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## Philosophy of Athletics at Grace Prep

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### Acknowledgment Form – sign and return
The Grace Prep Athletics philosophy is based on this mission statement: 

*GPA partners with parents to provide a Christ-centered, college preparatory education where students are allowed to further develop their God-given talents and virtues and become college-worthy character witnesses for Christ.*

The mission of athletics at Grace Preparatory Academy is to train student-athletes to glorify God with their bodies, minds, and spirits (I Corinthians 10:31), to develop a Christian character that will serve them throughout their lives, and to foster community at the school through the offering and support of athletic events.

Grace Prep Athletics will strive for excellence in all that we do. We will expect to win. A Grace Prep Lion will practice hard and compete hard. We will make our best effort to win each and every contest while conducting ourselves in a Christ-like manner.

**CHAPTER ONE: ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

**Objectives of the Athletics Department**

Participation on an athletics team is a worthwhile experience, which all students should have the opportunity to pursue. When conducted properly, athletics can positively contribute to spiritual, intellectual, physical, social and emotional development. Growth is accomplished when an athletics program, conducted by Christian, educationally oriented coaches, provides the means to achieving these ends.

In order to more fully realize the educational value of athletics, the athletics program should strive to:

- focus on the spiritual growth of each student,
- teach, model and nurture leadership skills in each athlete,
- emphasize the importance of excellence in the classroom,
- provide equitable and adequate funding for each sport,
- recruit and hire the best coaches possible,
- field competitive teams in each sport,
- increase participation in all sports,
- afford all students the opportunity to try out for athletics teams,
- treat all students, parents, coaches, GPA employees, opponents and community supporters with the dignity, respect and grace that they deserve,
- encourage continual development and improvement of coaches,
- exhibit outstanding sportsmanship in victory and defeat, and
- operate within the letter and spirit of all TAPPS and Grace Prep rules and regulations.

**Requirements for Participation (GPA and TAPPS)**

- To participate in athletics at GPA, student-athletes must have a physical exam each year using the form provided by TAPPS (available on the GPA website or from the Athletics Office). High school athletes are also required to have all RankOneSport.com e-forms required by GPA and/or TAPPS signed and on file.
- All student-athletes must be full-time day students (as defined by TAPPS) of Grace Prep Academy.
- High school students new to GPA must also have a completed electronic TAPPS Student Transfer Form (STF) as well as a paper copy of the Previous Athletics Participation Form (PAPF) on file in the Athletics Office. This form is available on the GPA website or from the Athletics Office.
- Junior High students must have paper copies of the physical, medical history and other GPA-required forms on file in the Athletics Office.
**Junior High Participation**

**Junior High Sports** – Cross Country, Football (boys only), Volleyball (girls only), Basketball, Track & Field

The junior high athletics program strives to address the physical, social, and emotional needs of early adolescence. The approach to athletics is less competitive, with opportunities to participate expanded in recognition of the physical, mental, and social changes junior high students are experiencing. Participation is not based on athletic ability alone. The GPA Junior High program will include:

- maximum exposure to ALL athletics activities,
- a “no cut” policy, except for basketball and volleyball or unless the number exceeds common sense guidelines for health and safety,
- all team members in each contest,
- limited practice times during vacation periods (some practice will be necessary).

**High School Participation**

**Boys Sports** - Cross Country, Football, Basketball, Baseball, Golf, Tennis, Track & Field

**Girls Sports** - Cross Country, Volleyball, Basketball, Golf, Tennis, Track & Field

Athletic participation at the high school level is more competitive than the Junior High program, and the Junior Varsity (JV) program functions as a transition between the two. Varsity competition is based on ability, and participation in this program requires a significant commitment of time as well as adherence to more stringent team and Athletics Department rules. Parents and athletes are advised to take this into consideration when deciding whether or not to participate at the JV or varsity level. In order to fully appreciate a family’s commitment to JV/varsity competition and to avoid miscommunication and unrealistic expectations, parents and students must understand that:

- Practices/contests may be scheduled on Saturdays and during vacation periods. Athletes are expected to participate in all practices/contests unless excused by the coach. Unexcused absences will result in disciplinary action, which could include dismissal from the team.
- Squad selection is based on ability and “cuts” are made at the discretion of the coach.
- “Playing time” is based on ability and substitutions are made at the discretion of the coach.
- Athletes who fail to complete a season may not be awarded a letter/certificate.

