 20:6), self-denial (Phil. 2:4), patience (Col. 3:12-13), forgiveness (Eph. 4:32), thankfulness (Ps. 100:4-5), and contentment (I Tim. 6:6).
3. Application of good sportsmanship by the demonstration of the following:
 - a) *Respect for the opposition at all times.*
 - b) *Respect for the officials at all times.*
 - c) *Knowledge, application and appreciation of the rules of the game.*
 - d) *Self-Control*
 - e) *Recognition of an appreciation for skilled performance regardless of affiliation.*

III. Effective Parent/ Coach/ Player Relations

- A. Love One Another. John 13:34
1. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."
- B. Respect Each Other. Romans 12:10
1. "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honoring preferring one another;"
- C. Pray for Each Other. II Corinthians 1:11
1. "Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf."
- D. With full recognition of and respect for parental responsibility under God, it must be kept in mind that, for athletic participation, parents have delegated the responsibility and authority for the young person to the coach. There will be a direct/indirect impact on your young person if things like the following occur:
1. Parental coaching "from the stands". This can only be detrimental. A coach needs the full attention and concentration of his players. During practice or game, the player "belongs" to the coach. Uninvited parental intervention during these times is a serious distraction and a hindrance to the program.
 2. Parents negatively approaching the coach or their young person "on the bench" during the game, half-time or immediately after a game will not be overlooked. A coach should be able to expect full support from both player and parent.
- E. How Do I Get My Questions Answered or Give Input?
1. Those parents desiring to have input should use the proper communication channels and procedures. The first course of action is to speak with the coach by scheduling an appointment with them to discuss your concerns in private when he/she can offer you his/her undivided attention. If your concern/input is not sufficiently responded to then address the athletic director and the school administrator, in that respective order. Do not contact the SCACS office.

F. Support is Expected

1. It is reasonable to expect that any parent that permits his/her young person to come out for a team, should be supportive of the coach. Well-placed constructive criticism given privately to a coach is welcomed, but simply airing negative opinions to those around (and to children) should not be expressed.

G. Each head coach will have the responsibility and authority to determine which players are entered into the games at what point and for how long. His/ her determination in this area will be made on the basis of what will best benefit the team as a whole. This does not mean that there will be absolutely no consideration given to the individual needs of a player, but it does mean that instruction and guidance on making a total team effort is of primary significance in this particular educational experience at GCS.

IV. Description of the GCS Athletic Program

A. Affiliation

1. Grace Christian School is affiliated with the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools
2. All athletic contests are operated under the rules and regulations governing that sport by the National Federation of High School Athletics and the South Carolina High School League.
3. All officials used in home games for GCS are currently certified under the N.F.H.S.

B. Programs Offered (Subject to Student Support and Administrative discretion)

1. Junior Varsity Program

- a) *Boy's Soccer (grades 7-10)*
- b) *Boy's Basketball (grades 7-10)*
- c) *Girl's Volleyball (grades 7-10)*
- d) *Girl's Basketball (grades 7-10)*
- e) *Girl's Cheerleading (grades 7-9)*

2. Varsity

- a) *Boy's Soccer (grades 7-12)*
- b) *Girl's Volleyball (grades 7-12)*
- c) *Boy's Basketball (grades 7-12)*
- d) *Girl's Basketball (grades 7-12)*
- e) *Girl's Cheerleading (grades 9-12)*
- f) *Co-ed Golf (grades 7-12)*
- g) *Girl's Soccer (grades 7-12)*
- h) *Girl's Softball (grades 7-12)*
- i) *Boy's Baseball (7-12)*

V. Facilities / Field / Equipment

- A. All damage to facilities or equipment should be reported to the Athletic Director as soon as possible.
- B. No athlete will be allowed in the ball room or in the equipment “cage” without the consent of the Athletic Director or a coach.
- C. All equipment/ facilities will be handled with the utmost of respect. (i.e. No hanging on rims/ nets, backboard braces, soccer goals. No sitting on balls)
- D. No street or dress shoes should be on the gym floor.
- E. Use of equipment should be limited to the sport for which it is intended.
- F. All equipment should be returned to the proper storage area after use.
- G. Uniforms are to receive the utmost of care. Any damage to or loss of uniforms will be the responsibility of the athlete to whom it was issued.

VI. Locker Room Conduct

- A. Locker rooms are to be left clean after each practice session.
- B. There is to be no horseplay in the locker rooms at any times. This can lead to injury or damage to property.
- C. All personal items are the responsibility of the individual athlete. Valuables should be kept locked in the lockers. The school will not be held responsible for valuables left in the locker room.
- D. No glass containers of any kind should be brought into the locker rooms.
- E. Any athlete involved in intentionally damaging a home or away locker room will pay for the repairs and receive a one game suspension.

