GAHANNA MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT-ATHLETE AND FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR

GAHANNA - JEFFERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GAHANNA MIDDLE SCHOOL EAST

GAHANNA MIDDLE SCHOOL SOUTH

GAHANNA MIDDLE SCHOOL WEST

DEPARTMENT OF INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

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Mascot: Lions | **Colors:** Royal Blue and Gold

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Welcome to Gahanna Middle School Athletics

Letter from your Director of Athletics

Dear Lion Student-Athletes and Families,

Welcome to the Gahanna-Jefferson Public Middle Schools Athletics Program!

We are thrilled to have you join a community that values teamwork, dedication, and character both on and off the field. Whether this is your first season or you're a returning athlete, we are committed to making your experience in middle school sports rewarding, educational, and enjoyable.

Our athletic program is an extension of the classroom, where students not only grow as athletes but also develop leadership skills, discipline, resilience, and a respect for others. We believe that the lessons learned through participation in sports contribute significantly to each student's overall growth and future success.

To help guide you through this experience, we've created this Student-Athlete and Family Handbook. It outlines our expectations, policies, and important information to ensure that everyone—students, families, and coaches—can work together in a spirit of cooperation and sportsmanship.

We encourage open communication and a positive partnership between families, coaches, and school staff. If you ever have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any member of our coaching staff.

Together, we live by One PRIDE: Purpose, Respect, Integrity, Diversity and Excellent These values guide everything we do, helping us grow stronger as a team and as a community.

Thank you for supporting our athletic program. We look forward to an exciting season ahead, filled with personal achievements, team successes, and lifelong memories.

Go Lions!

Warm regards,

Philip K. Dorn, MA, CAA
Director of Athletics

Gahanna Jefferson Middle Schools Athletic Department Philosophy

The athletic programs at Gahanna Jefferson Middle Schools are a collaborative effort involving the Board of Education, administrators, staff, coaches, and the broader community. Participation in middle school athletics provides a foundational experience that complements classroom education, fostering essential life skills, emotional growth, and personal responsibility.

Interscholastic athletics at Gahanna Jefferson Middle Schools are considered an integral and enriching element of the overall educational experience. Student-athletes develop physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally, benefiting from structured programs that emphasize teamwork, sportsmanship, and personal growth. Participation is a privilege that comes with responsibilities toward oneself, teammates, the school, and the community.

Our athletic department is committed to fostering an environment where all students feel encouraged and valued, thereby promoting personal confidence, school pride, and community involvement. Conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) and aligned with district core values, our programs aim to nurture well-rounded students who excel both on and off the field of play.

Gahanna Jefferson Middle Schools Athletic Department Values:

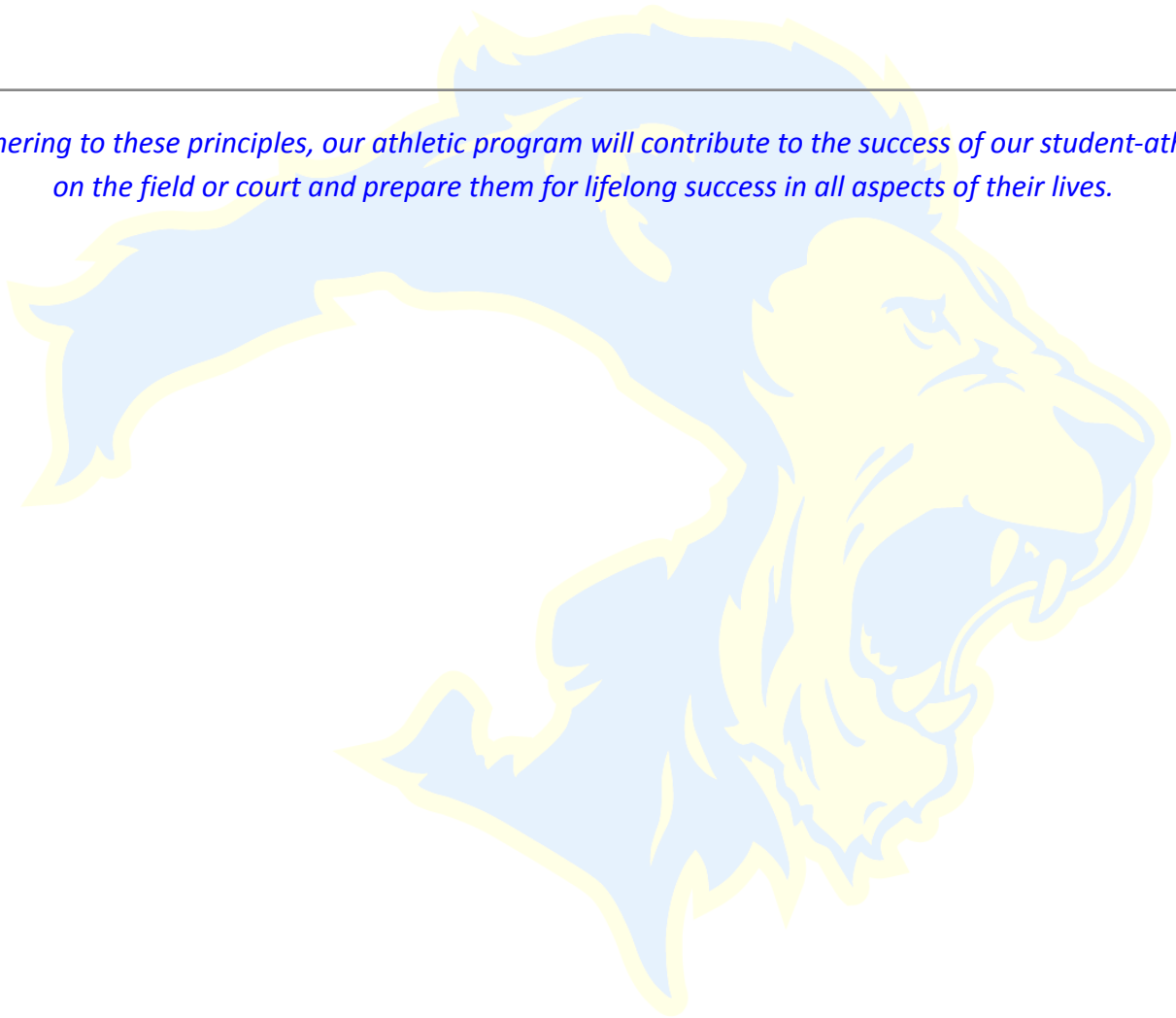
- ***Integrity*:** We uphold high standards of sportsmanship, honesty, and respect, demonstrating ethical behavior on and off the playing field.
- ***Students First*:** We prioritize the holistic development and well-being of our student-athletes, ensuring athletics supports their broader educational journey.
- ***Collaboration*:** We build supportive relationships among students, coaches, families, and the community to foster a cohesive and inclusive environment.
- ***Empowerment*:** We encourage our student-athletes to develop confidence, leadership, and responsibility, preparing them for future challenges and opportunities.
- ***Inclusivity*:** We ensure our athletic programs are accessible and welcoming to every student, regardless of their background, ability, or experience level.
- ***Excellence*:** We inspire students to pursue excellence through dedication, effort, and continuous self-improvement, celebrating both growth and achievement.

