



Girls Global Academy Athletics Handbook as a Member of D.C. PCSSA  
FULL MEMBER STATUS AS OF JULY 1, 2022

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Letter from the Executive Director and Co-Founder: **Karen Venable-Croft**

Girls Global Academy athletics empower students to lead confidently, thrive academically, stand boldly, and flourish physically in any arena they may find themselves. Through our intramural, junior varsity, and varsity programs, we elevate student choice and voice by offering sports that students are interested in and ones that will help them grow beyond the field of play. GGA Athletics embodies our 4 pillars of Sisterhood, Scholarship, Service, and Safety and is a way to support both the physical and mental wellbeing of our students.

Our interscholastic program is the nourishment and the environment in which students learn the rules of fair play and ethical behavior while honoring the values of teamwork, communication,

growth, and healthy competition. We strive to create traditions where students celebrate the wins, learn from mistakes, and stand together in the face of adversity.

Girls Global Academy Athletics epitomizes the power of our why and the importance of life connections.

Students learn to show up for themselves, for their teammates, the athletic community, and the broader

community. When you educate, you can change the trajectory of a student's life. Put that student on an

athletics team and they will develop memories, experiences, and skills carried throughout a lifetime.

We are the Girls Global Academy Trailblazers!

Together We Thrive,

Karen Venable-Croft

Co-Founder and Executive Director

## Letter from the Athletic Director: Nadia McCrimmon

It is an honor to be the Athletic Director at a school founded rich in athletic tradition and excellence. We are established with great coaches that are committed to the health and well being of every student-athlete and their families. If you have questions or comments about GGA Athletics please do not hesitate to contact me at [nmccrimmon@girlsglobalacademy.org](mailto:nmccrimmon@girlsglobalacademy.org).

### Personal Philosophy of Athletics

Student Activities and Athletics are a vital part of the overall educational program. Participation in activities and athletics is a privilege available to all eligible students. This privilege carries with it serious personal responsibilities to the school and the community.

Participants and staff members understand that an emphasis on academic achievement is of high importance. Most importantly, the overall purpose of student activities is to develop positive values and habits so that personal growth and character development occurs.

I believe effective student activities & athletic programs:

- play a vital role in improving the overall climate and academic goals of the school

- emphasize solid character values, sportsmanship and commitment to excellence.
- promote respect of self and others
- be lead by qualified individuals that are positive, encouraging, and promote safety
- have a clear commitment to excellence both in the classroom and in competition

GGA Athletics aims to educate our student athletes to rely on our four pillars of safety, scholarship, service, and sisterhood. It is our mission and belief to embed those pillars into our athletic program while promoting good mental, emotional, social, and physical health.

GGA Athletic's will focus on teaching young people values and lifelong habits such as – accountability, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership skills, organizational skills, persistence, work ethic, self-discipline, social skills, teamwork, performing under pressure, and the ability to take instruction while striving for excellence.

Go Trailblazers!

Nadia McCrimmon  
Director of Athletics

### Assumption of Risk:

Participation in GGA Athletics can involve intense physical activity and competition, which poses the potential for serious, catastrophic, or life-threatening injury. Participants and parents are urged to consider that there are inherent risks and hazards associated with athletic participation in any capacity. Risks vary from sport-to-sport and can occur under direct supervision and with the use of proper safety equipment.

GGA is responsible for informing their student-athletes and parents of this risk prior to the student-athlete's participation in a sport. At minimum, GGA will communicate this risk through the following:

- Posting an Assumption of Risk statement in the GGA athletics handbook, and/or
- Posting an Assumption of Risk acknowledgement statement in the GGA athletics registration forms.

### Certificate of Insurance/Indemnification:

Prior to the start of regular season play every Fall, each school must complete the PCSAA indemnification document and submit a Certificate of Insurance (COI) demonstrating the school has current general liability, umbrella liability, and student accident insurance. Completed waiver documents and COI must be emailed to [pcsaaadc@gmail.com](mailto:pcsaaadc@gmail.com) by a deadline designated by the PCSAA Executive Board. Failure to submit proper documentation by the deadline shall result in

the suspension of all that school's teams until submitted. League games scheduled to be played during that suspension will result in a forfeit.

## Student-Athlete Eligibility

GGA Athletics as part of the PCSAA league, has adopted and follows all DC State Athletic Association(DCSAA) eligibility requirements for all high school athletic programs, which can be found on the DCSAA website, [www.dcsaasports.org](http://www.dcsaasports.org).