VII. Eligibility

- A. Only eligible students may participate in interscholastic athletics and cheerleading. Eligibility will be determined every two weeks during the season.
1. Students must maintain an overall “70” average with no “F” average in a specific class.
 2. All courses will apply.
 3. Should an athlete have an “F” average for a specific class or fall below an overall “70” average, then the student will be placed on academic probation. Probationary terms are as follows:
 - a) *The athlete will continue to practice during the two-week period, however, they are not eligible to play and/or travel with the team.*
 - b) *At the next evaluation period, should the athlete still have an “F” average in any class and/or the overall average still be below a “70”, the athlete will be placed on probation for an additional 2 weeks, at which time his/her eligibility will be determined.*
 - c) *However, if at the next 2 week evaluation period, the athlete has no “F” class averages and the overall average has been brought up to at least a “70” average, the athlete is taken off probation.*
 - d) *Athletes and parents will be notified of academic ineligibility with a form that must be signed and returned.*
 - e) *A list of academic eligibility dates will be provided at the beginning of each season.*
 - f) *If a student is placed on academic probation 3 times within a specific season they will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season.*
 - g) *The managers and book keepers of each sport must meet these same grade requirements.*
 - h) *Any student who receives an “incomplete” on a report card must arrange to make up work before continuing to compete in any sports event.*

i) *Quitting– Once a student is selected to be on a team or squad, he/she has made a commitment. Athletes that quit will not be eligible to participate in the next sport offered at GCS.*

B. Athletes must be present at each day of try-outs. Only the most extenuating circumstances will be taken under consideration (decided by the coach and AD). Try-out dates are announced prior to the end of the previous school year so plan your summer accordingly.

1. Only students currently enrolled in GCS may try-out and practice with the team.

2. Students are required to be in GCS dress code (clean-shaven, haircut, hair color) and follow GCS student policies on the first day of tryouts and for the remainder of the season. Students not in compliance with the school standards will not be allowed to try-out or practice.

C. An athlete must be in school all day on the day of a game if he/she expects to play.

1. An athlete will not miss practice or games unless in the case of an emergency.

2. An athlete that misses a practice before a game and is a starter, he/she may not start the next game.

3. If an athlete misses practices or games two times unexcused, he/she may be dismissed from the team.

4. If an athlete is late to or misses a practice, he/she may be required to perform extra duties.

5. All athletes should strive to be godly role models for other students. If an athlete fails to keep a good testimony, he/she may be removed from the team.

6. If an athlete reaches 50 demerits he/she will automatically be removed from a team and become ineligible for awards.

VIII. School Attendance

- A. All athletes are expected to have a good attendance record.
- B. Illness is not a satisfactory excuse. If the athlete is too sick to attend school, he/she is too sick to participate in a strenuous sport (practice or game).
- C. An athlete that is not in school all day the day after a game (unless excused with a doctor's note or pre-excuse) may not be allowed to play in the next game (coaches' discretion).
- D. Any athlete who misses physical education classes due to an illness or injury will not be allowed to participate in a team practice or game that day.
- E. Athletes returning late from a game will not be excused for any tardiness or from assignments or tests given the following day.
- F. Each athlete is responsible for work missed due to athletic absences.
- G. If the athlete will be departing school prior to the end of the school day, they are required to turn in any assignments that are due. This is to be done prior to departure.

IX. Guidelines for Away Trips

- A. Conduct
 - 1. All athletes are representatives first of our Lord Jesus Christ, second of their parents and family, and third of Grace Christian School and the athletic department. This responsibility should not be taken lightly.
 - 2. Athletes are expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen at all times— on and off the field or floor.
 - 3. There is to be no screaming or yelling on the buses. Keep hands and feet inside the windows at all times. Standing and moving around on the bus should be minimal.
 - 4. Mobile phones will be given to the coach prior to departing GCS. Phones will be returned to the athlete prior to departing the other school. Headphones/earbuds are not allowed. Student's will not "stream" videos or movies to their device. Any violation of the GCS standard of conduct using mobile phones on athletic trips will result in the privilege being revoked for the remainder of the season.

5. Males and females are not allowed to sit in the same seat together. The male and female athletes will be seated in different areas of the bus and separated by the Coach or Sponsor.

B. Dress

1. We want our athletes to look sharp and modest. We are representing Christ and GCS. Take pride in personal appearance.
2. The dress standards of GCS are to be followed at all times. The coach and athletic director may require the athlete to adhere to a particular standard for the team.
3. When returning from away games, students will either be in complete game uniform if they travelled in their game uniform or in complete school uniform.

