

**Grace Covenant Academy  
Athletic Department**



**Athletic Policies &  
Procedures  
2023-2024**

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# General Information

**Program Founded:** 2014

**Mascot:** Eagles

**Colors:** Navy, Red, and White

**League:** TCAF

**Classification:** N/A

**District:** N/A

## Contacts and Staff

- Headmaster - Brian Smith
- Dean of Academics - Amy Smith
- Athletic Coordinator: Christina Griffiths

## Mission

The mission of GCA sports is **to connect people and make disciples.**

Athletics are an important component of a well-rounded education, providing opportunities to enjoy the competition and growth in a sport, through that to develop godly character, and as a result to represent the Lord in the sports arena.

When teams are formed correctly, the individuals experience the joys and benefits of teamwork that can mirror the family of God. We seek to create teams that can experience this interdependence on the team, and foster long-lasting relationships.

Through the rigors and adversities of sports, students have an opportunity to see their need for the Savior's work and discipling. Our coaches provide the lead on assisting teams in this process, though the team itself is a key element in growth.



# Core Values

**Excellence** - Our teams strive for excellence in their sport. We work hard, do their best, and seek to glorify God through their effort. (Matt 5:16, Col. 3:23-24)

**Character** - Our teams encourage and grow in Christ-like character. We work together as a team, respect the authority of coaches and officials, and seek to represent the character of the Lord in the sports arena.

**Discipleship** - Our teams seek to grow in our personal love and joy in Christ, while also teaching and leading others to love and find their joy in Christ.

# Sports Offered

The sports offered for the **2021-2022** school year are listed below. Offerings are based on student participation.

## Fall

- MS Flag Football
- MS Girls Volleyball
- HS Girls Volleyball

## Winter

- HS Boys Basketball
- MS Boys Basketball
- MS Girls Basketball

## Spring

- MS Track
- HS Track

## All Year

Adventure Club



# For Students and Parents

## Student Classification

### Full-Time Student Classification

- GCA sports teams will be composed primarily of **full-time students**. For athletic purposes, any students enrolled in 4 core classes at GCA are considered full-time students. Students must be enrolled in 4 core classes at all times in order to be considered a full-time student athlete. Any student not meeting these requirements will be considered a home-school student.

### Home-school Student Classification and Policies

- If a home-school student participates in a GCA sports team, they may apply through a provisional application process, but must commit to the values and policies of the school.

### Transfer Students

- Students who transfer to GCA during the school year are eligible to participate in GCA athletics, after a 15-day waiting period, starting on their first day of classes.

## Levels of Participation

Student athletes must participate in their appropriate age/grade level. Below are the levels of participation for Varsity and Junior Varsity teams.

	<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>Age Levels</b>
High School Varsity	9th-12th	14-18
High School Junior Varsity	9th-11th	13-18
Middle School Varsity	7th-8th	12-14
Middle School Junior Varsity	6th-8th	12-14



# Student Eligibility

## Academic Eligibility

Participation in athletics and other extra curricular activities requires additional time and effort. Students must be able to represent the school and their fellow students with excellence and not jeopardize academic preparation and success. Co-curricular activities do not, at any time, take precedence over the academic program. All students who desire to participate in co-curricular activities must meet the following requirements to remain eligible for participation:

- Students are required to maintain a 70 or higher in all classes.
- Six weeks after the year begins, the grades of student athletes will be checked. A student who fails to maintain a 70 or higher in all classes will be placed on team academic probation for 3 weeks, starting no later than the Wednesday after the grade check.
- After the 3-week period, a player may be reinstated, if his/her grades meet the minimum requirement. If a player fails to meet the minimum requirements, he will remain on probation until the requirements are met for another 3 weeks.
- Grade checks will occur each 3 week period after that.
- Students on probation must participate in all scheduled practices, but are ineligible to compete in any games or scrimmages against other teams.
- Students on suspension may not participate in all scheduled practice sessions, games, or scrimmages.
- Coaches are responsible for monitoring grade checks and working with the Academic Advisor to help students succeed in the classroom.
- Additional discipline for probation/suspension may be imposed by the Head Coach with the approval from the Athletic Director and/or Headmaster



## **Conduct Eligibility**

- All student athletes must adhere to the GCA student code of honor and any/all team rules.
- Students placed on disciplinary probation by the school may not participate in athletics or Adventure Club games and trips while they are on probation.
- If a student violates the code of honor, or any team rule, the coach may discipline appropriately, including limited playing time, extra conditioning, or team suspension. Coaches must consult with the Athletic Director or Dean of Academics prior to initiating any form of official team punishment, such as probation or suspension.
- Students on probation must participate in all scheduled practice sessions, but are ineligible to compete in any games or scrimmages against other teams. Each student will be allowed a probation period for each sport they participate in.
- Students on probation may not participate in all scheduled practice sessions, and are ineligible to compete in any games or scrimmages against other teams. If a student has been on team suspension multiple times, he or she may be removed from the team at the discretion of the advising department.
- Additional discipline for probation/suspension may be imposed by the Head Coach with the approval from the Athletic Director and/or Headmaster

## **Medical Eligibility**

- All students participating in athletics must have a medical physical on file. Students who have not completed a medical physical examination may not participate until they have received one.
- Students must have a physical a minimum of once every two years. Once the physical has been done, the student must present a completed and signed doctor's form to the school. The school in turn must keep the form on file.