**Participation in Multiple Sports**

It is common for a student-athlete to compete in multiple sports. The school encourages this, and in fact, to remain competitive, desires this. The expectation is that ALL GPA coaches will encourage this as well. Student-athletes benefit, both physically and in the area of character development, from participation in multiple sports. However, a student-athlete may not begin a GPA sport/activity until their current participation in a GPA sport or activity has ended unless arrangements have been made between the head coaches of the conflicting activities.

**Commitment to a Team**

Whenever students enlist in the athletics program by joining or “trying out” for a specific team, they assume a responsibility and commitment to that team and coach. A commitment is to be honored. To walk away from that commitment is unacceptable. Based on this philosophy, athletes will adhere to the following:

- A student-athlete participating in a team sport may not begin another GPA sport until their current sport has ended. The student-athlete may begin working with the coach of the next sport, if arrangements have been made with the current sport’s coach.
- Any athlete who leaves a team, in season, will not be allowed to participate in another sport until current season of the team s/he left has ended. Example: A young man decides he no longer wants to play football (a fall semester sport) and quits the team mid-season. This student will not be allowed to play basketball until football has ended.
- An athlete who is dismissed from a squad for disciplinary reasons (e.g. violation of the Code of Conduct, insubordination, excessive unexcused absences, etc.) would be subject to the same policy.
A student will have a 14-calendar-day grace period to determine if he wants to commit to a sport. This period begins when the athlete first attends a practice or tryout. The athlete is free to leave the team during this grace period with no repercussions as no commitment has been made.

CHAPTER TWO: THE ROLE OF GRACE PREP

Qualified Coaches
The success of our athletics program will depend upon our ability to secure the services of highly qualified and motivated coaches. All coaching positions are yearly appointments, and there is no tenure. Each coach will be evaluated annually by the Director of Athletics and a satisfactory evaluation will be essential for continuation in that position for the next school year. Returning coaches with satisfactory evaluations will, under normal conditions, continue with their assignments.

All GPA athletics personnel, whether paid or volunteer, who work with GPA students in any capacity, on or off the field/court during the regular course of an athletics season, including off-seasons or in-season practices, must fill out an employment application and clear a background check performed by the Administration.

All coaches employed by GPA will be expected to:
- Set an example of sound Christian values and good sportsmanship.
- Be professional in all areas.
- Approach competition as a healthy and constructive exercise, not as a life and death struggle that requires victory at any price.
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat and instruct our athletes accordingly.
- Stress academic achievement with our athletes at every opportunity.
- Dress appropriately for practice and for games, and be well groomed.
- Abstain from the use of profanity, crude or abusive language with players, opponents, officials or spectators and expect the same behavior from our athletes.
- Respect the judgment of the officials. Instruct the athletes to not argue. Any questions with officials concerning rules interpretation should be made by the captain or coach.
- Remove players from competition who demonstrate unsportsmanlike behavior.
- Abstain from use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs while representing GPA at any contest or practice, or in any other official capacity.
- Know and comply with all TAPPS policies and procedures. Keep current certifications including CPR/First Aid and all coaching certifications as required by TAPPS.
- Embrace the core mission/vision of GPA.

Facilities
It is the Director of Athletics’ responsibility to schedule the use of all facilities for practices, scrimmages and games. All requests for use of facilities by coaches, as well as other organizations, must be made through the Athletics Office. The Athletics Department will arrange for supervisors, scoreboard operators, ticket takers and ambulance/trainer coverage.

