

**GEORGIA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
PARENT/STUDENT
ATHLETIC
HANDBOOK**



GCS Mission Statement:

Georgia Christian School will provide a Christian foundation that promotes a passion for learning, responsible citizens and the skills necessary to lead through character development, spiritual guidance and excellent academic instruction.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Mission Statement	2
3. Philosophy	2
4. Purpose and Objectives	2
5. General Statement	3
6. Athletic Fees	3
7. Sports Season/Calendar	4
8. Game Entrance Fees	5
9. Athletic Honor Code	5
10. League Fines	6
11. Eligibility	6
12. Multi-Sport Participation	6
13. Sport Physicals	7
14. Athletic Participation Release	7
15. Report of Injury	7
16. Concussion Recognition and Response	7
17. Tryouts & Participation	8
18. Athletic Awards / Varsity Letter	8
19. Equipment and Uniforms	8
20. Game Day / Early Release	8
21. Transportation	9
22. Travel Attire	9
23. College Bound Athletes	9
24. Game Schedule/Postponement	9
25. Parent Volunteers	9
26. Parent/Coach Relations	10
27. Professional Development	11
28. Fundraising Expectations	11
29. The 1914 Club (i.e. Booster Clubs)	11
Appendix A: Gym Use Policy	12
Appendix B: Coaches Responsibilities	

1. Introduction

The Parent/Student Athletic Handbook exists in order that athletes and their parents may better understand their responsibilities and rights when an athlete participates in the Georgia Christian School athletic program. It shall be understood that the Student Handbook of Georgia Christian School is applicable to all students, including student athletes, and shall have precedence over the Parent/Student Athletic Handbook should any question arise regarding interpretation of rules.

2. Mission Statement

Georgia Christian School will provide a Christian foundation that promotes a passion for learning, responsible citizens and the skills necessary to lead through character development, spiritual guidance and excellent academic instruction.

3. Philosophy

Extra-curricular activities are an important and vital part of the American educational system and have great potential to contribute to the sound growth and all-around development of the students. The standards and ideals established and practiced will greatly influence the student, the school, and community; therefore, only the best traditions of good citizenship and conduct will be fostered. The program of activities should conform to and be closely and wholly integrated with the administrative policies of the school to the end that there shall be no undue interruptions or interference with the established rules and principles. The welfare of the student takes precedence over any other interest. All athletic activities should be school controlled and school directed. The athletic department should be a close-knit organization, and all sports should be considered in their right perspective with each other and with the rest of the school program.

4. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of our athletic activities is threefold:

- 1.** To promote Godly character development.
- 2.** To provide rigorous exercise of the body.
- 3.** To encourage healthy competition and school spirit (“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not men.” Colossians 3:23).

The objective of our sports program is to provide gender- and age-appropriate activities while giving students the opportunity to learn the fundamentals, develop skills, understand the rules, compete proficiently, and exemplify Christ-like sportsmanship. The school ministry expects its athletes to be positive leaders both academically and spiritually. Our student-athletes are expected to give their best and to have an appropriate Christian attitude at all times. They are expected to behave in a Christ-like manner both on and off the school’s campus. Athletics is a great platform for our students to learn and practice Christian values.

5. General Statement

Georgia Christian School is committed to developing and maintaining a Christ-centered and competitive athletic program. High school interscholastic athletics will be governed by rules established by the National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS) and by those regulations developed by our school's affiliation with the Georgia Independent Christian School Athletic Association (GISA). Many of our Middle and Elementary school athletic programs will participate in the GISA; therefore, we shall adhere to all regulations governing said organizations.

6. Athletic Dues

Athletic Dues are essential for the day-to-day operation of the Athletic Department. Every effort is made to keep these dues minimal. A \$50 per athlete fee is required for each HS level sport and a \$25 per athlete fee for each MS level sport. Jr. Pro Basketball is a \$10 per athlete fee. Once the student-athlete has been placed on a roster, the Athletic Director will submit the student's information to Student Accounts for collection. **Once submitted, there shall be no refunds.** Student Accounts will submit the amount of the due to the student's FACTS account.

