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MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

***“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”
Colossians 3:17***

The mission of GRACE Christian School athletics is to provide an atmosphere where student-athletes can develop their physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual gifts through the avenue of athletic competition. GRACE athletics desires to be a catalyst that helps develop a lifestyle of character, integrity, discipline, hard work and leadership. Athletics provide a wonderful opportunity to develop and practice skills and lessons that are learned in the classroom. GRACE athletics is another way to help educate and develop our student-athletes as they mature. All of the functions of GRACE athletics will be done with excellence and conducted under the principles of doing all things for the glory of Christ. (Colossians 3:17)

GRACE offers a variety of middle school and high school athletic teams for our student-athletes. While GRACE athletics are committed to competing and winning at the highest level there are different expectations at the middle school and high school levels. Every level will put a heavy emphasis on sportsmanship. GRACE athletes will learn how to win and lose with dignity and humility.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY (GRADES 6 - 8)

GRACE middle school athletic teams have a focus on skill and team development. Middle school players will focus on learning the skills and rules necessary to compete well in their chosen sport. Playing time will be determined by squad size, athletic ability, attitude, team-orientation, work ethic, and practice attendance. It is the coach's decision on who plays and for how long. Try-outs and cuts may be utilized in determining a team roster. Roster size will be determined by the athletic director, head coach, and uniform availability.

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY (GRADES 9 - 12)

GRACE high school athletes strive to compete successfully at the highest level. Even with a focus on winning we will not have the attitude of “win at whatever cost.” High school level athletics is for student-athletes that have more advanced skills in their sport. The athlete will continue to develop their skills while learning the nuances and strategies for advancing and winning in their sport. Playing time will be determined by the coach and players are to accept their role on the team. Try-outs and cuts may be utilized in determining a team roster. Similar to the middle school level, roster size will be determined by the athletic director, head coach, and uniform availability.

CODE OF CONDUCT

GRACE student-athletes, coaches, fans and parents must realize that our athletic teams and athletic events are the only impression many people will have of GRACE Christian School. We want to have an excellent reputation amongst other student-athletes, coaches, fans, parents and officials as being a competitive and honorable organization. Demonstrating and coaching sportsmanship at all levels of participation is paramount in achieving this reputation. Guidelines will be set and enforced to make sure GRACE has this type of reputation. Student-athletes and parents/guardians must sign the Pursuing Victory With Honor Contract before the student-athlete can participate in any GRACE athletic programs. (see appendix for forms)

STUDENT-ATHLETES

RESPONSIBILITIES

In the classroom and on the playing field GRACE athletes will pursue their goals with excellence. A student-athlete's classroom behavior, attitude and work ethic should set the standard for others in the school.

As ambassadors of Christ and of our school, GRACE student-athletes are to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in the classroom, on and off the field of play, and in their personal lives.

Student-athletes will follow all of the behavior and conduct guidelines that are set forth in the school's behavior policy.

A student-athlete who chooses to behave in a way that is not consistent with the school's behavior and conduct policies will be in jeopardy of losing their privilege of participating in GRACE athletics.

Any behavior that could reflect negatively on GRACE Christian School or GRACE Athletics will not be tolerated and could lead to suspension from the team.

If a student-athlete receives a detention or any other form of disciplinary action they may not use athletics' practice or games as an excuse to not serve the detention or disciplinary action.

Ejection from a contest will result in a minimum two game suspension. The student-athlete will not be allowed to play in the events but may sit, without a uniform, on the team bench. A mandatory conference with the Principal and Athletic Director will be scheduled to discuss the ejection and any further disciplinary action.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Minimum GPA 2.0

No Failing Grades in any class

A student-athlete will not be penalized for being late or missing practice if they are in an academic help session.