Practice Policy
It is the responsibility of the head coach to plan and conduct practices on a regularly scheduled basis.
- Practices should be scheduled so as to create the minimum amount of daily conflict with normal family activities and study time (generally 1.5 to 2.5 hours at the varsity and JV level and 1 to 2 hours at the middle school level).
- Regular team prayer and devotions, or Bible instruction, will be scheduled.
• Sunday Practice – There will be NO team practices on Sundays; however, in instances when Sunday travel is necessary, it can be scheduled with the Director of Athletics’ prior approval.
• On days when ACT, SAT, and PSAT tests are administered, consideration should be given to scheduling practices and scrimmages so that conflicts do not arise with the test times.
• Practice sessions will be well planned and structured to make the most of the time we have with our athletes.
• Practices may be held on vacation days such as over Thanksgiving, Christmas and Spring Break. However, they should be scheduled with family commitments taken into consideration.
• Junior high practices, during vacation periods or on Saturdays, will be minimal.

Supervision of Students
• It is the responsibility of each coach to supervise his/her squad members. This responsibility begins when athletes enter the locker rooms and ends when athletes leave the building or parking lot following practices/games.
• The coach shall be the last person to leave the facility. Prior to leaving, loose equipment should picked up, lights turned off, and windows and doors secured. All team storage areas should be checked and locked.
• An athlete should never be left to wait alone.

Training and First Aid
Grace Prep partners with Sideline Orthopedics & Sports (4401 Park Springs Blvd #130, Arlington, 76017). The athletic trainers at games and practices are from Texas Health/Ben Hogan are paid on an hourly basis to provide medical guidance and assistance when needed. Sideline Orthopedics doctors are also available for consultation and evaluation, by appointment, for Grace Prep athletes. They can be reached at 817-960-9120.

In many instances GPA coaches will be the first responders in an injury situation. All GPA coaches have completed the NFHS/American Red Cross first aid, health and safety course.

Transportation
• GPA will not provide transportation to away games within a 30-mile radius. Travel with parents is encouraged. Football will be the exception due to the unique nature of the equipment necessary to participate.
• Students that are licensed drivers may choose to drive to these locations with a “driver” form on file in the Athletics Offices. A student-athlete wishing to ride with a teammate (or the teammate’s family) must have a “rider” form on file with the Athletics Office.
• Transportation decisions for trips of more than 30 miles, will be made by the head coach in conjunction with the Athletics Office.
• GPA will not provide transportation to and from off-site practices.

Overnight trips
When organized properly, overnight athletics trips can be a most worthwhile and memorable experience for athletes and coaches. However, such trips require a great deal of advance planning and preparation to ensure success.

Overnight trips should be planned so that the following guidelines are satisfied:
• A written itinerary will be discussed with the Director of Athletics who will, in turn, seek the approval of the Head of School. This itinerary will be on file in the Athletics Office.
• A team meeting shall be held to explain the trip itinerary to athletes and to discuss the rules of conduct that will guide student behavior while representing GPA. Disciplinary action, to be taken in the event that a rule of behavior is violated, will be at the discretion of the head coach.
• A signed Medical Release Form and Permission Slip must be on file with the coach. This information will be required in the event of accident or illness, which requires medical attention while away from home.
● There may be some financial obligations for the family of the athletes involved. This will be clearly explained prior to the trip.
● It is the responsibility of each student to complete all assignments and tests prior to the trip unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher.

**Awards System (Lettering)**
A system of awards has been established to recognize the contributions and achievements of members of GPA High School athletics teams. The criteria shall be explained to all squad members and parents at the beginning of a sport season. **The responsibility to establish criteria for the awarding of a varsity letter rests with head coach of each sport.** It should take into consideration an athlete's level and quality of participation during a season as well as during his/her previous years’ contributions in that particular sport.

- **Varsity** - First-time varsity award winners will receive a “GP” letter. Subsequent varsity awards will also be at the discretion of the Head Coach.
- **Junior Varsity** – Award winners will be recognized at their end of the season gathering by the coach.

