# ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

## *Parent/Student Manual*

**Gloucester County Institute of Technology**
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The Gloucester County Vocational-Technical School District does not discriminate in admission, access, treatment, or employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or any other status protected by applicable law in its programs and activities.

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## Foreword

This booklet has been prepared as a reference guide concerning athletic policies, procedures, regulations, existing rules and information now in effect for the Gloucester County Institute of Technology. It is hoped that this booklet will contribute to a better understanding of policies and procedures thereby conferring a harmonious and efficient athletic program.

As a parent it is imperative to know, understand, and impress upon your son(s) and/or daughter(s) that they are students first and athletes second. Being a student first is a year-long commitment. The achievements attained by our teams will be reflected in positive memories, experiences, and successes created by the students both on the field and in the classroom. It is our duty and obligation to positively contribute in the development of a well-rounded and experienced student. As we all know, athletics can play a tremendous role throughout this development of your student-athlete(s).

Certainly, from time to time, our policies and regulations may change. Any ideas or suggestions that will improve our athletic program are always appreciated. Please feel free to contact any administrator or myself with any questions or concerns. I wish you the best of luck and success throughout the year.

Dr. Daniel W. Uszaki
Director of Athletics
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## Purpose of the Interscholastic Athletic Program

The opportunities provided by the interscholastic athletic program will enable students to:

- Develop skills in all areas of growth: physical, intellectual, emotional and social.
- Develop interest in life-long leisure activities, either as participants or spectators.
- Develop self-discipline; self-motivation; good, strong character; and the ideals of good sportsmanship.
- Acquire special skills in the activities of their choice.
- Participate in team play and develop team-oriented skills that produce successful teams characterized by loyalty, cooperation, and fair play.
- Compete in interscholastic athletic events.
- Achieve personal, team, and school goals.
- Explore various career opportunities.
- Develop values, attitudes, and habits important for citizenship and participation in a democratic society.

## League Membership

GCIT is a member of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA), the Tri-County Conference (TCC) and the New Jersey Technical Athletic Council (NJTAC). GCIT follows the rules and regulations of all these organizations and competes in all competitions and tournaments.

## Statement of Philosophy

Athletics is an integral part of the school program and, as such, is a vital facet in the life of the school. The purpose of the athletic program is to offer as many opportunities as possible to develop athletic skills, good attitudes, strong character, and school spirit, which reach beyond the athletic fields.

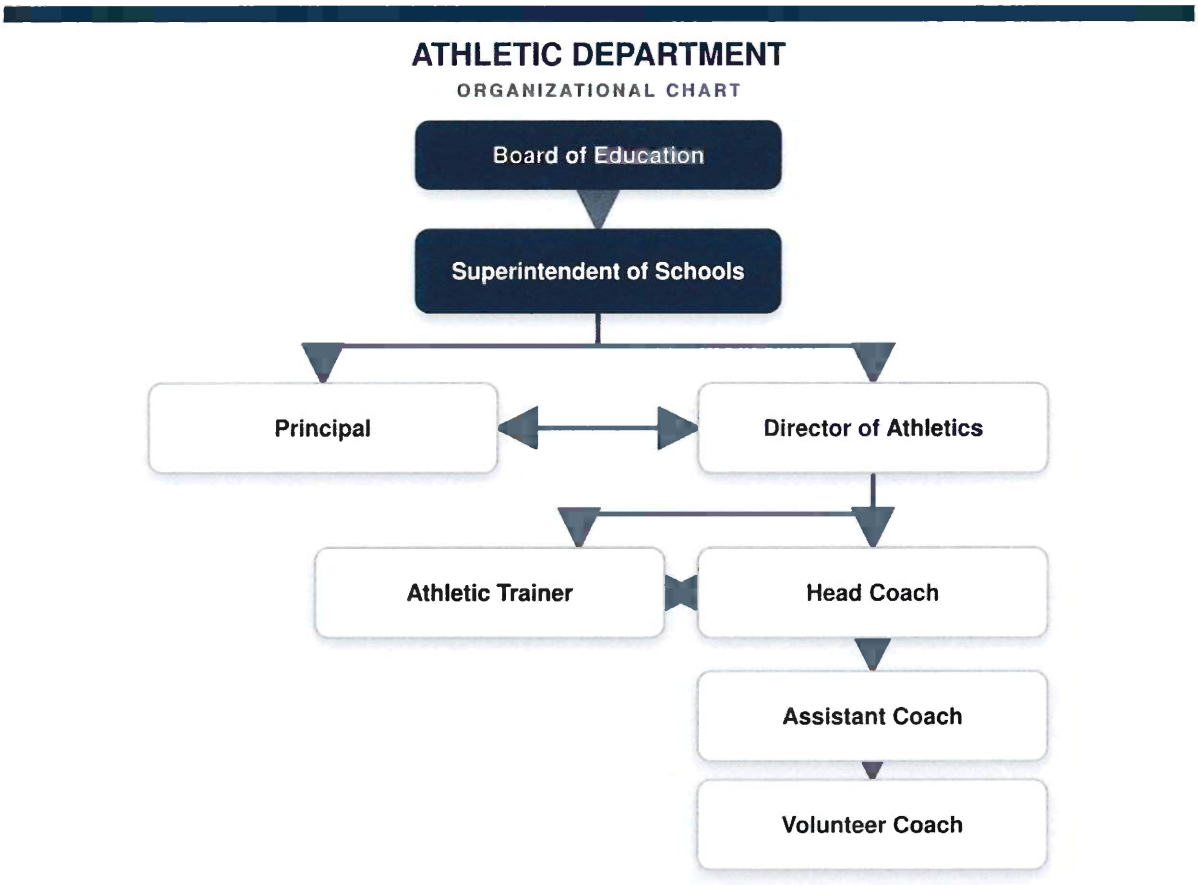
The various levels of our program have different functions and reasons for existing:

- **Varsity**
  - This is the program designed to compete against the best teams from other schools. It is possible for students from grades 9 through 12 to compete at this level in a particular activity. The varsity program is the school's athletic showcase and should always represent the best we have to put forward at any time. The excellence we seek from coaches and athletes in the varsity phase of our athletic program is not less than the excellence we seek from students and teachers in the classroom. Opportunities to play in contests are determined by the coach.
- **Junior Varsity**
  - This program accommodates athletes whose interest and skills go beyond the intramural level, yet who are not ready to compete at the varsity level. Students capable of making these teams should all be given ample opportunity to play in as many contests as possible, as this is the training ground for future varsity competition and for honing special skills needed for the varsity team.
- **Freshman**
  - This program accommodates 9th grade athletes whose skills go beyond the intramural level, yet who are not ready to compete at the varsity or junior varsity level. These **students will be competing against 9th graders from other schools. Students playing** these teams should all be given ample opportunity to play against 9th graders from other schools and will help prepare them for future varsity and junior varsity competition and for honing special skills needed for the varsity team. Due to the complicated nature of fulfilling freshman rosters, it is possible that these teams may also include advanced grade players with limited experience previously communicated by other schools. Additionally, it is possible that these teams may not exist due to roster and other limitations.

