

# Gaston Day School Athletics

## S P A R T A N S

### Mission:

Gaston Day's Athletic Department exists to fulfill the school's mission and play an integral role in our students' overall education; this will be done through competitive team experiences that reinforce departmental core values and build school spirit.

### Department Core Values:

Team Before Self, Tireless Preparation, and Fierce in Competition

### Educate our Students

- Gaston Day student-athletes will embrace and embody the core values of GDS Spartans.
- Gaston Day student-athletes will value their commitment to their team.
- Gaston Day student-athletes will learn the key concepts, principles, and fundamentals of their sporting endeavor.
- Gaston Day student-athletes will work to develop the skills necessary to compete at their participation level.

### Prepare Students for Academic Success

- Gaston Day student-athletes will learn to define success through the pursuit of their full potential.
- Gaston Day student-athletes will exhibit grace and determination in the face of adversity.
- Gaston Day student-athletes will put forth consistently outstanding physical and mental effort regardless of the setting or game situation.

### Prepare Students for Responsible, Productive Lives

- Gaston Day student-athletes will take pride in representing their school with the highest level of class and sportsmanship. They will always consider their actions when interacting with their opponents, officials, and fans.
- Gaston Day student-athletes will strive to fulfill their roles in order to best serve their team.
- Gaston Day student-athletes will always cooperate with and respect their teammates and coaches.
- Gaston Day student-athletes will distinguish themselves as positive leaders on their teams and within the surrounding community on a daily basis.

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The primary purpose of the Athletic Handbook is to serve as a guide to administration, faculty, students, parents, and coaches as they interpret athletic policies at Gaston Day School. Although every facet of the athletic program cannot be covered, the existing philosophy and guidelines set forth here are to be standard practice.

As policy and procedures are amended in the natural course of events, this handbook will be revised, in its annual publication, to reflect those changes.

### **II. LEAGUE AND ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP**

#### **NCISAA**

Gaston Day School is a member of the North Carolina Independent Schools Athletic Association (NCISAA), competing in the 2A classification. As a member school, Gaston Day School agrees to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations promoted by the association. The NCISAA solicits input and is responsive to requests for rule modification from member schools, appointed committees, and coaches' associations. Interested parties can learn more about the NCISAA, its mission, its rules and regulations, and member schools by visiting [ncisaa.org](http://ncisaa.org).

#### **MAC**

Gaston Day School has been a member of the Metrolina Athletic Conference (MAC) since 2014 and will abide by league schedules, rules, and regulations. MAC member schools are: Concord Academy, Gaston Christian School, Gaston Day School, Hickory Grove Christian School, Metrolina Christian Academy, Northside Christian Academy, Southlake Christian Academy, and Westminster Catawba Christian School.

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### III. ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

#### PRE-PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Every student-athlete is responsible for obtaining a sports physical prior to participating in any athletic activity. Physicals are valid for 13 months after the exam takes place. All student-athletes and a parent must also review and sign Concussion Awareness and NCISAA Consent to Participate Forms on a yearly basis.

#### JV & VARSITY SPORTS

Students in grades 7-10 are eligible to compete on JV teams; students in grades 7-12 are eligible to compete on varsity NCISAA teams. In most instances, the coaching staff will initiate the process for middle school students to try out for JV or varsity teams. The following varsity sports are traditionally offered at Gaston Day School: Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country, Golf, Soccer, Swimming, Tennis, Track & Field, and Volleyball. Gaston Day usually fields JV volleyball and JV boys' basketball teams. Sports offerings will vary with student interest.

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS

Middle school sports are open to students in grades 6-8. The following middle school sports are traditionally offered at Gaston Day School: Baseball, Basketball, Cross Country, Soccer, and Volleyball. Sports offerings will vary with student interest.

