



**GILBERT  
CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOLS**

HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS

**2023-2024  
ATHLETICS HANDBOOK**



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## **Letter from the Athletic Director**

Knights,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! My name is Mark Duitsman and I am honored to serve the Gilbert Christian community as District Athletic Director. This is a special place, and it is a privilege to partner with 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, and commitment 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 partnership 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 in 2022-23!

God Bless and Go Knights!

Mark Duitsman  
District Athletic Director



## Mission Statement

*The mission of Gilbert Christian Schools is to partner with parents to prepare the next generation to impact the world for Christ.*

Gilbert Christian Athletics carries out the mission of GCS through our core values of character, commitment, and community.

### Character

We are committed to nurturing Christian character through discipleship and mentorship. (Proverbs 22:6)

### Commitment

Remembering Christ's commitment to us, we strive for excellence in all that we do. (Colossians 3:23)

### Community

We seek to serve and celebrate others through a selfless mindset. (John 15:12)

## Athletic Department Staff

Name	Position	Email/Phone
Mark Duitsman	District & HS Athletic Director	<a href="mailto:mark.duitsman@gcsaz.org">mark.duitsman@gcsaz.org</a> 480-699-1215
Ashley Storey	HS Assistant Athletic Director	<a href="mailto:ashley.storey@gcsaz.org">ashley.storey@gcsaz.org</a> 480-699-1215
Andrew Rasmussen	HS Athletics Coordinator	<a href="mailto:andrew.rasmussen@gcsaz.org">andrew.rasmussen@gcsaz.org</a> 480-699-1215
Bailey Anderson	MS District & GF/VV Athletic Director	<a href="mailto:bailey.anderson@gcsaz.org">bailey.anderson@gcsaz.org</a> 480-699-1215
Jamie Hurtado	Agritopia Athletic Director	<a href="mailto:jamie.hurtado@gcsaz.org">jamie.hurtado@gcsaz.org</a> 480-699-1215



## Calendar

Gilbert Christian Schools participates in several leagues and abides by the rules set in those organizations. Gilbert Christian High School participates in the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA).

	FALL SPORTS	WINTER SPORTS	SPRING SPORTS
High School (AIA)	<b>Boys</b> Cross Country Football Swim	<b>Boys</b> Basketball Soccer	<b>Boys</b> Baseball Golf Tennis Track Volleyball
	<b>Girls</b> Cross Country Spiritline Swim Volleyball	<b>Girls</b> Basketball Soccer Spiritline	<b>Girls</b> Beach Volleyball Golf Softball Tennis Track

## Registration

All athletes are **required** to register prior to participating in the season of sport. Every athlete must have an AIA yearly sports physical that is completed by a physician prior to registration. All other required documents can be e-signed during registration through TeamSnap. Registration fees must be paid online through TeamSnap before students will be added to the roster.



## **Sports Fees**

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Football	\$200
Spiritline	\$150
All Other Sports	\$100
Family Annual Sports Fee Maximum	\$500

*\*For programs where roster cuts must be made following tryouts, a full reimbursement of the participation fee will be offered to those who do not make a team. The fee can also be transferred to a registration later in the year. Reimbursements are not available for rostered participants once tryouts are complete and teams have been set.*

### **High School Transfer Students**

The AIA requires all students transferring from another high school who played a sport last year to complete the [550 Transfer Form](#) online.

### **First-Time High School Athletes**

The AIA requires all high school student-athletes to complete both the Brainbook Concussion and Opioid Courses online. You can complete these courses for free at [academy.azpreps365.com](http://academy.azpreps365.com). This is a requirement before you can practice. These courses only need to be completed one time during high school.

## **Eligibility**

### **Academic Eligibility**

GCS athletes are students first. Eligibility is a standard set-in place by GCS administrators and the athletic 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).

### **High School Eligibility**

Grade checks will be held on Tuesdays throughout the season. Student-athletes must have a passing grade in all classes to be declared academically eligible (60% or higher in each class). Student-athletes found ineligible will not participate in any games and they may not travel with the team until they regain academic eligibility. Student-athletes can become eligible by raising their grade(s) in each class above 60%.



## ***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 Athletic Director.

## ***Behavioral Eligibility***

Behaviors during the school day may carry a consequence from the school that will be honored by the athletic department, and these may also carry a team-level consequence determined by the head coach. Behaviors on any playing surface (practice or game) may carry a team-level consequence imposed in conjunction with the athletic department.