## Basis of Rules and Regulations Governing Interscholastic Athletics

1. Education law and case law as interpreted by the New Jersey Commissioner of Education and by the New Jersey State Board of Education.
2. National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) - develops rules on sport/game standards for all member athletic associations and/or schools.
3. New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) – develops and interprets rules on game standards and eligibility standards for all athletic programs in the State of New Jersey.
4. Tri-County Conference (TCC), New Jersey Technical Athletic Council (NJTAC) – develops rules and regulations governing our school's participation in specific athletic programs that carry League or Conference status.
5. The GCIT Board of Education - develops local policy, authorizes our membership in NJSIAA, and our participation in the Tri-County Conference.

## Line of Authority




**In the absence of the Director of Athletics, the Principal or a designee will assume duties.**

## Academics

The number one priority for your student-athlete at the Gloucester County Institute of Technology should be the pursuit of academic excellence. Athletics is an extension of the classroom and offers an excellent opportunity to learn about oneself and working with others. Students are encouraged to seek extra academic help if necessary. Student-athletes should arrange with their teachers and coaches to make an appointment for extra help before school, during any scheduled study halls, during lunch hours, or after school prior to practice. A student should feel proud of their academic accomplishments and want to strive for success in the classroom. Commitment and dedication to this program also means the student's academic progress. Your education will enable you to reach your goals in life.

## Athletic Insurance

All students are covered by the school's insurance policy as secondary coverage. This means that the Parents/Guardians medical insurance will be used first as the primary insurance and any costs beyond the primary carrier's coverage will then be covered by the school's policy. Parents/Guardians must submit the proper paperwork to the school for coverage to be enacted. This paperwork along with the accident report form can be located on the Athletic Website within the Athletic Trainer's Portal.

## Athletic Teams

| Season | Sport | Designation |
|---|---|---|
| Fall | Boys Soccer | Varsity, JV, Freshman |
| Fall | Girls Soccer | Varsity, JV, Freshman |
| Fall | Field Hockey | Varsity, JV |
| Fall | Boys Cross Country | Varsity, JV |
| Fall | Girls Cross Country | Varsity, JV |
| Fall | Girls Tennis | Varsity, JV |
| Fall | Girls Volleyball | Varsity, JV, Freshman |
| | | |
| Winter | Boys Basketball | Varsity, JV, Freshman |
| Winter | Girls Basketball | Varsity, JV, Freshman |
| Winter | Cheerleading | Varsity, JV |
| Winter | Boys Bowling | Varsity, JV |
| Winter | Girls Bowling | Varsity, JV |
| Winter | Boys Swimming | Varsity, JV |
| Winter | Girls Swimming | Varsity, JV |
| Winter | Boys/Girls Diving | Varsity, JV |
| | | |
| Spring | Baseball | Varsity, JV, Freshman |
| Spring | Softball | Varsity, JV, Freshman |
| Spring | Boys Tennis | Varsity, JV |
| Spring | Coed Golf | Varsity, JV |
| Spring | Girls Flag Football | Varsity, JV |
| Spring | Boys Volleyball | Varsity, JV, Freshman |
| | | |
| All Seasons | Physical Fitness Center | |
| All Seasons | Athletic Training Student Aide | |
| All Seasons | Sports Manager | |

## Competition

GCIT follows the regulations and guidance established by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) and the New Jersey Department of Education regarding participation on boys' and girls' athletic teams:

1. In accordance with directives issued by the New Jersey Commissioner of Education, when GCIT does not offer a corresponding girls' team in a sport, female students must be permitted to try out for the boys' team and, if selected, participate on an equal basis with male students.
2. A female student may not participate on a boys' team when GCIT offers a corresponding girls' team in the same sport. However, if the boys' program offers events that are not available through the girls' program, female students must be permitted to try out for those events.
3. A transgender student may participate in athletics consistent with either the student's sex assigned at birth or gender identity, but not both.

## Signups and Tryouts for Athletic Teams

| High School | Open Registration | Tentative Tryouts Start |
|---|---|---|
| Fall | June/July/August | NJSIAA |
| Winter | September/October/November | NJSIAA |
| Spring | January/February/March | NJSIAA |

## Athletic Training Room

The Athletic Training Room was designed to better serve our student-athletes and teams. Please see that all general rules and guidelines are followed when you are utilizing these services.

1. All injuries, no matter how minor, need to be reported immediately to the coach and to the athletic trainer for proper examination.
2. No student or athlete is permitted to be in the training room for any reason without direct supervision by the athletic trainer/coach.
3. All athletes are required to sign-in no matter how insignificant the visit.
4. The use of any therapeutic modality and all supplies must be under constant supervision. Pupils are not permitted to use any therapeutic modality unless the athletic trainer or a faculty member is present.
5. Nothing is to be removed from the training room without advising the director or athletic trainer.

## Attendance Regulations

1. No student shall be permitted to begin practice or engage in any competitive sport without a physical examination, completed the online registration process which includes all consent forms. The school must be in possession of the records.
2. Students are expected to attend all scheduled practices and competitions. Each sport team will provide a schedule before the season gets underway.
3. If an athlete is absent from school, they is not permitted to practice or participate in a scheduled event on that day. The exceptions are prearranged appointments as approved by the director or principal.

