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## **GOOSE CREEK ATHLETIC POLICIES FOR THE SPECIAL OLYMPIC STUDENT ATHLETE (ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT)**

Participation in the Special Olympic Athletic program/contests is a **PRIVILEGE**, not a right. No student is required to take part in the contests or activities. Therefore, it is imperative that all students that qualify for Special Olympics and the parents of students taking part in the program understand the following Athletic Code of Conduct and conform to the rules and regulations therein and that the coaches of the sport or activities shall have every right to remove these privileges.

The goals of the athletic programs of Goose Creek CISD are designed to:

- Develop attitudes in each individual that will become an integral part of his/her quest for success

- Further an appreciation for optimum health and physical fitness of the participant

- Encourage the student-athlete to grow physically, mentally, and socially

- Develop the characteristics of sportsmanship, loyalty, discipline, training, courage, improvement, and pride in the student-athlete

The student-athlete must understand that both winning and losing are part of the game. A student-athlete must be disciplined to be a good loser as well as a gracious winner. The student-athlete must never use profanity or resort to illegal tactics. Excessive displays of temper, flagrant violations of contest rules, etc., will not be tolerated. Total respect to officials at all times is an absolute must. Any discussion of calls made by officials will be done by the coach. Any behavior contrary to the above or any other act that is not conducive to good sportsmanship may result in removal from the contest and possible further discipline action, including, but not limited to expulsion from the team.

### **ATHLETIC DRESS CODE**

To participate in athletics in Goose Creek CISD, certain standards must be maintained, one of which is acceptable grooming and dress as determined by the district Board of Trustees, the Athletic Director, and the head coach of each sport. Specific standards of grooming are necessary in order to provide a safe and healthy athletic environment, to express uniformity among team members, and to promote self-discipline of the student-athlete.

The student-athlete should be in compliance with the student dress code as it appears in the Student Code of Conduct and student handbook. Also, the head coach of a sport may determine additional dress code requirements for his/her sport. The athlete should be neatly dressed for competition. Each team member is to be dressed the same as his/her teammates, while participating in an event. Equipment worn by the athlete should be identical to his/her team members, with the exception of shoes. Game uniform tops/shirts must be worn as they were designed to be worn.

## **FAILING TO FULFILL COMMITMENT**

A student should take his/her decision to join an athletic team seriously. Athletics takes much hard work, time, and dedication. Any participant who quits a sport after he/she has begun will not be allowed to participate in any other sport until the regular season has ended in the sport he/she quit. The only exception to this will be if he/she quits upon the recommendation of the coach.

Reinstatement in a sport quit by a student-athlete will not be allowed unless he/she has a majority vote of approval from the Special Olympic coaches.

An athlete that signs up and practices with a sports team but does not show up for the area competition, will not be able to participate on another team for the remainder of that semester. They may participate however; in individual competitions if they are offered in the sport and are appropriate (based on the athlete's skill level).

Classification rounds, that are held prior to most area team competitions, are mandatory to participate at area. Athletes, who do not attend the classifications when they are required, will not be allowed to attend or play in the area competition for that sport.

## **CARE AND USAGE OF EQUIPMENT**

The athletic budget provides money to field well-equipped teams in all sports. While this equipment is not always the most expensive available, it is always good equipment and provides adequate protection where needed. With proper care, this equipment can be kept in use for the duration for which it is designed, possibly allowing budget money designated for replacement equipment to be used in other areas of the athletic program. The athlete is financially responsible for all uniforms or equipment that has been issued to him/her.

Proper care of equipment relies basically on the use of common sense by the student-athlete. This includes keeping equipment as clean as possible at all times and repairing equipment as soon as possible after it is damaged.

Poorly-fitting and/or damaged equipment can be a hindrance to any athletic team and can often lead to injuries. The athlete should insure that equipment issued to him/her fits properly and is not damaged. If issued equipment does not fit properly or is damaged, the athlete should notify the coach.

Athletes are not allowed to wear/take any uniforms home after an event. Athletes must bring a change of clothes to change into if they plan to leave from an event. No exceptions.