**Awards Ceremonies/Team Gatherings**
**High School:** An all-sports award ceremony will be held for High School varsity athletes. The purpose of this event is to recognize outstanding achievement by our athletics teams as well as district and state level individual awards. The date of this event will be established as soon as possible and cleared through the Athletics Director in coordination with the GPA Master and Athletics Department calendars.

**JV and Junior High:** Post-season team gatherings to recognize our JV and junior high athletes will be held on a sport by sport basis and are the responsibility of the coaches of these teams. **The dates of these events must be communicated to the Athletics Administrator in a timely manner for inclusion on the GPA website.**

**CHAPTER THREE: THE ROLE OF THE ATHLETE**
Students who choose to participate in our athletic program will be expected to conform to basic standards of conduct and to demonstrate a degree of self-discipline and self-sacrifice for the welfare of their team. Athletes will also be expected to demonstrate respect for the dignity and rights of others, good sportsmanship, and respect for authority.

**Academic Eligibility**
All GPA students, wishing to participate in extracurricular activities must meet all TAPPS eligibility requirements including, but not limited to, the full-time student requirement. In addition, secondary students (grades 7-12) must meet academic performance standards specific to Grace Prep.

**The First Six Weeks**
- Students are eligible to participate in contests during the first six weeks of the school year provided that they have been promoted from the previous grade prior to the beginning of the current school year.
- Transfer students new to Grace Prep may be eligible the first six weeks of school if they meet the criteria cited above or school officials are able to determine that they would have been eligible if they had remained in the school from which they are transferring.

**After the First Six Weeks of the School Year**
- A student who receives, at the end of any grading period (after the first six weeks of the school year), a grade below 60 in any class may not participate in extracurricular contests for two school weeks. They may not be on the bench with the team, dress as a member of the team or travel with the team.
- They will be allowed (and expected) to practice with the team during this period.
- Ineligible athletes will be allowed to attend the event as a non-participating GPA student. The student regains eligibility at the conclusion of two school weeks.
- A student may also lose athletic eligibility if placed on academic probation. The period of ineligibility is at the discretion of the Administration.

**Grace and Waiting Period:** A seven calendar day grace and waiting period is always applicable after grading periods and periods of ineligibility. Example: A student is failing one or more classes at the End of Term 1, Friday, September 18th. The student becomes ineligible for competition at 3:30pm on Friday, September 25th. The student will regain eligibility on Friday, October 9th at 3:30pm.

**Holiday Exception:** All students are academically eligible during a school holiday of a full calendar week or more. When the bell rings to dismiss students for the December holidays, all students are academically eligible until classes resume in January. The same is true for summer recess and fall and spring breaks provided those breaks consist of at least a full calendar week (see calendar). Ineligible students would serve their suspension at the conclusion of the holiday break (and any coinciding grace period).

**Student-athletes are expected to attend class and turn in all academic work due on time – an athletics event is not an excuse for academic sloth.** In the event that a team must miss a portion of a school day to travel, teachers will be notified in advance (with the exception of post-season schedules that often are not known until the day before/day of an event), and it is the responsibility of each student to complete all assignments and tests prior to the trip unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher.

**Academic Assistance:** Tutoring is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00-11:00am for student-athletes needing additional academic assistance in order to maintain eligibility.

**ELIGIBILITY CALENDAR 2020-2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Loss of Eligibility</th>
<th>Regain Eligibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End of Term 1</td>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>September 25</td>
<td>October 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Term 2</td>
<td>October 30</td>
<td>November 6</td>
<td>November 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Term 3</td>
<td>December 16</td>
<td>(All students eligible over the Thanksgiving holiday period)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Term 4</td>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>January 6</td>
<td>January 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Term 5</td>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>April 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**In-season Attendance**

Athletes are expected to be at all practices and games, on time and ready to practice or compete. The only acceptable reasons for missing practices or games are: (a) illness, (b) school-sponsored activities approved by the coach through activity sponsor, (c) emergencies, or (d) church-sponsored mission trips.