4. Any student who is ineligible to participate in regular Physical Education classes will also be ineligible to participate in athletics until cleared by a physician.
5. Attendance at Practice/Game:
    a. A student must meet the school's "legal attendance" requirement which is 4 educational hours in order to practice or play in a game. This means the student must sign in by 10:30 a.m. If leaving early must remain in school until noon. The only exceptions are prearranged appointments as approved by the athletic director or principal.
    b. Each head coach will verify daily the legal attendance in school of their athletes. Those found to be illegally absent and appear for practice or a game will not be allowed to participate.
6. Any athlete who is suspended shall not be allowed to participate in any athletic event during the period of suspension. Interpretation: If a student is serving a suspension on a Friday, they are not eligible for participation over the weekend.
7. Students should wait for rides outside or inside the lobby during inclement weather. A coach will be present until the last student-athlete has left the school premises.
8. When GCIT is closed due to inclement weather, there shall be no activities conducted. Exceptions will have the prior approval of the Principal and Superintendent.
9. Practices or games are not scheduled on Sundays. Some circumstances may require a special practice or game situation. Thereby, the Superintendent must give approval for this practice/game.
10. Once a competition gets underway, all decisions regarding play are within the jurisdiction of the game/meet official(s). Refusal to play could result in probation, suspension of championship opportunities and/or fines (NJSIAA rules and regulations).

## Awards

An awards ceremony at the conclusion of the Fall, Winter, and Spring Sport seasons will be held. At this time, all awards earned throughout the season will be handed out. Specific eligibility requirements for awarding athletic letters in individual sports are as follows:

Athletics

1. General criteria for awarding athletic letters are:
    a. All candidates for awards must:
        i. Attend all practices, unless excused by the instructor/coach.
        ii. Exhibit a cooperative attitude towards coaches and team members.
        iii. Exhibit sportsmanlike conduct at all times
2. Players who have been excluded from the team for breaking training rules, or quitting, shall be ineligible for any award in that sport for that year.
3. In the event of unique circumstances, such as an injury or illness, the individual coach may make recommendations for awards they deem appropriate, with final approval based on a review by the athletic director, and the principal's approval.
4. Seniors who have been official members of a team for three consecutive years, and have not otherwise qualified, shall be awarded a varsity letter.
5. Any recognition of a championship team (conference, NJTAC or NJSIAA) must be consistent and uniform for all sports.
6. Any awards presented by an organization not affiliated with the school system must have the sanction of the Board of Education.

7. Based on the criteria, the standard athletic awards are Varsity letters and certificates, Junior Varsity letters and certificates and Freshman letters and certificates.
    a. A six inch letter "GCIT" will be awarded to qualifying varsity team members.
        i. A certificate for a second varsity letter in that sport.
        ii. A "GCIT Three Year Award" for a third varsity letter in that sport.
        iii. A "GCIT Four Year Varsity" plaque for a fourth varsity letter in that sport.
        iv. A certificate will be awarded to qualifying junior varsity and Freshman team members.
        v. A certificate will be awarded for every year of Junior Varsity participation.

| **Recommended eligibility requirements for awarding athletic letters in individual sports/activities** | |
|---|---|
| Boys/Girls Soccer | Playing in one-half of the total number of periods in regularly scheduled games. |
| Field Hockey | Playing in one-half of the total number of games in the schedule |
| Boys/Girls Cross Country | A team member who places among the first seven in accumulated point total, and/or scores in one-half the regular season meets. Also, any participant who places in the Tri-County Conference Meet or Gloucester County Meet, or any invitational or State meet. |
| Girls Tennis | Playing in one-half of the regularly scheduled matches |
| Girls Volleyball | Playing in one half of the total number of games in the schedule |
| | |
| Boys/Girls Basketball | Playing one-half of the total quarters of the season |
| Cheerleading | All members who have no unexcused absences from practice or games are eligible for a letter. Varsity and Junior Varsity requirements are the same. |
| Boys/Girls Bowling | Playing in one half of the total number of matches in the schedule |
| Boys/Girls Swimming/Diving | a. Averaging 1.5 points per swim meet during the season.<br>b. Placing in the South Jersey Swim League Meet, or any State sponsored or invitational meet. |
| | |
| Baseball/Softball | Playing in one-half the total innings in all games. Pitchers are eligible if they have participated in one-third the total innings |
| Boys Tennis | Playing in one-half of the regularly scheduled matches |
| Coed Golf | Playing in one-half of the regularly scheduled matches |
| Girls Flag Football | Playing in one half of the total number of games in the schedule |
| Boys Volleyball | Playing in one half of the total number of games in the schedule |
| | |
| Physical Fitness Center | No Awards |
| Athletic Training Student Aide | Discretion of Athletic Trainer |
| Sports Manager | Managers who serve a Varsity Team will receive a Varsity letter and those that serve a Junior Varsity Team will receive a Junior Varsity Certificate. |
| All Sports | In all sports/activities, coaches have the prevailing authority to look past criteria and select a student-athlete for Varsity letter recognition. Post-season awards are not debatable and the Athletic Office is not involved in the overall decision making process. |

**Note: Students who do not qualify for a Varsity letter will receive a Junior Varsity or Freshman Certificate.**

## Cancellation of Athletic Activities

1. When GCIT is closed due to inclement weather, there shall be no activities conducted. During days of such closings, students and/or teams shall not participate in any athletic activity scheduled outside of our school. Exceptions must have the approval of the Principal and the Superintendent.

2. In the event of an emergency closing where the safety of the student body is involved, no activities are to be scheduled for the remainder of the day. In the event of a closing due to partial heat failure, etc., PM activities may continue with approval of the building Principal.
3. Cancellation of school athletic activities on non-school days (holidays and weekends) shall be the responsibility of the Athletic Director. The director shall consult with the principal or superintendent if and when this should happen. Coaches shall stay in close contact with the director on such days. Therefore, students shall hear about cancellations from their coaches or from the GCIT school website.
4. Cancellation of school athletic activities on school days due to inclement weather shall be the responsibility of the Athletic Director. The director will consult with the grounds department, coaches, and other administrators before making a decision.

## Coaching Objectives

The following objectives govern the conduct of the athletic program at all levels.

