



HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS

**2026-2027
ATHLETICS HANDBOOK**



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Updated July 15, 2026

Letter from the Athletic Director

Knights,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! It is a privilege to serve the Gilbert Christian community as District Athletic Director and to partner with our student-athletes, coaches, and families in another exciting year of competition, growth, and discipleship.

At Gilbert Christian, we believe athletics are about far more than wins and losses. Sports provide a unique opportunity to strengthen faith, develop character, build meaningful relationships, and pursue excellence in a Christ-centered environment. We are committed to creating programs that challenge student-athletes to compete at a high level while growing as leaders, teammates, and followers of Christ.

This handbook contains important information regarding eligibility requirements, registration procedures, program expectations, and athletic department policies. We encourage every student-athlete and parent to review it carefully and become familiar with the expectations and opportunities that come with participating in GCS Athletics.

The success of our athletic programs depends on a strong partnership between our school, coaches, student-athletes, and families. Your support, encouragement, and involvement help create an environment where our students can thrive both on and off the field of play. Whether serving behind the scenes, attending events, or simply encouraging our athletes, your investment makes a lasting impact on our community.

While this handbook is designed to provide guidance for most situations, we recognize that unique circumstances may arise throughout the year. When they do, we are committed to communicating clearly and working together in a manner that reflects the values of Gilbert Christian Schools.

Thank you for your partnership and support of GCS Athletics. It is an exciting time to be a Knight, and we look forward to seeing how God works in and through our student-athletes, teams, and community during the year ahead.

God Bless and Go Knights!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Duitsman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Duitsman".

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, competition, and community.

Character

We are committed to nurturing Christian character through intentional discipleship and mentorship.

(Proverbs 22:6)

Commitment

Remembering Christ's commitment to us, we pursue excellence in all that we do.

(Colossians 3:23)

Competition

We embrace competition as an opportunity to steward our God-given gifts and pursue our full potential. (1 Corinthians 9:24)

Community

We cultivate a culture of service and community where every person is seen, valued, and loved. (John 15:12)

Athletic Department Staff

Name	Position	Email/Phone
Mark Duitsman	District & HS Athletic Director	mark.duitsman@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215
Ashley Storey	HS Associate Athletic Director	ashley.storey@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215
Andrew Rasmussen	HS Assistant Athletic Director	andrew.rasmussen@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215
Arin Mearig	MS District Athletic Director/ Val Vista Athletic Coordinator	arin.mearig@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215
Tamera Miller	Agritopia Athletic Coordinator	tamera.miller@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215
Beth Moore	Greenfield Athletic Coordinator	beth.moore@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215
Heather Peterson	Athletic Engagement & Extended Programs	heather.peterson@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215
Madison Dewar	HS Athletic Trainer	mmdewar@banner-ptrehab.com

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)	Boys Cross Country Football Swim	Boys Basketball Soccer	Boys Baseball Golf Tennis Track Volleyball
	Girls Cheer Cross Country Flag Football Dance Swim Volleyball	Girls Basketball Cheer Dance Soccer	Girls Beach Volleyball Golf Softball Tennis Track

Registration

All athletes are required to complete registration prior to participating in their season of sport. Each athlete must provide proof of insurance and a current AIA annual sports physical completed by a medical provider. The physical form, proof of insurance, and all other required documents must be submitted through the TeamSnap registration portal. Registration fees must be paid online through TeamSnap before a student will be added to the team roster.

Sports Fees

High School Sports	Fee
HS Tackle Football	\$350
All Other HS Sports	\$200
Middle School Sports	Fee
MS Tackle Football	\$200
MS Cheer & Pom	\$150
MS Golf	\$150
All Other MS Sports	\$100
GCS Family Annual Sports Fee	\$800
Max	

**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.*

**If your family has exceeded the GCS annual max of \$800, please contact andrew.rasmussen@gcsaz.org for reimbursement details following registration.*

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 the Brainbook Concussion, Opioid, and Hazing Courses online. You can complete these courses for free at 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. Sport-specific spandex (ie. volleyball, track) may be worn during practices 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 fee owed to the school (in some cases 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.

Uniform and Equipment Return

School-owned athletic uniforms and equipment must be returned at the end of each season. Student-athletes are responsible for the replacement cost of any lost, unreturned, or damaged athletic uniforms and equipment. Equipment from the previous season must be returned, or the replacement cost paid in full, before a student-athlete may participate in another Gilbert Christian athletic program. If a student-athlete is not participating in a future sport, any unpaid balance at the conclusion of the school year may be added to the student's school account and handled in accordance with school financial policies. Seniors must clear all athletic obligations prior to graduation.

Lettering

A varsity letter is awarded to student-athletes who demonstrate a substantial competitive contribution to their varsity team during the course of a season. In general, this contribution is evidenced by participation in at least one-half of the total quarters, periods, innings, matches, meets, contests, or games in a varsity season. Because the nature of competition varies by sport, individual programs may establish sport-specific lettering criteria that more accurately reflect varsity contribution. The determination of lettering is ultimately made by the head coach in accordance with established sport-specific criteria and Athletic Department guidelines.

In exceptional circumstances, a student-athlete who does not meet established criteria may be awarded a letter upon the recommendation of the head coach and approval of the Athletic Director. This may include athletes whose season is impacted by injury while participating in good standing or whose contributions to the varsity program warrant special consideration.

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.

Locker Rooms

Locker rooms are locked and monitored by the PE Department throughout the school day until 2:40. Students may only enter locker rooms designated for their biological sex. Students are allowed to obtain a locker from the PE office for the purpose of securing their clothes during their PE class and sports. Students are not to be in locker rooms without staff member permission and knowledge. Students are not allowed to use cell phones, including taking pictures and video in the locker rooms (see Major Conduct Violations for consequences per the GCS Student Handbook).

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

Transportation to and from games, practices, and other team activities will be provided by Gilbert Christian Schools unless otherwise communicated by the Athletic Department.

If GCS transportation is not provided for a game, practice, or other athletic activity, students will be released to their parent or guardian, who is responsible for arranging transportation to and from the event.

If GCS transportation is not provided and students are leaving campus during the school day for an athletic event, they must sign out through the front office. Upon signing out, the student is considered dismissed for the day and released to the care of their parent or guardian. Transportation to and from the athletic event then becomes the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Following an off-campus athletic event, practice, or team activity, student athletes may be released to their parent or guardian with the approval of the head coach. Release to another teammate's parent or another approved adult is permitted only with prior authorization from the student's parent or guardian and approval of the head coach.

Coaches will remain with student athletes after an off-campus event until each student has been picked up, released to an approved adult, or other appropriate supervision has been arranged.

Fundraising

Fundraisers, sponsorships, and donations must receive pre-approval from the GCS Advancement 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, and it is possible to be suspended from attending future events.

Per AIA Bylaws: Any adult spectator that has been removed from a contest shall be required to complete the NFHS sportsmanship course and provide a certificate of completion prior to attending future contests. Any subsequent removal of the same spectator shall result in the inability of that spectator to attend contests for the remainder of the season of sport.

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.
 - i. ***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 athletic department administration, the coach, student-athlete, and parent(s).
4. If there is no resolution to the matter after athletic department administration has been brought in, the parents should request a meeting with the Principal, athletic department administration, 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) 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 ***