



Grove City Christian School Athletic Handbook 2026-2027

(Revised: June 1, 2026)

*“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.” (Isaiah 40:31)*

Grove City Christian School Athletics Handbook

Grove City Christian School

Address: 4750 Hoover Road, Grove City, Ohio 43123

Phone: (614) 875-3000

Fax: (614) 875-8933

Mascot: Eagles

School Colors: Royal Blue and Black

Website: www.grovecitychristian.org

Athletic Department Staff

Athletic Director	John Hamilton IV
Assistant Athletic Director	Ashley Hall
Athletic Administrative Assistant	Amanda Smith

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Athletic Department Mission

The mission of GCCS Athletics is to prepare student-athletes to become Christian leaders through the vehicle of athletics.

Student-athletes are developed through:

- Leadership opportunities
- Teamwork
- Character development
- Spiritual growth
- Life preparation

Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes are expected to follow all standards outlined in:

- The GCCS Student & Family Handbook
 - This Athletic Handbook
 - Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) regulations
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Purpose of This Handbook

This handbook exists to:

- Communicate athletic department policies
 - Clarify expectations for students and parents
 - Ensure consistency across athletic programs
 - Promote fair and Christ-centered competition
 - Explain OHSA and GCCS athletic requirements
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Athletic Programs

Middle School Athletics (Grades 7–8)

Fall Sports

- Rifle (Coed)
- Cheerleading (Girls)
- Cross Country (Coed)
- Football (Boys)
- Volleyball (Girls)
- Soccer (Coed)

Winter Sports

- Rifle (Coed)
- Basketball (Boys & Girls)
- Cheerleading (Girls)

Spring Sports

- Baseball (Boys)
 - Softball (Girls)
 - Track & Field (Boys & Girls)
-

High School Athletics (Grades 9–12)

Fall Sports

- Rifle (Coed)
- Cheerleading (Girls)
- Cross Country (Coed)
- Golf (Boys & Girls)
- Football (Boys)
- Soccer (Boys)
- Volleyball (Girls)

Winter Sports

- Rifle (Coed)
- Basketball (Boys & Girls)
- Cheerleading (Girls)
- Swimming (Boys & Girls)
- Bowling (Boys & Girls)

Spring Sports

- Baseball (Boys)
- Softball (Girls)
- Track & Field (Boys & Girls)

Note: Sports offerings are subject to participation numbers, staffing availability, and scheduling considerations.

Membership & Affiliations

GCCS Athletics operates under the rules and regulations of:

- National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
 - Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA)
 - Mid-State League (MSL)
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Mid-State League (MSL) Cardinal Division Members

- Berne Union
 - Bishop Rosecrans
 - Fairfield Christian
 - Fisher Catholic
 - Grove City Christian
 - Harvest Preparatory
 - Miller High School
 - Millersport
 - Wellington
 - Worthington Christian (Football Only)
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Athletic Department Philosophy

Athletics are a God-given opportunity to develop students spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally.

At GCCS, athletics are viewed through a biblical lens rather than a worldly one. Our goal is to glorify God through competition, teamwork, leadership, and character.

Six Core Athletic Focuses

1. Glorify Jesus Christ

Our highest athletic goal is not winning—it is honoring Christ.

Student-athletes, coaches, and spectators should:

- Demonstrate Christ-like attitudes
- Represent Christianity positively
- Pursue excellence while honoring God
- Use athletics as a testimony to others

2. Athletics Reflect the Whole Person

Christian character should remain consistent:

- In competition
- In the classroom
- At home
- In church

The pressure of competition never excuses un-Christlike behavior.

3. Performance Does Not Determine Worth

A person's value is not tied to:

- Wins or losses
- Statistics
- Playing time
- Athletic achievement

Success is measured by:

- Character growth
- Spiritual development
- Personal integrity

4. Accept God's Will in Victory and Defeat

Athletes should:

- Compete to win
- Prepare diligently
- Trust God's sovereignty

Winning is important, but God's purposes are greater than outcomes.