1. To ensure student safety and welfare. This takes precedence over any other objective.
2. To teach, develop, and refine the skills directly related to the sport and position in each student-athlete.
3. To invoke positive student attitudes which is developed by cultivating good sportsmanship and good habits.
4. To provide students with an opportunity to develop positive leadership skills.
5. To encourage students to improve their academic performance.
6. To conduct activities under the district's philosophy and objectives while keeping with the level of assignment.
7. To maintain the personal relationship of coaching as that of a teacher to a pupil.
8. **To conduct oneself as a professional at all times in speech and action both on and off the field.**

## Communication

Good, open, two-way communication is the key behind any success a student-athlete will experience and one that they can utilize to further their endeavors. The student-athlete and parent carry the same responsibility as the coach to maintain open lines of communication. If, at any time throughout the year, a student-athlete or parent has a concern regarding anything related to the program, they must first try and communicate with the coach. If the concern cannot be resolved through open dialogue with the coach, then the student-athlete/parent should follow the chain of command until their concern can be satisfactorily resolved.

Parent–Coach Communication, Conduct, and Athletic Program Guidelines

## Cut Policy

Due to the growth of our community, the large number of participants trying out for our athletic teams, and the highly competitive nature of sports at the high school level, it may be necessary for coaches to institute cutting procedures to help determine members of a team. Roster limitations, safety issues, and teacher-pupil ratio are some of the reasons cut policies are put in place.

The determination of what players "make" athletic teams will be the sole decision of the

coach(s). Every student interested in trying out for any squad will be given fair and equal treatment regarding a position on the team regardless of previous determinant factors. Attendance at tryouts/practices may be used as criteria for making or not making the team. If you are unclear about any procedures or expectations, then please contact the coach first.

## Directions

All directions to away matches can be found on the following website at www.tricountyconferencenj.org.

## Discipline

All coaches are to address discipline and consequences of certain actions in the specific team's rules and regulations. Keep in mind that the Board's policy pertaining to student's rights will supersede all rules. The key to good discipline is creating an open line of communication and leading by example. Keep in mind that a student may be dismissed from the team for any conduct that brings the person, the team, the school and/or the community into negative light. Of course, the Athletic Director and Principal will make these decisions after careful review of each situation.

Also all student-athletes are bound to the GCIT code of conduct. Any school discipline directly affects a student-athlete's participation in any activity. Some examples are:

- Pupils under in/out-of-school suspension are prohibited from participating in or attending any school-regulated activity during the date(s) of their suspension. This includes all extracurricular activities, GCIT related employment, and Athletic participation.

- Any student who is suspended TWICE will be removed from athletic, co-curricular, and **extracurricular participation**.

- Possession of or use of CDS, alcohol, drug paraphernalia or weapon possession will prohibit any extra-curricular participation for the entire school year.

Please refer to the GCIT student-handbook.

## Disqualification

Students that are disqualified from a game by an official must be removed from the immediate area. If a student-athlete is disqualified from play they must not be present at any games while they are under suspension. If they show up for a home or away game, your team may have to forfeit that contest.

## Drug Testing

In accordance with Executive Order 72, issued by the Governor of the State of New Jersey, Richard J. Codey, on December 20, 2005, the NJSIAA will test a random selection of student athletes, who have qualified, as individuals or as members of a team, for state championship competition.

1. List of banned substances – A list of banned substances shall be prepared annually by the Medical Advisory Committee, and approved by the Executive Committee.

2. Consent form – Before participating in interscholastic sports, the student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall consent, in writing, to random testing in accordance with this policy. Failure to sign the consent form renders the student-athlete ineligible. ***(When students and parents register online for athletics they must sign off on this consent in order to participate)***
3. Selection of athletes to be tested – Tested athletes will be selected randomly from all of those athletes participating in championship competition. Testing may occur at any state championship site or at the school whose athletes have qualified for championship competition
4. Administration of tests – Tests shall be administered by a certified laboratory, selected by the Executive Director and approved by the Executive Committee.
5. Testing methodology – The methodology for taking and handling samples shall be in accordance with current legal standards.

## Eligibility

Eligibility rules shall apply to all Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Freshmen teams involved in interscholastic athletic competition. All participants will comply with GCIT School Board of Education Policy, Tri-County Policies, NJSIAA Rules
and Regulations, and NFHS rules.

Academic Requirements for Participation in Athletics

In order to be eligible to participate in Athletics at the start of the first semester of each school year, a student must have earned a total of 30 credits the prior school year (through regular class or accredited summer school work). In order to be eligible to participate in Athletics at the start of the second semester, in grades nine through twelve, a student must have earned during the first semester (15 credits). Incoming ninth grade students are automatically eligible during the first semester. Continued eligibility is based on the provisions of this policy. A student becomes ineligible for athletics after the completion of eight (8) semesters following a student's entrance into the 9th grade. A student eligible to represent their school at the start of the Winter sports season and may continue to do so until the end of that season. Students going into 10th thru 12th grades need to have earned at least 30 credits after the 2nd semester from the previous school year to be eligible to participate for the Fall / Winter season.

Physical Requirements for Participation in Athletics

New Jersey School Law requires an annual medical examination of all competitive sport candidates. Medical examinations are good for one calendar year. Students whose annual medical exam expires are ineligible to participate. For each subsequent sport within the same school year, the candidate must submit a new permission form and health history update to be reviewed by the School Nurse. At the discretion of the School Nurse, any athlete who has sustained a serious illness or injury since the initial exam may be asked to be re-examined by their physician or the school physician.

1. All students must receive a complete physical examination at the "medical home" of the student (the student's physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or clinical nurse specialist). These physicals must be documented on the proper state mandated paperwork as provided by the school. The forms will be given to each student-athlete upon signing up for the team or they can be found in the athletic director, athletic trainer, and/or the nurse's offices. Once

completed, the forms are to be returned to the athletic trainer. The school physician, or their designee, will then review each form.

2. Any student participating in athletics needs to register online through the GCIT website. The parent/guardian will complete the online registration process. No one can participate until this process has been completed.

**Note: No student shall participate in any game or interscholastic scrimmage until they have practiced six (6) days (not sessions) regardless of the time of the year or season (NJSIAA regulation).**

Athletic Activity Fee

Any student participating in an athletic activity will pay a $100 athletic registration fee. This fee covers one sports season. If a student is cut from a team, the fee will be reimbursed. Students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals may request a fee waiver in accordance with district procedures. Athletic Activity fees are considered part of the overall registration process, and those students who have not paid for their sports' season fee will not be eligible to practice/participate.

