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Introductions

To the parent:

This material is presented to you because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics and your willingness to permit him or her to compete. We believe that participation in sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences, which assists students in coping with everyday life.

We, who are concerned with the educational development of boys and girls through athletics, feel that a properly controlled, well-organized sports program meets with the students' needs for mental alertness, physical, emotional and spiritual growth. It is our hope to maintain a program that is sound in purpose and will further each students educational maturity.

A student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and self-denial. These are desirable character traits that should be important to any Christian athlete. These are the reasons we place such stress on good training habits. Failure to comply with the rules of training and conduct means exclusion from the squad. This concept of self-discipline and self-denial is tempered by our responsibility to recognize the rights of the individual within the objectives of the team. There is no place in athletics for students who will not discipline their minds and bodies for rigorous competition. We are striving for excellence and do not want our athletes to compromise with mediocrity.

When your son or daughter enlisted in one of our sports programs, he or she committed our staffs to certain responsibilities and obligations, which are:

- ◆ to provide adequate equipment and facilities
- ◆ to provide well trained coaches
- ◆ to provide competitive contests governed by skilled officials

Likewise, we feel that you have committed yourselves to certain responsibilities and obligations. We would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with specific policies that we believe are necessary for a well-organized program of athletics.

It is the role of the department of athletics to make rules that govern the spirit of competition for the school. These rules need a broad basis of support, which is achieved only through communication to the parent. It is our hope to accomplish this objective through this athletic publication for students and parents.

To the athlete:

Being a member of a Genesee Christian School athletic team is the fulfillment of an early ambition for many students. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad of Genesee Christian School, you have inherited a great tradition, a tradition you are challenged to uphold.

Our tradition has been to win with honor in a Christ-like manner. We desire to win, but only with honor to our athletes, our school, our opponents, and most importantly, to our Lord Jesus Christ. Such a tradition is worthy of the best efforts of all concerned. Over many years our squads have achieved more than their share of league and tournament championships. Many individuals have set records and won All-District, All-State, and All-Conference honors. Several of our squads have been honored with Good Sportsmanship awards.

It will not be easy to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When you wear the colors of your school, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but are willing to assume the responsibilities that go with them. However, the contributions you make should be a satisfying accomplishment to you and your family.

- ◆ **RESPONSIBILITY TO YOURSELF:** The most important of these responsibilities is to develop in yourself Christ-like character. You owe it to yourself to get the greatest possible good from your athletic experiences.
- ◆ **RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOUR SCHOOL:** Another responsibility you assume as a squad member is to your school. Genesee Christian cannot maintain its position as having an outstanding school unless you do your best in whatever activity you wish to engage. By participating in athletics to the maximum of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of your school.

You assume a leadership role when you are on an athletic squad. The student body and members of the school community know you. You are on stage with the spotlight on you. The student body, the school community and our opponents view our school and its character by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the field. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to school spirit and the reputation of the school. Make Genesee Christian proud of you, and the school community proud of your school, by your faithful exemplification of these ideals.

- ◆ **RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS:** As a squad member you also bear a heavy responsibility to your home. When you know in your heart that you have lived up to all of the training rules, that you have practiced to the best of your ability everyday, and that you have played the game with all your effort, you can keep your self-respect and your family can be justly proud of you.

The younger students in our school are watching you. They will mimic your behavior in many ways. Set a good example for them.

- ◆ RESPONSIBILITY TO CHRIST: Your greatest responsibility is to Jesus Christ. The challenge given in 1 Corinthians 10:31 "...to do all to the Glory of God", should do more to motivate you to excellence than anything. If you never give your Lord anything to be ashamed of in your athletic experience, you will have done well indeed.

Athletic Philosophy

Statement of philosophy:

The Genesee Christian Athletic Program should provide a variety of experiences to aid in the development of Christ-like habits and attitudes in students that will prepare them for adult life.

The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing policies, rules and regulations. While we take great pride in winning, we do not condone “winning at any cost.” We discourage any and all pressures which might tend to neglect good sportsmanship. At all times the athletic program must be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity.