## ***Practice and Activity Attendance***

High school athletics require a substantial commitment from all involved. Representing GCS in athletic competition is a privilege and attendance at in-season practices and activities is required to be eligible to participate. GCS programs will have attendance standards set in place that must be met and not all reasons for absence will be excused. Missing practices and team activities, whether excused or unexcused, may result in playing time and roster decisions depending on the circumstances. Up to 3 unexcused absences will result in consideration of removal from the team.

## ***Vacation Policy***

Everyone looks forward to breaks and extended weekends within the school year calendar. It is important for those involved with high school sports to understand that athletic schedules **will** overlap with these breaks (fall, winter, spring). While coaches will be conscientious of how they schedule team activities during these windows, it is the responsibility of the participant to understand that required team activities, including practices and games, may take place during a vacation break. Participants must also understand that failure to attend in-season activities during these vacation windows may impact playing time and roster decisions.

## ***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. Participation fees are not refundable as a result of quitting once tryouts are complete and rosters have been set.

## ***Participating in Multiple Sports in the Same Season***

GCS does allow for the consideration of participation in multiple GCS sports within the same season (ie. Swim and Cross Country in the fall). These circumstances will be decided on a case by case basis and require prior approval from both head coaches and the Athletic Director. Approval is not guaranteed. Participants and parents must understand that participating in an additional sport while in-season will likely impact playing time and roster decisions for one or both sports. A primary sport must be determined prior to the season for when scheduling conflicts exist.

## ***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**

Spandex shorts are only allowed when approved by the athletic department as part of the uniform. Spandex may be worn during volleyball practice time for high school student-athletes, but prior to entering or leaving the gymnasium, no less than 3-inch length shorts must be worn over the spandex.

## ***Game Day Attire***

Teams may choose to wear travel suits or team theme shirts on competition days. Prior approval from administration is required. This is a full team decision, and all team members must be dressed similarly and in accordance with the approved proposal.

## ***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 Athletic Director.

## **Lettering**

For an athlete to letter at Gilbert Christian, they must have made a significant contribution to the varsity squad in that sport. In general, the athlete should have played in at least 1/2 the total number of quarters, periods, innings or games. Individual sports may develop their own system to determine letter winners. In an outstanding case where an athlete has contributed greatly to the benefit of the team and has not met the specific requirements for a letter, he/she may be awarded a letter upon the recommendation of the coach and approval of the Athletic Director. A student athlete injured while participating in a sport who is not able to participate further may receive a letter by a recommendation of the coach and approval of the Athletic Director. A student athlete who has been a member of a team for four years without earning a letter, may be awarded a letter by recommendation of their coach. Managers, statisticians, trainers, videographers etc. may earn a letter. The Athletic Director may approve letter award requests when extenuating circumstances prevail.

## **Facility Use**

Whenever possible, school sponsored athletic events will begin at the end of the school day during the week with the exception of tournaments. 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 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. Athletic dress code rules apply in the weight room at all times.

## **Injuries**

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

## **Athletic Trainer**

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

## **Concussions**

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 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.

## **Hazing**

Gilbert Christian Schools prohibit bullying, hazing, intimidation or threats. Hazing includes, but is not limited to humiliation tactics, forced social isolation, verbal and emotional abuse, forced or excessive consumption of food or liquids, or any activity that requires a student to engage in illegal activity. Hazing is not permitted in any kind of activity. It is everyone's responsibility to immediately report any acts of hazing that they become aware of to a coach or administrator at Gilbert Christian. Any hazing violation could result in school or team consequences that may include dismissal from the activity or further disciplinary consequences and/or referral to law enforcement.

## **Transportation**

Whenever possible, 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. 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. Student athletes are not permitted to drive their own cars to games or practices when there are GCS activity buses available unless approved by the Athletic Director or other administration.

Student athletes are not permitted to ride home with other students from an off-campus practice or game. Permission may be granted by the head coach of the sport for student athletes to travel home with their own parents directly from an off-campus practice or game. 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 parent of the student athlete has submitted permission to the head coach 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 their athletes are gone or to leave their athletes properly supervised by an adult employee on duty.

## **Fundraising**

Fundraisers, sponsorships, and donations must receive pre-approval from the GCS Development Director.

## **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 may be approached by the Athletic Director, administration, 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 Athletic 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.
  - a. \*\*\*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 Athletic Director, coach, student-athlete, and parent(s).
4. If there is no resolution to the matter after the Athletic Director has been brought in, the parents should request a meeting with the Principal, Athletic Director, coach, student-athlete, and parent(s).



## **Athletics Handbook Agreement**

All student-athletes and parents must agree to this form. It is included in the TeamSnap ([www.teamsnap.com](http://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 sports registration documents on TeamSnap \*\*\*