



GILBERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

**2022-2023
MIDDLE SCHOOL
ATHLETICS HANDBOOK**





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Letter from the Athletics Director

Knights,

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year! My name is Mark Duitsman, and I am honored to serve our Gilbert Christian families as District Athletic Director. This is a special community and it is a privilege to serve alongside each of you as we carry on the strong traditions of GCS while also working towards our exciting future.

The need for focused and intentional ministry in the lives of our children through their education and activities has never been greater. GCS Athletics and our highly-qualified coaches embrace this mission, cherishing and proclaiming our identity in Christ while also pursuing both competitive and character excellence. I believe our community can be intently driven towards athletic goals and achievements in a setting where core Christian values and beliefs are not compromised, but rather amplified, and I am thrilled for our athletic programs to lead the way in that endeavor.

This handbook provides valuable information for the year ahead, including details about eligibility, registration, programs offered, as well as expectations of GCS student-athletes. Thank you for taking the time to review this material and please reach out to me with questions or feedback. While this handbook is thorough, there is no doubt there will be additional issues and unforeseen concerns as we journey through this year together. When this happens, the athletic department will communicate with you as clearly and promptly as possible.

On behalf of everyone involved with GCS Athletics, thank you for your prayers and support throughout the year ahead. Interscholastic athletics are an outstanding avenue for teaching, developing, and enhancing character and life skills, but these things can only be accomplished through the cooperation and commitment of everyone involved. It is an exciting time to be a Knight and I cannot wait to see what we will accomplish together!

God Bless and Go Knights!

Mark Duitsman
District Athletic Director



Gilbert Christian Schools Athletics Program

Mission Statement

“To develop athletes both spiritually and physically to use their gifts and talents in the area of athletics to bring glory and honor to God.”

Five Areas of Focus

1. *Communication*

As an athletics department, we will strive to communicate effectively both in person and through the Team Snap application. Communications regarding registration will come via email initially, while communications regarding practices and games will come through TeamSnap.

2. *Spiritual Growth*

As an athletics department, we will strive to provide opportunities for student-athletes to grow in their faith through the avenue of athletics. Each individual has various God-given gifts, and athletics provide a platform for their expression.

3. *Practice and Game Management*

As an athletics department, we will strive to grow each student-athlete in knowledge and skills about the sport. Our coaches will provide each student-athlete the opportunity to earn playing time during practices. During games, our coaches will be thorough in their preparation and execution to put each team in a position to be successful.

4. *Professionalism*

As an athletics department, we will hold ourselves to the highest standard. Our attire and conversation will present the beliefs and values in which Gilbert Christian Schools is founded. Student-athletes and families are expected to honor these beliefs and values as well.

5. *Professional Development*

As an athletics department, we have adopted a growth culture. This means that each of us is intentional about learning each and every day with additional times throughout the year dedicated to camps and clinics.



Athletics Department Staff

Name	Position	Email	Phone Number
Mark Duitsman	District & High School Athletics Director	mark.duitsman@gcsaz.org	Office: 480-699-1215
Jamie Hurtado	Agritopia Athletics Director	jamie.hurtado@gcsaz.org	Office: 480-279-1366
Chris Jones	Greenfield Athletics Director	chris.jones@gcsaz.org	Office: 480-638-8000
Maritta Krahling	Assistant to the Athletics Director	maritta.krahling@gcsaz.org	Office: 480-699-1215
Jolina Shue	Agritopia Principal	jolina.shue@gcsaz.org	Office: 480-279-1366
Amy Majeski	Greenfield Principal	amy.majeski@gcsaz.org	Office: 480-638-8000
Holly Garza	Agritopia Vice Principal	holly.garza@gcsaz.org	Office: 480-279-1366
Kate Daily	Greenfield Vice Principal	kate.daily@gcsaz.org	Office: 480-638-8000



Gilbert Christian Schools Sports

Calendar

Gilbert Christian Schools participates in two leagues and abides by the rules set in those organizations. Gilbert Christian Middle Schools participate in the Cactus Christian Schools League (CCSL) and the Mountain Valley Athletic League (MVAL).

