

GAINESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK FOR

STUDENT-ATHLETES



Billy Kirk-Athletic Director

Information:

- Athletic Department – 770-536-4441 ext. 5444
- Website – www.gainesvilleredelephantathletics.com

Welcome!

Participation on an athletic team can be a rewarding and meaningful educational experience that enhances a child's secondary education. It is important that students realize the time demands, responsibility, dedication and sacrifices required when making this kind of commitment. The following information defines the interscholastic policies and procedures for all students participating in our High School athletic programs. The Athletic Department hopes this document provides parents and students with a better understanding of our philosophy, goals and policies. Please refer to the following information when a question about your child's athletic experience arises.

Philosophy of Athletics at Gainesville High School:

At Gainesville High School we believe athletics is an integral part of a student's life. Winning is of great importance, and the goal is to give your best and try to win. Important as winning is, it does not replace all other goals. The program should not sacrifice an ethical-like quality to win a physical victory at every practice and competition. The main purpose of sports at Gainesville High School is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the student-athletes through aspects of contests.

Athletics are an extension of the classroom; thus they should work to assist academic achievement. Athletics should also promote citizenship in both the school and community. Student-athletes and coaches are constantly observed. The goal of our program is that our student-athletes be role models both on and off the field, within the school and the community. Athletics is an opportunity to practice principles of life, such as subjecting one's self to authority, working together as members of a team, and controlling the emotions that arise in competition. It is important in life to learn to live with both success and adversity.

The coaches, teachers, and administrators are role models for the student-athletes. The best way to lead is to lead by example. The coach performs a critical role in the development of the student-athlete's desire to reach his or her fullest potential. Coaches should always be enthusiastic and prepared each day for practice and games and have a schedule of events to help all student-athletes reach their fullest potential. Athletes may feel cheated by a coach or official. This is when the coach should be in control and display leadership. The coach is in control of the team during all circumstances relating to competition and the school. The student-athletes are responsible each day to be prepared to work towards their fullest potential, respect others, and follow their coaches' directions.

The goal and motivation for each student-athlete should be to perform at his or her personal best to help the team achieve its goals. Student-athletes should strive to achieve goals through competition. However, they should pursue individual goals through the team concept. The student-athlete should not be pressured to perform for friends or family.

Governing Bodies:

Gainesville High School is a member of the Georgia High School Athletics Association (GHSAA), whose purpose is to organize, regulate and promote interscholastic athletics for secondary schools in Georgia. As a GHSAA member school, GHS abides by the standards set forth by this organization. Please note that these are minimal standards and members schools may enforce stricter standards, which Gainesville High School does in many instances. Locally, Gainesville High School belongs to Region 8 AAAAAA, which is comprised of 6 area schools. Those schools are Habersham Central High School, Lanier High School, Winder-Barrow High School, Apalachee High School, and Dacula High School. We also compete against teams from other regions, and these are referred to as “non-region opponents.

Gainesville High School Athletic Team Information

Basic Interscholastic Participation Policies:

A. **Participation:** An athlete may participate in only one sport per season unless two coaches /sponsors agree to the athlete’s competing in both athletic activities, and priorities are set to settle conflicts before the season.

B. **Dropping or transferring sports**

1. A student-athlete may lose the privilege of participating in the interscholastic program. On occasion, however, an athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the following procedure must be followed:

(a) The athlete will consult with immediate coach and then the head coach.

(b) The coach will report the situation to the athletic director.

(c) The athlete will return all equipment issued to him or her.

2. The athlete cannot begin a new sport until the completion of the regular season of the sport in which he/she is currently involved.

C. **Equipment:** School equipment issued to the athlete is the student’s responsibility. Loss of any equipment is the athlete’s financial obligation, and failing to meet that obligation can result in the denial of participation in the program.

D. **Missing practice:** An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing practice.

Missing practice or a game without good reason will be dealt with at the discretion of the coach.

E. **College recruitment policy:** In the event that an athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, he/she has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. It is important to inform the coach about the contact as soon as possible.

F. **Conflicts in extracurricular activities:** An individual athlete who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations.

1. The school recognizes that each athlete should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities, and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts.

2. Athletes have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise.

3. When a conflict arises, the sponsors/coaches will work out a solution. If a solution cannot be found, the principal will make the decision based on the following:

- (a) The relative importance of each event.
- (b) The importance of each event to the student.
- (c) The relative contribution the athlete can make.
- (d) How long each event has been scheduled.
- (e) Input from the parent(s) / guardian(s).

4. Once the decision has been made and the athlete has followed that decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by either sponsor/coach. If it becomes obvious that an athlete cannot fulfill the obligations of a school activity, he/she should withdraw from that activity.

G. Attendance: Students who miss over half of the school day due to illness will not be able to participate in a contest or practice on that date. Students missing school for reasons other than illness must have an excused absence in order to participate. The 50% rule will be in effect with regards to participation in practices or scheduled contests. A student ***must*** be in attendance 50% of the school day to participate in any extra-curricular activity. Final authority for infractions of this rule will rest with the principal and athletic director. Students absent from school on the day prior to a non-school day will be eligible to participate the day after the absence.

H. In-School and Out-Of-School Suspension: Students will not be allowed to participate in activities on the days they have been assigned to in-school suspension and until they have served their out-of-school suspension. Every student-athlete will be all given a “free” pass for the first assigned in school suspension assignment each semester. If there is another assigned in school suspension regardless of reason the athlete will fall under the no participation policy. There should be no adjustments made in the assignment of suspension days to allow a student to participate in any activities.

I. Release from Class: It is the responsibility of the student to see his/her teacher(s) the day before he/she is to be released to participate in an interscholastic activity. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher.

