

Gulf Shores High School



Athletic Department Handbook

Gulf Shores High School

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Gulf Shores High School Athletics. We are proud of our athletic tradition and of the student-athletes and coaches who devote so much of their time and energy to honor and build on that tradition.

Gulf Shores High School's athletic program is designed to further the educational development of young men and women through participation. We at Gulf Shores High School believe that the competition, camaraderie, loyalty and respect for others experienced in athletics will serve as a foundation of each student's continued growth and life-long learning experience. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose, reflects the goals and objectives of Gulf Shores High School, furthers each student's educational maturity and health and contributes to school spirit and morale.

Those students who participate in the interscholastic athletic program commit themselves to the following goals:

- A primary focus on academic development and attendance.
- Avoidance of any action that would bring embarrassment or disrespect to themselves, their team, their school, and their community.
- Development of desirable personal health standards which includes the avoidance of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and illegal drugs and substances.
- Development of athletic skills.
- Growth of a competitive philosophy, which includes sportsmanship and a consistent awareness of school and community pride.

As a member of the Alabama High School Athletic Association, Gulf Shores High School adheres to and enforces a policy of academic eligibility. Details regarding the academic eligibility policy are reinforced each season by the coaching staff. It is the role of the Athletic Department to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the community. These rules need a broad base of community support, which can be achieved through communication to athletes and parents. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic handbook. We take this opportunity to acquaint you with the specific policies that are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics. **Please note that although the following policies and procedures are intended to set minimum guidelines for participation in athletics at Gulf Shores High School, the administration may establish additional sport specific rules or procedures from time to time that must also be observed.**

Gulf Shores High School reserves the right to interpret, amend or alter these policies at any time. If you have any questions or concerns about the materials contained in this handbook or about any aspect of the athletic program at Gulf Shores High School, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely yours,

Cindy Veazey
Principal

Matt Blake
Athletic Director

Mission Statement

All stakeholders involved in our program are on a mission to develop the “whole” player. We strive to impact young people’s character, academics, and athletic development in a team atmosphere. We believe that all three components are essential to the Gulf Shores “Dolphin” Program. It is our mission that players leave Gulf Shores a “Champion for Life.”

Athletic Eligibility

Students entering the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least six new Carnegie units with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six units. Four core courses must be included in those units passed and averaged. English, math, science, and social studies are core curriculum courses. An updated Pre-Participation Physical Form signed by an M.D. or D.O. Student Birth Certificate. NFHS sportsmanship completion. Student Participation agreement. Student “Good Standing” Form (transfer students only). Concussion Form on File.

Students entering the 9th grade must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least five new subjects with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those five subjects.

Students may regain eligibility at the end of the first semester by meeting the same requirements listed above during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable. All first semester work used in regaining eligibility must be completed by the fifth day of the second semester.

Athletic Trainer Coverage

The athletic director shall determine the athletic trainer’s game and practice coverage schedule in consultation with the athletic trainer and coaching staff. Coaches, parents, and student athletes must alert the athletic director to any individual situation that may require changes to the coverage schedule.

Attire and Appearance

Athletic teams represent our school and community. In order to project a good image, both athletes and team personnel must be well groomed and neat in appearance. It is expected that all uniforms will be properly worn and clean.

When a team travels and changes at the opponent’s site, they shall conform to the school’s daytime dress code as set forth in the Gulf Shores High School’s Student Handbook. Coaches may opt to have their team travel in the team’s appropriate uniform. Coaches may refuse to take an athlete to any game if his or her appearance violates this policy.

When all athletes enter their athletic period, participate in athletic practice or participate in an athletic game (home or away), they shall have their hair kept neat. The following guidelines will be followed:

- Hair will be fashioned so that all equipment will fit properly (no buns or ponytails for males; no protruding or wildly colored hair).
- Female student-athletes shall fashion their hair so that it is pulled back and out of their faces.

It should be understood that all AHSAA guidelines will be followed.

Attitude

Athletes should come to practice with a good attitude. Athletes should understand that practice is to make the individual and team better. Athletes should listen to corrections and should not take constructive criticism personally. Coaches and athletes are all striving to reach the same goals, and if they work together these goals will be attained.

Game Ejections

Any Coach or Player Ejected from participation will be fined \$300 for the first offense and any applicable increase for future offense. Players and Coaches must sit out of the next game for the second ejection. Athletes and Coaches will pay the monetary fines themselves to AHSAA. Fines can be reduced to \$100 if STAR Sportsmanship 2 module is completed.