	FALL SPORTS	WINTER SPORTS	SPRING SPORTS
Middle School (CCSL & MVAL*)	6th – 8th Boys Tackle Football Soccer (coed) 6th ONLY Flag Football*	6th – 8th Boys Baseball Cross Country	6th – 8th Boys Basketball Golf
	6th – 8th Girls Spiritline Soccer (coed) Volleyball	6th – 8th Girls Cross Country Softball	6th – 8th Girls Spiritline Basketball Golf

Registration

All athletes are required to register prior to participating in the season of sport. All forms for registration can be found at www.teamsnap.com. All required documents can be e-signed and/or uploaded to the website. Registration fees must be paid online before students will be added to the roster.

NOTE: Registration is a process that takes time. Every athlete must have a yearly sports physical that is completed by a physician. Please do not wait until the last minute to register.

Deadlines for Registration

FALL SPORTS	WINTER SPORTS	SPRING SPORTS
Registration due August 12, 2022	Registration due November 10, 2022	Registration due February 17, 2023



Official Start Dates and Registration Closing Dates

SEASON	SPORT	OFFICIAL START DATE	REGISTRATION CLOSING DATE
Fall	Tackle Football	8/8/2022(tentative)	8/12/2022(tentative)
	Flag Football	8/8/2022	8/12/2022
	Soccer (COED)	8/8/2022	8/12/2022
	Spiritline	8/8/2022	8/12/2022
	Volleyball	8/8/2022	8/12/2022
Winter	Baseball	11/7/2022	11/10/2022
	Cross Country (Boys)	11/7/2022	11/10/2022
	Cross Country (Girls)	11/7/2022	11/10/2022
	Softball	11/7/2022	11/10/2022
Spring	Basketball (Boys)	2/13/2023	2/17/2023
	Basketball (Girls)	2/13/2023	2/17/2023
	Golf (COED)	2/13/2022	2/17/2023

Sports Fees

Sport	Fee
Football	\$200
All Other Sports	\$100
Family Annual Sports Fee Maximum	\$500



Eligibility

Academic Eligibility

GCS athletes are students first. Eligibility is a standard set in place by school administrators and the athletics department.

Ineligibility requires a student be withheld from all games until grades warrant eligibility. Students may participate in practices provided they have attended tutoring with the teacher(s) of the class(es) with low grade(s).

Course Load Requirement

In order to compete on a Gilbert Christian Middle School athletic team, a student must be enrolled full time (7 classes).

GPA Requirement

A student must maintain a C or above in each of their academic classes.

Elementary and Middle School Eligibility

Grade checks begin on the Wednesday of the first week of practice for all sports. Grade checks will be repeated every two weeks throughout the rest of the season.

Consequences

- 1st Offense Warning with Probation for the Entire Season
- 2nd Offense Sit Out 1 Game Minimum (Includes No Travel)
- 3rd Offense Removed from Team

Below you will find the scheduled dates of grade checks for each season.

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
8/31/2022	11/16/2022	2/22/2023
9/14/2022	11/30/2022	4/5/2023
9/28/2022	12/14/2022	4/19/2023

Student-athletes found ineligible will not participate in any games, and they may not travel with the team. Student-athletes can become eligible by raising their grade(s) above 70%. Ineligible student-athletes are required to attend Omega hour in order to practice with the team.

Attendance Eligibility

Student-athletes absent from school for more than half the day (4 periods) may not participate in a scheduled evening practice or game without a doctor's note or approval by a campus administrator or the Athletics Director.



Behavioral Eligibility

Students are expected to follow the Knights Honor code of conduct. Behaviors during the school day will carry a consequence from the school that will be honored by the athletics department and school administrator, and these may also carry a team-level consequence. Behaviors on any playing surface (practice or game) will carry a team-level consequence imposed in conjunction with the athletics department.

