



GILBERT CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

**2025-2026
MIDDLE SCHOOL
ATHLETICS HANDBOOK**

ITAN SO
DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS
ALWAYS GIVE YOUR BEST
KNOW THAT YOUR LABOR IN THE LORD IS NOT IN VAIN
1 CORINTHIANS 15:58 (NIV)



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Last Revised December 22, 2025

Letter from the Athletic Director

Knights,

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year! My name is Mark Duitsman, and it is a privilege to serve the Gilbert Christian community as District Athletic Director. GCS is a very special place, and I am honored to partner with you as we continue building on a foundation of Christ-centered excellence while pursuing a future filled with purpose, passion, and growth.

At GCS, we believe sports are not just about competition, but about character. 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 contains important information for the upcoming year, including eligibility requirements, registration details, program offerings, and commitment expectations for GCS student-athletes. We ask that you take the time to read through it carefully. Your partnership is vital, not only in encouraging your student-athlete, but in actively supporting GCS Athletics through volunteering, attending events, and helping create a culture we can all be proud of. Whether it is serving at games, helping with logistics, or simply being present in the stands, your involvement makes a difference and strengthens our community.

While this handbook is thorough, we know unexpected situations will arise. When they do, we are committed to communicating clearly and promptly. We welcome your feedback, your questions, and your prayers as we move through the year together.

On behalf of our entire coaching staff and athletic department, thank you for your partnership and support. 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 God will do in and through our community in 2025-26.

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)

Athletics Department Staff

| Name | Position | Email/Phone |
|------------------|--|--|
| Mark Duitsman | District & HS Athletic Director | mark.duitsman@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215 |
| Ashley Storey | HS Assistant Athletic Director | ashley.storey@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215 |
| Andrew Rasmussen | HS Athletics Coordinator | 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 |
| Tara McIntire | Greenfield Athletic Coordinator | tara.mcintire@gcsaz.org 480-699-1215 |

Calendar

Gilbert Christian Middle Schools participates in the Cactus Christian Schools League (CCSL) and abides by the rules set in that organizations.

| | FALL SPORTS | WINTER SPORTS | SPRING SPORTS |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| Middle School | 6th – 8th Boys Tackle Football Soccer (coed) 6th ONLY Flag Football (coed) | 6th – 8th Boys Baseball Cross Country Volleyball | 6th – 8th Boys Basketball Golf |
| | 6th – 8th Girls Cheer Pom Soccer (coed) 6th ONLY Flag Football (coed) | 6th – 8th Girls Cheer Pom Softball Cross Country | 6th – 8th Girls Cheer Pom Basketball Golf Flag Football |

Registration

All athletes are **required** to complete registration prior to participating in their season of sport. Prior to participation, each athlete must have 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 are to 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.

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.

Sports Fees

| High School Sports | Fee |
|----------------------|-------|
| HS Tackle Football | \$250 |
| All Other HS Sports | \$150 |
| Middle School Sports | |
| MS Tackle Football | \$200 |
| MS Cheer & Pom | \$150 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| MS Golf | \$150 |
| All Other MS Sports | \$100 |
| GCS Family Annual Sports Fee Max | \$600 |

*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 \$600, please contact andrew.rasmussen@gcsaz.org for reimbursement details following registration.

Eligibility

Academic Eligibility

GCS athletes are students first. Eligibility is a standard set in place by GCS campus 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).

Course Load Requirement

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

Elementary and Middle School Academic Eligibility

Grade checks will be held on Tuesdays throughout the season. Student-athletes carrying either 1 F or 2 D grades in any classes will be declared ineligible (see consequence schedule below). 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) above the 1 F or 2 D threshold.

Academic Eligibility Consequences

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1 st Offense | Warning with Probation for the Entire Season |
| 2 nd Offense | Sit Out 1 Game Minimum (Includes No Travel) |
| 3 rd Offense | Further steps, including the possibility of being removed from the team, will be determined by the Principal and campus Athletic Director. |

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 may carry a consequence from the school that will be honored by the athletic 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. Participation fees are not refundable as a result of quitting.

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

Shorts with a 5-inch minimum inseam are allowed. Spandex shorts are only allowed when approved by the athletic department as part of the uniform, and those must meet the 5-inch inseam minimum requirement as well.

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.

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

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.

Fundraising

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

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 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 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.