- If a student-athlete is going to be absent from or late to a practice or game, he/she should notify the coach as soon as possible on the day of the absence.
- Any practice missed by an athlete, at any time for any reason, will result in makeup work as assigned by the individual coach. A coach does not have time to make up the individual instruction that was missed, but the loss of conditioning will be made up.
For the purposes of team unity, support, and instruction, an injured student-athlete is expected to be at all practices and games, whether or not they are able to participate. The only exception to this is if an arrangement has been made with the coach.

Each game missed by a player will result in that player sitting out the following game. A player missing a tournament will sit out the next two games. This includes holiday games and tournaments. Absences for the acceptable reasons listed above would be an exception to this rule.

Continued attendance issues could be grounds for dismissal from the team. A player’s level of commitment is part of the criteria for selecting a team.

**Dress Code for Athletics**
The GPA dress code will be in effect any time an athlete is representing Grace Prep.

- Athletes, when attending the off-season athletics class, will wear GPA athletics spirit wear. In season, athletes will wear official school practice gear or practice gear approved by the coaching staff.
- Student-athletes are expected to follow GPA guidelines for proper attire and personal grooming at all practices and games, including overnight travel. This includes, but is not limited to bus trips, hotels, pre- or post-game meals, and downtime before or after games.
- Matching travel suits or sweats are acceptable when traveling.

**Care of School Equipment**
Coaches will supervise the return of all issued equipment and uniforms and submit, in writing, the names of those athletes who failed to return one or more equipment items. Lost, stolen, or misused equipment will be reported to the Athletics Office. Athletes will be expected to make restitution. If the obligation has not been cleared within a reasonable period of time, they will not be permitted to continue athletic competition. Athletes should be reminded that the acceptance of responsibility for equipment is an important part of becoming a member of an athletic team. If payment for equipment continues to be withheld, the student-athlete may be barred from re-enrollment in or graduation from the academy, as well as have transcripts withheld.

**The Athletics Code (Discipline)**
Students selected to a GPA athletics team must recognize this distinction as an honor and privilege. They must also understand that they will be held to a greater standard of accountability than that of the general school population. The student-athlete is a recognized representative of GPA and as such must demonstrate the highest levels of character and Christ-like behavior.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Athletics and each coach to ensure this high level of expectation. Coaches must monitor the character and behavior of team members in and out of season, in and out of uniform, and on and off campus. The inordinate amount of time coaches spend in contact with our athletes provides a unique opportunity to observe, assist, and intercede to help the student-athlete make good decisions. Each coach is responsible for setting the rules by which their athletes must abide. These rules must be in accordance with all GPA standards and the Athletics Handbook. Furthermore, each coach is responsible for seeing that team rules are fully explained (not just merely distributed) and properly signed by each athlete’s parent(s). Athletes should not be allowed to practice with the team until a signed copy is returned. Signed copies from all squad members should be kept on file with the coach.

**Violations**
The Athletics Code in conjunction with the GPA Student Code of Conduct identifies a broad range of behaviors that are detrimental to the progress and success of our athletic programs. The following behaviors are considered unacceptable and would be considered to be violations of the Athletics Code.

**Level I:** Campus behavioral issue (example: dress code violation, classroom disruption, PDA, profanity, etc.) resulting in disciplinary action by GPA administration or a violation of team rules.

**Level II:** Stealing, racial/ethnic slurs, bullying/intimidation, fighting, vandalism, major academic dishonesty, acts of unsportsmanlike conduct, the falsifying of TAPPS or GPA forms, or repeated
Level I violations.