Quitting

Quitting a GCS sports team will result in a student-athlete being ineligible to join any other sports team until the first team is completely done with the current season including post-season play.

Attire

Student-athletes are to remain in school uniforms while on campus. Students changing for practices or games must wear appropriate attire and report to designated areas for athletic activities.

Practice Attire

Shirts

T-shirts of appropriate length are acceptable. No tube tops, spaghetti straps, or visible midriffs are allowed. Shirts must be worn at all times.

Shorts

Fingertip-length shorts are acceptable. Spandex shorts are only allowed when approved by the athletics department as part of the uniform.

Game Day Attire

Teams may choose to wear travel suits or dress-up one day per week. This is a full team decision, and all team members must be dressed similarly.

Team Theme Shirts

Teams may design one team theme shirt that includes school branded wording and logos. The Athletics Director must approve artwork prior to purchase of these shirts.

Uniforms

Uniforms will be provided by the coach to each student-athlete. Student-athletes will check-out these uniforms at the start of the season, and they will check them in at the end of the season. Failure to return uniforms in a timely manner will result in a charge added to the tuition statement, as well as a forfeiture of end of season awards including letters and pins.

Uniforms are only to be worn during scheduled contests. Uniforms are not to be worn during the school day unless prior approval is given by the Athletics Director.



Facility Use

School sponsored events will always begin at the end of the school day during the week with the exception of tournaments, and at the coach's discretion, practices can be scheduled for Saturdays.

Facilities/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 up for protection. GCS is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Weight Room

Student-athletes desiring to use the weight room at the high school must be accompanied by a GCS coach or other staff member for the entire duration of the time in the weight room. The weight room is designed to improve student-athletes' strength and conditioning. It is recommended that student-athletes speak to their head coach about a workout plan.

Injuries

Injuries are a part of any and all sports teams. At GCS, our coaches are the first line of defense against injuries. GCS employs an Athletics Trainer who is available for consultation and referrals to local physicians.

Athletic Trainer

The GCS Athletics Trainer has an office at the high school. The Athletics Trainer will be at the majority of practices and home events for high school athletics. The Athletics Trainer is available for consultation for middle school injuries. For more information contact the athletics department.

Concussions

If a middle school student athlete is suspected of having a concussion, he/she is immediately removed from the game or practice for the remainder of that day. During this time the Athletic Trainer uses a SCAT3 test to further evaluate the athlete. This consists of a symptom checklist, memory questions, balance examination, etc. The Athletics Trainer also checks the ways the eyes track and react to light. If the athlete does have a concussion, the coach is notified in person or by phone, and the athlete's parents are notified in person or by phone. During the conversation with parents, the Athletics Trainer will inform the parents about the red flag symptoms to look out for overnight. The Athletics Director receives an incident report the following day explaining the situation. Once an athlete is symptom-free, he/she will go through a return-to-play protocol under the direct supervision of the Athletics Trainer. The first step after becoming asymptomatic is light aerobic activity followed the next day by moderate



aerobic activity (running, resistance training, etc.). The third step is participating in a non-contact practice. The athlete will then retake his/her ImPACT concussion test and must achieve scores at or above the baseline test before completing the fourth step, which is full-contact practice. After all of these steps are completed, the athlete can return to game play. If at any time during this process the student is struggling with schoolwork, he/she has the right to request academic accommodations to give him/her extended time to do assignments and/or the ability to retake or make up exams.

Concussions are addressed in the “Extended Absences/Health/Injury” section of the GCS Student Handbook. If a student is going to miss class due to a concussion, the parents must contact the administration and Student Support Services to discuss all of the possible implications of the student’s attendance and academic progress. The school may require a medical diagnosis in order to develop a temporary AAP to help the student transition during his/her doctor-prescribed recovery.

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 student athletes 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.

A student athlete may ride home from an off-campus practice or game with the parent of a teammate or another adult 21 years old or older only if a “Driving Parental Consent Form” is completed by a parent of the student athlete and submitted to the Athletics Director at least 24 hours prior to the event.