# Athletic Registration

Each sport is an individually assessed athletic fee which covers participation. Due to the nature of athletics, a student must sign up at the beginning of the semester the sport begins. No refunds, partial or otherwise, will be given to students who drop the sport at any time after they register for the sport. No refunds, partial or otherwise, will be given to students who temporarily are barred from participation due to academic or disciplinary problems. Parents should expect additional expenses for extra equipment or practice clothes, student travel expenses, etc. Any student discounts will not apply to athletic fees.

## Uniforms and Practice Wear

### Uniforms

Grace Covenant Academy will provide team uniforms to all student athletes. Each athlete will be issued a game uniform(s) and/or equipment, which they will be expected to maintain throughout the season. Students must wash and return all parts of their uniform to the team coach at the end of the season. All students will be supplied with a GCA athletic bag that is to be used only for practice and game purposes. After the end of each season the bag will be returned. Failure to return all materials in good condition will result in a replacement fee covering any damaged or missing pieces.

**If a student shows up out of dress code, it will be considered an ABSENCE. If there are a total of 3 absences the student will be removed from the team.**

In general, the following policies will be enforced:

- No visible underwear
- Appropriate footwear should be worn at all times (tennis shoes, cleats, etc.)
- No t-shirts with offensive languages or statements
- Use wisdom and modesty when wearing tight fitting athletic wear
- GCA practice t-shirt required for all practices
- Shorts that are at finger length or longer and no spandex.





# Transportation

All student athletes will adhere to the following GCA transportation policies:

- Typically, GCA will **not** provide transportation to and from athletic events. Parents are expected to coordinate rides for their students.
- Students must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to game time. If a student rides with another family, the coach should be notified via email, text message, or in person conversation.
- For long distance travel or overnight stays, the Athletic Director will coordinate appropriate lodging and transportation.
- Teams should arrive to a game destination 30 - 60 mins prior to start of game.
- Players will never be released to ride with anyone other than their parents. Exceptions to this rule would require parental consent to ride with another family.
- When riding to and from games, we encourage team members to begin to prepare mentally for the game and to engage with others riding in the car, which includes refraining from cell phone use, listening to uplifting music, talking with each other, etc.

# Scheduling

## Games

The Athletic Director will work with other schools/leagues to create the Grace Covenant Academy athletic calendar. Head coaches will assist the Athletic Director with game scheduling as needed. We will strive to have no more than two games scheduled during any calendar week. Additionally, games will not be scheduled during school holidays or vacations. A game schedule will be distributed to parents/faculty/staff prior to the athletic season. Parents will be given at least 2 weeks of notice prior to scheduling any additional games/scrimmages



## **Practices**

The Head Coach of each sport program will determine their respective practice schedule, including dates and times. Every effort will be made to ensure consistent practice times and schedules. Coaches will submit their practice schedule to the Athletic Director for final approval, prior to distributing it to parents. Students/parents are responsible for ensuring that student athletes show up to every practice and game.

## **Attendance**

- Failure to be on time for practice/games will result in minimum play time and disciplinary action decided by the head coach.
- Failure to notify a coach for any missed practices/games will result in minimum play time/suspension or removal from the team decided by the athletic administration.
- If a practice is missed due to any reason (sickness, family, grades) the athlete must make up the conditioning missed at that practice before they can participate in any game.

## **Offseason**

All Grace Covenant Academy athletic teams must adhere to the following offseason procedures:

- Coaches may host non-mandatory practices during the offseason.
- Playing time may not be determined by attendance at offseason practices/activities.
- Coaches may coach registered GCA students in summer/offseason leagues. Summer/offseason league participation may not be mandatory.
- Recruiting is unacceptable and off limits. Non GCA players may participate in GCA leagues/clinics/camps/etc., but events organized with the purpose of recruiting students during the offseason will not be



allowed at GCA.

# For Fans and Spectators

## Fan Conduct

In alignment to our mission and as representatives of the Lord Jesus, we want to create a community that reflects the love and grace of Jesus Christ to others.

To ensure our fans reflect the purpose and values of Grace Covenant Academy, we ask that all fans adhere to the following principles:

- During home contests, treat all visitors with grace and hospitality.
- During away contests, treat all facilities, players, and home-school personnel with love, honor, and respect.
- Cheer and support our team but do not root against the opponent. Do not seek harm against any player, coach, or team.
- Be gracious and humble in victory or defeat. Fans also participate in teaching our students how to win and lose in a way that honors Christ.
- Show respect - and encourage your students to show respect for authorities and officials in a way that honors Christ. This is not common in our age, and is one way of glorifying the Lord.
- Honor and encourage the coaches. Respect the decisions of the coaches, even if you would have done something differently. Don't coach from the sidelines.
- Be creative and seek ways to show honor, love, and grace to other teams and players. Outdo one another in showing honor to all.
- Understand that any unloving, unwholesome, or ungodly conduct will not be accepted and could be grounds for expulsion from the game, and from future contests.