Middle Schools Athletic Mission

The mission of the Gahanna Jefferson Middle Schools Athletic Department is intended to complement the broader goals of Gahanna-Jefferson Public School' Mission and is dedicated to:

- ***Holistic Development:*** We prioritize the growth of the whole student, cultivating character, sportsmanship, and leadership through meaningful athletic participation.
- ***Academic Excellence:*** We emphasize that students are learners first, supporting them as they balance the rigors of their studies with their athletic commitments.
- ***Inclusivity and Respect:*** We foster a welcoming environment where every student-athlete feels valued, respected, and encouraged to succeed.
- ***School and Community Pride:*** Our programs serve to strengthen the bond between our schools and the community, building a shared sense of unity and Lion Pride.

By adhering to these principles, our athletic program will contribute to the success of our student-athletes on the field or court and prepare them for lifelong success in all aspects of their lives.



Middle Schools Athletic Programs

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Cheerleading (Fall) - Coed	Basketball - Boys	Baseball - Coed
Cross Country - Boys	Basketball - Girls	Lacrosse - Boys
Cross Country - Girls	Cheerleading (Winter) - Coed	Lacrosse - Girls
Football - Coed	Wrestling - Boys	Softball - Girls
Golf - Boys	Wrestling - Girls	Tennis - Boys
Golf - Girls		Track & Field - Boys
Tennis - Girls		Track & Field - Girls
Volleyball - Girls		

General Information

Ohio High School Athletic Association

Gahanna Middle Schools are proud members of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA). All coaches, families, and athletes must be familiar with the OHSAA bylaws. Intentionally violating any bylaws or other policies is a serious offense. All members of the GMS Athletics community are expected to comply with OHSAA rules and regulations.

Parents/guardians should not contact the OHSAA directly. All questions must be directed to the Athletic Director, who will serve as the official liaison to ensure accuracy and alignment with OHSAA bylaws.

For more information, please visit the Ohio High School Athletic Association website at www.ohsaa.org.

Ohio Capital Conference

Gahanna Middle Schools are members of the Ohio Capital Conference (OCC), a highly prestigious, competitive conference of public middle schools in central Ohio. Teams compete at the state level annually in nearly every sport.

Gahanna Middle Schools coaches are required to attend all relevant conference meetings for their respective sports, seasonal conference meetings, and coach meetings.

More details about the Ohio Capital Conference can be found at www.OhioCapitalConference.org

Athletic Schedules

The most up-to-date athletic schedules can be viewed at www.gahannamsathletics.com/ and the Gahanna Middle Schools Athletic App. Athletic schedules are subject to change. Updates will be provided by the coaching staff and/or athletic department. The appropriate conference or league creates and provides its schedule to the athletic department. Non-conference or league games are scheduled by the head coach and/or the athletic department.

Requirements for Student-Athlete Participation

To be eligible to participate in any athletic program at Gahanna Jefferson Middle Schools, student-athletes and families must complete the following steps in FinalForms:

1. **Valid OHSAA Pre-Participation Physical Exam** (must remain current through the entire sport season) - *uploaded to FinalForms before enrolling and trying out in the sport*
2. **Emergency Medical Authorization Form** - *uploaded to FinalForms before enrolling and trying out in the sport*
3. **OHSAA Authorization and Consent Form** - *completed in FinalForms before enrolling and trying out in the sport*
4. **OHSAA Eligibility and Authorization Statement** - *completed in FinalForms before enrolling and trying out in the sport*
5. **OHSAA Concussion Information Sheet** - *completed in FinalForms before enrolling and trying out in the sport*
6. **Meet academic eligibility requirements** - the *grading period immediately preceding the start of the athletic season*
    a. Passing four (4) core credits or equivalent (OHSAA)
    b. Achieving a minimum of a 2.0 GPA or greater (GJPS)
7. Attend a mandatory preseason meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) and coaching staff, *as scheduled seasonally by the athletic department*
8. FinalForms must be completed by the student-athlete and parent(s)/guardian(s) - *completed in FinalForms before enrolling and trying out in the sport*

Participation Limits & Transfers

- Middle School Athletes are permitted only four (4) semesters of athletic eligibility at the 7th & 8th grade level. Semesters are counted toward eligibility whether you participate in interscholastic athletics or not.
- A student who turns 15 before August 1 of the school year in which he/she desires to participate is not eligible for seventh and eighth grade athletics.
- Summer school and other educational options may not be used to bring a student into compliance with scholarship bylaws, nor can they be used to compensate for lack of courses taken in the preceding grading period.
- Ineligible students are not permitted to wear the team uniform, participate in scrimmages or competitions.

Prepared athletes are successful athletes.
Complete your forms, meet your responsibilities, and represent GMS with pride.

Health/Physical Exam Requirements

To ensure the safety and well-being of all student-athletes, Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools (GJPS) mandates the following requirements for participation in middle school athletics:

OHSAA Requirement: Before participating in any practice or contest, each student-athlete must undergo a physical examination by a licensed medical professional (MD, DO, DC, NP, or PA). This examination must be completed within the past year, and the signed Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation (PPE) form must be on file with the school.

Validity Period: Physical examinations are valid for 13 months from the date of the exam. However, exams conducted between May 1 and June 1 are valid through the end of the next school year's spring sports season.

Required Forms and Permissions

All student-athletes and their families must complete and submit the following forms via the FinalForms online platform:

1. OHSAA Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation (PPE) Form: Completed and signed by a licensed medical professional.
2. OHSAA Eligibility and Authorization Statement: Acknowledges understanding of eligibility rules and authorizes participation.
3. Concussion Information Sheet: Acknowledges awareness of concussion risks and protocols.
4. Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) Information Sheet: Acknowledges awareness of SCA risks and protocols.
5. Emergency Medical Authorization Form: Provides consent for emergency medical treatment.
6. GJPS Code of Conduct Agreement: Acknowledges understanding and agreement to adhere to the district's athletic code of conduct.

All forms must be completed and electronically signed by both the student-athlete and a parent/guardian in FinalForms. Physical forms must be uploaded directly into the system. Incomplete or missing documentation will result in ineligibility to participate in practices or contests.

FinalForms Registration Process

To complete the registration process:

1. Access FinalForms: Visit FinalForms.com or the athletic website and click on the FinalForms link.
2. Create or Update Account: Families must create or update their FinalForms account and add their student-athlete.
    a. Student-athlete profiles must use the student's email address (not the parent or guardian)
3. Complete Forms: Fill out all required forms listed above.
4. Upload Physical: Scan and upload the completed PPE form signed by the medical professional.
5. Submit: Ensure all forms are signed and submitted electronically.

For detailed instructions, refer to the FinalForms Parent Instructions available on the athletics website.

Gahanna Middle Schools

Athletic Department Code of Conduct

(for Student-Athletes, Families, and Spectators)

Purpose

The Gahanna Middle Schools Athletic Department is committed to providing a positive, enriching, and inclusive athletic experience that promotes academic excellence, character development, and personal growth for all student-athletes. Our programs are extensions of the district's educational mission, grounded in our core values of putting students first, integrity, collaboration, empowerment, inclusivity, and a relentless pursuit of excellence.

All student-athletes, families, and spectators are expected to uphold these core values and contribute to a culture of respect, leadership, and school pride.