C. Vehicles

1. Buses are to be kept clean at all times. This is the responsibility of every athlete who rides the bus.
2. There is to be no food, drink or candy on the bus unless given specific permission by the coach or athletic director.
3. Always be courteous to the driver. Do not distract him/ her.
4. Any damage done to the bus from horseplay or carelessness will be the responsibility of the individual(s) who caused the damage.
5. Students may not stand or sit in the entry way while the bus is in motion.

D. Return Trips

1. Athletes may ride home with immediate family members. Make sure that the coach is aware that he/she will not be on the bus.
2. If parents will be picking-up the athlete at school, please be prompt. We will do our best to be on time; so do your best to be on time too.
3. If the bus will be early or late by 20 minutes or more the coaches will have the students notify their parents by using the coaches' cell phone, and/or a message will be sent out via Remind.
4. We would like to encourage families that are traveling to and from the games in personal vehicles to follow the buses. This will ensure that you get to right place and will also ensure that if there are any complications with the buses, we will have some assistance.

X. Technical Fouls/ Cautions/ Ejections

- A. Any athlete receiving a conduct technical foul in basketball, an unsportsmanlike caution in soccer (yellow card), or a caution in volleyball will be removed from the game/match and will remain out of the game/match for a period deemed necessary by the head coach.
- B. Any player receiving an unsportsmanlike caution or conduct technical in two consecutive games/matches, may be removed for the remainder of that game/match and be suspended from the next scheduled game/match.
- C. Any athlete receiving two technical fouls in one game, an ejection in soccer or volleyball will automatically be suspended for the next game/match no matter if it is a conference, playoff or state tournament game.
- D. Any player having been suspended for two games will be removed from the team. This does not apply to suspensions from school.
- E. If, at the discretion of the Administrator, Athletic Director, Coach/ Sponsor, an athlete displays a consistent attitude or behavior which is contrary to the direction of the athletic program of GCS, the parents will be contacted for a conference. If the behavior continues, he/she may be removed from the team or squad.

XI. Practice

- A. Practices are important to each team/squad's success, and attendance will be required.
- B. A player should not be absent from a practice (except in the case of illness or emergency) without prior permission (5 school days prior) from his/her head coach prior to the absence.
- C. Players will not be excused from practices or team responsibilities for outside jobs.
- D. Unexcused absences from a practice will be handled by the individual head coach. Two unexcused absences may result in removal from the team. The following is a list of examples:
 - 1. Games or practices for another sport/team
 - 2. Hair appointments
 - 3. Music lessons
 - 4. Drivers license tests
 - 5. Birthday parties
 - 6. Attend the State Fair
 - 7. Homework, study for tests, work on projects
- E. Athletes are encouraged to attend help-classes when needed. However, it is the sole responsibility of the athlete to notify the head coach and to find transportation if applicable.
- F. Practice attire is to be loose-fitting knee-length shorts, and loose-fitting short-sleeved shirts. Sleeveless shirts, tank-tops, and compression shirts are not to be worn unless it is under a short-sleeve shirt.
- G. Parents are to be on time to pick up their students after practice. We will make every effort to be on time so please do the same.

XII. Rosters/Schedules/Parent Meetings

- A. At the beginning of each season, game schedules will be produced and distributed from the athletic office. These schedules will be as up-to-date as possible. Changes may occur during the season which will affect the schedule, but these will be kept to a minimum.
- B. In the event of inclement weather, check your “Remind” account for delays or cancellations.
- C. Game times, departure schedules, and directions are available online at www.gracelions.com. Any changes will to the published schedule and updates will be sent out via “Remind” If there are any questions please call the athletic office.

XIII. Athletic Spectator Guidelines

- A. Please be respectful during prayer and the reciting of the “Winners Creed”.
- B. Spectators should be dressed modestly and appropriately.
- C. Cheer with the GCS cheerleaders for GCS.
- D. Do not “BOO” or make degrading remarks at any time.
- E. Fans are not to cheer or distract during free-throws in basketball or during serves in volleyball.
- F. Remain off the soccer field and playing floor before, during and after games and matches.
- G. Please keep children under strict supervision.
- H. Only those with official duties will be allowed on the playing field or on the bench. All others are asked to remain in the stands.
- I. Pick up and dispose of your own trash after games.

J. Fans are not to make any remarks or comments directed to the officials. Once the game has begun, the officials and athletic director are the governing agents. Questions and concerns may be brought to the athletic director.

1. An official representative from GCS will be appointed in the absence of the athletic director or school administrator. The role of the representative is to address problems with fans from GCS. The representative is to introduce themselves to the officials prior to the start of the game. The representative is not to address the officials. The representative is there to help the officials maintain order in the stands or sidelines.