**Progressive Discipline**
GPA athletes will be subject to disciplinary action if he/she commits any violation of the Athletics Code. The Athletics Code utilizes a philosophy known as “progressive discipline”. Progressive discipline means there are different levels of student misbehavior with corresponding levels of appropriate disciplinary consequences. In a system of progressive discipline, two students who have committed the same offense may receive different consequences. One student may be a first-time offender, having no previous infractions on record, while the other student may have a previous history of misbehavior.

**Consequences**
A student has no ordained right to participate in athletics. It is a privilege that has been granted. It is possible that the privilege can be taken away. This will be the decision of the Head Coach and could take place after any violation at Level II. If a student is removed from an athletics team for disciplinary reasons, he/she will be ineligible for the following sport season until the current one ends (ex. volleyball suspension; ineligible for basketball until the volleyball season concludes).

- **Level I:** A Level I violation will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the head coach and will not necessarily result in a report of infraction.
- **Level II: First offense.** A Level II violation will result in a report of infraction and suspension from all athletic contests for two (2) consecutive events, or two weeks of the season, whichever is greater, with the student expected to participate in all practice sessions during that time. The student will not be allowed to suit up or travel with team for competitions. Any infraction by an athlete requires the coach to conference with the parents.
- **Level II: Second offense.** After confirmation of a second violation, the student shall lose eligibility for six (6) consecutive weeks. The student is required to continue attendance in practice but may not participate in athletic contests. This suspension may be carried over from one sports season into another and/or from one year into the next year. The athlete must complete the season during which the penalty is being served.

If drugs (including performance enhancing substances) or alcohol are involved, a mandatory conference with the Director of Athletics, the head coach, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the student athlete is required. The athlete may not practice until his or her coach determines that reinstatement is appropriate and in the best interest of the player and the team. These sanctions apply to all athletes whether or not they are actively engaged in their sport(s) at the time of the violation.

**CHAPTER FOUR: THE ROLE OF THE PARENT**
There is no more important role than that of the parent. From spiritual life to social skills, from intellectual awareness to self-identity, the parent is the most influential person in a student’s life; this reality is the cornerstone of our educational philosophy. However, once our students are on the field/court of competition the role of the parent changes. The parent should become a supporter.

**Fundraisers**
Fundraising is an important part of an athletic program and is encouraged. The following guidelines will apply to all athletics fundraisers:
- Must be approved in advance by the Director of Athletics (who will seek administrative approval).
- All fundraisers shall be service-oriented in nature and be organized and conducted under the supervision of the Head Coach.
• Under no circumstances should a coach or parent solicit funds, for any purpose, without the approval of the Director of Athletics or the Director of Development.

Volunteerism
The athletics department at GPA relies heavily on the involvement of parents. There are many opportunities to participate and simultaneously receive volunteer credit hours. We encourage parents to find a way to get involved and model commitment and selflessness to our athletes. The needs vary from sport to sport. Here are some examples of ways to get involved:
• Ticket sellers
• Clock and scorebook keepers
• Set up and clean-up of facilities
• Donations of meals, snacks

Transportation
• Families are responsible for transportation to away games within a 30-mile radius. Travel with parents is encouraged.
• Students that are licensed drivers may choose to drive to these locations with a “driver” form on file in the Athletics Office. A student/athlete wishing to ride with a teammate or another family must have a “rider” form on file with the Athletics Office.
• GPA will provide transportation for trips of more than 30 miles.
• Families will be responsible for transportation to all practices.

What Athletes Need from Parents
A successful experience for the athlete requires a communication triangle between the parent, athlete and coach with each of these playing a defined role in the success of the athlete. If handled correctly, the athletics experience can be extremely positive. Parents must be aware that there is a delicate line between support/encouragement and interference. Everyone in the process, coaches and parents alike, must always remember that the needs of the athlete come first. The most important contribution a parent can make during a game is to model appropriate behavior.