Athletic goals and objectives:

OUR GOAL - To assist our school in fulfilling its mission and purpose. That is to assist families and local churches in training young men and women in truth and righteousness.

OUR SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES - The student athlete shall learn:

1. To work with others - In our society a person must develop self discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice
2. To be successful - Our society is very competitive. We do not always win, but we succeed when we continually strive to do our best. You can learn to accept defeat by striving with earnest dedication.
3. To develop good sportsmanship by displaying a Christ-like attitude in victory and defeat.
4. To improve and grow by establishing goals and striving to reach those goals.
5. To enjoy athletics - Most athletes participate in a particular sport because they enjoy it. Hard work, dedication, and sacrifice are all important components of successful athletic programs. However, having fun while you play is equally important.

Chain of Command

Player Relations

In the event of conflicts or difficulties with members of the coaching staff or members of the team, students and parents are expected to follow the proper “chain of command.”

- ◆ Conflict with another member of the team - Go to that person and attempt to resolve the problem. If this attempt fails, then go see the coach. If the problem is still unresolved, go to the Athletic Director. If this fails, see the high school principal. If the problem remains, see the administrator.
- ◆ Conflict with the coach - Go to the coach and attempt to resolve the matter. If this attempt fails, see the Athletic Director. If the problem still exists, go to the high school principal. If the problem is still unresolved, go to the administrator.

Avenues of appeal are available and effective. Conflicts get out of hand when people refuse to seek resolutions in a biblical manner. Each member of the team including parents should prayerfully pursue conflict resolution with Jesus’ instructions in Matthew 18 in mind. Gossip in the locker room, in the stands, or at home will solve nothing. Late night phone calls or impromptu conferences with the coach at courtside immediately following a contest can have disastrous results for all parties involved. Take some time to think and pray about a possible solution before you act. Follow God’s plan for conflict resolution and the difficulty will have a much better chance of being resolved in a manner that is pleasing to everyone.

Parent/Coach Relations

Both parenting and coaching can be difficult jobs. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the others and provide greater benefit to the student. As parents, when your children become involved in our programs, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication you should expect from coach:

- ◆ Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all players.
- ◆ Locations and times of all practices and contests.
- ◆ Team requirements.
- ◆ Emergency procedures if an injury occurs.
- ◆ Team rules and requirements.

Communication coaches expect from athletes:

- ◆ Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance.
- ◆ Special concerns in regards to a coaches philosophy and or expectations.
- ◆ If things do not go as your child wishes or expects, discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

- ◆ The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- ◆ Ways to help your child improve.
- ◆ Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

- ◆ Playing time.
- ◆ Team strategy or play calling.
- ◆ Other student-athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

If you have a concern to discuss with a coach:

1. Call to set up an appointment. If you do not know your coaches phone number, please call the high school (743-3108) and we will obtain it for you.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, please call the athletic director and he will set up the appointment for you.
3. Please do NOT attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

If the meeting with coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution:

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

Requirements for Participation

Physical Exam

A yearly physical examination is required. The physical form must be completed by the physician and submitted to the coach prior (BEFORE THE FIRST PRACTICE) to participation. The form must be kept on file in the athletic office. Sports physicals completed after April 15th are good for the following school year.

Emergency medical authorization:

Each athlete's parents shall complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Form giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parents are not available. The form will be kept in the possession of the coach at all practices and games.

Risk of participation:

All athletes and parents must realize the risk of serious injury, which may be a result of athletic participation. Genesee Christian School will use the following safeguards to make every effort to eliminate injury:

- Conduct a mandatory parent/coach meeting prior to the start of each season to fully explain the athletic policies and to advise, caution and warn parents/athletes of the potential for injury.
- Maintain a continuing education program for coaches to learn the most up-to-date techniques and skills to be taught in their sport.
- Instruct all athletes about the dangers of participation in the particular sport.