As Lions, we hold ourselves to the highest standards and lead by example in all that we do.

Student-Athlete Expectations

Standards for Athlete Behavior

At Gahanna Middle Schools, student-athletes are expected to uphold the highest standards of behavior in all athletic-related settings, both in competition and outside of it. As leaders in our school and community, your conduct reflects not only on yourself but on your teammates, coaches, and the entire Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools community.

Maintaining a respectful, safe, and positive environment is essential. Therefore, the following standards must be followed:

Conflict with Spectators

- Student-athletes must remain within the designated playing area during contests.
- At no time may a student-athlete enter the spectator area to engage verbally or physically with a spectator, opponent, or fan.
- If a student-athlete leaves the playing area and enters the stands to engage in a conflict:
    - The student-athlete's privilege to participate in interscholastic athletics will be revoked, and the student-athlete will be ineligible for the rest of the school year.

Respect for others and self-control must always be maintained – even in emotionally challenging circumstances.

Inappropriate Participant Behavior

Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in the following behaviors:

- Taunting or disrespecting officials, opponents, or spectators
- Leaving the bench area during an altercation
- Use of profanity during games, practices, or any school-related athletic activity
- Damage to or destruction of school property (either at Gahanna Lincoln or other schools)
- Theft of school or personal property during any athletic event, practice, or related activity

Violations of these behavioral expectations may result in school-based discipline, athletic suspensions, or further penalties as directed by the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA).

At Gahanna Middle Schools, success is measured not only by our performance in competition, but also by the character we demonstrate beyond it.

Sportsmanship Philosophy and Guidelines

At Gahanna Middle Schools, our student-athletes are leaders both in competition and in the community. As representatives of our school and community, all players must consistently demonstrate respect, integrity, and sportsmanship at all times. Our student-athletes are expected to:

- Be students first and focus on high achievement in the classroom.
- Demonstrate sportsmanship toward teammates by encouraging and cooperating with them, and by showing respect to coaches through listening, following instructions, and maintaining a positive attitude.
- Respect opponents as fellow competitors and guests, treating them with dignity during and after competition.
- Engage in positive sportsmanship by shaking hands with your opponents and offering sincere well-wishes before and after contests, when appropriate.
- Demonstrate self-control by respectfully accepting officials' decisions without argument, gestures, or visible displays of disagreement.
- Win or lose with pride, grace, and humility, recognizing that success is measured by effort, attitude, and respect just as much as the final score.
- Embrace the responsibility of representing Gahanna Middle Schools and the Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools with pride, both in athletic competition and throughout the community.

As a Lion, your actions reflect on yourself, your team, your school, and your community. We expect all athletes to compete with character and lead by example.

Student-Athlete Code of Conduct

Expectations

Student-athletes must:

- Maintain academic eligibility in accordance with district and Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) standards.
- Demonstrate respectful and responsible behavior at school, athletic events, and within the community.
- Use social media responsibly and represent your team, school, and district in ways that reflect positively on them.
- Respect teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, and all community members.
- Commit to health and wellness by abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, illegal substances, and unsafe behaviors.
- Follow team expectations regarding dress, attendance, and conduct.

Unacceptable Behaviors for Student-Athletes

1. Unsportsmanlike Conduct
    - Disrespect toward opponents, officials, coaches, teammates, or fans.
    - Taunting, trash-talking, or any gestures meant to demean others.
    - Arguing with or disrespecting officials.
2. Hazing, Bullying, or Harassment
    - Any initiation, hazing, or harassment of teammates or others.
    - Cyberbullying through social media, text, or any digital platform.
    - Threatening or intimidating others verbally, physically, or electronically.
3. Substance Abuse
    - Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, or illegal drugs.
    - Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during school or athletic events.
4. Academic Dishonesty
    - Cheating, plagiarism, or any form of dishonesty in the classroom.
5. Violations of School Policies
    - Violations of any code of conduct or student handbook rules established by the school.

- Skipping class, unexcused absences, or repeated tardiness.

6. Criminal Behavior
   - Engaging in theft, vandalism, or destruction of property.
   - Physical assault, fighting, or any form of violence.
   - Possession of weapons or dangerous objects.
7. Disrespect for Diversity and Inclusion
   - Use of racial, ethnic, or gender-based slurs or any discriminatory language.
   - Intolerance or harassment based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.
8. Poor Representation of the School
   - Wearing the uniform or representing the school while engaging in inappropriate conduct.
   - Behavior that embarrasses the team, school, or community.
9. Failure to Follow Team Rules and Expectations
   - Missing practices, games, or team meetings without a valid excuse.
   - Not adhering to the team's dress code, curfew, or other program-specific guidelines.

Consequences of Violations

- **First Offense:** Meeting, possible suspension, parent notification
- **Second Offense:** Defined suspension, required meeting with the Athletic Director
- **Third Offense:** Removal from team or extended suspension

Note: Severe violations may escalate immediately

The administration and athletic department reserve the right to evaluate each situation and apply appropriate consequences, including suspension or removal from a team.

Sportsmanship is not just a requirement — it's a reflection of who we are.

Social Media & Digital Citizenship

Student-athletes are viewed as leaders and representatives of Gahanna Middle Schools, both on and off the competition area, including in digital spaces.

While social media can be a great way to share achievements and team spirit, it also creates public reflections of character. Content posted online is easily accessible by coaches, colleges, media, employers, and others.

Student-athletes must refrain from posting content that includes:

- Images, videos, or language showing or implying the use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
- Sexually explicit content or links to inappropriate material
- Profanity, hate speech, threats, or disrespectful remarks
- Derogatory or disrespectful comments toward teammates, opponents, coaches, or officials.
- Content that misrepresents Gahanna Middle Schools, the Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools, or its athletic programs

Violations may result in:

- Written warning
- Meeting with the coach and/or athletic director
- Suspension or removal from the team, depending on the severity of the offense

Recommendations for student-athletes:

- Use strong privacy settings
- Avoid posting personal contact information
- Think before you post — if you wouldn't say it publicly at school or to a coach, don't post it online.

If you're unsure whether something is appropriate, ask: Does this reflect my values and represent my school in a positive light?

At Gahanna Middle Schools, athletes are expected to lead with class, both online and in the community.

Substance Abuse Policy

The use, possession, or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs is strictly prohibited — on or off school grounds, during or outside the season. This policy is enforced year-round and applies cumulatively from grades 7 through 12. Violations occurring at the end of a season will carry over to the next athletic season of participation.

Violations may be verified by:

- Observation by school staff, coaches, or administrators
- Law enforcement reports
- Verified social media or digital content

Consequences of violations

- **First Offense:** Meeting, possible suspension, parent notification *
- **Second Offense:** Defined suspension, required meeting with the Athletic Director *
- **Third Offense:** Removal from team or extended suspension *

  ** Or as defined in other sections of this handbook, or the Gahanna Middle School Student Handbook*

  Note: Severe violations may escalate immediately

  The administration and athletic department reserve the right to evaluate each situation and apply appropriate consequences, including suspension or removal from a team.

Self-Referral Policy

Students have the opportunity for a voluntary referral procedure to seek information, guidance, counseling and/or assessment in regard to the use or possession of alcohol, tobacco and other controlled or non-controlled substances. The student or their immediate family may make voluntary referrals.