5. Respect Authority

God establishes authority.

Athletes and spectators should:

- Respect officials
- Respect coaches
- Respect school leadership
- Respond appropriately during disagreements

6. Athletics Are a Classroom for Life

Athletics teach:

- Leadership
- Discipline
- Perseverance
- Humility
- Teamwork
- Emotional maturity
- Christian character

These lessons extend far beyond sports.

Benefits of Participation

Student-athletes gain opportunities to develop:

Character & Leadership

- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Leadership Skills
- Trustworthiness
- Work Ethic

Spiritual Growth

- Christian Discipleship
- Team Devotions
- Character Formation

Personal Development

- Goal Setting
- Commitment
- Mental Wellness
- Physical Fitness

Team Development

- Teamwork
- Sportsmanship
- Social Interaction
- Healthy Competition

Personal Enjoyment

- Fun
 - Achievement
 - Lifelong Memories
-

Parent Guide to Interscholastic Athletics

The GCCS Athletic Department seeks to create a partnership among coaches, parents, and school personnel to provide the best possible environment for student-athletes to grow and succeed.

Parent Expectations

Support Your Athlete

Parents are encouraged to:

- Attend contests, meetings, and team events whenever possible.
- Show consistent support regardless of performance.
- Celebrate effort, growth, and character development.
- Encourage commitment to practices and competitions.

Maintain Perspective

Parents should:

- Avoid viewing their athlete as faultless or superior to teammates.
- Recognize that all athletes require coaching, correction, and accountability.
- Understand that improvement often involves challenges and setbacks.

Respect Coaching Authority

Coaches are responsible for:

- Team strategy
- Player selection
- Playing time decisions
- Practice planning
- Team culture

Parents should avoid questioning these decisions in front of athletes.

Communicate Appropriately

When concerns arise:

- Address issues respectfully.
- Follow the communication process outlined in this handbook.
- Seek solutions rather than conflict.
- Use a Christ-centered approach.

Promote Team Unity

Parents should:

- Encourage all team members.
- Avoid criticizing teammates, coaches, officials, or opponents.
- Demonstrate hospitality toward visiting teams and families.
- Model positive sportsmanship.

Remain Flexible

Schedules occasionally change due to:

- Weather
- Facility availability
- Opponent conflicts
- Transportation issues

Families should be prepared for adjustments.

Social Media Expectations

All social media activity should:

- Reflect Christian values.
 - Support the team and school positively.
 - Avoid criticism of coaches, teammates, officials, or opponents.
-

Teaching Athletes About Winning and Losing

Value of Winning

Help athletes understand that winning involves:

- Hard work
- Team effort
- Improvement
- Commitment

Parents should:

- Celebrate accomplishments.
- Recognize growth and development.
- Emphasize doing one's best.

Value of Losing

Help athletes learn from defeat by:

- Respecting opponents.
- Identifying lessons learned.
- Recognizing areas for improvement.
- Setting future goals.
- Demonstrating resilience.

Losses can be valuable opportunities for growth and maturity.

Student-Athlete Standards & Expectations

Student-athletes represent:

- Jesus Christ
- Their family
- Their school
- Their teammates
- Their community

Athletes are expected to:

Character & Integrity

- Accept responsibility for their actions.
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
- Speak up against injustice.
- Lead courageously.

Respect

Show respect toward:

- Parents
- Coaches
- Teammates
- Teachers
- Opponents
- Officials
- Spectators

Inclusion

Student-athletes will:

- Treat others fairly.
- Reject stereotypes and discrimination.
- Value individuals based on character.

Empathy

Athletes should:

- Seek to understand others.
- Offer encouragement.
- Support teammates during challenges.

Leadership

Student-athletes are expected to:

- Serve as positive role models.
- Use appropriate language.
- Demonstrate courteous behavior.
- Represent GCCS with honor.