During the game:
1. **Avoid** the bench area, the dugout, the scorer’s table or any other location typically dedicated to coaches or players. The only personnel allowed on the sidelines or courtside are GPA-approved coaches and student-athletes, or volunteers appointed by the Head Coach for the purpose of keeping team stats, play-by-play announcing, etc. Our liability insurance precludes parents, visitors, or students not on the team roster from being in these areas.
2. Athletes need only one instructional voice during a contest. That voice should be that of the coach. Shout encouragement, but do not shout advice to your athlete during a contest. A steady stream of technique suggestions has no value. Your insightful tips may conflict with our instruction.
3. Please don’t harass the officials. Parents that loudly harass the referee are embarrassing to the athlete, the team and our school.
4. There are only four roles during a game: spectator, competitor, official, and coach. The role of the parent is to be a spectator.
5. Please do not yell at your athlete’s teammates or the opponent. Other people’s children should be off-limits. Most parents will not appreciate you screaming at their child.

After the game
1. Understand that playing time is EARNED, not granted and is based on the “Three A’s”: ATTENDANCE, ATTITUDE and APTITUDE. Our coaches will help athletes understand their roles as they relate to playing time. It is imperative that athletes approach the coach when that understanding is not occurring to the athlete’s expectations. An athlete has every right to ask a coach what needs to be done to earn more playing time. A parent, however, **should not** talk to a coach about playing time.
2. Be a loving, supportive parent. Do not make them feel as if their value as a person is somehow tied to playing time or winning or losing athletic contests. Always bring them back to the bigger perspective.

3. Give them time and space at the end of the game. The more competitive the athlete and the more competitive the sport, the more time and space the player needs. What they need most at these times is not another coach, but a parent (i.e. “just be my dad”).

4. Avoid criticizing coaches in the presence of your athlete. This is the worst thing the parent of an athlete can do. A coach can tell how a parent feels about them by the way the athlete treats him/her in practice. The coach does not suffer. The parent does not suffer. The athlete, however, is caught in the middle.

**Parent/Coach Conference Guidelines**

Do not approach a coach immediately after a contest. Please schedule an appointment to meet with the coach. As a general rule there should be a 24-hour “cooling off” period. This will allow both the coach and the parent the time necessary to organize their thoughts and to remove emotion from the situation.

**Appropriate concerns to discuss with a coach:**

- mental and physical treatment of your child
- ways to help your child improve
- your child’s academic performance as it relates to athletics
- injury or illness
- your child behaving in a way during a sport that you would not allow at home

**Inappropriate areas of discussion with a coach:**

- playing time
- team strategy or play calling
- other team members

**Red Flags for Parents of Athletes**


- You say “we” all the time.
- You continue to coach your child past the time they know more about the game than you do.
- You are more nervous than your child for competition.
- It takes you longer to bounce back after a loss than it does your child.
- You are taking mental or physical notes about what your child did wrong.
- You are paying them based on performance
- You are critical of coaches, other players or umpires.
- You are taking credit when the child has done well
- You are trying to solve all your child’s athletic related problems
- Your athlete avoids you after the game or is embarrassed about your involvement.
- Your athlete’s focus is on you in the stands, not on the game, for approval or out of fear.
ATHLETICS HANDBOOK – ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

Athlete’s Name: ___________________________________________________________

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official GPA school policy manual. Rather, it is a guide to and a brief explanation of GPA athletics policies. Its purpose is to provide useful information and answer questions with the goal of facilitating a successful year for our Athletics Department. It is intended to be a resource for our athletes and their families. Not all GPA policies and procedures have been included. Those that are included have been summarized.

GPA policies and procedures can change at any time. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to the Director of Athletics.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the GPA Athletics Handbook. I have read the handbook and agree to abide by the standards, policies and procedures defined or referenced in this document.

The information in this handbook is subject to change. I understand that changes in GPA policies may supersede, modify, or eliminate the information summarized in this booklet. As GPA provides updated policy information, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes.

_______________________________________          ____________________________
Athlete Signature                                           Date

_______________________________________          ____________________________
Parent Signature                                           Date

*Please sign and date this form, and return it to the Athletics Office.