## **PRACTICE REGULATIONS**

Practice is an integral part of developing into the best athlete a person can be. Therefore, all athletes are expected to participate to their fullest potential at all practice sessions. Absence from any practice must be approved by the head coach. Missing a practice without permission may result in suspension or removal from the team. Please notify the coach if an athlete is sick, in detention, at an appointment, etc.

All athletes are expected to follow all rules and regulations set up by the coach. Unsportsmanlike conduct during practice sessions will not be tolerated and poor effort during practice will not be accepted. Work as hard in practice as you intend to play in a game. Inappropriate effort in practice may result in reduced playing time or suspension from future athletic contests or even early dismissal from a practice session.

If a student is not at school for at least 50% of the day, they may not attend a practice or competition that day unless cleared in advance by the head coach.

Athletes need to be picked up within 15 minutes from the end of each practice session or from arrival back from a competition. Repeated tardiness to be picked up could result in dismissal from the team. Practice end times are posted and coaches will try to wrap up practices within 5 minutes of those scheduled times. Athletes do not need to call parents to tell them practices are finished.

### **TRAVELING TO OFF-CAMPUS CONTESTS**

All student-athletes in Goose Creek CISD are representatives of our community, school, and coaches. Therefore, it is expected that all student-athletes will dress in an acceptable manner on trips and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects pride in self and community. At a minimum, the school dress code should be worn at all times when representing a Goose Creek CISD athletic program. Coaches may impose stricter dress requirements on athletes. Violations may result in suspension and possible expulsion from the team or athletic program.

Athletes are expected to be on time for all contests. Time of departure will be set by the coach. Tardiness may result in discipline consequences within the program or dismissal from the team.

Traveling representatives of Goose Creek CISD should show respect for opposing teams' facilities and any other venues visited. Abuse of any facilities will not be tolerated. Behavior in restaurants and other public places must be appropriate at all times.

Athletes will be expected to make all trips to and from contests on district-provided transportation. Athletes will be expected to return on this transportation unless there is an emergency situation or when parents are present and prior arrangements have been made for the student-athlete to leave with them. Arrangements for alternate transportation after an athletic event must be made between the parents and the head coach. This arrangement must be in writing and signed by the parent with whom the student will leave. Athletes will not be allowed to leave with anyone other than their own parent(s) unless their parent gets a signed note to the coach prior to the event.

Parents are given an approximate return time for most competitions and coaches will try to call approximately 30-45 minutes out from out of town trips so parents don't have to wait too long. Please make sure coaches have a current working number. Parents should be expecting a call and make sure that a ride is available when students arrive back to campus.

### **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR / SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

Student-athletes are expected to be leaders inside and outside of the classroom. Therefore, a student-athlete who is a habitual problem in the classroom and/or receives repeated poor conduct grades may be suspended from a team on a temporary or permanent basis. In addition, a student-athlete may receive additional athletic consequences for inappropriate behavior in the classroom or for other violations of the Student or Athletic Codes of Conduct. Serious violations of any part of the above mentioned codes, including those involving off-campus placements, will be referred to the Special Olympic coaches for review.

### **ATHLETIC TRAINING AND CONDUCT**

In order to maintain a sound body physically, mentally, and emotionally and to demonstrate characteristics expected of a student-athlete in Goose Creek CISD, participants in athletics must refrain from the following:

- Use or possession of any tobacco products
- Use, possession, or under the influence of any alcoholic beverage
- Use, possession, or under the influence of marijuana or other controlled substance, glue or aerosol pair, or any other mood-altering or behavior-altering drug
- Insubordination, disrespect, disobedience to coaches and/or officials
- Participation in illegal activities of stealing, fighting, hazing, indecent exposure, or public lewdness
- Participation in any illegal activities resulting in adjudication of the individual

### **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY & OFF-CAMPUS DISCIPLINARY PLACEMENT**

A student is ineligible for athletic participation during any off-campus disciplinary placement (OCS or SCGC), in school, or out of school suspension. He or she may not participate in games or practices.

With the Special Olympic coaches' approval, a student returning from off-campus placement may enter an in-season program.

A student returning from off-campus placement of 20 school days, or longer, will be subject to a minimum probationary period of 7 calendar days. (The probationary period may be longer depending on the reason for the placement.) During this period, the student remains ineligible for athletic competition. At the conclusion of the probationary period, eligibility may be regained as determined by the Special Olympic coaches.