GRACE student-athletes are to have academics as their top priority. All student-athletes will have their GPA reviewed for eligibility at the end of each quarterly report card period. A student's GPA is averaged from all courses in which they are enrolled. A student-athlete who falls below a 2.0 GPA (77%) for a reporting period or is receiving a failing grade in any class will be ineligible to compete in practice or in games. If a student-athlete is found to be ineligible, the period of ineligibility will take effect the day following the production of the report in order to notify the parents and student-athlete and verify any grades that are in question. An ineligible student-athlete's GPA or failing grade will only become eligible for review at the next mid-term report. Once the GPA is above the minimum requirement, their eligibility will be reinstated immediately

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Student-athletes are expected to regularly attend all classes, practices and games regularly unless otherwise cleared by the coach **and** athletic director.

Student-athletes must attend school the same day of practice or game in order to be eligible to participate.

If a student-athlete is absent because of illness they will not be allowed to participate in practices or games for that day. Students must be at school no later than 10:00 AM and may not leave before 1:00 PM to be eligible for that day's athletic activity (excused tardiness or dismissal is an exception).

A late home or away contest is not an excuse to be tardy on the next school day. Excessive attendance or tardy infractions will lead to suspension from athletic competition.

NO QUIT POLICY

Student-athletes take on responsibility when they agree to participate on athletic teams. Therefore, accountability is essential to maintain a cohesive and functional athletic program. Once an athlete has made the commitment to participate and has either attended a practice or checked out equipment, the athlete must complete the season. If a student-athlete quits a team, he/she forfeits the privilege of participation in other sports for the remainder of the school year. Special exceptions may be granted in unique circumstances.

EJECTIONS

Any ejection from a game or match by an official will result in a minimum of a 2-game suspension from athletic events.

PARENTS

RESPONSIBILITIES

You are a vital part of the success of GRACE athletics and we encourage vigorous participation by our parents.

You are not allowed to openly criticize a coach. By openly criticizing the coaches, your student-athlete becomes trapped between the coach's authority and the parent's criticism. This situation merely erodes the athlete's effectiveness and affects their contributions to the team effort.

You are encouraged to be positive with your child. Let them know they are accomplishing something simply by being a part of a team. The emphasis on sportsmanship and character amongst our student-athletes and student body begins with your example and participation..

You are not allowed to use derogatory cheers directed at any participant (players, fans, coaches, officials, etc.) will not be tolerated and will be considered grounds for removal from a GRACE sporting event. Criticizing or showing envy in relation to the failures or successes of other student-athletes is an inappropriate behavior. Most are trying their hardest on any given day and they deserve respect for their efforts. Living your life vicariously through your student-athlete puts undo pressure on all concerned. Remember, a sport is a game and it is supposed to be fun.

You are also ambassadors of Christ and of our school and should cheer on our teams in an appropriate manner. Focus your energy toward being a supporter of the team and do not waste it tearing the team down.

You are not allowed to approach an official before, during or after a sporting event. During a game, the team bench area is for coaches, players, and officials only. Spectators may not approach the bench area during a game (including halftime).

You will be asked to leave an event if your conduct is deemed inappropriate. A Grace athletic event could be jeopardized by our conference should an inappropriate action occur. Your student-athletes participation on a team could also be affected.

You are encouraged to avoid offering excuses for your child. If they are not playing or seeing only limited action, encourage them to work hard, seek their full potential and contribute to the team's efforts.

You are encouraged to communicate any dates your student-athlete will miss practice due to appointments, at least a week in advance. If students choose to participate in the ministry of athletics, they are expected to fulfill the commitment to the best of their abilities. Every athlete is responsible to attend all practices and games. Unexcused absences will result in disciplinary actions, which can include loss of playing time. Our philosophy views athletics as a very valuable ministry, an arena for teaching God's principles and an opportunity to understand winning from God's perspective.

You are encouraged to have insurance coverage. We do not assume responsibility relative to doctor, ambulance, or medical expenses in case of an emergency. Athletics are a voluntary, co-curricular program in which students may participate if they desire, but do so at their own risk. Parents or guardians must obtain adequate insurance coverage for their students through a family insurance policy. Any liability or cost incurred is the responsibility of the family of the student-athlete.