A voluntary referral must occur prior to any report of violations. Involvement by law enforcement officials negates the option of voluntary referral. The student may use the option of voluntary referral once in their career at Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools. Any subsequent violations will be enforced as a second or subsequent violation.

For an alcohol and/or controlled substances/mood-altering chemicals referral, the student must have, within five days, an appointment for an assessment with a certified chemical dependency counselor and notify the principal or designee of the appointment. The student must participate in the assessment process (the cost of any and all assessment will be the responsibility of the student and/or parents) and follow the counselor's recommendations to completion. If treatment or counseling is recommended it must be with an Ohio-certified chemical dependency counselor. The student must waive their rights of

confidentiality so that verification of this assessment and a written report can be given to the principal or designee.

For a tobacco referral, the student must, within five days, provide verification of enrollment in an out-of-school tobacco education/cessation program approved by the principal or designee. Parents must sign a release of information to the principal or designee so that the student's progress in the program can be followed and written verification of completion given to the principal or designee. The student must complete the program.

If the student requesting the voluntary referral opportunity does not complete the assessment recommendations by the established time schedule, the violation consequence will be put into effect immediately.

Additional Disciplinary Action

Any violation of the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct, whether on school grounds, at school-related events, in the community, or online, may result in disciplinary action and athletic consequences.
The administration and athletic department reserve the right to evaluate each situation and apply appropriate consequences, including suspension or removal from a team.

At Gahanna Middle Schools, athletes are expected to lead with class, both online and in the community.

Being a Lion means holding yourself to a higher standard,
in the classroom, in competition, and in life.

Player Ejection from a Contest

The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) has established strict regulations regarding player conduct during competition. Gahanna Middle Schools fully supports and enforces these rules to promote the highest standards of sportsmanship.

If a student-athlete is ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct or a flagrant foul:

- The student-athlete is ineligible for the remainder of that day's contest(s).
- Additionally, the student-athlete must miss the next two regular-season or tournament contests in the same sport at the same level of play (or one contest if the ejection occurs in football).
- If the ejection occurs during the final contest of the season, the suspension carries over to the next sports season in which the student-athlete participates.

While under suspension:

- The student-athlete may remain a team member, travel with the team, enter the locker room, sit on the team bench, and participate in team activities at the contest site. During this time, they must wear Gahanna Middle School Team apparel (street clothes) and be under the supervision of a coaching staff member.

If a student-athlete is ejected a second time during the same season:

- The student-athlete in that sport will be suspended for the remainder of that season.
- If the second ejection occurs during the final contest of the season, the suspension may carry over into the next sport, with the specific length and terms determined by the OHSAA.

After the OHSAA-defined suspension has been completed, the return to play is at the discretion of the head coach, the athletic department, and the building principal.

All GMS student-athletes must know, understand, and comply with the OHSAA ejection regulations. Failure to do so may result in additional disciplinary action at the school or district level.

Families and Fans Code of Conduct

Respect the Game

At Gahanna Middle Schools, interscholastic athletics are an extension of the educational process, teaching student-athletes essential life lessons in perseverance, teamwork, responsibility, and respect. Families and fans play a crucial role in shaping the athletic experience and modeling the behaviors we expect from our students.

A student's success or lack thereof in sports does not define their family. However, raising a student-athlete who is coachable, respectful, resilient, a great teammate, mentally tough, and committed to doing their best directly reflects strong parental support and guidance.

To help create the best environment for all students, families, and fans are asked to embrace the following:

- **Remember Why They Play**: Student-athletes participate for their growth, enjoyment, and love of the game, not to entertain a crowd.
- **Support the Coaches**: Get to know your student-athlete's coaches. We trust that the leadership, philosophy, and ethics of our coaching staff align with the values of our school and athletic department.
- **Respect Our Coaches**: Coaches dedicate their time and energy to developing student-athletes. Support their efforts, even if you don't always agree with every decision they make.
- **Focus on Growth**: Recognize that athletics are an integral part of the learning experience. Praise your student-athlete's effort and improvement, just as you would encourage growth in the classroom, whether in victory or defeat.
- **Attend with Purpose**: Attend contests to support and cheer for our teams. Avoid behavior that may intimidate opponents, other fans, or officials. Athletics should unite, not divide.
- **Respect the Opportunity**: Remember, a ticket to an athletic event is a privilege to observe and support the contest, not a license to be disruptive, confrontational, or abusive.
- **Appreciate Our Opponents**: Competition would not exist without them. Respect them as fellow participants working hard toward the same goals.

- **Treat Others with Dignity**: Respect opposing players, coaches, fans, and support groups. Treat visitors as you would treat guests in your own home.
- **Promote Positive Behavior**: Cheer for our team, not against our opponent. Refrain from taunting, booing, or making derogatory remarks toward opponents, officials, or other spectators.
- **Appreciate the Game**: Learn the game's basic rules to better understand the flow of play, decisions, and officiating.
- **Respect Officials**: Recognize the integrity and professionalism of game officials and understand that they are doing their best to facilitate fair and competitive contests.
- **Model Leadership**: Through your words, actions, and reactions, be a positive role model for all in attendance. If inappropriate behavior occurs nearby, address it appropriately or report it to event staff.
- **Celebrate Effort, Not Just Outcomes**: Recognize that doing one's best, improving, and learning from mistakes are as valuable as winning. Never ridicule or criticize a student-athlete for errors or performance.
- **Support Integrity and Fair Play**: Encourage student-athletes to play by the rules and resolve conflicts respectfully, without resorting to hostility or confrontation.
- **Honor the Officials**: Officials are crucial to ensuring fair competition. Their judgment should be respected, even when there are disagreements.
- **Use Positive Language**: Refrain from profanity, yelling at officials, or harassing players, coaches, or other fans.
- **Lead by Example**: Students look to the adults in their lives for guidance. Let your actions reflect the pride, respect, and responsibility we value at Gahanna Lincoln.

At Gahanna Middle Schools, we take pride in our tradition of excellence in athletic performance, sportsmanship, leadership, and community spirit. Thank you for doing your part to "Respect the Game" and supporting our student-athletes in a positive and meaningful way.

Together, we can build an environment where every athlete, coach, official, and fan feels respected and where the true spirit of interscholastic athletics is preserved.

Lion Pride means respecting the game, respecting others, and representing Gahanna with class.

Spectator Expectations

At Gahanna Middle Schools, spectators play a vital role in creating a positive and respectful atmosphere at athletic events. Your support of our student-athletes, coaches, officials, and opponents reflects the values of our school and community. All spectators are expected to uphold the highest standards of sportsmanship at all times, both before, during, and after every contest.

All families, family members, and spectators attending athletic events must:

- Demonstrate positive sportsmanship at all times.
- Support all participants, coaches, and officials with respect and enthusiasm.
- Promote a cooperative and positive environment in collaboration with coaches, administrators, and students.
- Refrain from coaching from the stands during games or practices.
- Honor officials' and coaches' decisions without confrontation.
- Treat all contests, home and away, with the same high standards of respect expected on GJPS property.