J. Team selection: In accordance with our philosophy of interscholastic activities and the desire to see as many students as possible participate in interscholastic programs while at our school, we encourage coaches to involve as many students as possible without compromising the integrity of the program. Time, space, facilities, equipment, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective team size for any particular activity. Choosing the members of teams is the responsibility of the coaches or sponsors of those teams.

K. Reporting of injury: All injuries that occur while participating in interscholastic activities should be reported to the trainer/coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, it will be necessary to have an injury report form completed by the trainer/coach. Once a student is treated by a doctor, written permission from the doctor is required to return to the activity.

L. Dismissal of a Student-Athlete from a Team

1. When a coach makes a decision to dismiss a student-athlete from a team, the student-athlete should be informed verbally by the coach in a private setting. It is the responsibility of the coach to discuss the situation with the student-athlete and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s).
2. The student-athlete may appeal the coach’s decision for dismissal from the team to the Principal of the school. This appeal must be made within 48 hours of the notification of dismissal and the appeal must be made in writing by the student-athlete to the principal.
3. The student-athlete is denied participation on the team until the appeal process is completed.

4. The Principal should review the appeal and make a decision whether to uphold the dismissal from the team or to restore the student-athlete's membership to the team. *The Principal's decision should be made within 72 hours of receipt of the written appeal from the student-athlete.*

5. *The Principal's decision of the appeal made by the student-athlete is the final decision and represents the conclusion of the appeal process. There is no appeal beyond the appeal to the Principal.*

NOTE: A Principal can remove or suspend a student-athlete from any team. The Principal should inform the student-athlete of the decision and should also inform the student-athletes parent(s) / guardian(s). Participation on an interscholastic athletic team is a privilege and not a right. A student may also be removed from a team in other circumstances, such as when the student is expelled from school.

Requirements for Athlete Participation

Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation - A yearly physical examination is required. The physical must be completed by a medical doctor and submitted to the coach prior to participation. The physical covers all sports for one calendar year. The form will be kept on file in the high school athletic office. The recommended pre-participation physical evaluation form is the form which was adopted by the GHSA. It consists of an athlete's personal and family medical history and an athlete's physical examination completed by a medical physician. (See Appendix)

Parental Consent for Athletic Participation and Transportation - All athletes and parent(s) / guardian(s) must realize the risk of serious injury which may be a result of athletic participation. Gainesville City School System requires that a Parental Consent for Athletic Participation and Transportation Form is signed by the athlete and his/her parent(s) / guardian(s). Parent(s) / Guardian(s) may not alter or change this form. Parent(s) / Guardian(s) acknowledge that they have read and understand the "Athlete / Parent / Guardian Handbook for GHSA Sanctioned Athletics Interscholastic Activities 2016-2017 when they sign this form.

Emergency Medical Authorization - Each student-athlete's parent(s) / guardian(s) shall complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent(s) / guardian(s) are not available. The form will be kept by the school's athletic department for use as needed during the emergency. **Each sport should have an emergency action plan for every sport, and this plan should be accessible by the head coaches and assistants at all times.**

Student/Parent Concussion Form- each student and parent/guardian shall complete the GHSA Concussion Awareness Form. **The student-athlete will not be allowed on the field of play for practice or games without this form being turned in.**

Insurance - The school district provides an opportunity to purchase insurance to cover student athletic injuries. Parent(s) / Guardian(s) are required to sign a form stating that they have purchased either the necessary school insurance or possess a family insurance plan that covers athletic injury. If a family insurance plan is used, the family must provide the school with the name of the insurance company and the policy number on the appropriate form. Where possible, a scholarship fund should be set up to assist students who are in financial need as

determined by the principal or his/her designee. Some method of discreet communication through a school contact person should be made available for students. There are **NO WAIVERS** for insurance; **ALL ATHLETES MUST HAVE INSURANCE.**

Athletic Offerings:

Fall Sports

The fall season begins August 1st of each calendar year through the play-offs for the fall sports respective season. The following sports compete in the Fall:

- Football (Varsity ,Sub-Varsity, Freshman)
- Girls/Boys Cross Country (Varsity and Sub-Varsity)
- Girls Volleyball (Varsity, JV, Freshman)
- Fast Pitch Softball (Varsity, Sub-Varsity)
- Cheerleading (Varsity, Sub-Varsity, and Freshman)

Winter Sports

The winter season begins the second week of October of each calendar year through the play-offs for the winter sports respective season. The following sports compete in the Winter:

- Girls/Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV, Freshman)
- Boys/Girls Swimming
- Wrestling (Varsity and Sub-Varsity)
- Cheerleading (Varsity, Sub-Varsity, Freshman)

Spring Sports

The spring season begins the second week of January of each calendar year through the play-offs for the spring sports respective season. The following sports compete in the Spring:

- Baseball (Varsity, JV)
- Boys/Girls Lacrosse (Varsity, JV,)
- Boys/Girls Track (Varsity and Sub-Varsity)
- Boys/Girls Tennis (Varsity, JV)
- Boys/Girls Golf (Varsity and Sub-Varsity)
- Boys/Girls Soccer (Varsity and Sub-Varsity)

Program Goals:

Though the unique nature of each sport dictates its specific objectives, all teams will attempt to

- Emphasize the development of basic skills, appropriate attitudes, values and team concepts.
- Allow as many students as possible to participate and share the experience and benefits derived from team membership.
- Compete competitively with region and non-region opponents.

Participation at the Varsity level is generally limited to the most highly skilled players and those with the ability to interact constructively with other players for team success. The coaching staff will determine the level of play for each student-athlete (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman) based on what would be most beneficial to the development and progress of each player and team. It should be understood that playing time could be limited.