Other Requirements for Participation in Athletics

1. Obligations to other coaches – uniforms and/or equipment not handed in (see Equipment section)
2. Age restrictions (generally ineligible if born before September 1, 2007, for the 2026-2027 school year, subject to current NJSIAA waiver provisions):
3. Classified students who will reach age nineteen (19) prior to September 1 of a school year may request a waiver to participate in non-contact sports.
4. Drug screening
5. Transfer rules
6. Recruitment rules
7. Maintain amateur status

Protect Your Eligibility – Amateur Athlete

An amateur-athlete is one who participates in athletics solely for the physical, mental, social and educational benefits derived from such participation. The following is a list of principles student-athletes must abide by to retain their amateur status, and thus, their NJSIAA eligibility:

1. A student-athlete may not participate in any athletic activity under an assumed name.
2. Professional Athletics. A student-athlete may participate as an individual, or as a member of a team against professional athletes, or as a member of a team on which there are some professionals who are not currently under contract with a professional team and are not receiving money for their participation. However, a student-athlete may not (1) sign a contract to play professional athletics (whether for a money consideration or not); or (2) receive a salary or any other form of financial assistance from a professional sports organization.
3. Outside Work. Student-athletes are permitted to receive payments for coaching and providing athletic instruction, however student-athletes may not play on the teams that they coach. The student-athlete's compensation must be commensurate with the work performed.
4. Name, Image and Likeness. A student-athlete may profit off of the use of their own name, image and likeness (NIL). Such permissible activities include commercial endorsements, promotional activities, social media presence, product or service advertisements, and non-

fungible tokens (NFTs). No one employed by a member school, including coaches and administrators, may be involved with a student-athlete's use of their NIL. Student-athletes are prohibited from making any reference to a member school or the NJSIAA when engaging in any NIL activity. Student-athletes may not endorse or promote any third-party entities, goods or services during team activities. Student-athletes may not wear the apparel or display the logo, insignia, or identifying mark of an NIL partner during any team activities. Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in any NIL activities involving the following categories of products and services: (1) Adult entertainment products and services; 37 (2) Alcohol products; (3) Tobacco and nicotine-related products; (4) Cannabis products; (5) Controlled dangerous substances; (6) Prescription pharmaceuticals; (7) Casinos and gambling, including sports betting, the lottery, and betting in connection with video games, on-line games and mobile devices; and (8) Weapons, firearms and ammunition.

5. Awards. A student-athlete may only accept individual interscholastic awards and similar mementos if the award is approved by the local Board of Education or school governing body, in keeping with traditional high school requirements which are basically symbolic in nature, i.e., letters, sweaters, jackets, pins, trophies, rings and watches. No other award of monetary value may be granted to any student-athlete without prior approval by the local Board of Education or school governing body and the NJSIAA. Also, a student-athlete may accept a monetary award under the United States Olympic Committee's "Operation Gold" program without compromising their eligibility for NJSIAA competition. Operation Gold awards athletes for top-place finishes in a sport's most competitive international competition of the year.
6. Participation in Non-NJSIAA Events. A student-athlete who participates in non-NJSIAA events may receive reasonable travel, meal and lodging expenses. Beyond reasonable, travel, meal and lodging expenses, a student-athlete may accept sports-related paraphernalia with a monetary value not to exceed $500.00. Note – Compliance with this provision does not ensure maintenance of eligibility under the eligibility standards of other athletic organizations, such as, but not limited to, the NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, etc. Student-athletes are encouraged to communicate with those organizations to ensure any activity complies with those eligibility standards.- *Consult the Athletic Director if you are in doubt in any of these circumstances.*

## Equipment

### Distribution, Care and Collection of Athletic Equipment

- No athletic equipment is to be issued for out-of-season use.
- Equipment responsibility for the athlete:
    - Each athlete is responsible for the equipment issued to him/her.
    - Do not leave equipment in unattended or in unlocked lockers. Locks must be used for safety; no valuable items should be left unlocked. Leave valuable items with the coach.
    - No equipment is to be taken from school grounds by athletes except for use in a contest or for laundering purposes.
    - No athletic equipment is to be worn as a part of the school attire or during gym class.
    - If equipment is lost, stolen, **misused, mishandled, or improperly cared for** the athlete will have to pay the designated replacement costs.
    - Equipment will not be re-issued to the athlete unless first paid for.
    - Equipment or uniform will be paid for at the end of the season.
    - If equipment or uniforms are later recovered or returned, a full refund will be made to the athlete.

- No athlete shall be permitted to participate in a second sport until they has met all equipment requirements in a previous sport.
- All equipment used or loaned to a player must be returned or paid for prior to awarding of letters/awards.

## General Information

How to Best Help Your Student-Athlete

The best way to help your student-athlete is to provide encouragement and to be positive, both at home and in the stands. Know that you are the most important person in your son/daughter's life and that your son/daughter wants you to be proud of him/her.

1. Be interested: Make certain that your son/daughter knows that his academic progress is important to you. If possible, attend all open houses and parent conferences.
2. Make sure your son/daughter's courses are appropriate for him/her: If your son/daughter plans on attending a Division I or Division II college, ask their counselor or the athletic office for information on NCAA guidelines and make sure they is taking the courses needed to be eligible. Please refer to the ncaaclearinghouse.net website for pertinent academic information and visit the ncaastudent.org website as well.
3. Discuss classes and set goals: set realistic academic goals at the beginning of each marking period. Setting goals gives your son/daughter something to work for, and it also makes him/her aware of exactly what your expectations are.
4. Discuss time management: attending school and playing a sport requires a substantial time **commitment. Help your student-athlete by encouraging them to use their time given in school** to complete assignments, study or do homework. Help them create a study plan and identify anything that may sabotage the plan (watching television, playing on the computer, etc.)
5. Offer to help: offer to assist with studying or homework.
6. Make your son/daughter accountable: It's human nature to be tempted to "slack off" when we are not held accountable. Your son/daughter needs to know that you are monitoring their academic progress. they needs to know that successes will be recognized and that poor performance will be noticed. Go over every progress report and report card with him/her and contact the teacher if your son/daughter has a low grade in a class.
7. Work with the school: Teachers, counselors, coaches and principals are there to help your son/daughter get the best education possible. A divorce, health problem or death in the family can affect your child's attitude and performance. If such a circumstance should arise, call the school, teacher, coach or counselor and tell them what is going on.