Code of Ethics for Coaches

At Gulf Shores High School each student-athlete should be treated as an individual whose welfare shall be primary at all times. The coach must be aware that he or she serves as a model in the education of the student-athlete and, therefore, shall never place the value of winning above the value of character building.

The coach must constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the teaching profession. In all personal contact with the student-athletes, parents, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The coach shall support and enforce school rules for the prevention of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use and abuse, and under no circumstances shall allow the use of these substances. If a student athlete is arrested for alcohol or drug related offenses, the student-athlete will be suspended for a minimum of 20% of the athletic events for that particular sport. Athletes may be removed from the athletic team at the coaches discretion if their conduct is determined to detrimental to the team, athletic department, or school.

The coach shall promote the entire athletic program and direct his or her program in harmony with the total school program.

The coach shall be thoroughly acquainted with game, state, association and local rules, and is responsible for his interpretation to team members. The coach shall abide by the letter and spirit of these rules at all times.

Coaches shall actively use their influence to promote sportsmanship by working closely with parents, athletes, cheerleaders, and administrators.

Game officials shall have the respect and support of the coach. The coach shall not indulge in conduct that will incite players or spectators against officials, or against each other. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.

Before and after games, rival coaches should meet and exchange friendly greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

Conduct

The conduct of an athlete is closely observed in many areas of life. It is important student-athletes' behavior be above reproach in all of the following areas:

On The Field

In the area of athletic competition, a real athlete does not use profanity or illegal tactics and learns fast that losing is part of the game and that he or she should be gracious in defeat and modest in victory. It is always courteous to congratulate the opponent on a well-played game after the contest, whether in defeat or victory.

In the Classroom

In the academic area, a good athlete becomes a good student. A person cannot be a classroom laggard and think he or she can be an outstanding athlete. If he or she is lazy in class, he or she will become lazy on the practice field and will never reach his or her potential. As an athlete, one must plan his or her schedule so that he or she gives sufficient time and energy to his or her studies to ensure acceptable grades. In addition to maintaining good scholarship, an athlete should give respectful attention to classroom activities and show respect to other students and faculty at all times.

Communication

Positive innovation in sports requires commitment from students, parents, and coaches. To be successful, all involved must work to ensure effective communication. The following guidelines are intended to aid parents and staff in their interactions.

Communication Parents Can Expect from Coaches

1. Location and time of practices and games
2. Description of coach's philosophy
3. Coach's expectations for all players on the squad as well as the individual student-athlete.
4. Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning
5. Notification when a student-athlete is injured during participation

6. Notification of disciplinary action resulting in removal of student-athlete from participation.
7. Request for support toward the commitment of the program. For example, coaches may ask a parent's help in ensuring that a student-athlete is at practice on time or imposing a reasonable curfew.

What are appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches?

1. The treatment of their child both physically and mentally.
2. Skill improvement and development
3. Concerns about their child's behavior.

What things are not appropriate for parents to discuss with coaches?

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

Communication Coaches Should Expect from Parents

1. Individual concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Advance notification of any schedule conflicts
3. Support toward the commitment of the program. For example, coaches may ask a parent's help in ensuring that a student athlete is at practice on time or imposing a reasonable curfew.

If a parent has a concern to discuss with a coach, what procedure should be followed?

1. Make an appointment with the coach
2. If the coach can not be reached, call the athletic director to set up a meeting.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach **before, during, or after a game or practice**. These are emotional times for both the parent and coach and this period does not promote objective analysis of the situation.

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the athletic director to discuss the situation further.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

We are continually attempting to improve communication with the student-athletes and parents. For our program to be successful, it is necessary that everyone involved understand the direction the program is headed to avoid unnecessary miscommunications. Positive and effective communication can only strengthen our program.

Fundraising

Student-athletes will be required to participate in the fundraising projects for the sports in which they participate.

Insurance

Gulf Shores High School insures athletes on a very limited basis. The insurance coverage provided has very specific limits and is not designed as basic health insurance, but rather as a companion plan to the athlete's personal insurance and as limited coverage if the athlete has no personal insurance. The athletic department must have on file a copy of each student-athlete's parent's insurance card. If the student-athlete does not have health insurance, the parents must purchase All Kids Insurance.

Jewelry

Student-athletes who enter their athletic block, participate in athletic practice or participate in an athletic game (home or away) shall not wear jewelry or adornments of any kind.

Female athletes may not use metal ponytail holders.