7. Sport Season / Calendar (Calendar to be broken into tables for easier read)

Each season, the athletic conference of participation provides dates indicating the start and end of a sport's season. Georgia Christian School offers each of the sports listed. Teams are formed based on numbers of students desiring to participate. The seasonal calendar representing each sport can be found below. Tryout dates and preseason conditioning are not indicated. Your team's head coach will supply you with this information at team meetings.

Sport	Grades	Season	Conf.	Begins	Ends
MS Cross Country	6 th -8 th	Fall		August	October
Varsity Cross Country	9 th -12 th	Fall	GISA	August	October
Varsity Softball	9 th -12 th	Fall	GISA	August	October
Middle School Softball	6 th -8 th	Fall		August	October
MS & HS Cheerleading	6 th -12 th	Fall/Winter	GISA	August	February
Middle School Football	6 th -8 th	Fall		August	November
Varsity Football	9 th -12 th	Fall	GISA	August	November
Middle School Volleyball	6 th -8 th	Fall		August	November
Varsity Volleyball	9 th -12 th	Fall	GISA	August	November
Junior Pro. Basketball	4 th -6 th	Winter		December	January
Middle School Basketball	6 th -8 th	Winter		October	February
Varsity Basketball	9 th -12 th	Winter	GISA	October	February
Middle School Baseball	6 th -8 th	Spring		February	April
Varsity Baseball	9 th -12 th	Spring	GISA	February	May
Middle School Soccer	6 th -8 th	Spring		February	April
Varsity Soccer	9 th -12 th	Spring	GISA	February	April
Varsity Wrestling	9 th -12 th	Winter	GISA	October	February

8. Game Entrance Fees & Passes

Game Entrance Fees or “Gate Fees” are fees charged to enter athletic events. **The maximum entry fee is determined by the GISA and set by the host school.** Current GCS students wearing GCS Spirit Wear are exempt from charge into any athletic event hosted at a GCS venue. All others will be asked to pay the gate fee. Per Sport Season Passes may be sold each school year and can be purchased from the Business Office or the Athletic Department. The passes will only be valid for the names on the passes. Passes are not valid when visiting other schools or GISA State events.

9. Athletic Honor Code

Our athletes represent Christ, their parents, and their school in an extracurricular setting, and are thus held to a high code of conduct. It is a privilege to participate in athletics at Georgia Christian School. This privilege comes with a great deal of responsibility. We expect every student-athlete to demonstrate respect, kindness, responsibility, and self-control at all times at all school-related programs, activities, and events both on and off-campus.

The Honor Code: In order to maintain honor in our relationships between teammates, coaches, opponents, and officials, I agree to do what is right, be respectful, represent my school positively, to speak the truth, and to strive for integrity as I train and compete. Therefore, I will not be involved in lying, cheating, and stealing. If I do vary from this path of honor, I will accept the correction from those concerned with my welfare and the established consequences of this school as well as my team. Honor is a goal that I seek to attain.

10. League Fines

If any student-athlete’s conduct or behavior results in Georgia Christian School being fined, that player shall be responsible to pay the fine. Any major infractions will result in a mandatory meeting with the Athletic director, coach, parent and student-athlete. An appeals process is available (we will add in appendix).

11. Eligibility

A student must have paid the GCS registration fee to be eligible to participate (practices and or games). Participation in extracurricular activities during the school day does not constitute an absence. For athletic participation ONLY, a student is considered “present” if they are in school for three and a half hours of the day. It is the student’s responsibility to get assignments prior to leaving for the activity.

High School Eligibility Requirements:

- A student must pass Bible to be eligible for Extracurricular activities.
- A student must be passing 3 out of 4 classes at the end of each of the first three nine week grading periods to be eligible for extracurricular activities. These activities include sporting

events, literary, etc. Participation in practice will be at the Athletic Director's discretion. Students will not be allowed to dress out or travel with the team to events.

- Students remain ineligible for extracurricular activities until grades are passing at the end of the nine-week grading period.
- The student will be ineligible for the entire semester if 2 out of 4 classes were not passed the previous semester.
- A student will be placed on academic probation if he/she has a cumulative failing grade in two or more classes at the end of a nine-week period. When a student is placed on probation, any careless act or questionable attitude will be grounds for dismissal. There will be written documentation for the designated probationary period.