#### JOINING A TEAM, COMMITMENT, AND ATTENDANCE

The following guidelines were created to assist Spartan student-athletes in developing team unity, pride, and commitment:

- 1) The Director of Athletics and the Head Coach of each team will determine the number of student-athletes on each team's roster. When the number of students wishing to play exceeds the number of players who may be reasonably developed, try-outs will occur and students will be cut. Coaches will be instructed on how to conduct this process with as much respect and dignity afforded each student as possible. In the event that a student-athlete on the team is unable to fulfill his or her responsibilities and becomes ineligible to participate, then the coach may approach a student who was previously cut about joining the team.
- 2) In the event that a current or new transfer student would like to join a team that did not make cuts in the middle of the season, these steps must be followed:
  - a) The Director of Athletics will first check with the NCISAA to determine if this student-athlete is eligible to participate in postseason competition. This does not determine whether or not the student has the opportunity to make the team, but it is the first step of the process.
  - b) The Director of Athletics and the Head Coach will meet to determine if the student-athlete should be granted the opportunity to participate.
- 3) Student-athletes are expected to exhibit a full commitment to the team. The goal for any student-athlete is to attend 100% of all team functions and activities. Respect for the team and the coaches demands attendance. Commitment by students and families enriches the athletic experience and gives the team the best chance to develop in order to compete successfully. Any absences should be discussed with the coach as far in advance as possible. Absences without

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notice or for inappropriate reasons may result in the removal of the student from the team. The guidelines that have been established regarding absences from classes serve as good guidelines for athletics as well. Examples of legitimate absences include: school-sponsored programs and activities, medical reasons, family emergencies, weddings, funerals, religious observances, and prior-approved college visits.

### EARNING VARSITY LETTERS

In order to earn a Varsity letter, student-athletes must meet the following conditions:

- 1) Retention of academic eligibility throughout the entirety of the season; and
- 2) Demonstration of satisfactory commitment to the team during the season through attendance, attitude, and effort.

### ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY AND ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Students who do not attend school on the same day as a co-curricular activity may not participate in the activity. Students must arrive at school by 10:40am in order to participate in co-curricular activities that day. Students missing school after 10:40am for a prescheduled doctor's appointment must present a doctor's note in order to participate in a co-curricular activity that day. Any other reason for an excused absence after 10:40am must be pre-approved by the Director of Athletics or appropriate Division Head in order to participate in co-curricular activities on the same day.

Eligibility for co-curricular participation will be evaluated at the end of each of the four marking periods of the school year (Fall Interim in October, First Semester in January, Spring Interim in March, Second Semester in June). A student will be ineligible to participate in any co-curricular activities for the next marking period if he or she receives any of the following on his/her report card\*:

- 2 or more conduct grades of 3 or higher; or
- 2 or more course grades below a 70 for that marking period; or
- 1 or more failing grades in a course for that marking period

Grades in the June marking period determine eligibility for the first fall marking period.

\*Upon the very first occurrence of any of these situations, the student will receive a one-time probation lasting one marking period. While on probation, students may participate in co-curricular activities. Students are allowed one probation during their academic career in the Middle School and one probation during their academic career in the Upper School.

Athletic coaches work with faculty to meet the after-school academic needs of students. Occasional lab time or study/tutoring sessions may require an athlete to be tardy for or miss practices. Such instances should be easily worked out through conversation/e-mail with the athletic department staff. Routine absences from athletic practices, however, may require students to reconsider priorities and commitments.

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### EARLY DISMISSALS FOR ATHLETICS

In the event of an early dismissal for an athletic event, student-athletes must be proactive by communicating with their teachers in advance of the absence. They need to identify which classes they will miss and see those teachers early in the day to turn in and receive assignments. In the event that a test or quiz is taking place during that class period then they should make every attempt to take the assessment earlier in the day during a free period or lunch. If the student does not have a free period on the day of the absence then they should arrange a suitable time to make the assessment up with their teacher. Ideally, this will still be in advance of the absence.