Effort

Athletes will:

- Give maximum effort during practices and contests.
- Demonstrate commitment to team goals.
- Respect coaches through preparation and effort.

Sportsmanship

Student-athletes should:

- Encourage teammates.
- Respect opponents.
- Avoid boasting or trash-talking.
- Accept victory and defeat graciously.

Coach Standards & Expectations

GCCS coaches are expected to develop successful people—not just successful athletes.

Coaching Commitments

Player Development

Coaches will:

- Develop character and integrity.
- Teach life skills.
- Promote Christian values.
- Help athletes reach their potential.

Positive Communication

Coaches will:

- Correct without shaming.
- Build confidence.
- Encourage growth.
- Speak respectfully.

Safe Environment

Coaches will:

- Protect athletes physically and emotionally.
- Create a positive team culture.
- Address problems appropriately.

Professionalism

Coaches will:

- Treat all athletes fairly.
- Model integrity.
- Communicate honestly.
- Admit mistakes when necessary.

Parent Partnership

Coaches recognize parents as partners and will:

- Communicate clearly.
- Support family involvement.
- Work collaboratively for athlete success.

Sportsmanship

Coaches will:

- Respect officials.
- Honor opponents.
- Model self-control.
- Avoid profanity and abusive behavior.

Accountability

Coaches accept responsibility for:

- Their actions
- Their words
- Their influence

They commit to maintaining GCCS standards at all times.

Parent Standards & Expectations

Parents play a vital role in athlete development.

Parent Commitments

Parents agree to:

Support Program Goals

- Encourage empathy and integrity.
- Promote responsibility and leadership.
- Support Christian character development.

Encourage Positive Behavior

Parents will:

- Celebrate sportsmanship.
- Recognize effort and growth.
- Reinforce team values.

Model Respect

Parents will:

- Treat coaches respectfully.
- Respect officials.
- Demonstrate courtesy toward all spectators.

Support the Team

Parents will:

- Encourage all athletes.
- Support the team regardless of playing time.
- Celebrate collective success.

Promote Positive Communication

When concerns arise:

1. The athlete speaks with the coach first.
2. Parents follow up if necessary.
3. School procedures are followed.

Accept Accountability

Parents commit to upholding GCCS expectations and accepting correction when necessary.

Academic Requirements

Athletics are a privilege that requires academic responsibility.

OHSAA Eligibility Standards

High School (Grades 9–12)

Students must:

- Pass at least five one-credit courses during the preceding grading period.

Middle School (Grades 7–8)

Students must:

- Pass at least four subjects during the preceding grading period.
-

GCCS High School Requirements

In addition to OHSAA standards, athletes must:

- Maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA.
- Have no failing grades.
- Meet all eligibility requirements during the previous grading period.

Important Notes

- An "Incomplete" is treated as a failing grade until resolved.
 - Post-secondary students must meet the same standards.
-

GCCS Middle School Requirements

Athletes must:

- Maintain at least a 73% average.
- Have no failing grades.
- Meet all OHSAA eligibility requirements.

Additional Requirement

If an 8th-grade athlete is ineligible after the fourth grading period, that athlete will be ineligible during the first grading period of 9th grade.

Academic Monitoring

Student-athlete grades will be reviewed:

- At interim reports
- At the end of each grading period

Students who are struggling academically may receive:

- Eligibility warnings
 - Parent notifications
 - Academic support recommendations
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Ineligible Athletes

Athletes who become academically ineligible:

- May not compete in contests.
 - May practice at the coach's discretion.
 - Must regain eligibility before returning to competition.
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Drug, Tobacco & Alcohol Policy

Students must follow all policies outlined in the GCCS Family Handbook regarding:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Nicotine products
- Illegal drugs
- Steroids
- Controlled substances

Violations may result in disciplinary action and athletic consequences.

Athletic Awards

Participation Certificates

Awarded to student-athletes who complete a season but do not earn a varsity letter.