Levels of Play:

8th Grade Participation for Gainesville High School Athletics

Although 8th graders are allowed to compete on sub-varsity teams for Gainesville High School, the athletic director must approve each individual circumstance. The following will be the basic rules for participation:

1. The 8th grade athlete must be academically eligible
2. The 8th grade athlete must have a physical on file
3. The 8th grade athlete ***must complete*** the Gainesville Middle School regular season for practice and scheduled contests prior to joining a sub-varsity team unless the coaches work out a schedule to not interfere with the middle school practices and scheduled contests.
4. The purpose of middle school athletics is to prepare our student-athletes for high school competition and build team camaraderie; we must protect the integrity of our middle school sports teams in all considerations with regards to 8th grade participation.

FRESHMAN:

At the entry level for high school athletics, athletes and their parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized:

- Developing fundamental skills
- Providing equal practice opportunities for all participants
- Having the coach's evaluation of an athlete's attitude, skills, and team role determine game time, working toward equitable playing time for all participants
- Learning the rules of the game
- Developing an orientation toward and appreciation for team effort in each athlete
- Demonstrating sportsmanship and fair play
- Developing the ambition to achieve at the next level of competition
- Prioritizing skill and character development over winning

JUNIOR VARSITY:

This is a transitional level for high school athletics, and athletes and parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized:

- Reinforcing and refining fundamental skills.
- Having the coach's evaluation of an athlete's attitude, skills, and team role determine game time
- Demonstrating sportsmanship and fair play
- Developing more sophisticated athletic strategies

- Specifically defining an individual athlete's role within the team concept
- Refining and reinforcing the concepts of commitment and team play.
- Focusing on physical conditioning and development
- Developing the ambition to achieve at the next level of competition
- Prioritizing skill and character development over winning

VARSIITY

At the highest level of athletic competition in high school athletics, athletes and parents should expect the following concepts to be emphasized

- Developing a high level of proficiency in the physical skills of the sport
- Having the coach's evaluation of an athlete's attitude, skills, and team role determine playing time
- Developing sophisticated strategy, situation analysis, and other mental aspects of the sport
- Specifically defining an individual athlete's role within the team concept
- Fostering maximum commitment to the athletic team
- Understanding and valuing the physical conditioning components of one's sport
- Understanding the importance of individual sacrifice for the good of the team
- Winning within the rules of sportsmanship and fair play.
- Participation at the Varsity level is generally limited to the most highly skilled players and those with the ability to interact constructively with other players for team success. The coaching staff will determine the level of play for each student-athlete (Varsity, Junior Varsity and freshman) based on what would be most beneficial to the development and progress of each player and team. It should be understood that playing time could be limited.

There are many decisions made on a regular basis by members of our coaching staff that may include which athletes should start a contest, which athlete should play at what position, and the amount of playing time an athlete will be given. Only members of our coaching staff make these very difficult coaching decisions after weighing a considerable number of factors. Generally, the most competitive, skilled team members will play the major portion of contests; however, teams cannot be successful without all team members playing their part. These athletes must work as hard as they can to help make their respective teams as competitive as possible and be ready at all times to step forward to compete. They must also demonstrate the perseverance and commitment to strive to advance to a starting role.

Team Tryouts / Selection:

During the tryout period, each coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the duty of the student to demonstrate to the coach that they can fulfill these expectations. If a student is not selected for a team, he/she may contact the coach personally for an explanation on how to improve for the next opportunity. Each sport that conducts a try-out will use a rubric to decide specific skills necessary to make the team. Students who are not selected are encouraged to explore other GHS athletic opportunities on teams that have not finalized their rosters. An athlete will not

be allowed to join a team after its third official practice without the approval of the Athletic Director and Coach. Switching sports is also not allowed to discourage quitting one sport and moving to another. The athlete will have to sit-out the length of the in-season sport until they will be allowed to join a new sport. The coaching staff of each sport has the sole responsibility for selecting members of the team, determining the level of play, and apportioning the amount of playing time for each student athlete.

Commitment:

Each member of an athletic team MUST:

- Be a great student maintaining eligibility year round
- Commit to being present at all team activities, including try-outs, practices, meetings and contest with other schools.
- Dedicate himself/herself to becoming an excellent team member and school citizen.
- Strive to continually improve as an athlete.
- Demonstrate pride in team performance and in himself/herself as members of a team.

Game/Practice Sessions:

Practices are held daily for approximately 2 to 2 ½ hours, or as appropriate to the activity. Some practices and games may be held on weekends. Most practice sessions do not begin before 3:20 PM. Any team member who must be late or miss practice, games, or meetings must confer with his/her coach. Practice and game schedules, particularly in the case of winter and spring sports, include school vacation weeks. Students and families should take this into consideration when deciding to try-out for our teams. The GHSA sets a mandatory dead week each summer for all sports and it is encouraged to take family vacations during this time.

Absence Policy:

Unexcused absences from practices may jeopardize retaining a position on the team, an opportunity to earn a varsity letter, and/or playing time at the coaches' discretion.

Excused absences from practices may impact position on the team and playing time, not as a punitive measure, but for the safety of that individual, fairness to the rest of the team, and strategic reasons.

Team Captains:

Captains are elected by team members and/or appointed by coaches. Prior to the selection, coaches will inform the team members of the selection criteria and obligations of the position. The position of team captain or officer is one of honor, leadership, and responsibility. As a result, students serving in that capacity are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both in and outside of school. Any student who is involved in a violation of any Gainesville High School rules and regulations resulting in a suspension from school, or any student who is found to be involved with drugs, alcohol, weapons, or crimes outside of school will lose the ability to serve as captain or to be appointed or elected to the position of captain of any school sponsored team for the period of

one calendar year. Any sitting captain of a GHS team will have that position rescinded and will be ineligible to serve for a period of one calendar year.