When picking up their child directly from the location of a practice or a game, whether on-campus or off-campus, parents should arrive at the pickup location prior to the end of the practice or game. When picking up their child from a GCS campus after an off-campus practice or game, parents should arrive at the campus prior to the estimated return time of the team vehicle. All coaches have been instructed to remain on campus until all of their athletes are gone or to leave their athletes properly supervised by an adult employee on duty.

Spectators

Respect should be shown to the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. No derogatory signs, banners, or cheers should be directed toward officials, players, coaches, cheerleaders, or the opponents’ fans. Those not complying with this request will be approached by the Athletics 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. The general mantra is:

“Let the players play. Let the coaches’ coach. Let the officials officiate.”



Communication

The GCS Athletics Department is committed to communicating the goals and objectives of the athletics program, eligibility rules, and expectations of our athletes. If more information is required or should a concern arise during an athletic season, the Matthew 18 process should be followed. Below are the steps to that process:

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 to set up a meeting that includes the student-athlete, parent(s), and 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 24-Hour Rule.
3. If the issue remains unresolved, the parent should then request a meeting with the Athletics Director, coach, student-athlete, and parent(s).
4. If there is no resolution to the matter after the Athletics Director has been brought in, the parents should request a meeting with the Superintendent, Athletics Director, coach, student-athlete, and parent(s).



Athletics Code of Conduct

I. *Seek Him*

As a Gilbert Christian Schools student-athlete, I understand that I am flawed, and it is only by His divine grace that I can be the person that He has called me to be. Through seeking Him daily, each person is revealing a desire to grow. In athletics, growth is an absolute necessity for the benefit of both the individual and team.

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. – Matthew 6:33

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. – James 1:5

II. *Trust the Process*

Athletics provide a unique opportunity to overcome new challenges at each practice and game. As a Gilbert Christian Schools student-athlete, I understand that a sport season is a marathon and not a sprint. Each day, I must choose to get better as I face new and exciting challenges.

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. – James 1:2-4

... we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. – Romans 5:3-4

III. *Embrace the Opportunities*

Sports provide a unique opportunity to use the gifts God has given us in a competitive environment. The athletic courts and fields also give us an opportunity to be a witness to those around us. As a Gilbert Christian Schools student-athlete, I will represent a follower of Christ no matter where I am.

He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much... – Luke 16:10

IV. *Be Humble*

There is a fine line between confidence and arrogance. As a Gilbert Christian Schools student-athlete, I will be humble in victory and defeat to my opponent, officials, and fans.

When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom. – Proverbs 11:2

A man's pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor.

– Proverbs 23:23

V. *Ripple Effect*

Even the smallest stone thrown into a lake produces ripples that will eventually hit the shore. Our actions have consequences both on the playing surface and off. As a Gilbert Christian Schools student-athlete, I will work to sow seeds that reveal good fruit within me while promoting the growth of good fruit in others.

...for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. – Galatians 6:7-8

He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. – 2 Corinthians 9:6



Athletics Handbook Agreement

All student-athletes and parents must agree to this form. It is included in the TeamSnap (www.teamsnap.com) registration documents.

I have read the Student-Athlete Handbook and understand the responsibilities and expectations for my attitude, actions, and behaviors. I understand that I represent myself, my family, Gilbert Christian Schools, and God while I am a part of Gilbert Christian Schools Athletics. I agree to follow the guidelines of this handbook to ensure that I maintain the privilege of participating in athletics at Gilbert Christian Schools. I accept the challenges that I will face in practices and games, and I will see these challenges as opportunities to grow. I will use the gifts that God has given me to bring glory and honor to Him.

Student-Athlete's Name: _____

Student-Athlete's Signature: _____

As parents and/or guardians, we have read the Student-Athlete Handbook, and we agree to support our student-athlete during the season of sport. We understand and embrace the opportunity to support student-athletes, teams, and Gilbert Christian Schools.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

*** All student-athletes and parents must agree to this form. It is included in the TeamSnap (www.teamsnap.com) registration documents.