Financial obligations and equipment:

- ◆ Pay to Play - Each sport season, when squads are selected, athletes will be assessed a fee to help maintain the cost of the athletic program. The current fee for high school athletes is **\$75** per player per sport, and **\$50** per player per sport for junior high and **\$35** per player per sport for elementary athletes.
- ◆ Uniforms - In most cases Genesee Christian will supply the game uniform for each athlete. In the event that it becomes necessary for the athlete to purchase a portion of the game uniform, that portion will become the property of the athlete. In some cases a practice uniform is required. If the athlete purchases the practice uniform it becomes his or her property.
- ◆ Equipment - All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them or used by them. School furnished uniforms and warm-ups for games are to be worn only for games. All equipment or uniforms not returned in good condition at the end of the season will be subject to a financial penalty.

Athletic Codes of Conduct

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The administration and coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The testimony of our athletes is an important consideration. The testimony of our school is a major consideration.

Any conduct that results in dishonor or loss of testimony to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality or violations of law, tarnish the reputation and testimony of everyone associated with the athletic programs and will not be tolerated.

Code of conduct:

1. Sportsmanship: Displaying evidence of good sportsmanship at all times regardless of the outcome of the game is the goal that all athletes and coaches should strive for. Therefore, it is imperative that our behavior does not in any way bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Sportsmanship demands from us some of the following:
 - ◆ A spirit of respect and genuine concern for our opponents.
 - ◆ Officials are to be treated with courtesy and respect.
 - ◆ Self-control even in very difficult situations.
 - ◆ A Christ-like attitude when we enjoy individual or team success. Remember the challenge found in Philippians 1:27, "...let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ."
 - ◆ Trash-talking or taunting - The National Federation disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of race, religion, gender or national origin. This type of violation can result in an athlete being ejected or disqualified from a game immediately. The athletic department at Genesee Christian respects and will enforce this policy.
2. Attitude:
 - ◆ Toward your coach: He or she is the authority that has been placed over you. Without our coaches, we have no athletic program. Treating them with anything less than respect for any reason is wrong.
 - ◆ Toward your teammates: Enthusiastic support of each member of your team is the attitude we endorse in this program.
3. Ejection from a contest: The Michigan High School Athletic Association requires that any athlete ejected from a contest must be suspended for the next scheduled game. This rule also applies to tournament play and will carry over to the following year if the expulsion

occurred during the last game of the season. This rule also applies to any member of the coaching staff.

Means of discipline:

In dealing with violations of good conduct, the athletic department reserves the right to use appropriate means of discipline, including suspension or expulsion from the team. The athletic department will support all means of discipline that occur as a result of violation of policies not found in the Athletic Handbook that are recorded in the Student Handbook.

Basic Athletic Department Policies

The privilege of participation:

Participation in athletics is not a right, it is a privilege. This is a notion that is lost in a society that glorifies the “star athlete” while ignoring the rest of the team. It is the goal of this athletic program to restore the belief that all members of the team are valuable. It is an honor to be a part of a team, wear the uniform, and represent your school throughout the course of a season. This privilege lasts only for “a season” and ends all too quickly. Enjoy that privilege while you can.

Attendance:

1. School Policy - All attendance policies covered by the Student Handbook will be enforced. Any special circumstance that may occur must be approved in advance by the Athletic Director & High School Principal.
2. Practice Policy - An athlete should always consult his or her coach before missing practice. The coach is under no obligation to start or play an athlete that missed practice the day before a contest. With the exception of severe weather and practice during holidays, all practices are mandatory.
3. Vacations policy - Vacations by athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged. In the event that an absence due to a vacation is unavoidable, the athlete must:
 - Contact the head coach prior to the vacation.
 - Be willing to assume the consequences related to their status on that squad as a starter, 2nd string, 3rd string, etc.

Limited Participation:

1. Participation on more than one team - Athletes may participate in only one sport per season. Any exception to this rule must be cleared by the coach and Athletic Director.
2. Dropping or transferring to another sport - On occasion 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 before you transfer:
 - a. Consult with your head coach, and return all equipment issued to you.
 - b. Report your situation to the Athletic Director.