Gainesville High School Criteria for Athletic Honors and Awards:

To be considered for a team award presented by the coach, a student must:

- Display upright conduct and a spirit of fair play at all times.
- Exhibit respect for school personnel, coaches, game officials, and opponents.
- Not violate the Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Return all equipment at the completion of the season
- Meet criteria established by the coach.
- Finish the season as a member in good standing on his/her team, which includes being academically eligible.

VARSITY LETTER: Receiving a varsity letter is an honor reserved for those student athletes who have demonstrated excellence in performance and the commitment and sacrifice appropriate for membership on a varsity team regardless of grade level. Students who are on the varsity team for fifty percent of the season and complete the season shall receive a varsity letter, as long as they have excellent attendance, work ethic and not have violated the Code of Conduct. The standard for receiving a varsity letter for programs that only have one team will be determined by the coach.

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION: Athletes who do not receive a varsity letter, but have excellent attendance and work ethic, and have not violated the Code of Conduct will be awarded a certificate of participation.

MANAGER LETTER: As an integral, non-playing member of a team, managers may also be recognized for the valuable role they play. In order to be considered, managers must:

- Adhere to all general rules and regulations of athletes.
- Fulfill all the duties as outlined by the coach.
- Adhere to all rules and regulations that bind student athletes.

Conflict Resolution:

Athletic involvement can be highly emotional and issues about playing time, team selection, honors and awards can arise. It is very important that these issues be addressed as soon as possible, and as directly as possible, so that they can be resolved promptly. The following model will be used when a problem arises.

STEP ONE: Personal Contact between Student-Athlete and Coach

As a general rule, the issue should be presented as soon as possible to the coach by the *individual* student-athlete. If personal contact is not practical, a student-athlete may ask his/her team captain to talk with the coach. If these recommended routes are not *successful*, the coach should be contacted by the student-athlete's parent(s) at an appropriate time. Times to be avoided are:

- Either prior to or immediately after a competition
- During a practice session
- During a time when other students maybe present or when it may be readily apparent to others that a discussion is taking place
- At a time when it is apparent that there would not be sufficient time to provide for a complete discussion

Usually the best solution is to ask the coach either over the phone, via email or in person if an appointment could be made to discuss the issue. A parent or student-athlete could also contact the coach via the Athletic Office. ***It is strongly recommended that the student-athlete join their parent(s) at this meeting to ensure that all sides of the issue can be thoroughly discussed.***

STEP TWO: Personal Contact Between Coach, Student-Athlete and Athletic Director

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached through direct contact with the coach, the student-athlete and/or parent(s) should contact the Athletic Director. As a courtesy, the coach should be informed that this contact is being made. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled involving all concerning parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution. It is very important for all student-athletes and their parent(s) to know that any comments, concerns, or ***issues raised to the athletic director will be addressed with the coach.*** Issues concerning coaching personnel will not be addressed

STEP THREE: Student-Athlete – Administration Contact

If there is not a satisfactory resolution, the student-athlete and/or parent(s) should contact the High School Principal. As a courtesy, the Athletic Director should be informed that this contact is being made. While there is no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings a thorough, respectful airing, or different perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understandings in the future.

Sportsmanship Policy:

Gainesville High School expects all parties present at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators should treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators with respect at all times. GHS reserves the right to warn, censure, place on probation or suspend (for up to one calendar year) any player, team, coach, or school official determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship. Spectators who do not adhere to standards of good sportsmanship may be asked to leave the contest and/or be prohibited from future contests. If you are not sure what details good sportsmanship, please follow this simple rule: Cheer for your own team, but do not belittle opposing teams and officials. The following is GHSA by-laws regarding sportsmanship:

2.71 GHSA-member schools are required to conduct all relationships with other schools in a **spirit of good sportsmanship.**

(a) It shall be the responsibility of a member school to use every means at its disposal to impress upon faculty, students, team members, coaches, and spectators the **values of sportsmanship** in preparation for the management of interscholastic contests. Contest officials have the authority to have any and all individuals removed from the confines of the contest whose behavior has become a

distraction and/or hindrance to the administration of the event. This may include, but is not limited to, verbal and visual gestures

2.72 Any **player, coach, or team attendant** who is **ejected** from a GHSA contest shall be suspended from all levels of competition (i.e., varsity or sub-varsity) in that sport or activity (regular season or playoffs) until the period of suspension has expired.

(a) Ejections are based on judgment calls by an official and are not reviewable or reversible.

(b) A coach shall have no role nor be in attendance at pre-contest warm-ups or activities, and shall not be in attendance at contests until the period of suspension has expired.

(c) A player or team attendant may not be on the competitive area nor in the team bench area during any contest until the period of suspension has expired.

(d) The **period of suspension** resulting from an ejection will expire as follows:

(1) **Football:** after the individual has been withheld from the next-scheduled game at the level at which the ejection occurred (and all contests at any other level).

(2) **Soccer:**

(a) One-Game Sit-out:

1. Two yellow cards in the same game

2. Deliberate handball to prevent a goal

3. Red card for a foul on a player moving toward his goal in a scoring situation

(b) Two-Game Sit-out with Red Card for any of the following: taunting, violent conduct, serious foul play, spitting on another person, foul or abusive language, leaving the bench area for a fight situation.