All student-athletes will abide by guidelines set forth by the Alabama High School Athletic Association.

Physical Examination

All student-athletes must have on file with the athletic director a physical examination before he or she is allowed to tryout or practice with the team.

Quitting a Team

In rare instances, an athlete may find it necessary to quit a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The student-athlete must talk with his or her coach and head coach.
2. The student-athlete and coaches must report the situation to the athletic director.
3. The student-athlete must return all equipment issued.
4. All monetary obligations must be met.

Athletes will be allowed to quit any team they try out for during the first two weeks of the season as established by the AHSAA official start date for practice. After that time, if an athlete quits for other than medical reasons, he or she will not be allowed to compete in another sports activity for the remainder of that sport's season, unless properly cleared by the coaches involved.

Sponsored Sports

Boys			Girls		
Sport	JV	V	Sport	JV	V
Football	X	X	Softball	X	X
Basketball	X	X	Tennis	X	X
Baseball	X	X	Basketball	X	X
Tennis	X	X	Track	X	X
Track	X	X	Volleyball	X	X
Soccer	X	X	Swimming		X
Sport	JV	V	Sport	JV	V
Golf		X	Soccer	X	X
Cross Country		X	Golf		X
Swimming		X	Cheerleading	X	X
Bowling		X	Bowling		X
Wrestling		X	Cross Country		X

Sportsmanship

We have a constant challenge that our high school sports program serves an educational purpose in the lives of young men and women.

The challenge is sportsmanship. Good sportsmanship and bad sportsmanship determine whether athletics will live or die.

The administrator holds the key to the issue of sportsmanship. If he or she appreciates the importance of it by insisting that sportsmanship be good at any cost, the school cannot go wrong. If he or she realizes the value of sportsmanship but fails to implement its good practice, then the school cannot help but run into problems.

The coach is the standard-bearer of sportsmanship. His or her role is a critical one. He or she has the challenge of either making a contest a real showcase for education or turning it into a meaningless exercise in winning or losing. He or she can help players and spectators do the right thing through winning or losing. He or she can help players and spectators do the right thing through self-control and dignity or can incite either or both to act contrary to the aims and objectives of school athletics.

The players generally mirror the coach in exhibiting sportsmanship. Many, of course, do not need the coach's direction; they know how you play the game is the number one priority. The players are neither puppets nor mature individuals and are, therefore, susceptible to inconsistent sportsmanship. But the coach, the good coach, knows how to handle difficult situations even in front of spectators.

What about the spectators? Most of them know what high school sports are about. But an irritating minority always will be with us. The "good guys" in the

audience, we hope will minimize the influence of the “bad guys.” But if they don’t, then there is all the more reason for the players to present themselves well, for the coach to be above reproach at all times, and for the administrator to prepare and enforce procedures to keep fans in line.

As long as there exists within all of us that human drive to win, we will have to be concerned about sportsmanship. The desire to win is not bad by itself. On the contrary, it is good. It is the proper attitude with which to approach any endeavor. To do otherwise would be opt for failure instead of success. But while the quest to win must not be stifled, it must be honorable. In athletics, the quest must carry with it the realization that somebody is not going to win. In high school sports, winning cannot be the “only thing.” Handling loss is equally as educational, therefore, equally as important as winning. Remember, high school sports will live or die not by contests won or lost, but by my sportsmanship – good or bad.

Transportation

All athletes shall travel to and from all away athletic contests in transportation provided by the athletic department. Athletes will remain with their team under the supervision of a coach when attending away contests. All school bus rules remain in effect for athletic travel, including but not limited to rules regarding food, noise, remaining in seats, and the care and respect for equipment.

Exception: When an emergency arises, athletes may return from athletic events with their parents with the permission of the particular coach. Written parental permission must be submitted to the coach prior to the event. The athletic director will handle extenuating circumstances. Parents should contact the involved coach well in advance of the event if there are any questions.

The use of privately owned automobiles to transport athletes is not recommended. All forms are to be filed and state transportation guidelines are to be followed. **Athletes may not transport other athletes by automobile.** Only parents/guardians may transport their own child to and from a contest.

It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that their children are picked up from the school at the end of each practice and athletic contest. If a student-athlete is left at a school waiting for a ride home for an extended period of time, the Gulf Shores Police Department will be contacted.

Valuables

Athletes should leave all valuables at home – not in the locker room. The Gulf Shores High School Athletic Department provides student-athletes with locks. Each replacement lock will cost the student-athlete \$10. All lockers must be locked properly.