Unacceptable Behaviors

- Taunting, ridiculing, or verbally abusing officials, players, coaches, or other spectators.
- Using profanity, derogatory language, chants, signs, or cheers.
- Interfering with coaching responsibilities from the stands or sidelines.
- Entering the team box, locker rooms, or restricted areas during contests.
- Confronting another parent, coach, student-athlete, official, or event worker before, during, or after events.
- Criticizing school officials publicly at contests or events.
- Engaging in disruptive behavior that interrupts or delays a contest.

Being a spectator at extracurricular events is a privilege. Spectators should be advised that the athletic director and building/district administration reserve the right to restrict a spectator's attendance at events if unacceptable behavior is displayed.

Enforcement and Consequences for Spectators

- *First Offense:*
    - The Athletic Director will set up a meeting with the spectator.
    - Suspension may include up to two (2) consecutive regular-season contests (home and/or away)
    - Formal notification letter from the Athletic Department.
- *Second Offense:*
    - Suspension from all home and/or away athletic contests for the remainder of the season in which the infraction occurred.
    - Formal notification letter from the school administration.
- *Third Offense:*
    - Suspension from all GJPS athletic contests and events for the remainder of the school year.
    - Formal notification letter from the Superintendent or designee.

The administration and athletic department reserve the right to evaluate each situation and apply appropriate consequences, including suspension from all athletic activities in the current or future seasons. Consequences may also extend beyond athletics into all other school-related functions.

Note: Any contest official, game supervisor, athletic administrator, principal, or other designated school administrator may enforce spectator removal or ejection.

Community and Attendee Sportsmanship Expectations

At Gahanna Middle Schools, we believe athletics are an important part of a student's educational experience. Through competition, we have the opportunity to teach and demonstrate respect, integrity, responsibility, and teamwork – the proper foundation for sportsmanship.

As members of the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA), Gahanna Middle Schools and Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools are committed to promoting sportsmanship at all levels – from our athletes and coaches to families, fans, and spectators. Every community member plays a role in creating a positive and respectful environment.

We expect all Lions to embrace the following sportsmanship principles:

- Respect Others: Treat athletes, coaches, opponents, officials, and fellow spectators with dignity at home and away contests.
- Honor the Game: Follow the rules, support fair play, and respect officials' decisions.
- Stay Composed: Maintain self-control and represent our school with pride, regardless of the outcome.
- Appreciate Excellence: Recognize outstanding effort and performance from all participants on both teams.
- Protect the Environment: Take care of school facilities, equipment, and shared spaces, whether at your school or when visiting another school.

At Gahanna Middle Schools, we compete hard and fairly, always showing Lion Pride.

Academic Eligibility Policy

At Gahanna Middle Schools, academic success is the foundation of athletic eligibility. As a student-athlete, your first responsibility is in the classroom.

Student-athletes must meet both the Gahanna-Jefferson Board of Education policy (2431) and the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) standards to be eligible for athletic participation.

Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools Requirements:

- Student-athletes must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA each grading period preceding the grading period in which the student-athlete wishes to participate.

OHSAA Requirements:

- Student-athletes must pass a minimum of four (4) one-credit courses or the equivalent during the preceding grading period. These must be core academic courses.

Additional Clarifications:

- All coursework must be submitted by the final day of the grading period. Late work submitted after the grading period ends does not count toward eligibility.
- Grades are final once posted. Teachers cannot retroactively update grades for eligibility purposes.
- If a student receives an incomplete due to an excused absence(s), they are immediately ineligible until the incomplete is resolved with a passing grade.
    - Once the grade is updated, the student-athlete must contact the athletic director to begin the OHSAA reinstatement process.
    - Reinstatement is not automatic. It is based on:
        - The reason for the incomplete grade.
        - Documentation of excused absences.
        - An attendance record that reflects the expectations of a committed student-athlete.

Failure to meet these academic standards will result in ineligibility for practices, games, and team events. There are no exceptions.

Academic accountability prepares our student-athletes for life beyond middle school. Strive for excellence in the classroom, and success on the field or court will follow.

Attendance Policy for Participation

Being a student-athlete at Gahanna Middle School begins with being a student first. Daily school attendance is essential to academic success, athletic eligibility, and team accountability.

Student-athletes must be present for more than half of the school day per the Gahanna Middle School Student Handbook to participate in practices, games, or competitions on that day. This includes both home and away events. Attendance is tracked by minute via Infinite Campus.

- Excused absences (such as medical appointments, funerals, or other verified reasons) do not count against participation eligibility.
- Unexcused absences or absences without proper documentation may result in a loss of participation for that day. Unexcused Friday absences may impact weekend participation.

It is the student-athlete's responsibility to ensure that any absence is accurately recorded and properly documented with the school attendance office. If an absence is reported in error, the student-athlete must work directly with the school attendance office to resolve it promptly.

All absence documentation (doctor's notes, parent notes for excused reasons, etc.) should be submitted to the attendance office upon return to school. Timely communication and follow-through are expected.

Student-athletes who regularly miss school or fail to meet attendance expectations may face consequences, up to and including suspension from team activities. Consistent school attendance reflects commitment, discipline, and respect — all qualities we value in Lion Athletics.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of our student-athletes are of paramount importance. Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools (GJPS) is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all participants in our Middle School athletics programs.

Sports Medicine Partnership

GJPS partners with OhioHealth, a leading healthcare provider, to deliver comprehensive sports medicine services to our student-athletes. Through this collaboration, we ensure access to high-quality medical care, injury prevention strategies, and rehabilitation services.

Our dedicated GJPS Middle School Athletic Trainer, Haley Cole, ATC, is available to assess injuries, provide immediate care, and coordinate treatment plans. Haley works closely with coaches, families, and healthcare professionals to support the health and recovery of our athletes.

Injury Prevention and Management

To minimize the risk of injury, GJPS implements the following measures:

- Pre-Participation Physical Examinations: All student-athletes must undergo a physical examination before participation, as outlined in the Health/Physical Exam Requirements section of this handbook.
- Proper Training and Conditioning: Coaches emphasize the importance of appropriate warm-up routines, strength training, and conditioning exercises tailored to each sport.
- Education on Safe Techniques: Instruction on correct techniques and safety protocols is provided to reduce the likelihood of injuries.
- Immediate Response to Injuries: In the event of an injury, immediate evaluation and care are provided by the athletic trainer or appropriate medical personnel.

Concussion Management

GJPS adheres to the Ohio Department of Health's guidelines for concussion management:

- **Education:** Student-athletes and families receive information on concussion symptoms, risks, and management strategies.
- **Immediate Removal:** Any athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion is immediately removed from play and evaluated by a healthcare professional.
- **Return-to-Play Protocol:** A structured, step-by-step protocol is followed for an athlete's safe return to play, requiring medical clearance from a licensed healthcare provider.

Emergency Action Plans

Each athletic venue has a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in place, detailing procedures for responding to medical emergencies. Coaches and staff are trained to execute these plans effectively, ensuring prompt and coordinated responses.

Communication with Families

Open communication is vital to the health and safety of our student-athletes. Families are encouraged to:

- Inform Coaches of Medical Conditions: Share any relevant medical information or concerns with the coaching staff and athletic trainer.
- Report Injuries: Promptly report any injuries or symptoms experienced by the athlete during or outside of school activities.
- Follow Medical Recommendations: Adhere to prescribed treatment plans and communicate any changes in the athlete's health status.