### **PROBLEMS WITH CIVIL AUTHORITIES**

Trouble with civil authorities could lead to suspension from athletics if it is determined that the infraction or conduct is detrimental to the athletic program or school. Athletes may be suspended indefinitely pending an investigation of the incident.

### **HAZING**

Hazing is any action or activity that, regardless of location, intent, or consent of participants, causes or intends to cause: 1) physical harm, 2) mental harm, 3) anxieties, or 4) degrading or disgracing a person for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization. Hazing has long been a tradition for many organizations, clubs, and sports teams, causing members to endure physical or mental abuse in the name of brotherhood, sisterhood, and unity.

Hazing is an illegal activity (Texas Education Code 37.151-37.157) and is also a violation of the GCCISD Student Code of Conduct. Therefore hazing under any circumstances will not be tolerated in the athletic programs of our school district. Students found to be in violation of this portion of the Athletic Code will be subject to disciplinary action through the athletic program, the school district, and the judicial system.

### **CELL PHONE USE**

Cell phones are great and are allowed with some limitations. Phones should be used to call parents on the way home from competitions or during the competition day for short informational purposes. Athletes may not be on the phones during practices, on the bus, or during games/competitions. Athletes should not be holding or using other athletes' phones. Phones that are misused will be taken up and returned to parents after the event. Practice end times at set so athletes do not need to call to say practices are finished.

## **PARENT / COACH RELATIONSHIPS**

Both parenting and coaching are very difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding between coaches and parents, both are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a more positive experience for everyone. Parents should be informed of the expectations placed on them and their children by the coach. Coaches should be afforded the opportunity to meet and discuss any concerns of the parent at the appropriate time and place.

### **Communication parents should expect from their child's coach:**

1. Coach's philosophy.
2. Expectations the coach has for the student and others on the team.
3. Locations and times of practices and contests.
4. Team requirements (team rules, off-season expectations, special equipment needs, fees, etc.).
5. Procedures that will be followed if the student becomes injured during participation.

### **Communication coaches expect from parents:**

1. Concerns regarding the student expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place.
2. Specific concerns in regard to the coach's philosophy and/or expectations.
3. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.

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

1. The mental and physical treatment of your child.
2. What your child needs to do to improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very important to understand your child may not be playing as much as you may hope. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe is in the best interests of all students participating. As you can see from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those listed next, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

### **Issues NOT appropriate for discussion with your child's coach:**

1. How much playing time each athlete is getting.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Any situation that deals with other student-athletes.

## **RESOLVING CONFLICTS**

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. These are not discouraged, as it is important for each party to have a clear understanding of the others' position. **Persons seeking a resolution conference for athletic concerns should not approach the coach immediately following an athletic contest or practice.** Coaches have responsibilities at these times that limit the time they have available to meet with parents. In addition, the time immediately following practices or games can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution of the situation and can often escalate it.

When these conferences are necessary, the following steps are suggested to help promote resolution to the issue.

Telephone the school to set up an appointment with the coach. If the coach is an assistant coach, include the head coach of the sport in the conference.

If the concern is not resolved, a conference involving the student and/or parent, head coach of the sport, and the Special Education director should be scheduled.

### **ADDITIONAL POLICIES**

The head coach of each sport in GCCISD has the authority to set rules and regulations in addition to this Athletic Code of Conduct that are specific to his/her sport. These additional rules and regulations will be distributed to all participants in the program at the beginning of the season and all participants will be expected to follow the additional guidelines. The head coach will set the consequences for violation of the rules.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Sports that GCCISD participate in at present are Golf, Bocce, Softball, Flag Football, Bowling, Volleyball, Table Tennis, Basketball, Cycling, Athletes, and Soccer. Sports offered may change due to schedules, number of participants or budget.

Goose Creek provides uniforms, most sports equipment, travel, meals at competitions, entry fees, lodging and expenses at state competitions, and most other costs for all athletes in the GCCISD.