Injury/medication:

Reporting of injury - All injuries which occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, it will be necessary to have an injury report form completed. Once athletes are treated by a physician, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission to return to the activity.

Medication - Any athlete that is using medication of any kind, prescription or non-prescription must have that medication supplied by the parent. This medication along with instructions should be kept in the high school office. No coach or team member should keep or distribute medication without written parental and or physicians guidelines.

Academic eligibility:

Student athletes must meet specific academic requirements to be eligible to participate in athletics at Genesee Christian School. The MHSAA requires that in order for students to participate in high school sports, they must be passing 66% of their classes and must have passed 66% of their classes the previous semester. In addition to MHSAA regulations, GCS also requires students to meet the following criteria.

1. Student athletes must be passing all classes
2. Student athletes must maintain no lower than a 2.0 GPA (C average / 74%) in all classes.
3. Student athletes must maintain acceptable behavior according to the student code of conduct.

The following is a list of guidelines that the athletic department will follow in order to determine and monitor eligibility.

1. Students are eligible to play sports at the beginning of a new school year by meeting the MHSAA minimum requirement for the previous semester.
2. Eligibility will be checked on a weekly basis beginning after the third week of each quarter. **The grading period will end each Friday and ineligibility runs from Wednesday to Wednesday.**
3. Students meeting eligibility requirements at the end of a quarter will be eligible for the first three weeks of the following quarter.
4. Any exceptions must be approved by administration.
5. Ineligible students may attend practices and games, but attendance will not be required.

Dress code:

- ◆ Male athletes:
 - a. Practice clothes should be modest and loose fitting.
 - b. Practice jerseys or practice uniforms must be worn if they are available.
 - c. Shirts must be worn at all times.
 - d. Ties must be worn on game days. They are to be worn with a dress shirt that is designed to be worn with a tie.

- ◆ Female athletes
 - a. Practice attire should be modest and loose fitting.
 - b. “Tank-top” practice jerseys are allowed if a “T-shirt” is worn underneath.
 - c. Sweat pants are acceptable if loose fitting and modest.
 - d. Dress code for game days is no different than what is worn on a typical school day.
 - e. Ladies are allowed to wear dress pants to a game in which they are spectators.

- ◆ Procedure for changing before and after a contest:
 - a. No athlete should change into his or her game uniform before it is necessary. Some application of common sense is vital concerning this matter.
 - b. Once a contest is finished you are to change back into school dress code. Exceptions to the rule are as follows:
 - ◆ If there are no changing facilities available.
 - ◆ If you are going home immediately after the game is over.
 - ◆ If you have been issued a uniform warm-up suit, the complete warm-up suit may substitute for school dress code.

Squad selection:

It is our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program at Genesee Christian. Coaches are encouraged to keep as many students as possible without unbalancing the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. In the event that cutting becomes a necessity, the following information shall be provided to all candidates for the team:

- ◆ The extent of the try-out period.
- ◆ The criteria used to select the team.
- ◆ The expected practice commitment if they make the team.
- ◆ The expected game commitment if they make the team.

Playing time:

- Elementary basketball - All team members must play at least one full quarter. Coaches are encouraged to allow players to play a variety of positions.
- All junior high teams - All team members must play in each contest. Coaches are encouraged to allow all players to play a variety of positions.
- All high school teams - Coaches are not required to play everyone in every contest. However, when the outcome of a contest has been more or less decided, coaches are encouraged to substitute whenever possible.

Crowd Control

It is the desire of the Athletic Department at Genesee Christian School that our crowd contributes to an atmosphere that makes our guests welcome and our players and coaches feel enthusiastic support. It is absolutely essential that Jesus Christ is glorified by all our actions at an athletic contest. There are three elements that must work together to make this a reality.