(3) **Lacrosse** players who are ejected or foul out will sit out as follows:

(a) **BOYS:** Any player who fouls out for the accumulation of personal foul penalty time will sit out the next scheduled game. Any player or coach ejected for unsporting behavior or violent conduct will sit out the next two games.

(b) **GIRLS:** Any player who fouls for accumulation of two (2) yellow cards in one game will sit out the next scheduled game. Any player or coach given a red card for unsporting behavior or violent conduct will sit out two (2) games.

(4) **Track and Field:** after the individual has been withheld from the next scheduled contest.

NOTE: All allegations of unsporting behavior must be referred to the "Jury of Appeals" for a final resolution on disqualification. A report must be submitted to the GHSA office in the event of a disqualification.

(5) **All Other Activities:** after the individual has been withheld from the next two (2) scheduled contests at the level at which the ejection occurred.

(e) To satisfy the penalty of the sit-out game(s), those games must have been scheduled at the time of the ejection, and must be played to completion.

(f) *Penalties for ejections of a coach or player for unsporting acts shall be:*

(1) **First Ejection:** *Coach - \$250.00 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws. Player: Completion of the "NFHS Sportsmanship Course" online plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws.*

(2) **Second Ejection:** *Coach - \$500.00 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws; and suspension until completion of the "NFHS Sportsmanship Course" online. Player: \$200 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws. NOTE: When a player, coach or team attendant has a second ejection in the same activity during a school year, that individual shall be withheld from competition for **twice** the time period of a normal suspension.*

(3) **Third Ejection:** *Coach - Season suspension plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws; can not coach in any activity at any GHSA member school until successful completion of "GHSA Principles for Coaching." Player: Season suspension plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws.*

(4) The Executive Director shall have the authority to levy additional penalties for repeat offenders.

(5) Penalties imposed by the GHSA Executive Director may be appealed as described under Section 9 of Article IV, in the GHSA Constitution.

(g) If the ejection occurs in the last game of the season, the penalty carries over to the first game of the next season. If the student is a senior, the penalty carries over to the next sport in which the student participates.

(h) When a player or coach is ejected from a pre-season scrimmage (i.e., a practice game) in any sport, the school shall be fined a minimum of \$250 and there will be no sit-out penalties imposed.

(i) Game Incident Reports are due within 24 hours of the contest, and are to be submitted via the GHSA electronic reporting portal.

School Athletic Equipment Policy:

Students are responsible for and expected to maintain proper care of all equipment issued to them. Students are responsible for payment of any lost, stolen or damaged items. Each item not returned will be assessed at a rate comparable to the current replacement cost. All equipment is to be returned at the completion of the season. Grades will be withheld for those who do not return or pay for lost/damaged equipment. Additionally those student athletes will not be allowed to participate in another sport. Student-athletes are not to wear uniforms, either practice or game, at any time other than those allowed by specified team regulations.

Athletic Training Room Policies:

GHS is fortunate to have a highly qualified and skillful full-time trainer as a member of our staff. On school days our trainer's hours usually begin at 2:15 PM and last until the conclusion of the last practice or home game. During weekends and times when school is not in session, the trainer is required to be on site only for contests and for some scheduled scrimmages. Occasionally, the trainer will be on site for non-school day practices.

The training program exists to help athletes receive the best possible care. At certain times, however, the trainer and training room facilities are extremely busy. Consequently, access to the training room and its services is limited to athletes who require care only. Training services are granted on a first come, first served basis on practice days. On game days, students will be treated in an order that will allow bus and/or game commitments to be met.

In the event of an athletic injury, the trainer is in immediate control. At away contests, if the trainer is not present, the host school medical personnel are in control. If no medical personnel are present, members of the coaching staff are instructed to "take charge" of the situation and, if warranted, call for emergency care. All sport related injuries must be reported to the athletic trainer and a student may not return to competition without clearance by the trainer, which may also include written permission from a physician.

Student-athletes who have been treated for an injury must be cleared by the Athletic Trainer prior to resuming participation.

Transportation Policy:

When GHS provides transportation to and from athletic events, student-athletes are required to ride that transportation. The members of the athletic staff feel it is in the best interest of team unity that

everyone travel together and share the game experience. As the “guardian” during these trips, the athletic staff must be able to account for the whereabouts of all student-athletes and insure their safety. It is expected that our student-athletes will conduct themselves appropriately while on bus transportation. Any misconduct will result in a penalty including and up to dismissal if warranted. Student-athletes will be responsible for any damages to bus property and subsequent costs to repair or replace.

In the event that there are extenuating personal circumstances or JV/Varsity games are scheduled back to back and a parent wishes to take responsibility for the transportation of his/her son or daughter, it is required, barring unforeseen circumstances, that the parent/guardian provide written notice to the coach requesting the exception 24 hours in advance. A parent/guardian must also present himself/herself to a member of the coaching staff informing the coach that his/her child is leaving with him/her. Student-athletes may then ride with their parent/guardian. Student-athletes may not ride with other student-athletes or anyone else other than their parent/guardian.

Georgia High School Athletic Association Eligibility:

1.50 - SCHOLASTIC STANDING / SCHOLARSHIP

1.51 To be eligible to participate, practice, and/or try out in interscholastic activities, a student must be academically eligible. A student is required to pass classes that carry at least 2.5 Units counting toward graduation the semester immediately preceding participation.

Exception 1: First semester ninth grade students.

Exception 2: A cheerleader who is academically ineligible for the spring semester may try out if she is passing ALL classes at the time of the tryout. The window of opportunity to try out under these conditions is available only during the ten (10) consecutive school days set aside for tryouts that the school chooses.

(a) Passing in all GHSA member schools is a grade of seventy (70).