By working collaboratively, we aim to provide a safe and healthy athletic experience for all GJPS Middle School student-athletes.

Playing Time Philosophy

At Gahanna Middle Schools, participation in interscholastic athletics is both a privilege and a commitment. Playing time is earned, not guaranteed, and is determined solely at the discretion of the coaching staff. Coaches make these decisions based on a variety of factors, including but not limited to:

- Effort and performance during practices and games
- Attitude, teamwork, and coachability
- Preparation and focus during the preseason and in-season training
- Conduct in the classroom, in the locker room, and throughout the school community
- Overall commitment to the team and program standards

Our coaches are educators, and their role includes making decisions that serve the team's best interests while helping student-athletes grow. Student-athletes are encouraged to take ownership of their development. If questions arise about playing time, student-athletes must respectfully initiate a conversation with their coach to seek feedback and guidance. This is an important life skill and an opportunity for personal growth.

Conversations about playing time are a valuable opportunity for student-athletes to advocate for themselves, take ownership of their development, and build communication skills. We encourage and expect student-athletes to initiate these discussions directly with their coaches.

If further conversation is necessary, any meeting involving families and coaches about playing time must include the student-athlete. Discussions of this nature will not be conducted solely between families, coaches, or athletic department staff. We ask that families support this boundary as part of our shared effort to foster responsibility, resilience, and respect in our student-athletes.

We are proud of the opportunities we provide through education-based athletics, and we remain committed to helping every student-athlete reach their full potential both on and off the area of competition.

Communications

Communication with Your Student-Athlete

At Gahanna Middle Schools, open, supportive communication between families and student-athletes is essential to a positive and meaningful athletic experience. The way you engage with your student-athlete throughout their sports journey plays a vital role in their development, confidence, and enjoyment of athletics.

Families are encouraged to keep the following principles in mind:

- Be Objective: Maintain a realistic perspective about your student-athlete's abilities, sportsmanship, attitude, and development. Focus on growth, effort, and progress rather than just outcomes.
- Offer Unconditional Support: Ensure your student-athlete knows your love and pride are not tied to their performance. Whether they win or lose, succeed or struggle, your encouragement should always be steady.
- Promote a Healthy Mindset: Encourage your student-athlete to enjoy competition, strive for improvement, embrace challenges, and find joy in the experience. Help them strike a balance between competitiveness, fun, growth, and good sportsmanship.
- Avoid Coaching from the Stands: Trust the coaches to lead and instruct the team. Offering technical advice during or after contests can overwhelm or confuse your student-athlete.
- Support the Coaching Staff: Reinforce the coach's role and authority. Conflicting guidance from families and coaches can create unnecessary stress and tension for student-athletes.
- Focus on Their Journey — Not Yours: Let your student-athlete experience their own successes and setbacks. Avoid projecting your past experiences or expectations onto their path.
- Celebrate Individuality: Avoid comparing your student-athlete to teammates, classmates, or siblings. Every athlete develops at their own pace and in their own way.

Through positive, patient, and encouraging communication, you help build the confidence and character your student-athlete needs to thrive on and off the field.

Your words matter. Choose encouragement, trust the process, and celebrate the journey.

Communication & Conflict Resolution Guidelines

Clear and respectful communication among families, student-athletes, coaches, and the athletic department is essential to maintaining a positive, productive environment in interscholastic athletics. Gahanna Middle School is committed to supporting student-athletes and families through a transparent and structured communication process.

What Families Can Expect from Coaches

Coaches are responsible for setting a clear vision for the program and ensuring your student-athlete has the tools to grow, compete, and succeed. You can expect the coach to communicate:

- Their coaching philosophy and expectations for the team.
- Team rules and expectations for player conduct and commitment.
- Practice and competition schedules, including locations and times.
- Required equipment and recommended off-season activities or conditioning.
- Procedures for reporting injuries or illnesses.
- Consequences of rule violations or behavior concerns that could impact participation.

What Coaches Expect from Families

To best support your student-athlete, coaches ask that families:

- Share any relevant health concerns or injury history that may affect participation.
- Communicate special circumstances that could influence your student-athlete's performance or availability.
- Provide advance notice of scheduling conflicts whenever possible.
- Ask questions respectfully—especially when discussing team expectations or your student-athlete's experience.

Communication Protocol

To ensure effective communication, please follow these steps:

1. Student-Athlete and Coach Communication: Encourage your child to speak directly with their coach about any concerns or issues. This fosters self-advocacy and personal growth.
2. Parent/Guardian and Coach Communication: If further discussion is necessary, families should contact the coach to schedule a meeting. Please avoid approaching coaches before or after games or practices, as these are not appropriate times for discussions. Please wait 24 hours after a contest or practice to contact a coach about specific concerns.
3. Athletic Director Involvement: If the issue remains unresolved after meeting with the coach, contact the Middle Schools Athletic Director, Philip K. Dorn, MA, CAA, to discuss the concern and explore possible solutions.
4. Building Principal Involvement: If the matter remains unresolved, schedule a meeting with the building principal to address the concern further.
5. District Administration: If all previous steps have been exhausted without resolution, contact the GJPS District Administration for further assistance.

Procedures for Discussing Concerns with Coaches

We encourage respectful, open communication when concerns arise, but only through the appropriate process.

1. Schedule an Appointment: Contact the coach to arrange a meeting. Meetings will not be held immediately before or after contests or during practices. Please use the coach's school-provided email to initiate communication.
2. Meeting Format: Meetings typically include the parent/guardian, the student-athlete, the head coach, and an assistant coach. This format ensures a respectful, collaborative conversation.
3. Topics of Discussion:
    - Focus solely on your student-athlete's experience.
    - Discussions about other players or team decisions involving other athletes are not appropriate.
    - Coaches will provide honest, constructive feedback, including strengths, areas for improvement, and the student-athlete's role on the team.
4. Next Steps: If a satisfactory resolution is not reached after the coach's meeting, a follow-up meeting with the athletic director may be requested, provided that the initial steps have been taken.

Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Topics to Discuss with Coaches

Appropriate Topics:

- Your student-athlete's experience, development, or well-being.
- Ways to support your student-athlete's improvement.
- Concerns about behavior, safety, or academic performance.
- Team expectations and requirements

Inappropriate Topics:

- Playing time or position.
- Game strategy, play calling, or coaching decisions.
- Other student-athletes' roles, performance, or behavior.

Important Reminder: Confronting a coach immediately after a game or practice is not productive and is strongly discouraged. Emotions tend to run high during these moments. We ask that families and coaches observe a 24-hour reflection period before initiating communication regarding concerns.

Financial Obligations and Use of Equipment

Participating in interscholastic athletics at Gahanna Middle Schools may involve financial responsibilities, including uniforms, equipment, and other team-related expenses. Families and student-athletes are expected to understand and uphold these responsibilities to support the integrity of our programs.

Pay-to-Participate Fees

- Per the Gahanna-Jefferson Board of Education policy (2431), pay-to-participate fees are required for each sports season and are charged through the Infinite Campus portal.
- Fee Structure:
    - First Sport/Season - $100
    - Second Sport/Season - $50
    - Third Sport/Season - no fee
- All pay-to-participate fees must be paid in full before the first regular season competition.
- Students who qualify for the Free or Reduced Lunch Program may have fees waived by submitting the Consent to Share form available on the district website.
- Failure to pay participation fees prior to the first competition will delay eligibility for participation.