## Proper Nutrition

It is important for all athletes to eat properly. Be sure your son/daughter eats a healthy breakfast before coming to school and has lunch daily. A healthy diet includes foods from the four major food groups (meat, dairy, grain, and fruits/vegetables). A diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, and foods that are high in complex carbohydrates (e.g. pasta, potatoes, grains, etc.) is best for athletes. The meal the night before a competition is especially important for strength and endurance; it should be a nutritious meal high in complex carbohydrates.

It is extremely important for your son/daughter to drink plenty of healthy fluids (i.e., water), especially during the warm/hot parts of the season. Be sure to provide your child with a water bottle that has their name on it. Do not share water bottles or drinking cups with anyone else.

## Injury Prevention

Prevention of injuries should be of utmost importance to everyone. Athletes can avoid injury by: 1) being in good condition when the season starts, 2) having the right equipment, 3) stretching properly before all practices and competitions, 4) drinking enough water, 5) getting proper rest and nutrition, and 6) working closely with the coach and trainer. Report any injuries or concerns to your coach and athletic trainer.

It is imperative that each student-athlete protects himself or herself from the sun. Avoid sunburn and the risk of sun skin cancer by using an appropriate sunscreen or sun-block daily.

## Weight Training

All athletes should follow a conditioning program that combines weight training and aerobic exercise (running, biking, etc.) during the off season. Conditioning is important not only for performance enhancement, but also for injury prevention. Your son/daughter should work with their coach and athletic trainer in order to develop a program that is appropriate.

## Hazing

Please refer to the Board Policies – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying - # 5131.9

**Acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying are strictly prohibited.**

A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Therefore, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment, and will not be tolerated.

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any gesture or written, verbal, or physical act that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, and that:

- Results in one student or group of students exercising power and control over another student(s) either in isolated incidents or patterns of harassing or intimidating behavior; and/or
- Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability; or
- By any other distinguishing characteristic; and/or
- A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to their person or damage to their property; or

- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

In determining the appropriate response to students who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, school administrators shall consider the following factors: the developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved, the levels of harm, the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behaviors, past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances. It is only after meaningful consideration of these factors that an appropriate consequence shall be determined, consistent with the case law, Federal and State statutes, regulations and policies, and District policies and procedures. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline of Pupils.

The school District prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law, federal and state statutes and regulations, and District policies and procedures.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline of Pupils. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with District policies, procedures, and agreements. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

## Infectious Disease and Blood Borne Pathogens

Please be aware that during the activity of any sport the possibility of injury may result. The GCIT Athletic Department follows the guidelines proposed by the NJSIAA in order to minimize the transmission of any infectious disease during any athletic contest or practice.

Contest officials, the athletic trainer, coach, and/or student- athlete are to monitor situations in which injury occurs that results in blood being present. Please be aware that a contest will be stopped to aid the injured person and to clean the playing area. Practice good hygiene by taking a shower after practice/competition, cover open wounds, and do not share towels, cups and water bottles.

Further information can be attained regarding infectious disease and blood borne pathogens by contacting the athletic trainer, school nurse or Athletic Department.

## Playing Time

While parents have the best interest of their child in mind, it is the job of the coach to be concerned with what is best for the team and program. At the high school level, there are no guarantees regarding playing time. Coaches will inform student-athletes of their roles on the team and how that will affect playing time. Coaches will also provide student-athletes with suggestions on how to improve and feedback on where they stand. Any questions regarding playing time should come from the player and should be directed to their coach.

## Risks Involved in Athletics

When you sign the Parent Permission card required of all student-athletes, you are informed of the risks involved in athletics. Despite all the precautions taken regarding preparation, equipment, facilities, and training, the risk of injury still exists. The risk of injury is inherent in all sports. And, despite the use of protective equipment and proper technique, the risk of injury may be severe, including the risk of fractures, brain injuries, paralysis, and even death. While the risk of the most severe consequences is small, you must be fully aware that accidents can happen even under the most perfect of circumstances.

## Schedules

The athletic schedule is available at gcit.org or at **www.tricountyconferencenj.org** .

## Scholarship Opportunities

The key to any athletic scholarship opportunity is based upon four main themes: grades (GPA and SAT scores), work ethic, coachability, and talent. A positive attitude and team player mentality are two other attributes college coaches look for in potential scholar-athletes. Parents should keep in mind that a student-athlete has a much greater chance of attaining an academic scholarship than receiving an athletic scholarship. GCIT coaches will encourage and assist our student-athletes in gathering college information, share opportunities for scholarships, and help pursue the best programs for our student-athletes to continue their education.

Additional information can be found in the Guidance office or through developing relationships with interested colleges/universities/organizations. Parents should also familiarize themselves with the NCAA College Recruiting Guidelines. This information can be found in the guidance office **or go to www.ncaaclearinghouse.net. Further information about colleges can be found at www.collegiatedirectories.com and through the Princeton Review at www.Review.com.**

## Sportsmanship – Code of Conduct

Good sportsmanship is one of the key areas of emphasis for all our teams and student-athletes. The NFHS, NJSIAA, and the TCC have all stressed the importance of good sportsmanship and have set up guidelines for our teams to follow. GCIT has taken steps in order to maintain a safe and healthy atmosphere for our student-athletes and coaches to compete.

It is imperative for all student-athletes, parents, coaches and other spectators to understand that high school athletic programs are in continuum with the educational institution's objectives first. The field/court/alley/pool is just an extension of the classroom. With this in mind, it is expected that all behavior surrounding our athletic classrooms reflect the same atmosphere that we demand in all academic classrooms. Spectators should remain positive and not allow their emotions to interfere with the competition in any manner.

Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated from students, coaches, or spectators. Please be vigilant and proactive in approaching anyone that is not maintaining good sportsmanship behavior. Realize ahead of time that not all officials' calls may go our way. Always turn a negative situation into a positive learning experience. Always model the appropriate respectful behavior. Any person failing to comply with this code or the spirit of these rules may be prohibited from attending further athletic events.

The Athletic Department will continue to inform and educate our parents, fans and the public on the importance of good sportsmanship. If you have any input on developing ideas about sportsmanship please see the director.

Sportsmanship Responsibilities – NJSIAA

The Player:

1. Treats opponents with respect
2. Plays hard, but plays within the rules
3. Exercises self-control at all times, setting the example for others to follow.
4. Respects officials and accepts their decisions without gesture or argument.
5. Wins without boasting, loses without excuses, and never quits.
6. Always remembers that it is a privilege to represent the school and community.