(b) Students participating in junior varsity or “B” team competition must meet all scholastic requirements.

(c) If an eligible student transfers from a school that uses a block-schedule format to a school using a traditional format (or vice versa) and that student cannot get a full schedule of classes with equivalent credit in the semester of the transfer, the school may petition the Executive Director for a waiver of this rule for the first semester after the transfer occurs.

(d) For schools offering courses with yearlong grading, eligibility must be computed for each semester.

(1) At the end of the first semester, the school must determine that the student has a grade of 70% or higher in classes carrying at least 2.5 Units.

(2) The second semester grade will be the grade given for the entire course and shall include the end-of-course test grade.

(3) Remediation programs designed to bring the student’s first semester grade up to 70% or higher may be used (in accordance with GHSA guidelines) if the school allows such programs for all students.

1.52 Students gain or lose eligibility on the first day of the subsequent semester. The first day of the Fall semester shall be interpreted as the first date of practice for the first sport.

(a) Exception: Students who successfully complete summer school to maintain eligibility become eligible the last day of summer school.

(1) Summer school is an extension of the previous semester and courses may be:

a. remedial in nature where a previously-taken course is repeated in its entirety with a new grade being given.

b. enrichment in nature where a new course is taken that results in new credit being earned.

(2) A maximum of two (2) unit credits earned in summer school may be counted for eligibility purposes.

NOTE: Additional credits may be earned in credit recovery programs or make-up programs after the start of the new semester.

(3) Summer school credits earned in non-accredited home study programs or non-accredited private schools may not be used to gain eligibility. Accreditation recognized under the rule shall be from the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) or a regional accreditation agency (such as SACS) or the Georgia Private School Accreditation Council (GAPSAC).

(4) An independent study course taken in summer school must be regionally accredited and accepted by the school system for graduation credit.

(b) Courses completed after the beginning of a new semester may not be used to gain eligibility for that

semester. Example: night school classes, correspondence courses, etc.

(c) Independent study courses taken during the school year must meet the criteria of 1.52 (a) 4.

1.53 Students must **accumulate units towards** graduation according to the following criteria:

(a) **First-year students** (entering 9th grade) are eligible academically. Second semester **first-year students** must have **passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units** the previous semester in order to participate.

(b) **Second-year students** must have **accumulated five (5) total units** in the first year, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units** in the previous semester.

(c) **Third-year students** must have **accumulated eleven (11) units** in the first and second years, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units** in the previous semester.

(d) **Fourth-year students** must have **accumulated seventeen (17) units** in the first three years, **AND passed courses carrying at least 2.5 units** in the previous semester.

(e) Students may accumulate the required units for participation during the school year and eligibility will be reinstated at the beginning of the next semester.

ADVISORY NOTICE: CURRICULAR INNOVATIONS

A. BLOCK FOUR PROGRAMS:

1. The student takes four courses that are worth one (1) unit each and the classes meet twice the number of hours per week as in the standard curricular programs.

2. To be eligible, a student must earn at least 2.5 units.

3. Unit requirements are the same in all curricular programs.

B. BLOCK EIGHT PROGRAMS:

1. The student takes eight courses at some time during the term, and each course is worth one-half unit.

2. To be eligible, a student must earn at least 2.5 units during the term.

3. Unit requirements are the same in all curricular programs.

C. HYBRID SCHEDULING:

1. Definition: A student takes a combination of courses scheduled as block courses, yearlong courses and/or traditional courses.

2. To be eligible, a student must be enrolled in a combination of courses that carry at least 2.5 units.

3. To be eligible, a student must have passed a combination of courses the previous semester that carries at least 2.5 units.

1.54 A Dual Enrollment program is defined as a program in which a fulltime student at a GHSA member high school takes one or more courses from a state public or private postsecondary institution and receives credit

at the high school (toward graduation) and at the postsecondary institution.

(a) Dual enrolled students shall take courses that are approved by the Georgia Department of Education.

(b) Courses may be taken in a variety of formats (including distance learning and virtual courses) as long as the courses are approved.

(c) Postsecondary semester hour credit shall be converted to high school unit credit as follows:

(1) 1-2 semester hours equates to .5 unit

(2) 3-5 semester hours equates to 1 unit

(d) Postsecondary quarter hour credit shall be converted to high school unit credit as follows:

(1) 1-3 quarter hours equates to .5 unit

(2) 4-8 quarter hours equates to 1 unit

1.55 Students involved in approved Dual Enrollment programs shall be eligible to participate in GHSA activities

provided that academic eligibility is maintained.

(a) Courses taken each semester at the high school and/or postsecondary institution must total at least 2.5 units.

(b) Courses passed the previous semester at the high school and/or postsecondary institution must total at least 2.5 units

(c) Students will gain or lose eligibility on the first day of each semester at the high school and a college calendar that differs from the high school calendar may cause problems.

(d) Students who withdraw or are dropped from a Dual Enrollment program and are returned to the high school only, may encounter eligibility problems.

(e) Students involved in Joint Enrollment programs, Early College programs, or Gateway to College programs may not be eligible at their respective high schools.

(f) A student who participates on an intercollegiate athletic team may not participate in any GHSA activity.

1.56 **Loss of Eligibility:** Students assigned to an **alternative school** or on **out-of-school suspension for disciplinary reasons, or adjudicated to YDC**, lose their eligibility. Suspension is considered to have ended when the student is physically readmitted to the classroom.

1.57 **Failure to Meet Academic Standards:** When a school administrator believes that the student has failed to meet the academic eligibility requirements due to conditions that were beyond the control of the school, the student, and/or his parents, and such that none of them could have been expected reasonably to comply with the rule, he may request that the student's case be put on the agenda of the **Hardship Committee**.