Please note that participating in athletics is a privilege and in order for all to work as a unit we need student-athletes, parents, & coaches to operate on one accord.

COACH RESPONSIBILITY

The coach's authority to lead their team as they deem appropriate is in keeping with the philosophies and policies of GRACE Christian School. The head coach is charged with conducting tryouts, determining the team roster, defining player expectations, implementing team rules, deciding student-athletes' playing time, and taking disciplinary actions whenever necessary. Student-athletes are expected to completely and respectfully abide by the leadership and authority of the head coach and their assistants. Disciplinary measures may include but are not limited to increased exercise, suspension from a game, or expulsion from the team. Grievances with disciplinary measures or other issues should be taken directly to that coach first. Wisdom is advised in choosing what issues a parent should take to the coach. Please keep in mind that most parents believe that their child should be getting a majority of the playing time and that expectation is not possible or realistic when dealing with a group of athletes. When approaching a coach, please do so in a respectful way and in a manner consistent with Galatians 6:1-3 and Matthew 7:3-5. If the matter is not resolved then the athletic director should be contacted and if further actions need to be taken please send a written complaint to the principal.

EJECTIONS

Any ejection from a game or match by an official will result in a minimum of a 3-game suspension from athletic events.

PARENT COACHES/ASSISTANTS/VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer coaches or assistant coaches who are also parents of team members are expected to maintain a professional detachment from the parent/child relationship while “on duty”. In other words, act as a “parent” only after leaving the game, practice, court or field for the confines of their home.

PHYSICAL AND MEDICAL WAIVERS

An Athletics Department Authorization and Release Form and an Athletics Department Health History/Physical Examination Form must be completed annually by the family doctor or Dunn Physical Therapy before students may participate in athletic activities. All participants must have an up to date physical on file in the office in order to practice and play. Physicals are good for 365 days. (See Appendix for forms.)

Any team member that requires a visit to the Emergency Room or to a physician for an injury may not participate or practice until the physician provides a written medical release.

TEAM ELIGIBILITY

7th and 8th Grade Students Playing High School Sports

- By NCISAA rules, except for football, 7th – 12th grade students are eligible to play on varsity high school teams.
- Grace philosophy is that 8th graders will be allowed to try out for high school teams only when the **athletic director** decides that it is in the best interest to the Grace athletic program and to the individual student and their family.
- Middle school athletes who play on varsity teams are not eligible for “letters” or letter jackets. They may receive a pin if they participate on a varsity team.

5th Grade Students Athletic Participation

- The Triangle Middle School Conference of which GRACE is a member, does not allow the participation of any students in fifth grade.

ATHLETIC FEE

Each student-athlete is assessed an athletic fee per sport played to offset the expenses GRACE incurs to fund individual sports. Common expenses include gym and field rentals, referee contracts, and uniform and equipment purchases. The athletic fee curtails some of the associated expenses but certainly not all. Therefore, it is essential that all student-athletes tender the assigned athletic fee before or on the first day of

practice. Students will be billed once rosters are completed. If a student-athlete becomes ineligible during the course of the season the fee will not be refunded.

ATHLETIC FEES SCHOLARSHIP

We are asking our GRACE family to prayerfully consider the sponsorship of an athletic fee to insure that financial hardships do not prevent any student-athlete's participation. If you are either in need of or wish to fund a scholarship, please contact the athletic director. All inquiries are held in the strictest confidence.

TWO SPORT PARTICIPATION

Student-athletes are allowed to play more than one sport per season. An mutual agreement must be met by both coaches.

Student-athletes are encouraged to take each sport they participate in seriously. We encourage student-athletes to play club sports as it is a way to make our school more competitive. If a student-athlete participates in club sports we ask that they notify their school coach of any potential conflicts.

