

GCS SPORTS PROGRAM

Parent Sports Commitment Form

The athletic program at Grace Christian School is an extension of the larger educational program of the school. While the classroom is so often limited to the theoretical, sports provides an experiential basis to help develop in our students godly qualities such as self-discipline, endurance, self-control, diligence, sportsmanship, submission to authority, teamwork, and numerous other qualities under the godly oversight of the coaches. Sports can provide our students with "real life" experiences; with God's help, our goal is to see godly character develop through this program.

It is our experience that sports, because of its competitive nature, often brings out the "worst" in our sinful human nature. We must not be surprised when we see this less desirable aspect of human nature; however, it is in the context of these real life situations that we must recognize and capitalize on the opportunities as coaches, staff and parents to role model, mentor and instruct our students in the godly qualities that can be taught in the face of adversity, winning and losing, the need to endure, and the other highs and lows so common to sports.

In this context, we ask parents of all student athletes to be committed to the following guidelines in order to help ensure the maximum educational and spiritual benefit for our students.

1. I will be committed to the GCS Sportsmanship Creed, as follows:

*Let no unwholesome word proceed from your
mouth, but only such a word as is good for
edification according to the need of the
moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.*
Ephesians 4:29

While this is a high standard, it represents the distinctive that must characterize our sports program if it is to be distinctively Christian. This general principle should apply to all aspects of GCS athletics. We agree to respect the judgment of officials and accept their decisions.

2. We understand the coach is one who has committed to sacrificing large amounts of his personal time in order to work with our young people. We commit ourselves to supporting him in all ways possible. We specifically commit to refraining from criticizing him or her to others, or to our children. If we have concerns, we will first commit them to Christ in prayer, and then speak directly with him or her in a private manner if we still feel it necessary. If we are not satisfied after speaking with the coach, we will then approach the athletic director or school administrator, with the intent of dealing with our concerns in a Biblical manner.
3. At athletic events, we will refrain from public criticism of the officials or players and coaches from other teams. If we have significant concerns during the game which we feel need to be addressed, we will express them to a school official.

4. We will not berate or criticize our children or those of other parents during athletic events. We will contribute to maintaining an encouraging base of fan support at all times.
5. We acknowledge that a natural parental tendency often-times is to view our children and their participation in athletics as a parental “alter ego” dynamic, if we are not careful. With God’s help, we will refrain from pressuring our children or placing unrealistic expectations upon their sports achievement and performance.
6. We recognize that sports is much like real life. Participation on sports teams does not always represent that which is “fair” or the “perfect” environment. We recognize that such experiences – within reasonable parameters – provide our children with real life scenarios that will help prepare them for the realities of adult life. Instead of quickly intervening in order to try to make a perfect little world for our child, we will seek God’s wisdom in making the most of helping our child to work through the difficulties he or she may be encountering in a manner pleasing to the Lord.
7. We understand that the GCS sports philosophy from the earliest years of the youth program through the sixth/seventh grade team level is to seek to provide comparable game playing time for each team member. While this cannot be precise, the coaches will do their best to ensure comparable opportunities for each athlete.

At the 6th/7th grade level, athletes should receive comparable playing time. At the middle school level, athletes should each play 25% of the game. At the junior varsity through varsity levels, the coaches will do all possible to give playing time to each team member. However, at this more competitive level, the coaches will use their judgment in placing what they consider to be the best combination of players on the field or floor in order to win the game. Comparable playing time for individual athletes will not be a primary consideration at this level. Those who have played and coached at this level understand that there are valuable lessons – even for those with less playing time – in learning to be committed to the best interests of the overall team and in learning to defer to the coach’s judgment.

8. We understand that the sports program is funded primarily by the sports fee assessed to each student participant. This fee helps cover the cost of uniforms, supplies and equipment, transportation, and game officials. In addition, parents at the middle school and high school levels will be expected to assist in operating the concession stand as well as other game-related needs, such as ushering, working at the gate, helping with the books and scoreboards when needed, and general clean-up.

I (We) have read the Parent/Student Handbook and Parent Commitment Form. I agree with the above guidelines for parents and will support them to the best of our ability, and by the grace of God.

Student Name: _____ Sports Team: _____

Parent Signatures: _____ Date: _____