(a) Ignorance of the rule(s) on the part of any individual is not sufficient cause to set aside the rule(s).

(b) Schools must supply all the materials requested on the Hardship Application Form on the GHSA website.

1.58 **Credit Recovery/Make-up Work:** Students who have academic deficiencies at the end of a semester may make up those deficiencies in programs that are available to any student in the school.

NOTE: Programs allowing students to recover academic credit have a variety of names in various schools.

- (a) Credit recovery programs are short-term programs that involve a course that has been completed and a grade given. The student is given the opportunity to work on areas of deficiency.
- (b) Make-up programs occur when a course has not been completed and an “Incomplete” grade has been given. The student is given the opportunity to work on areas of deficiency.
- (c) Credit recovery and make-up work must be completed within 15 school days after the start of the next semester. The student is ineligible until such time as the work is completed and the required passing grade has been recorded. Exception: If the end-of-course test is not offered within 15 school days of the beginning of the next semester, the student may be granted a reasonable extension by the GHSA.
- (d) The GHSA Executive Director shall be authorized to approve credit recovery or make-up work completed later than fifteen (15) days after the start of the next semester if he finds that the:
 - (1) timeframe was not met due to circumstances outside the control of the student, his parent(s), and the school, AND
 - (2) work was completed as soon as reasonably possible, AND
 - (3) allowance for such a delay is offered on the same basis to all students in the school.
- (e) Credit recovery programs operated during the summer or in intersessions shall be completed within fifteen (15) days of the beginning of the new semester. Students using those credits to gain eligibility are ineligible until the course is completed successfully. Credit recovery is used for remedial work only, and no new credit courses may be applied under this provision.
- (f) Students using credit recovery or make-up programs must have their eligibility submitted to the GHSA office on a “Form C.”

Athletic Code of Conduct:

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the city and school. The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program. The welfare of the athlete is our major consideration. Any misconduct which results in a negative image to the athlete, the team, the school, or the community will not be tolerated.

Notwithstanding the consequences discussed in this handbook, any act at school or away from school, which results in any discipline by school administration; or any act at school or away from school which reflects in a negative manner on the school, athletic program, or activity may result in removal from the team or event or lessened participation opportunities. Behavioral expectations and prohibitions apply 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, in and out of the specific extracurricular season, and on or off school grounds. In addition to the individual penalties associated with this handbook, all athletes fall under the jurisdiction of the Gainesville City Schools Systems code of conduct.

Ethics Rule: Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to, disruption of school, theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality, or violations of the law tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the program and will not be tolerated. Due to the serious nature of violations of the Ethics Rule, the appropriate coach, the athletic director and the principal shall establish procedures to determine the penalty according to the degree of the infraction.

Bullying and Hazing: The Gainesville City Schools District expressly prohibits the bullying of any person by any means or method, at school, on school property, or at school-related functions.

Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Policy: Any form of substance abuse cannot be tolerated to allow participation in GHSA Extracurricular Activities. The athlete who uses tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, or any type of mood altering substance jeopardizes team morale, team reputation, and team success and does physical harm to himself/herself.

1. Use of Tobacco - Student athletes shall not use tobacco at any time, during the season and/or off- season.
2. Use of Alcoholic Beverages - Student athletes shall not consume alcoholic beverages at any time, during the season and/or off-season.
3. Use of Illegal Drugs or Mood Altering Substances - Student athletes shall not use illegal drugs or mood altering substances at any time, during the season and/or off-season.

Penalties for Violation of ***Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Policy*** (Non-Felony)

- A. An athlete, regardless of quantity, shall not:
 1. Buy, be in possession of, or use a beverage containing alcohol at any time;
- B. Be in possession of, or use illegal drugs or tobacco at any time;
 1. Use, consume, possess, buy, sell, or distribute any controlled or other illegal or mood- altering substance at any time.
 2. Athletes are responsible for their off-season and out-of -school behavior. These rules apply to an athlete's entire high school career.
 3. It is not a violation for an athlete to be in possession of a controlled substance specifically prescribed for the student's personal use by his/her doctor.

The minimum Penalties are as follows:

Tobacco

1. First Violation

After confirmation of the first violation out-of season or during the sport's season, the athlete will receive discipline issued by the principal/athletic director.

2. Second Violation:

After confirmation of the first violation during the season, the student will lose a minimum of 25% or up to a maximum of 100% of his/her remaining competitions/events. If the first violation occurs out-of-season, the determination of the penalty is at the discretion of the principal and/or athletic director. The athlete may be permitted to try out for the sport but will lose a minimum of 25% or up to a maximum of 100% of his/her remaining competitions/events. The athlete may be prohibited from ever representing his/her school in inter-scholastic activities at any time in the future.

Alcohol/Drugs/Controlled Substances

The minimum penalties are as follows:

1. First offense: Suspension from representing the school for the next consecutive interscholastic contest and 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating 25% of a season. Students will be required to attend all practices and team meetings during that time. During this time frame, the student may not represent the school in scrimmages or games.
2. Second offense: Suspension from representing the school for the next consecutive interscholastic contest and 75% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating 75% of a season.
3. Third offense: Suspension from representing the school for the remainder of the school year on any athletic and/or club team.

***Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, and a penalty period will extend into the next academic year. That is, if the violation occurs outside a season of competition or if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty will carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

POSSESSION OF, USE OF, OR BEING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR ANY CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE WHILE REPRESENTING GAINESVILLE CITY SCHOOLS AT PRACTICES, GAMES, OVERNIGHT ATHLETIC TRIPS, ETC. WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL FROM THE TEAM.