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### **IV. MISCELLANEOUS PROTOCOLS**

#### **TEAM RULES**

While there are standards and policies in place for the entire Gaston Day School Athletic Department, all teams will be run differently and have certain rules of their own to follow. This is a byproduct of having different coaches, a wide range of sport structures, and various age levels. Coaches should outline their specific team rules at the beginning of the season, and student-athletes are expected to comply with that team's rule set within their given season.

#### **GAME DAY DRESS**

As a matter of team and school pride and morale, teams may dress in a uniformed manner on game days. The team appearance may range from high dress to team t-shirts. Students are not permitted to wear their game uniforms to school.

#### **PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT/PARENT CONCERNS REGARDING ATHLETIC DECISION-MAKING**

The concerns of students and parents regarding athletics need to be expressed. Voicing concerns needs to occur in an appropriate manner. Please adhere to the following format.

Step 1: Contact the coach to express and explain the concerns. Whenever possible, parents should encourage their child to approach their coach to express these concerns first. If the concern is not resolved, parents should then contact the coach.

Step 2: If the concern is not resolved, parents should contact the Director of Athletics. Setting up a conference time could be necessary.

Step 3: If the Director of Athletics is unable to resolve the situation, the Head of School should be informed. A second conference may be set up at this time.

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

Usually, all athletes travel to and from games on vehicles provided by Gaston Day School. Students may depart from games with their parents or other parents provided direct notice has been given to the coach. Should extenuating or special circumstances arise, the Director of Athletics or the Director of Transportation must approve any other arrangements. Students are never to ride with other students to or from athletic events unless it is a sibling or regular carpool. There may arise a need to have parent volunteers provide transportation.

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### V. ATHLETIC TRAINING & SAFETY

#### ATHLETIC FIRST RESPONDER RESPONSIBILITIES

The health and well-being of Gaston Day School student-athletes is a top priority. The athletic department employs an Athletic First Responder to be present at school for most practices and some athletic contests. Student-athletes are encouraged to see the Athletic First Responder if they have been injured or feel the onset of a potential injury.

#### PLAN IN THE EVENT OF AN INJURY

The Coach is responsible for the following:

- 1) Providing proper emergency procedures within his/her scope of knowledge.
- 2) Notifying the Athletic First Responder.
- 3) Calling 911 if necessary.
- 4) Notifying the student's parents or other responsible individuals.
- 5) Submitting a report of all injuries to the Athletic First Responder.
- 6) Touching base with parents after an accident or injury to inquire about the student's health.

The Athletic First Responder is responsible for the following:

- 1) The Athletic First Responder will provide an injury assessment and notify the coach, parents, or other responsible individuals of the athlete's condition.
- 2) The Athletic First Responder will then determine if the athlete can return to play, continue activity with modified participation, or is to be referred to a physician.
- 3) If the athlete is referred for further care, a report needs to be given to the Athletic First Responder so the athlete's condition can continue to be monitored.
- 4) The Physician/Athletic First Responder should make the final decision regarding return to play.

The Student-Athlete is responsible for:

- 1) Attending all prescribed rehab sessions.
- 2) Maintaining their commitment to their team throughout the course of their injury. They should attend all practices and games unless they are getting treatment.

#### LIGHTNING SAFETY

If lightning is seen or thunder can be heard, coaches will stop activity and seek protective shelter immediately. Coaches will allow 30 minutes to pass after the last sound of thunder or a lightning strike before resuming activity.

#### HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION POLICY

All NCISAA schools comply with a Heat Acclimatization Policy for all fall sports. The heat acclimatization period is defined as the initial 14 consecutive days of preseason practice. The goal of the acclimatization period is to enhance exercise heat tolerance and the ability to exercise safely and effectively in warm to hot conditions. This period should begin on the first day of official team practice for the season.

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### CONCUSSION/HEAD INJURY SAFETY

The NCISAA requires member schools to comply with North Carolina's Gfeller-Waller Concussion Awareness Law.