K. Please help in any way possible with clean-up after games. Your help is greatly needed and appreciated.

L. Always be courteous to the officials and visitors.

XIV. Athletic Physicals/Emergency Data Sheets/ Concussion Management

A. Every athlete is required to have a physical examination form and an Emergency Data form filed with the school before he/she will be allowed to practice or participate in the athletic program of GCS. Athletes must have their physicals completed prior to the first day of try-outs.

B. A physical form may be obtained from the athletic office, or online at the South Carolina High School League website. Most doctor's offices have this standard form on-hand.

C. Any athlete who has been restricted from participation because of an illness or injury at any time during the season must secure a doctor's release to be eligible to participate again on the team.

D. Student's removed from participation due to a possible concussion must have a Concussion Medical Release form signed by an authorized physician.

E. Physicals must be performed by a licensed Medical Doctor (M.D.), a Physician's Assistant (P.A.) or a Nurse Practitioner working in conjunction with a Medical Doctor.

XV. Selection of Teams/Squads

A. Cheerleading

1. Selection for junior high and senior high cheerleading will take place in the fall.
2. Selections are made by the cheerleading sponsors.
3. Young ladies are selected based upon their cheering ability, enthusiasm and ability to work with a team after two days of clinic and a try-out session with the sponsors.

B. Teams (All levels)

1. Teams are selected by the coaching staff for each sport at the beginning of each season.
2. After a set try-out period, a selection of players is made, and the team is formed.

C. General Policy: Cutting any young person can be critical to that person's self-esteem.

1. Before an athlete is cut, the decision is thoroughly discussed by the judges and/or coaches involved. They will strive to make the best choices they can with the wisdom God has granted them.
2. Selection of teams/squads is not taken lightly, and is one of the toughest jobs any coach/sponsor has to do.
3. Please follow the guidelines set up for handling relations in athletics when approaching a coach/sponsor about the selection of one student over another. Please understand that coaches want the best for every young person.

D. Playing Time

1. The amount of playing time and starters will be determined by the head coach.
2. Simply being on a team does not guarantee playing time.
3. Several factors may determine who plays and how much time they play. Listed below are some examples.
 - a) *The level of play.*
 - (1) JV teams are developmental and should therefore include ample playing time for each player.
 - (2) Varsity teams are more competitive, building team work and unity is essential. It is at this level when coaches must determine what is best for the team.
 - (a) *It is important to note that a coach may decide not to play a player for their own safety (i.e. a 7th grader competing with a 12th grader)*
 - (b) *Individual's performance at practice and games.*
 - (c) *Individual's attitude at practice, while traveling to the game, or even on the bench.*
 - (d) *Individual's skill.*
 - (e) *Attendance to practices.*
4. If a question arises about playing time, speak to the head coach the following day after a game.

XVI. Awards

- A. Awards are used in GCS athletics for two general purposes:
 1. Recognition of God-given ability and achievement.
 2. Motivation
- B. Awards are issued at the athletic awards ceremonies held at the end of each season. Recognition is given in each sport and to each cheerleading squad.
- C. Varsity Letters
 1. The purchase of letterman jackets is the sole responsibility of the individual athlete (may be purchased at Todd and Moore).

2. Letters will be given to first time recipients. Pins and bars will be given for further letters. One letter and one pin will be supplied by GCS. If a bar or pin is lost, replacements can be purchased from the athletic office for \$1.00 each.
3. Under normal conditions, in order to earn a letter, an athlete must play in half of all the quarters of all the games, be currently enrolled as a student at GCS, and have remained on the team for the complete season.
4. An athlete that is dismissed from a team for academic or disciplinary reasons by the school administration is ineligible for athletic awards and will not letter.
5. An athlete that "quits" a team or is removed from a team by the parents prior to the end of the season is ineligible for athletic awards and will not letter.
6. An athlete that misses a game during the season may not letter (unless it has been excused by the coach and athletic director prior to the event).

Grace Christian School
Athletic Department
Athlete & Parental Agreement

Please sign, date and return this form to the Athletic Department.
Athletes will not be eligible to compete and/or practice until this form is completed and returned.

Athlete's Agreement

I have read the entire Athletic Handbook and understand that participating in athletics is a privilege and agree to abide by its standards and policies. I agree to support them both in spirit and practice and understand that failure to follow these policies and procedures may result in loss of privilege.

Athlete's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parental Agreement

I have read the entire Athletic Handbook and fully support the enforcement of its policies and procedures. I agree to support the coaching staff and their decisions, as they are the delegated authority in my son's or daughter's participation in GCS athletics.

Father's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Mother's Signature: _____

Date: _____