TEAM UNIFORM

Team uniforms are issued to players for most sports. School issued uniforms should be worn at games ONLY. It is the responsibility of the player to take proper care of that uniform and return it to the head coach, washed and in good condition immediately following the season. Each team will be assigned a uniform return date and time at the end of their respective season. Failure to turn in the uniform at that time will result in a \$10.00 per day fine. If the uniform is returned more than two weeks late, the student/family will be billed for the item(s) missing, as well as having the student's grades/records withheld.

TRANSPORTATION

GRACE

Passengers using the GRACE Activity Bus as transportation must obey the following guidelines:
General

1. State of NC bus rules should be observed
2. Buses must be reserved online
3. Buses may not be used for less than 8 or more than 29 passengers
4. Office Manager oversees bus calendar
5. Buses will be maintained by The Truck Shop
6. Buses will not be loaned or rented to any other organization other than possibly Colonial Baptist Church or Hope Community Church 33
7. Buses will be used for field trips, athletic events, faculty and staff events, and as a campus shuttle
8. Buses may be driven only by persons with a CDL license
9. Buses may not be for personal use
10. Buses must be signed in and out by driver after each trip

11. Any accident must be reported immediately to Office Manager and an accident form must be completed
12. Damage or vandalism must be reported immediately to Office Manager/Bus Coordinator
13. Videos displayed on buses must be pre-approved by the Head of School
14. No loud music may be allowed during transit
15. In addition to the driver, at least one other adult (coach, teacher or chaperone) is required for all trips off campus unless an exception is made in advance by the Head of School

Drivers

1. The bus driver is responsible for the safety of the bus and all passengers
2. Bus drivers must always carry a school GPS/cell phone
3. Only drivers possessing a class C CDL with P endorsement may transport students
4. Drivers must bring bus to a complete stop at all railroad crossings
5. Drivers must maintain a clean driving record
6. Drivers must submit to a criminal record check
7. Drivers must verify condition of bus after each trip
8. Buses must be signed in and out by driver after each trip
9. Trips should be detailed in the trip log kept in each bus

Students

1. Students must remain seated at all times when bus is in motion
2. Students must wear seatbelts when the bus is in motion
3. Students will be courteous to classmates and the bus driver
4. Students are not to interfere with anyone passing to or from a seat
5. There will be no throwing of objects on the bus
6. Students must talk quietly
7. No food or drink is allowed on the bus
8. No gum is allowed on the bus
9. No flash cameras to be used on the bus
10. The bus aisles must be kept clear at all times
11. Passengers will be responsible for their belongings. The school will not be liable for lost or stolen items
12. The bus driver must be obeyed at all times
13. The bus driver makes final decisions regarding the bus and bus safety
14. Students may not enter the bus with dirty clothes or shoes
15. High School and Middle School students of opposite gender may not sit in adjoining seats unless directed to do so by the teacher or coach.

Teachers/Coaches

1. Teachers and coaches should reserve buses at least two weeks in advance of use
2. Teachers and coaches should review all bus rules with passengers before trip
3. Teachers and coaches must maintain excellent student behavior at all times
4. When returning from a trip, the teacher and/or coach must remain with passengers until all are picked up
5. Teachers and coaches must submit a trip itinerary to the office before trip

Parents

1. Parents must sign a permission form in order for their students to ride on school buses
2. Parents and chaperones may ride school buses for field trips if room is available
3. Parents are responsible for any damage done to the buses by their children

PARENTS

It is the parents' responsibility to provide transportation to and from GRACE sporting events and to pick up athletes promptly following every event. There will be some times when Grace will use the school bus - you will then be responsible for picking up your child from the school at the designated return time. Your cooperation in this is greatly appreciated. We want to be respectful of the time and other commitments of our coaches. Carpooling is strongly encouraged; some families rely on carpooling to make it possible for their children to participate in athletics.