The Spectator:

1. Attempts to understand and be informed of the playing rules.
2. Appreciates a good play no matter who makes it.
3. Cooperates with and responds enthusiastically to cheerleaders.
4. Shows compassion for an injured player; applauds positive performances; does not heckle, jeer or distract players; and avoids use of profane and obnoxious language and behavior.
5. Respects the judgment and strategy of the coach, and does not criticize players or coaches for loss of game.
6. Respects property of others and authority of those who administer the competition.
7. Censures those whose behavior is unbecoming.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Behavior Standards – NFHS

Acceptable Behavior:

1. Applause during introduction of players, coaches and officials.
2. Players shaking hands with opponent who fouls out while both sets of fans recognize player's performance with applause.
3. Accept all decisions of officials.
4. Cheerleaders lead fans in positive school cheers in positive manner.
5. Handshakes between participants and coaches at end of contest, regardless of outcome.
6. Treat competition as a game, not a war.
7. Coaches/players search out opposing participants to recognize them for outstanding performance or coaching.
8. Applause at end of contest for performances of all participants.
9. Everyone showing concern for injured player, regardless of team.
10. Encourage surrounding people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.

Unacceptable Behavior:

1. Yelling or waving arms during opponent's free-throw attempt.
2. Disrespectful or derogatory yells, chants, songs or gestures.
3. Booing or heckling an official's decision.
4. Criticizing officials in any way; displays of temper with an official call.
5. Yells that antagonize opponents.
6. Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances.
7. Blaming loss of game on officials, coaches or participants.
8. Laughing or name-calling to distract an opponent.
9. Use of profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.
10. **Doing own yells instead of following lead of cheerleaders.**

GCIT Sportsmanship Pledge:

Please review the pledge and abide by the standards set.

As a spectator of high school sports and activities, I will respect the judgment and decisions made by coaches, advisors, and officials. I will not heckle, jeer, boo, or show disrespect towards opponents or performers, and I will censure behavior that is unbecoming. Most of all, I will be a positive role model exemplifying and demonstrating good moral judgment.

## Transportation

GCIT School District will provide transportation to and from all Board approved athletic events. Pick up and drop off from these events will take place at the back gymnasium entrance of the school. Alternate transportation requests are permitted with the proper approved permissions. Please consult www.gcit.org for more information.

## Fitness Center

All GCIT students have accessibility to the Fitness Center throughout the year. The following weight room rules and regulations must be followed to maintain access to the facilities:

1. No student may participate in Fitness Center activities until first submitting a permission form. Forms may be obtained through the coach/weight room supervisor. Submit these forms back to your coach/supervisor. Athletes in season will not have to submit a permission form.
2. No one may use the room without a coach/monitor present. Only those directly involved in lifting and/or exercising may be in the room.
3. No food or drinks are permitted in the Fitness Center.
4. Anyone lifting and/or exercising must be appropriately dressed (i.e., shorts, tee shirt and/or sweats; no half tees, no tank tops).
5. Treadmills are for walking only; no running due to safety measures.
6. Each student must have a towel and wipe down pads/benches after using. Sterile wipes are also available in the weight room (please use the wipes after exercising on each piece of equipment).
7. It is the user's responsibility to keep the free weights/dumbbells up off the floor and keep the room tidy before leaving.
8. Report any damage to equipment or machinery so it can be repaired and/or replaced.
9. Safety is always the top priority in the weight room. Safety can be assured if all people using the room act responsibly, be accountable, and take pride in the maintenance and care of it.
10. If you are unsure how to use certain machinery, please ask the Fitness Center supervisor before using something. If not, you risk damaging the equipment injuring yourself or others.
11. Do not slam or drop weights or equipment. Use all cardiovascular and strength-training equipment only as intended.
12. Sign the attendance ledger when entering and leaving the Fitness Center times.
13. Remember that proper strength training can build strength, support athletic performance, reduce injury risk, and increase self-confidence. injuries and increases self-confidence.

Failure to follow these rules and regulations may result in suspension or loss of Fitness Center privileges.

## Concussion Education/Compliance Policy and Concussion Management Protocol

In compliance with the requirements of the NJSIAA Concussion Policy, GCIT has established the following Concussion Education/Compliance Policy and Concussion Management Protocol.

### Concussion Education/Compliance Policy

Parents/Guardians:

- Parents/guardians of all student-athletes must annually review the concussion information included in the online registration process and acknowledge that they have read it. Students will not be permitted to participate until the required acknowledgment is on file with the Athletic Office.

Students:

- Parents/guardians of all student-athletes must annually review the concussion information included in the online registration process and acknowledge that they have read it. Students will not be permitted to participate until the required acknowledgment is on file with the Athletic Office.
- Students will also be required to participate in a concussion awareness program at the start of each season conducted by the Athletic Department.

Athletic Department Personnel:

- All Athletic Department personnel, including the athletic director, athletic trainer, coaches, and school nurse, must complete all concussion education required by law, district policy, the NJSIAA, and the NFHS. Completion records will be maintained by the district.
- For each subsequent year of appointment, Athletic Department personnel will be required to participate in a "Concussion Review Session" and "Heat Acclimatization Course" conducted by the Athletic Department.

### Concussion Management Protocol

Emergency Action Plan when a Concussion is suspected:

1. Once a GCIT student-athlete is suspected to have suffered a concussion, they will be removed from play immediately and will not be allowed to return to play that day.
2. The coach or athletic trainer will notify the parents/guardians about the possible concussion.
3. The student-athlete must be evaluated by an appropriate health care professional (MD or DO) to determine the presence/absence of concussion. The Physician Head Injury Evaluation Form will be given to the parents/guardians.

- Any student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion must complete a symptom-free week initiated on the first asymptomatic day. The student-athlete will be monitored during this time period for any reoccurrence of concussion symptoms.
- The student-athlete will be kept out of play until they is given clearance to return to activity by a physician.

- All return-to-sports clearances must be consistent with the GCIT concussion guidelines. Any clearances that are inconsistent will not be accepted, and the matter will be referred to our school physician.
- Once athletes are cleared to return to sports, we follow a stepwise return to activity progression[i]:

**Return to Activity Progression:**
Step 1: Light aerobic exercise (walking, stationary bike, elliptical machine)
Step 2: Sport-specific exercises, including running drills
Step 3: Non-contact practice activities + progressive resistance training
Step 4: Full contact practice activities
Step 5: Normal game play

**Each step is separated by 24 hours:** If any symptoms occur, the athlete will drop back to the previous asymptomatic level and try to progress again after 24 hours of rest has passed.