These rules and consequences are in addition to any other school discipline under the Code of Conduct for Gainesville City Schools.

Criminal Activity:

Parents/guardians and/or students must report any arrest of a student or behavior in which law enforcement is involved, to their high school administration or coach within two weeks (14 calendar days) of the arrest or behavior. The two week time frame includes weekends, school holidays and summer vacation. Failure to report arrest or behavior will result in the student's consequences for the behavior in question being doubled and possible additional consequences for failure to report the behavior.

Felonies (Including Felonies Relating to Drugs or Alcohol): A student who is arrested for, or charged with a felony or charged with an act that would constitute a felony if committed by an adult shall be automatically suspended from interscholastic GHSA activities. Students will not be permitted to participate in preseason activities. The student shall remain suspended until: (1) The charges are completely dismissed; (2) The charges are reduced to a misdemeanor in which case the student may be subject to penalties outlined for misdemeanors or alcohol/drugs; (3) The student is found not guilty; or (4) The student successfully completes the consequences assigned by the judge

or agreed to by the student, including probation or diversion. Once one of the four previous situations has occurred the student may be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities. Evidence that the probation period has expired, fines have been paid and/or community service has been completed is required.

If a student has been arrested or charged with an offense, but the matter has been expunged, sealed, removed from a student's record, or the behavior has not been prosecuted (*nolle prosequi*), that student should present or obtain documentation as required by the school to determine the circumstances of the matter. These circumstances may not be sufficient to lift the student's consequences.

Misdemeanors Not Related to Drugs and Alcohol: A student who is arrested for, charged with, or found guilty of a misdemeanor shall receive consequences as outlined below. However, minor offenses that result in fines alone may be dealt with in the discretion of the principal or athletic director. However, any student who is accused of a misdemeanor alcohol/drug offense or a misdemeanor DUI will receive consequences as follows:

1st and Subsequent Offenses: Minimum suspension from activities for one (1) school day up to a maximum of permanent suspension from extracurricular activities.

If the student produces proof that the charges are completely dismissed or the student is found not guilty, these consequences may be lifted. If a student has been arrested or charged with an offense, but the matter has been expunged, sealed, removed from a student's record, or the behavior has not been prosecuted (*nolle prosequi*), that student should present or obtain documentation as required by the school to determine the circumstances of the matter. These circumstances may not be sufficient to lift the student's consequences.

Individual Coach's Rules: Coaches may establish general rules and regulations with the approval of the athletic director and principal for their respective activities. Coaches may also address unique situations and issue consequences to athletes in accordance with the circumstances involving the athlete and his/her membership on the team. These rules, pertaining to a particular activity, must be given by the coach in writing to all team members and explained fully at the start of the season. Penalties for violation of team rules will be in writing and shall be administered by the coach. Copies of all additional team rules by coaches are on file in the local athletic office.

Student-Athlete Social Media Guidelines

Purpose: The athletic department for Gainesville City Schools will continue to utilize social media to disseminate information, promote programs, and organize activities. There is a responsibility attached to the schools, coaches, and players when using these tools. At no time should a student be the designee for any official team web-pages, twitter accounts, or any other social media platforms. Gainesville athletics encourages the use of applications that send information out to the athletes without giving them the ability to reply (For example: Remind 101). Applications that allow the students to reply should not be used by school employees to convey information to the students.

Due to the accessibility and use of social media in today's society, Gainesville City Schools Athletic Department is implementing guidelines to assist our athletes in developing the skills needed to make positive decisions while using social media outlets. The need to understand what is social media appropriate and what is not is paramount, as many employers and colleges now view potential candidate's social media activities before asking them to join their organization. This is specifically evident in collegiate athletics where students have had scholarships revoked, served suspensions, and are occasionally removed from teams. The below guidelines should be used to assist student athletes with deciding what to post on social media outlets. They provide a set of parameters to stay within when deciding to post statements and photos. Coaches will assist by being a resource the athletes can turn to for advice.

Coaches Responsibility:

1. Ensure their team members are aware of the guidelines.
2. Explain potential consequences for inappropriate social media use.
3. Address any social media concerns brought to their attention

Guidelines:

1. Social Media use should not violate the Gainesville City Schools Code of Conduct for students.
2. Post should not be demeaning or disrespectful to teammates, coaches, peers or other institutions.
3. Post should not contain profane, vulgar, obscene, racial/ethnic, or offensive language.
4. Photos should not contain nudity, be vulgar, obscene or offensive in nature.
5. Photos or written post should not contain or reference illegal acts.
6. Post should not cast a negative image or negative perception of the athlete, team, or school.

Consequences: Provided are a set of possible consequences for not adhering to the Gainesville City Schools Athletic Social Media Guidelines. Ultimately, the coaches/AD/School will determine consequences for their team(s). It is expected the consequences will be progressive if behavior is not improved through previous attempts.

Potential Consequences:

1. Conference between the athlete and coach. The coach may or may not include the parent in the conference.
2. Extra practice time.
3. Game Suspension.
4. Expulsion from the team.

Random Drug Screening

Gainesville City Schools Board of Education has consented to mandatory random drug tests for all student-athletes who participate in any Georgia High School contest. Any sports activity that requires an annual physical as a condition of participation is subject to this procedure.

1. Random testing may occur at any time during the school year with the student-athlete chosen through a lottery/random selection.
2. Once the student-athlete and parent sign the consent to administer drug testing the results can be released to the parent, the administrative official, and the head coach.
3. Parents or students do not have the option of not participating in the drug testing program if they wish to participate in any interscholastic activity on campus.

4. Testing will be conducted by Northeast Georgia Medical Center.
5. The agreement will remain in effect until the school receives a revocation in writing.