Middle School Eligibility Requirements:

- A student must pass Bible to be eligible for Extracurricular activities.
- A student must be passing 5 out of 6 classes at the end of each of the first three nine week grading periods to be eligible for extracurricular activities. These activities include sporting events, literary, etc. Participation in practice will be at the Athletic Director's discretion. Students will not be allowed to dress out or ride with the team to events.
- Students remain ineligible for extracurricular activities until grades are passing at the end of the nine-week grading period.
- The student will be ineligible for the entire following semester if they are failing 2 classes at the end of the current semester.
- A student will be placed on academic probation if he/she has a cumulative failing grade in two or more classes at the end of a nine-week period. When a student is placed on probation, any careless act or questionable attitude will be grounds for dismissal. There will be written documentation for the designated probationary period.

Participation in Sports for 5th and 8th Graders Policy

At GCS, 5th graders are allowed to participate at the Middle School level and 8th graders may participate at the Varsity level. However, this is a case-by-case basis that must be approved by the team coach, GCS Athletic Director and the parent must sign a waiver. No 8th graders may compete during a GCS Varsity game when the opponent is a GHSA school.

12. Multi-Sport Athletes

Many of our student-athletes participate in multiple sports during the school year. When one sport season overlaps a second, it is important that the student-athlete completes his/her obligation to the current competition team/sport before advancing into the next season. Under normal circumstances, student-athletes are not permitted to participate in more than one sport during a sport season. Student-athletes who choose to participate in more than one sport during a sport season must petition the Athletic Director for approval.

13. Sport Physicals

A student may not participate in any camps, practices, or games until they have been medically cleared. Georgia Christian School seeks to provide all students who want to participate in athletic-type events the safest conditions of participation. Every student seeking to participate in these events will therefore be required to submit to a physical examination by a licensed medical doctor. Such an exam will be at the expense of the parents. The completed sports physical must be turned in to the Athletic Department before participation. The sports physical form is valid for one calendar year.

14. Athletic Participation Release

A student may not participate in any camps, practices, or games until an Athletic Participation Release Form (per sport) has been completed by a parent or guardian. This form must be turned in to the Athletic Director before participation. The Athletic Participation Release Form is valid for all sports played during a school year.

15. Report of Injury

It is the responsibility of each student and/or parent to notify the head coach of any injury that occurs during participation in an athletic event. On occasion, an injury may not appear to require medical attention until after the student-athlete leaves the event. In those cases, it is important that the head coach or athletic director is notified as soon as possible. Some injuries may require a clearance from a medical doctor before the athlete may return to practices or full participation.

16. Concussion Recognition and Response

GISA member schools must abide by House Bill 284, known as the "Return to Play Act of 2013." This act was effective on January 1, 2014. Refer to the GISA website for all forms and information regarding the concussion policy. At a minimum, all Head Coaches employed by Georgia Christian School are certified by the National Federation of High School. In addition, Georgia Christian School requires all coaches to participate in Concussion Recognition Courses in an attempt to understand the effects and recognize symptoms of such an injury. Concussions can occur in any type of activity and are not simply restricted to sports. It is important that not only our coaches be educated but that our parents and student athletes become more aware of symptoms of a concussion. The National Federation of High School has developed a Parent's Guide to Concussion. Georgia Christian School has adopted the guide as a standard of practice. A copy of the National Federation of High School "Parents Guide to Concussion" and other resources can be found at:

- NFHS-Coaches Concussion Workshop-NFHS: <http://nfhslearn.com/courses>
- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/clinicians/index.html>
- [NFHS Concussion Guidelines:](http://nfhs) <http://nfhs>
- [A Parents Guide to Concussions:](http://nfhs) <http://nfhs>

17. Tryouts & Participation

Tryouts are a necessary component to the success of any team. In order to put the most competitive teams on the field, teams may have a designated tryout period. The team's head coach will determine the period of time necessary to accomplish this goal. Student-athletes will be required to meet all eligibility requirements before attending the tryout process. Student-athletes will be selected based on several criteria including but not limited to; physical condition, talent, attitude, dedication, and coach-ability. Each coach is required to include a conditioning program for all teams regardless of the level of competition. Once placed on a roster, the student-athlete is expected to be an active member for the entire length of the season. Student-athletes who quit a team will be reviewed by the Athletic Director to determine eligibility in other sports and seasons.