If the student-athlete exhibits any re-emergence of any post-concussion signs or symptoms once they return to play, they will be removed from activity immediately and referred back to their primary care physician or the school physician for re-evaluation.

GCIT follows the concussion grading and return to play guidelines set forth by neurologist Dr. Robert Cantu [ii]. Once athletes are asymptomatic, we follow a stepwise activity progression based on recommendations in the Zurich Consensus Statement from the 3rd International Congress on Concussion in Sport (1) as follows. This is also in accordance with the April 2010 NJSIAA Guidelines for Concussion Management in high school athletes.

**Concussion Severity Grading System**

| | |
|---|---|
| Grade 1 (mild) | No loss of consciousness. Post-concussive signs/symptoms clear in less than 30 minutes. |
| Grade 2 (moderate) | Loss of consciousness lasting less than 1 minute or post-concussive signs/symptoms lasting longer than 30 minutes but less than 24 hours. |
| Grade 3 (severe) | Loss of consciousness lasting longer than 1 minute or post-traumatic amnesia* lasting longer than 24 hours or post-concussive signs/symptoms lasting longer than 7 days.<br>*anterograde or retrograde amnesia |

Guidelines for Return to Play After Repeated or Recurrent Concussions

| | FIRST CONCUSSION | SECOND CONCUSSION | THIRD CONCUSSION |
|---|---|---|---|
| Grade 1 | May return to play after asymptomatic for 1 week. | Return to play in 2 weeks if asymptomatic for 1 week. | Terminate season; may return to play next season if asymptomatic. |
| Grade 2 | May return to play after asymptomatic for 1 week. | Minimum of 1 month; may return to play then if asymptomatic for 1 week; consider terminating season. | Terminate season; may return to play next season if asymptomatic. |
| Grade 3 | Minimum of 1 month; may return to play then if asymptomatic for 1 week; consider terminating season. | Terminate season; may return to play next season if asymptomatic. | |

McCrory et al. Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport. *Journal of Athletic Training*, 2009: 44(4): 434-448.
Cantu, RC. Posttraumatic Retrograde and Anterograde Amnesia: Pathophysiology and Implications in Grading and Safe Return to Play. *Journal of Athletic Training*. 2001; 36(3): 244-248.

Communicable Illness

All teams and individuals will follow applicable guidance and protocols issued by the New Jersey Departments of Education and Health, the Gloucester County Department of Health, the NJSIAA, the Tri-County Conference, and the district. Communicable-illness matters will be addressed in consultation with the school nurse, athletic trainer, and GCIT administration.

## Resources

1. Boonton High School Athletic Handbook
2. DAANJ – contact affiliated school AD
3. Haddonfield Memorial High School Athletic Handbook
4. NCAA Publishing, Indianapolis, Indiana www.ncaa.org.
5. NFHS, P. O. Box 690, Indianapolis, IN 46206, 317-972-6900
6. NJSIAA, Robbinsville, NJ 08691; 609-259-2776 www.njsiaa.org.
7. Olympic Conference – contact affiliated school AD
8. Recruiting Realities, Jack Renkins, 6400 East Thompson, Scottsdale, AZ 85251; 1-800-242-0165; www.recruitingrealities.
9. The Sport Source, 1-800-862-3092; www.sportsource.com.
10. Tri-County Conference – contact affiliated school AD
11. Woodburn Press, Wrestling Information for Parents and Fans, Dayton, OH 45409; www.woodburnpress.com.
12. Clearview Regional High School Athletic Handbook

### *Administrative Recommendations for Review*

Confirm all 2026-2027 start dates against the final NJSIAA quick charts and the district calendar before publication; NJSIAA dates may be revised.

Have district counsel and the Title IX coordinator review the competition, transgender-participation, nondiscrimination, discipline, and due-process language for alignment with current federal and state requirements and Board policy.

Have the school physician and athletic trainer replace the legacy concussion grading tables and repeated-concussion timelines with the district's current, physician-approved return-to-learn and return-to-sport protocol.

Confirm that the $100 athletic registration fee, reimbursement process, and waiver procedure match the current Board-approved fee schedule and registration materials.

Reconcile the Athletic Teams chart with the final 2026-2027 approved levels, including junior varsity girls flag football and all current swimming/diving levels.

Replace outdated recruiting websites and references with current NCAA Eligibility Center, NJSIAA, NFHS, district athletics, and Tri-County Conference links.

Verify that the attendance, suspension, transportation, Sunday-practice, awards, and no-cut/cut provisions exactly match current Board policies and collective-bargaining requirements. Update the table of contents after final administrative changes so page numbers match the approved document.

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[i] McCrory et al. Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport. *Journal of Athletic Training*, 2009: 44(4): 434-448.

[ii] Cantu, RC. Posttraumatic Retrograde and Anterograde Amnesia: Pathophysiology and Implications in Grading and Safe Return to Play. *Journal of Athletic Training*. 2001; 36(3): 244-248.

# Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 is a federal law that states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Title IX applies to all educational institutions, both public and private, that receive federal funds. Almost all private colleges, universities, and public schools must abide by Title IX regulations because they receive federal funding through federal financial aid programs used by their students.

Athletic programs are considered educational programs and activities. There are three basic parts of Title IX as it applies to athletics:

1. Participation: Title IX requires that women and men be provided equitable opportunities to participate in sports. Title IX does not require institutions to offer identical sports but an equal opportunity to play;
2. Scholarships: Title IX requires that female and male student athletes receive athletic scholarship dollars proportional to their participation; and
3. Other benefits: Title IX requires the equal treatment of female and male student athletes in the provisions of: (a) equipment and supplies; (b) scheduling of games and practice times; (c) travel and daily allowance per diem; (d) access to tutoring; (e) coaching; (f) locker rooms, practice, and competitive facilities; (g) medical and training facilities and services; (h) housing and dining facilities and services; (i) publicity and promotions; (j) support services and (k) recruitment of student athletes.

If you have been excluded from participation, been denied the benefits of, or been subjected to discrimination, please contact:

Allie Jones /Title IX Coordinator
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