STUDENT DRIVERS

Only student-athletes who have permission to drive to and from school will be able to drive themselves to and from practices and games. Student-athletes are only allowed to drive themselves if a current driving permission slip is on file in the office. Other student-athletes may not ride with student drivers (to practice or a game) unless the required permission slips (see appendix) have been signed by both the driver's and the passenger's parents.

STUDENT MANAGERS

A head coach may have a student-manager position available during the course of the season. The head coach of the sport is responsible to clearly present the responsibilities and time-commitment of the student-manager before the season begins. If a student takes advantage of this opportunity they will be required to keep the same academic, attendance and transportation requirements as a student-athlete. A student-manager will also need to complete and return the Athletics Department Authorization and Release Form (see appendix) before they are allowed to start their manager responsibilities. Additionally, if the coach requires help at practice that requires physical involvement, an Athletics Department Health History/Physical Examination Form (see appendix) must be completed annually by the parent before the students may participate. A student-manager is not required to submit the athletic fee. Student-managers cannot use this opportunity as a Teacher Assistant credit. Middle school sports may only have middle-school managers and high school sports may only have high school managers. The student-manager will be a non-uniformed participant and the coach may set the game time dress code for the manager in accordance with the school dress code policy.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

As the GRACE athletics program grows so does the need for volunteers. In order to successfully put together a sports program, we need head coaches, assistant coaches, and scorekeepers, bookkeepers, statisticians, team managers, game announcers, active booster members, and a facility set-up crew. If you feel led to join the fun and serve our school and student-athletes in any way, please contact the booster club or athletic director.

TEAM PARENTS

In past years we have enjoyed the initiative taken by parents to fulfill the role of “team mom/dad.” A “team mom/dad” supports the team by encouraging players, organizing carpools, disseminating directions to events, providing refreshments, and promoting team camaraderie by overseeing post game outings. If you are able to support one of our teams in this manner, please contact either the head coach or the athletic director.

BOOSTERS

In order to promote school spirit and defray rising athletic costs, we are looking for highly motivated volunteers with innovative fundraising ideas as well as the ability to transition these ideas into action. We are committed to growing an athletic program of excellence and recognize the necessity of a Boosters Club with extraordinary vision as we strive to reach this goal.

All athletes and their families are required to participate in booster projects, athletic fundraising efforts, and game management duties. Due to the difficulties that the booster club and coaches have experienced in filling these duties, we are requiring parents of participating athletes to commit to serving a specified number of times per season. In order to determine the number of times that a family will need to participate, the total number of games and responsibilities will be multiplied to determine the total on needed slots. This in turn will be divided by the number of players on a roster. The resulting number will be the number of times that a family will need to fulfill a needed role, such as admissions, concessions, scorebook, scoreboard, lines calls, etc. at home games. Failure to fulfill the specified responsibility without finding a replacement will impact the student-athlete’s playing time and participation. The idea is to equally share these responsibilities to insure that no one group of volunteers is unduly burdened.

CANCELLATION

In the event that adverse weather threatens a practice or game, the athletic director will make the decision about canceling the event in question and notify the GRACE office no later than 2:00 p.m. of that day. Away games are excluded from this policy because the decision to cancel rests with the other team. Parents are expected to check their e-mail and check the website to verify the cancellation status when weather appears to be an issue.

The middle school sports programs belong to and compete in the TMSA Conference. The high school sports programs belong to and compete in the Carolina Christian Conference (CCC).

SPORTS OFFERED

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
B - MS & VARSITY SOCCER	B - MS, JV, VARSITY BASKETBALL	G - MS & VARSITY SOCCER

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
G - MS & VARSITY VOLLEYBALL	G - MS, JV, VARSITY BASKETBALL	MS & VARSITY BASEBALL
CHEERLEADING	B/G SWIMMING	SOFTBALL
B/G CROSS COUNTRY		B/G TRACK & FIELD
G - MS & VARSITY TENNIS		MS & VARSITY GOLF
		B MS & VARSITY TENNIS