Scholar-Athlete Certificates

Awarded to high school athletes who:

- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher
 - Successfully complete their athletic season
-

Varsity Letters

Varsity letters may be awarded to athletes who:

- Finish the season in good standing.
- Demonstrate loyalty and commitment.
- Attend practices and competitions consistently.
- Meet sport-specific participation requirements.
 - Air Rifle Criteria set forth prior to season.
 - Baseball 50% of the total innings played in the regular season.
 - Basketball 50% of the total quarters played in regular season
 - Bowling 50% of total matches played in the regular season
 - Cheerleading Cheer for the Varsity squad for their season.
 - Cross Country 50% of total meets participated in the regular season.
 - Football 50% of the quarters played in the regular season.
 - Golf 50% of total matches played in the regular season.
 - Soccer 50% of the total halves played in the regular season.
 - Softball 50% of the total innings played in the regular season.
 - Swimming Swam for the varsity team for their season.
 - Track & Field 50% of total meets participated in the regular season.
 - Volleyball 50% of the games played in the regular season.

Special Circumstances

Coaches and the Athletic Director may award letters in cases involving:

- Injury
 - Medical issues
 - Exceptional circumstances using professional judgment.
-

Athletic Fees

Student-athletes who successfully make a team will be assessed an athletic participation fee.

Athletic Fee Schedule

Level	Fee Per Sport
Youth Athletics	\$135
Middle School Athletics	\$155
High School Athletics	\$180

Purpose of Athletic Fees

Athletic fees help offset costs associated with:

- Coaching staff
- Equipment
- Officials
- Transportation
- Facility usage
- League and tournament expenses
- Other sport-related operational costs

Payment Information

- Fees are due before the first contest of the season.
- Payment arrangements must be made through the Athletic Office if needed.
- Athletes with unpaid fees may be withheld from practices and contests until payment is received.

Accepted payment methods:

- Final Forms (additional processing fees may apply)
- Cash
- Check

Refund Policy

Athletic fees are non-refundable once an athlete has made the team, including situations involving:

- Voluntary withdrawal
- Injury
- Academic ineligibility
- Disciplinary removal

Additional Team Expenses

Certain sports may require additional purchases such as:

- Team apparel
- Shoes
- Cleats
- Warm-ups
- Sweatshirts
- Specialty equipment

Coaches will communicate these costs in advance.

Athletic Participation Forms

All athletic participation forms must be completed annually before participation in:

- Tryouts
- Practices
- Competitions

Required Forms

Athletic Department Forms

Students and parents must complete all required forms through Final Forms.

Required items include:

- Athletic Handbook Agreement
- Emergency contact information
- Medical history
- Insurance information

- Liability waivers

OHSAA Forms

The following OHSAA documents are required:

- Pre-Participation Physical Examination
- Authorization Form
- Eligibility & Authorization Statement

Physical Examination

- Valid for one calendar year.
- Must be completed before participation.

Insurance Requirement

Student-athletes must be covered by a family medical insurance plan.

GCCS is not responsible for medical expenses resulting from athletic injuries.

Communication Guidelines

Healthy communication strengthens the partnership between coaches, athletes, and families.

Coaches Will Communicate

- Team expectations
 - Team rules
 - Practice schedules
 - Game schedules
 - Player roles
 - Program information
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Appropriate Topics for Discussion

Parents may discuss:

- Ways their child can improve
 - Their child's treatment and development
 - Behavioral concerns
 - Coach expectations
 - Team requirements
 - Scheduling concerns
 - College participation opportunities
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Inappropriate Topics for Discussion

The following topics are not appropriate for parent-coach discussions:

- Playing time
 - Team strategy
 - Play calling
 - Other student-athletes
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Communication Process

When concerns arise, the following process should be followed:

Step 1

Student-Athlete and Coach Meeting

Step 2

Coach, Parent, and Student-Athlete Meeting

Step 3

Coach, Parent, Student-Athlete, and Athletic Director Meeting

Important Guidelines

- Do not approach coaches immediately before or after games.
 - Observe the 24-hour rule before requesting a meeting.
 - Schedule meetings in advance.
 - Whenever possible, meet in person rather than relying on email.
-

Athlete Commitment

Participation in athletics requires commitment and responsibility.