Uniforms and Team Apparel

- In some sports, student-athletes may be required to purchase a portion of their uniforms (e.g., personalized jerseys or practice gear). These items become the student-athlete's property.
- Uniforms and apparel issued by the school must be returned in good condition, with normal wear and tear accepted, following the conclusion of each season.

School-Issued Equipment

Student-athletes are responsible for the proper care, use, and return of all equipment issued to them. The following expectations apply:

- Authorized Use Only: Equipment issued to a student-athlete will be used only during official practices, games, or team-approved events. Any other use requires coach approval.
- Uniform Modifications: No additions, alterations, or accessories may be added to issued uniforms without the coach's approval.
- Care and Maintenance: All equipment should be kept clean, in good condition, and properly stored. Athletes should secure their belongings using a personal lock on their assigned athletic locker. Gahanna Middle Schools are not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items due to negligence.
- Property of the School: All equipment remains the property of Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools and may not be used for non-school events or by outside organizations without prior written approval from the Athletic Director.
- Return and Replacement: All equipment must be returned within one week of the season's final contest. Equipment not returned or damaged beyond normal wear and tear must be paid for at full replacement cost.
- Participation Holds: Student-athletes with outstanding equipment or financial obligations may be required to delay their participation in future seasons until these matters are resolved.

Additional Expenses

In some programs, there may be additional team expenses beyond the standard participation fee (e.g., team gear, spirit wear, travel meals, banquets, etc.). Coaches will communicate these in advance, and we remain committed to working with families to address any financial concerns in a confidential manner.

Responsibility and accountability are part of being a Lion.
Take pride in how you care for your gear, your space, and your program.

Additional Participation Guidelines

Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools (GJPS) encourages student-athletes to engage in athletic programs that promote personal growth, teamwork, and school spirit. The following guidelines are established to ensure a fair and supportive environment for all participants.

Multi-Sport Participation

- Student-athletes are encouraged to participate in multiple sports throughout the academic year.
- Participation in multiple sports should be balanced to prevent overcommitment and ensure academic responsibilities are maintained.
- Coaches will collaborate to accommodate multi-sport athletes, facilitating communication and scheduling to support the student's involvement in various programs.

Travel Ball Participation

- While GJPS recognizes the value of external athletic opportunities, student-athletes must prioritize school-sponsored sports during their respective seasons.
- Participation in non-school teams (e.g., travel ball) during the same sports season is subject to OHSAA regulations and may impact eligibility.
- Student-athletes must notify their school coaches of any external athletic commitments to ensure compliance with eligibility requirements and to manage potential scheduling conflicts.

Tryouts and Team Selection

- Tryouts are conducted to fairly and impartially assess the skills and abilities of student-athletes.
- Selection criteria are based on athletic skill, teamwork, attitude, coachability, and adherence to team rules and expectations.
- Coaches will provide clear information on tryout procedures, expectations, and criteria before tryouts begin.
- All students meeting eligibility requirements are welcome to try out; however, team selection is competitive, and not all participants may be selected.
- Feedback will be available upon request to assist student-athletes in understanding areas for improvement.

Commitment and Conduct

- Selected team members are expected to commit to the whole duration of the season, including practices, games, and team events.

- Student-athletes must adhere to the GJPS Code of Conduct and demonstrate sportsmanship, respect, and responsibility at all times.
- Failure to meet team expectations or violations of conduct policies may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or removal from the team.

Transportation and Access

Transportation to Away Events

Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools (GJPS) is committed to ensuring the safe and efficient transportation of student-athletes to and from athletic practices and contests.
The following guidelines outline the district's policies and procedures regarding transportation for Middle School athletics.

District-Provided Transportation

- For most district-sponsored sports, GJPS provides transportation for student-athletes to scheduled competitions and events.
- Transportation to off-site practices may be provided, depending on the location and availability of district resources
- All student-athletes are expected to utilize district-provided transportation to and from athletic events unless prior arrangements have been approved.

Parent/Guardian Transportation Requests

- In certain circumstances, families may request to transport their student-athlete to or from an athletic event.
- If extenuating circumstances require alternative transportation, a written request must be submitted to the head coach in advance. Student-Athlete Travel Release form.
- The completed form must be submitted to the coach or athletic director at least 24 hours prior to the event.
- Approval is subject to the athletic director's review and is not guaranteed.

Coach Transportation Restrictions

- Coaches are not authorized to transport student-athletes in their personal vehicles under any circumstances.

- All transportation of student-athletes must adhere to district policies and utilize approved methods.

Student Conduct on District Transportation

Student-athletes are expected to adhere to the following conduct guidelines while utilizing district-provided transportation:

1. Changing seats, standing, walking around while the bus is in motion
2. Noise at railroad crossings and other danger points
3. Excessive noise, loud talking, or laughter at any time
4. Distracting the bus driver in any manner
5. Putting any part of the body outside the bus
6. Scuffling or fighting on the bus
7. Spitting or throwing any object on, to, or from the bus
8. Smoking, vaping, or lighting matches/lighter on the bus
9. Eating, drinking, or littering
10. Failure to obey the driver
11. Transporting animals - dead or alive
12. Transporting any glass container on a bus
13. Damaging or marking any part of the bus
14. Use of profane or unbecoming language
15. Taking photos or videos

Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including suspension from transportation services or athletic participation.

Emergency Situations and Delays

In the event of an emergency or unexpected delay during transportation, coaches will communicate promptly with families using the contact information provided in FinalForms.
Families are encouraged to ensure their contact information is up to date and accurate in the FinalForms system.

Gahanna Middle School student-athletes are expected to use school-provided transportation to and from all away contests, scrimmages, and practices when available.

If a parent or guardian needs to transport their student-athlete due to extenuating circumstances:

- If extenuating circumstances require alternative transportation, a written request must be submitted to the head coach in advance: Student-Athlete Travel Release form.
- If approved, the student-athlete may only ride with their own parent or guardian.