The coaching staff

All members of the coaching staff must be aware of the following guidelines that contribute to the proper atmosphere:

- ◆ Coaches influence not only the conduct of the players under their direction, but also those who attend athletic contests. Since the coach is influential in setting the tone of conduct, he must visibly show that he values self-control, fair play and sportsmanlike behavior.
- ◆ Deliberate attempts to humiliate an opponent will not be tolerated, e.g., running up the score.

The student athlete

- ◆ Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you..."
- ◆ Refrain from making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial or sexual nature.
- ◆ Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.

Spectators

Our fans are perhaps the most important element of all. May these guidelines be helpful to all our spectators as they strive to be like Christ at each and every athletic event this year.

- ◆ Remember that you are at a contest to support and yell for your team and to enjoy the skill and competition; not to intimidate or ridicule the other team and its fans.
- ◆ Remember that school athletics are learning experiences for students and that mistakes are made. Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, and as athletes.
- ◆ Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.

- ◆ Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. Treat them as you would treat a guest in your own home.
- ◆ Refrain from making any kind of derogatory remarks to your opponents during the game, especially comments of ethnic, racial or sexual nature.
- ◆ Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
- ◆ Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- ◆ Be a positive role model through your own actions and by censuring those around you at events whose behavior is unbecoming.

Athletic Awards Policy

Varsity letter requirements:

1. Faithful attendance to practice - You are allowed to miss three practices that are excused and still earn a letter. Any circumstance that could be considered an exception must be cleared with the Athletic Director and the head coach.
2. Faithful attendance to games - You may not miss any games for an unexcused reason. You are allowed to miss three games that are excused absences.
3. Appearances in contests - You must appear in at least half the quarters, halves, games, meets, innings, etc. Failure to meet the required amount of playing time does not necessarily indicate the loss of a letter. The head coach reserves the right to grant the letter if he so desires. The letter is given only once.
4. Athletes that letter in a given sport more than once will receive a gold service bar and certificate for that sport.
5. A pin indicating the type of sport participated in will be given once for each sport in which a letter is earned.

Examples of awards that are exclusively for varsity athletes only are:

- ◆ All Conference
- ◆ All District
- ◆ All State

These awards may be in the form of a certificate or medal.

Transportation

Genesee Christian Schools does not have a fleet of vehicles nor a limitless supply of drivers to transport our athletes to and from games. Transportation is often difficult to arrange. Please keep in mind some of the following guidelines:

1. If a bus or van is used:
 - ◆ Essential personnel has priority to ride. This is players, coaches, scorekeepers, managers, or cheerleaders.
 - ◆ All others may ride only with the permission of the Athletic Director. This permission must be secured at least 24 hours in advance.
 - ◆ No student that is not essential personnel may leave school early to ride the team bus without specific permission from the Athletic Director and the High School Principal.
 - ◆ Return times are impossible to predict accurately. An estimated time of leaving and return will be announced and posted ahead of time. Students should call parents when they know what time they will arrive at the school. Please remember that the coaches are required to stay with their athletes until they have been picked up by parents to return home. The coaches are not required to stay beyond a fifteen minute waiting period. After this time has expired, they have the right to take the athletes home with them and have parents pick them up there. Parents please remember to do your best to pick up your athletes on time.
 - ◆ All vehicles used by Genesee Christian are borrowed. Keeping them clean and free of damage is imperative. Any abuse of these vehicles by a student or athlete will be dealt with severely.
 - ◆ In the event that you must drive to a contest or get to the game in another vehicle besides the one provided by the school you must obtain permission beforehand. Permission must be granted by the Athletic Director or High School Principal.
2. Other means of transportation may include a parent or coaches vehicle. It is possible for students to use their own vehicles. This must be cleared in advance by the Athletic Director and High School Principal.
3. The Athletic Department is striving to have as much local competition as possible. Generally, if an opponent is less than 30 miles from the school no transportation is provided. It is the responsibility of the parents to get the athletes to and from the game.
4. In the event of unusual circumstances such as a breakdown or inclement weather, every effort will be made to communicate the reason for the delay and the new estimated time of arrival to parents. Every effort will be made to bring the athletes home as safely and as quickly as possible.