Student-athletes are expected to:

- Attend all practices.
- Attend all contests.
- Communicate scheduling conflicts in advance.
- Fulfill team responsibilities.
- Represent GCCS positively.

Team Expectations

A successful teammate is:

- Dependable
- Responsible
- Disciplined
- Motivated
- Selfless
- Committed to team success

Athletes should evaluate their contribution by how they help the team rather than by individual statistics or playing time.

Conflict Resolution

GCCS follows Biblical principles for conflict resolution.

Conflicts should be addressed according to:

- Matthew 5 (when you have offended someone)

- Matthew 18 (when someone has offended you)

Whenever possible:

1. Address concerns directly.
 2. Seek reconciliation.
 3. Follow established chain-of-command procedures.
 4. Pursue resolution respectfully and privately.
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Ejections & Spectator Conduct

Student-Athlete Ejections

OHSAA regulations govern all ejections.

First Ejection

A player who is ejected:

- Is ineligible for the remainder of that day's contest.
- Must sit out the required OHSAA suspension period.

Second Ejection

A player ejected a second time during the same season:

- Is suspended for the remainder of the season.

Additional OHSAA penalties may apply.

Spectator Expectations

Spectators represent:

- Jesus Christ
- GCCS
- Their family
- Their community

Spectators Must

- Encourage athletes positively.
- Respect coaches and officials.
- Use appropriate language.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship.

Spectators Must Not

- Use profanity.
- Harass officials.
- Criticize athletes publicly.
- Engage in abusive behavior.

Removal from Events

School administrators and game officials may remove spectators whose behavior violates expectations.

Consequences may include:

- Immediate removal
- Suspension from future contests
- Required meeting with administration before reinstatement

Game Day Dress Code

The Athletic Director and Head Coach establish game day dress expectations.

Approved attire may include:

- Team jerseys
- Team apparel
- Uniform pants
- Uniform skirts
- Approved spirit wear

Purpose of Game Day Dress

- Promote professionalism
- Encourage team unity
- Showcase athletic programs
- Represent GCCS positively

Failure to meet expectations may result in the privilege being revoked.

Game Schedules & Schedule Changes

Schedules are distributed at the beginning of each season.

Despite careful planning, schedules may change because of:

- Weather
- Opponent conflicts
- Facility availability
- Transportation issues
- Other unforeseen circumstances

Athlete Responsibilities

Athletes must:

- Monitor schedule updates.
- Arrive on time.
- Follow coach communication.

Families will be notified whenever possible through:

- Coaches
 - Athletic Office communications
 - School scheduling platforms
-

High School Transfers

A student becomes a transfer student after the fifth day of the freshman year.

Transfer students must:

- Meet with the Athletic Director.
- Comply with all OHSAA transfer bylaws.
- Receive GCCS approval before participation.

Eligibility questions should be directed to the Athletic Director.

Inclement Weather Procedures

When weather conditions affect athletic activities:

- Administration evaluates safety concerns.
- Decisions are typically made by midday when possible.
- Coaches and the Athletic Department communicate updates promptly.

Examples include:

- Snow
 - Ice
 - Fog
 - Severe storms
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Mandatory Preseason Parent Meetings

A preseason parent meeting will be held before each athletic season.

Topics include:

- Athletic Department policies
- Team expectations
- Team schedules
- Communication procedures
- Program goals

Attendance Requirement

Attendance is strongly encouraged.

Parents unable to attend may be required to meet with the head coach before their athlete is permitted to participate.

Non-Interscholastic Participation

Athletes may not participate simultaneously in:

- School team competition
- Non-school competition

during the same season in the same sport unless specifically permitted by OHSAA regulations.