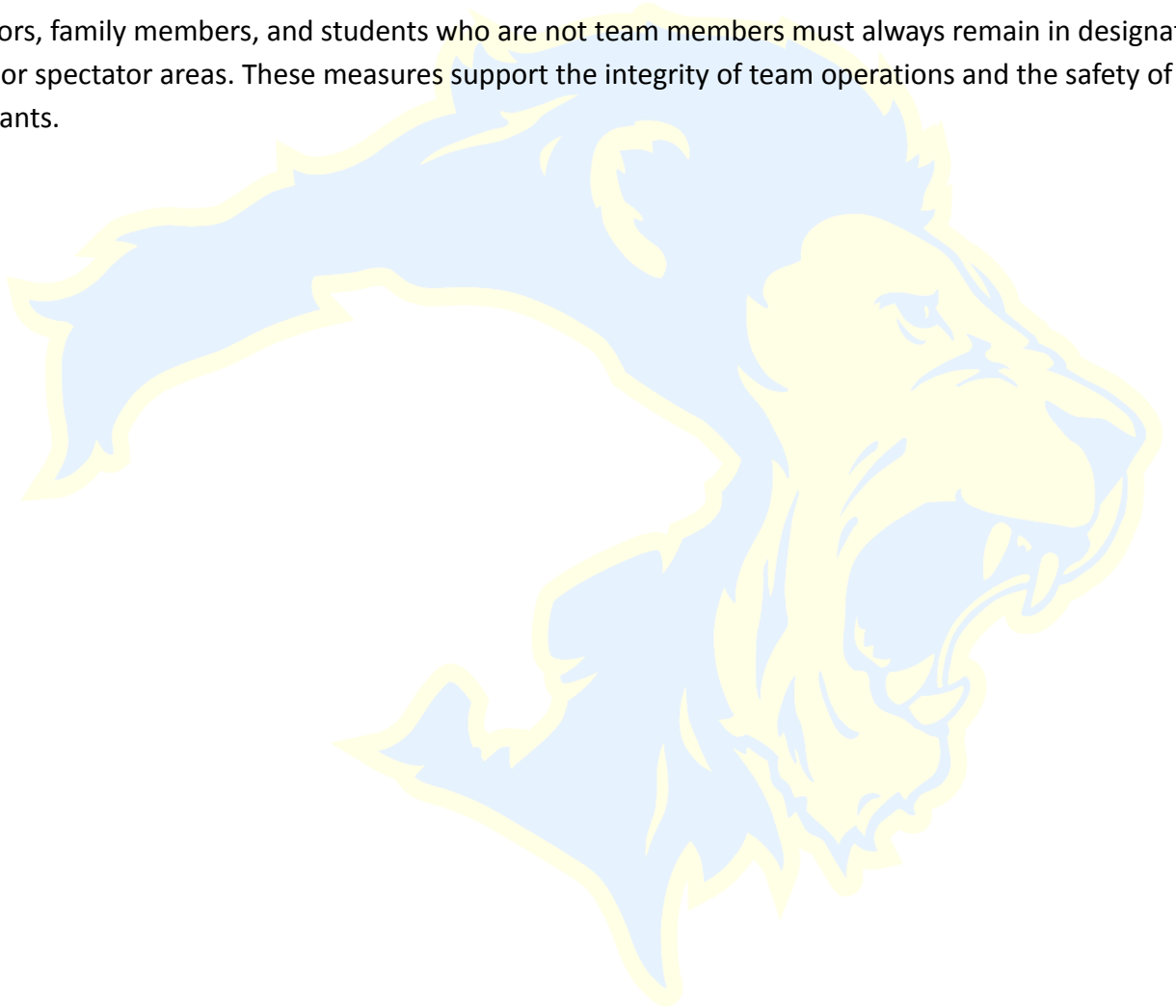
- Alternate transportation arrangements must not interfere with team expectations, arrival times, or group responsibilities.

Bench, Team Areas, and Locker Room Access

To maintain a safe and focused team environment, access to the bench, team areas, and locker rooms is strictly limited to:

- Official team members listed on the OHSAA eligibility form
- Coaching staff and approved volunteer assistants
- Certified athletic trainers, team physicians, and medical personnel
- Team managers, videographers, and staff approved by the head coach or athletic director

Spectators, family members, and students who are not team members must always remain in designated seating or spectator areas. These measures support the integrity of team operations and the safety of all participants.



Conflicts Between Athletics and Extra-Curricular Activities

At Gahanna Middle Schools, we encourage students to explore a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities, including athletics, fine arts, clubs, and academic competitions. Involvement in multiple programs fosters well-rounded student growth, leadership, and school pride.

However, with increased involvement comes the possibility of scheduling conflicts. While the athletic department and other activity sponsors work collaboratively to minimize these overlaps, it is the student's responsibility to manage their schedule and communicate effectively and proactively.

Expectations:

- Be Selective and Committed: Before joining multiple teams, clubs, or programs, students should carefully assess their ability to meet each team's time, energy, and performance expectations. Overcommitment can lead to avoidable stress and diminished success in all areas.
- Communicate Early and Often: If a conflict arises between two school-sponsored activities, the student should notify the coach and the activity advisor as soon as possible. Timely and honest communication facilitates better collaboration and the exploration of potential solutions.
- Fairness to the Team and Group: Participation in extra-curricular activities is a shared responsibility. Regular absences or recurring conflicts not only affect the student but also impact the collective progress and cohesion of the group. Students should prioritize involvement in programs where they can consistently attend required practices, rehearsals, events, and competitions.
- Collaborative Resolution: Coaches and advisors will make reasonable efforts to support students navigating occasional conflicts. However, suppose a student's dual participation consistently disrupts one or both programs. In such cases, a decision may be made to prioritize one activity over another to ensure fairness to teammates and group members.

Guiding Principles:

- Our students benefit when they can participate in a variety of activities.
- Teachers and coaches should make every reasonable effort to avoid conflicts. This should include avoiding multiple significant events on the same day, making scheduling requests to contest and tournament organizers, asking for scheduling adjustments so students can travel between two events, and allowing students to leave early or arrive late when possible.
- Students should not be penalized when two school activities conflict.
- Students have responsibilities to their ensembles and teams.
- Band, Choir, and Orchestra are graded academic courses, and the performances are a culminating part of the coursework.

- Performance and athletic events have different levels of importance, and higher importance should take priority
- When two competing events are deemed equally important, the decision of which to attend shall be made by the coaches and teachers involved to avoid putting the student in an uncomfortable situation.

Balance, communication, and commitment are key to successfully managing multiple opportunities.

Student-Athletes Transferring Between Sports

At Gahanna Middle Schools, we emphasize commitment, accountability, and follow-through as foundational values in all athletic programs. To uphold team integrity and respect the work of student-athletes and coaches, the following guidelines govern the process of transferring between sports:

The following guidelines apply to student-athletes wishing to transfer from one sport to another:

- Once a student-athlete has participated in the first scheduled scrimmage or contest, they may not transfer to another sport during that same season.
- A student-athlete who withdraws from a sport after the start of the season is not permitted to participate in any other sport, including open gyms, conditioning, or off-season activities, until the conclusion of the current sport's season.
- Exception:
  A student-athlete may participate in another sport's off-season activities (such as open gyms or conditioning) only with prior approval from the head coach of the sport they are withdrawing from. This ensures mutual understanding and maintains respect for all programs involved.
- Before Making a Change

  Any student-athlete considering withdrawing from a sport is strongly encouraged to:

  - First, speak directly with their head coach.
  - If necessary, schedule a conversation with the Athletic Director to understand the full impact of their decision and explore available options.

These policies are designed to foster a culture of responsibility, enhance team unity, and recognize the time and effort of all individuals involved. We expect all Lions to uphold their commitments and make positive contributions to their teams throughout each season.

At Gahanna Middle Schools, we believe in finishing what we start. Commitment builds character.

Online Resources:

Official Athletics Website:
https://www.gahannamsathletics.com/

HomeTown Ticketing Box Office:
https://events.hometownticketing.com/boxoffice/gahannaschools/entity

Middle School East Sideline Store:
https://sideline.bsnsports.com/schools/ohio/gahanna/gahanna-middle-school-east

Middle School South Sideline Store:
https://sideline.bsnsports.com/schools/ohio/gahanna/gahanna-middle-school-south

Middle School West Sideline Store:
https://sideline.bsnsports.com/schools/ohio/gahanna/gahanna-middle-school-west