High school athletes can earn a sports letter jacket from their school by meeting the following guidelines:

#### **AFTER TURNING 16 YEARS OLD:**

1. Compete at 5 area competitions
2. Compete at 2 state competitions

Or they may receive a jacket upon coaches' recommendation

Each sport may offer different skill levels of competition/teams for example individual skills, traditional team play or unified teams. Traditional teams are made up of all Special Olympic athletes. Unified teams are made up of Special Olympic athletes and athletes without intellectual disabilities competing together.

Each sport has an area (Houston) competition and state. Some sports have local competitions or leagues and some can advance to National and International competitions (World Games). Entries for area and state competitions have to be submitted usually 4-6 weeks prior to competitions and once submitted, entries can not be added to or adjusted.

Athletes are responsible for keeping up with their practice/competition schedules, for returning paperwork by due dates (for sport sign ups and events), and for updating the coaches of address or phone number changes.

Athletes are also responsible for notifying the coaches if they are going to miss a practice and they are responsible for getting notes from the coaches if they miss a practice.

Athletes should limit the number of personal items that they take to competition/events. The coaches are not responsible for the loss of an athlete's personal item.

A sports/awards banquet will be held at the end of each year if enough athletes sign up to attend.

Astros, Rockets and other sporting event tickets are made available to our group sometimes during the year. Usually they are given to us on short notice and often with restrictions tied to them (age, sex or grade). We try to open them to all athletes based on the restrictions set.

Parents and family members are not allowed to ride the buses to or from athletic/competition events unless requested by a coach due to special circumstances. Families are encouraged to carpool.

Sport team pictures will be taken for each sport throughout the year. Athletes do not have to purchase pictures to be in them but they are available to purchase for a modest charge. We encourage all athletes to come and take team pictures whether or not they are purchasing any.

The district provides transportation after school from all jr and sr high schools to all practices scheduled at Alamo Elementary. Elementary students are responsible for their own transportation to practices. **All athletes must provide their own transportation home after all practices.** District policy prohibits coaches from transporting students in their personal vehicles. Special education teachers and aides on each campus have practice schedules and try to assist students in getting to their practice buses but it is ultimately the students' and their parents' responsibility to keep up with the schedules and get on the practice buses.

**Practices are usually held rain or shine** and are not normally cancelled the day of, but if an emergency happens and it is; coaches will make every effort to call all parents and let them know the athletes are coming home. If there is a communication breakdown and a student is sent home, or a student misses their bus and they are stranded at their school, **parents need to have a plan for their son/daughter to follow.** That may involve having their own house key, going to a neighbor's house and calling their parents, etc. Athletes should always have their parent's phone number or an emergency number with them that they can call if needed.

**Most of the Special Olympic coaches are teachers and are in the classroom all day. Please call and leave messages at the coaches' office (281-420-4394) during the day. Calls will be returned when they get back to the office after 3 pm. During the work day (7am -3pm), please limit calls to their classrooms or personal cell phones to emergencies only.**

**THE ATTACHED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO THE HEAD COACH BEFORE A STUDENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY ATHLETICS**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ATHLETIC POLICIES**

### **BY THE STUDENT-ATHLETE**

I have read and understand the Athletic Policies for the Student Athlete in Goose Creek CISD and agree that I will abide by all policies. Furthermore, I understand that my failure to abide by these policies and any other rules and regulations determined necessary by my coaches may result in suspension or removal from the athletic program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student-Athlete

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### **BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN**

I/we have read and understand the Athletic Policies for the Student Athlete in Goose Creek CISD and agree that I/we and my/our son/daughter will abide by all policies. Furthermore, I/we understand that failure of my/our child to abide by these policies and any other rules and regulations determined necessary by his/her coaches may result in suspension or removal from the athletic program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ATHLETIC POLICIES**

### **BY THE STUDENT-ATHLETE**

I have read and understand the Athletic Policies for the Student Athlete in Goose Creek CISD and agree that I will abide by all policies. Furthermore, I understand that my failure to abide by these policies and any other rules and regulations determined necessary by my coaches may result in suspension or removal from the athletic program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student-Athlete

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### **BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN**

I/we have read and understand the Athletic Policies for the Student Athlete in Goose Creek CISD and agree that I/we and my/our son/daughter will abide by all policies. Furthermore, I/we understand that failure of my/our child to abide by these policies and any other rules and regulations determined necessary by his/her coaches may result in suspension or removal from the athletic program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date