18. Athletic Awards / Varsity Letter

The Varsity Letter is one of the highest honors the athletic department has to offer. At the conclusion of a sport's season, the Head Coach provides the Athletic Director with nominations to receive the award. The award is presented to the athlete at a ceremony at the conclusion of the season it was played (Fall, Winter, Spring). Requirements for an athlete to be eligible to receive a letter are as follows:

1. Athletes must be participating on a Varsity team.
2. Athletes must start or play in the majority of his/her games and make a significant contribution to his/her team's success.
3. Athletes must remain on the team until the season has ended (excluding injury).
4. Athletes must be devoted to attending practices and games.
5. Athletes must have represented the school in a Christ-like manner.

19. Equipment and Uniforms

All equipment and uniforms issued to the student-athlete are property of Georgia Christian School and must be returned. Student-athletes are financially responsible for all school equipment furnished to them and may be required to pay for negligent loss or damage.

All washing and drying of the uniforms will be taken care of by GCS. The head coach of each sport will establish protocols for uniform care/cleaning. Players should only wear their uniforms in preparation for and participation in GCS games. They are not to be worn to school or any other leisure situations without prior approval.

GCS Athletic Uniform Policy (Including Practice)

All GCS Uniforms (including what student athletes wear during practice) must meet the following guidelines; this is to be determined by the Coach and Athletic Director:

- All uniforms must be approved by the GCS Athletic Director before being purchased

- All uniform shorts/skirts must be come to at least mid-thigh at time of purchase (i.e. uniforms should be purchased that fall within the guidelines)
 - If there is an athlete's body type that puts them out of compliance with the mid-thigh criteria, they must wear compression shorts that satisfy the at least mid-thigh requirement
- All uniforms must be modest
- Student athletes may wear sleeveless shirts but not shirts that are open down the side
- Male student athletes are not allowed to be shirtless at practice/workouts or before/after a game
- Team Coaches are responsible for ensuring that student athletes conform to the GCS Athletic Uniform Policy
- Student Athletes not meeting the GCS Athletic Uniform Policy are not allowed to participate in practice/game play

20. Game Day / Early Release

On the day of the game athletes are to report to the team's Head Coach or his/her designee to receive instruction. Because of travel it sometimes is necessary for teams to leave school prior to normal dismissal times. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to make arrangements with teachers to make up any missed work. Any athlete on campus between regular school hours and practice must be under school supervision or leave campus until time for practice to begin.

21. Transportation

Team members are required to ride on Georgia Christian School transportation to all athletic events. Students can only be released to a parent when not riding GCS transportation back to school unless documented permission is provided. Parents are required to pick up their student from an event when participating at a home venue.

22. Travel Attire

Student-athletes are expected to dress appropriately while traveling to and from athletic events. Each coach will determine appropriate dress for his or her team. This includes post-game attire. Any changes from the "norm" must be pre-approved by the Athletic Director.

23. College-Bound Athletes

Those student-athletes who will eventually participate on the college level need to meet N.C.A.A. and/or N.A.I.A (www.naia.org) guidelines as they relate to recruiting and eligibility. A copy of the N.C.A.A. guide for the college bound student-athlete is available to the athlete online at www.ncaa.org. The NCAA eligibility center site is www.eligibilitycenter.org. See your Georgia Christian School guidance counselor or the Athletic Director for assistance.

24. Game Schedules/Postponement

It is the responsibility of the school's Athletic Director and coaches to prepare all schedules as they relate to athletic events. Schedules are posted on the GCS website at georgiachristian.org. In cases when games are postponed, cancelled, or rescheduled, parents will be notified as soon as the information becomes available. Inclement weather can cause last-minute changes in scheduling. If a scheduled game is cancelled or postponed on the day of the event, students will be notified via the school social media and via email. Parents should review schedules often for changes.