Questions should be directed to the Athletic Director before participation.

Open Tryouts & Team Selection

All GCCS athletic programs offer open tryouts.

Eligibility

Students must:

- Be enrolled for the upcoming school year.
- Complete all required athletic forms.
- Meet participation requirements.

Team Selection

After tryouts:

- Coaches evaluate participants.
- Rosters are developed in consultation with the Athletic Director.
- Cuts may occur when necessary.

Factors considered include:

- Skill level
 - Team needs
 - Safety considerations
 - Program numbers
-

Practices

Practices are mandatory for team members.

Athletes are expected to:

- Arrive on time.
- Be prepared.
- Participate fully.
- Communicate absences in advance.

Excused Absences May Include

- Funerals
- Medical appointments
- Approved tutoring
- Other school-approved circumstances

Important Notes

- In-season sports take priority over out-of-season activities.
- Athletes must be picked up promptly after practices.
- Students cannot stay after school for practices or games unless the event starts immediately after school.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences

May include:

- Reduced playing time
- Additional conditioning
- Team discipline
- Dismissal from the team

School Attendance & Athletic Participation

To participate in athletic events, athletes must:

- Attend at least four class periods during the school day.

Additionally:

- Athletes must attend four periods the day after an athletic event.
- Athletes must attend four periods on Friday to participate in Saturday events.

Unique situations will be reviewed by administration.

Sportsmanship

All athletes are expected to uphold OHSAA Sportsmanship Standards.

Unacceptable Behaviors

- Profanity
- Abusive language
- Vulgar jokes
- Property destruction
- Technical fouls
- Excessive celebrations
- Taunting
- Fighting
- Unsportsmanlike conduct

Violations may result in disciplinary action.

Transportation

Parents are responsible for arranging transportation for their athletes.

When School Transportation Is Provided

Athletes are expected to ride:

- School buses
- Approved team transportation

Transportation Exceptions

Exceptions require:

- Written request
- Submission at least 24 hours in advance
- Approval from the Athletic Office

Parent Responsibilities

Parents should:

- Know departure times.
 - Know return times.
 - Pick athletes up promptly after practices and contests.
-

Two-Sport Participation

Athletes may participate in multiple sports during the same season when approved.

Requirements

- Coaches must agree on participation arrangements.
- The Athletic Director will assist with conflict resolution.

Primary Sport Designation

Athletes must identify one sport as their primary commitment.

The primary sport receives priority regarding:

- Practices
- Games
- Team obligations

Failure to meet obligations may affect participation in the secondary sport.

Uniforms & Equipment

Uniforms and equipment are provided by GCCS whenever possible.

Athlete Responsibilities

Athletes must:

- Care for all issued items.
- Return all equipment by the designated deadline.
- Replace lost or damaged items.

Items Typically Purchased by Athletes

- Shoes
- Cleats
- Socks
- Personal equipment
- Specialty apparel

Failure to Return Equipment

Consequences may include:

- Charges for replacement costs
 - Withholding records until obligations are satisfied
 - Additional school actions as necessary
-

Wednesday & Sunday Activities

GCCS values student participation in church and family worship activities.

Scheduling Philosophy

Whenever possible:

- Contests will not be scheduled on Wednesdays or Sundays.
- Practices will be scheduled with consideration for church participation.

Wednesday Practices

When Wednesday practices occur:

- They will conclude by 5:30 PM whenever possible.

Exceptions may occur because of:

- League obligations
 - OHSAA requirements
 - Tournament schedules
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Conclusion

Participation in Grove City Christian School Athletics is a privilege and an opportunity to grow spiritually, academically, physically, and socially.

All student-athletes, parents, coaches, and supporters are expected to uphold the mission of GCCS Athletics by:

- Glorifying Jesus Christ
- Demonstrating integrity
- Practicing sportsmanship
- Respecting others
- Pursuing excellence

Together, we strive to develop Christian leaders who honor God through athletics and everyday life.