25. Parent Volunteers

At Georgia Christian School, the success of our athletic program depends heavily on parent volunteers. There are many areas where volunteers are needed: field set-up and take-downs, concessions, and gate workers, just to name a few. In many cases, parent volunteers find themselves serving as assistants to the coaches in positions such as chain crews, assistant coaches, and book-keepers. It is the policy of Georgia Christian School that all adult volunteers who have direct contact with the student-athletes be subjected to the same screening as do all employees of our school. Therefore, no adult, parent or otherwise, will be permitted within the immediate area of a team's practice or sanctioned athletic event without prior approval of the Athletic Director. For volunteer opportunities contact the Athletic Administrative Assistant.

26. Parent/Coach Relations

Mandatory pre-season meetings are required for each sport to ensure that clear expectations are communicated. Parents should support the team in public and with Christ-like sportsmanship, encourage loyalty to team and school, and provide positive reinforcement to all athletes. Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to our student-athletes. When your child becomes involved in Georgia Christian Athletics, you should understand what expectations are placed upon your student. This begins with clear communication from the coach of the program.

Georgia Christian coaches will provide this in their preseason meetings:

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Location and times of all practices, meetings and contests.
3. Team requirements: practices, special equipment needed, out-of-season conditioning, special concerns for the specific sport.
4. Procedures to be followed should your child be injured during participation.
5. Discipline that may result in the denial of your student's participation.

Communication that coaches should expect from parents:

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts made to coach well in advance.
3. Specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your student becomes involved in Georgia Christian Athletics, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important they understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your student wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Examples:

1. Ways to help your student improve.
2. Concerns about your student's attitude.
3. Academic support and college opportunities.

It is very difficult to accept your student's not playing as much or where you may hope. Coaches make judgments based on what they believe to be the best for all student-athletes in their program. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your student's coach. Other things should be left to the discretion of the coach. **Examples:**

1. Team strategy.
2. Playing time.
3. Team selection.
4. Play calling.
5. Matters concerning other student-athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures should be followed to help promote resolution:

1. Set up an appointment with the coach.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the athletic office. A meeting will be set up for you.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice.

If the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution, the next step is to set up an appointment with the Athletic Director and coach to discuss the situation.

Georgia Christian Athletics and athletics across the nation were established because research indicates a student involved in these programs has a greater chance of success during adulthood. Many of the character traits required to be successful participants are exactly those that will promote a successful life after high school. We hope the information provided here makes both your and your student's experience with the Georgia Christian School Athletic program less stressful and more enjoyable.

27. Professional Development

All Varsity/Head Coaches submit a “Plan of Action” that will be reviewed and approved by the Athletic Director. They must include:

1. Practice schedule to include days/times
2. In-season Conditioning Program (and out-of-season if necessary)
3. Progressive skill set taught (this should build on previous level of play)
4. Professional development plan (clinics and other opportunities)

28. Fundraising Expectations

Because of the nature of private school budgets, it is vital that each team participates in fundraising in order to provide the needed uniforms, equipment, facilities maintenance, etc. All fundraisers should be proposed to the Athletic Director by the head coach of the team. The GCS Board of Directors mandates that a fundraiser must provide a good or a service (i.e. t-shirt or car wash) and not simply a donation for nothing in return. Participation by parents and student athletes is expected and are vital to a successful athletic program.

29. The 1914 Club

For more information about and the benefits of the 1914 Club, contact Mr. Colson at wcolson@georgiachristian.org.

Hold Harmless Agreement: I/We acknowledge that, as a condition of the Student’s participation in Georgia Christian School Athletic activities, I/we hold harmless and waive any and all claims against Georgia Christian School, its officers, employees, representatives, agents, students, and volunteers, including, but not limited to, claims arising out of any ordinary negligence of any officer, employee, representative, agent, student, or volunteer of the School, or any loss or damage to personal property occurring during or by reason of the Student participating in Georgia Christian School Athletic activities.

Georgia Christian School Athletic Handbook Agreement 2021-22

By signing below, I am acknowledging that I have read and will abide by the rules and policies in the GCS Athletic Handbook including the Hold Harmless Agreement.

Student's Full Name (Please Print)

Date

Student's Full Name (Please Print)

Date

Student's Full Name (Please Print)

Date

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (Print)

Date