### NCAA Clearinghouse

Athletes anticipating playing at the NCAA Division I or Division II level must be registered with the NCAA Clearinghouse. **General information and waiver information** can be obtained from the Athletic Director, high school counselor or at [ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://ncaaclearinghouse.net).

### Eligibility

To be eligible for GGA Athletics, athletes must be able to answer "yes" to ALL of the following:

1. You will not nor have not turned 20 before or on the scheduled date of the PCSAA State Finals.
2. You are currently enrolled and currently passing 70% of the full credit subjects or the equivalent that a student can take (see below for GGA academic eligibility).
3. You have had a physical examination completed by a medical physician TURNED IN TO ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, HEAD COACH OR OPERATIONS TEAM.
4. You have filed with principal the Consent and Release Certificate, which has been signed by your parent/s or legal guardian/s.
5. You have not changed school without a corresponding move by your parent/s or guardian/s, INFORMATION ON FILE WITH OPERATIONS TEAM WITH CONSENT.
6. You have not participated in non-school contests in your sport after the designated date for the first authorized contest in that sport.
7. You have never dropped out of school.
8. You have had the required number of practices in your sport before participation in a contest.
9. You enrolled in your school during the first 15 days of the semester.
10. You have never received money or merchandise directly or indirectly for your athletic participation.
11. You are not participating in any other PCSAA or DCSAA high school athletics, unless a sport is not offered by GGA Athletics in any capacity.

### Participating in PCSAA athletics outside of GGA Athletics

Any student that wishes to participate in a school sponsored athletic program not affiliated with GGA Athletics, must fall under the following conditions.

1. GGA Athletics does not offer the particular sport of interest.

2. You will not nor have not turned 20 before or on the scheduled date of the PCSAA State Finals.
3. You are currently enrolled and currently passing 70% of the full credit subjects or the equivalent that a student can take (see below for GGA academic eligibility).
4. You have had a physical examination completed by a medical physician TURNED IN TO ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, HEAD COACH OR OPERATIONS TEAM.
5. You have filed with principal the Consent and Release Certificate, which has been signed by your parent/s or legal guardian/s.
6. You have not changed school without a corresponding move by your parent/s or guardian/s, INFORMATION ON FILE WITH OPERATIONS TEAM WITH CONSENT.
7. You have not participated in non-school contests in your sport after the designated date for the first authorized contest in that sport.
8. You have never dropped out of school.
9. You have had the required number of practices in your sport before participation in a contest.
10. You enrolled in your school during the first 15 days of the semester.
11. You have never received money or merchandise directly or indirectly for your athletic participation.
12. You are not participating in any other PCSAA or DCSAA high school athletics, unless a sport is not offered by GGA Athletics in any capacity.

#### GGA Academic Eligibility

Students must have passed 70% of available courses from the previous term AND must be enrolled in 100% of a full schedule during their current term to be academically eligible through the PCSAA. GGA offers academic pathways for our students to earn credits toward graduation. The grade point average equivalency must equal at least 2.0 gpa at the end of each quarter for the academic year to be considered eligible for GGA Athletics.

#### Academic Probation

1. What makes them ineligible – failure to pass 70% from previous quarter and enrolled in 100% of class schedule
  - a. At the end of each academic quarter student-athlete must be passing 70% of class course load with a 2.0 cumulative gpa
2. Consequences
  - a. Loss of privilege to compete in any GGA sponsored event
  - b. Weekly study hall hours
  - c. Weekly progress report check-ins signed by all teachers
  - d. Weekly progress report check-ins signed by parent and/or guardian

#### GGA Athletics Fees:

Girls Global Academy Athletics as a public charter school incur all costs associated with basic athletic costs (to include, but not limited to) uniforms, transportation, team equipment, and facilities maintenance. GGA Athletics reserves the right to invoice for any replacement of lost equipment or equipment damaged beyond normal wear and tear, as determined by the Head Coach and the AD, will be the sole responsibility of the athlete and parent/guardian.

## Equipment

Participants should take reasonable care of school owned equipment. Replacement of lost equipment or equipment damaged beyond normal wear and tear, as determined by the Head Coach and the AD/A, will be the sole responsibility of the athlete and parent/guardian. Participants should not borrow equipment from others without permission. School owned equipment is not to be worn outside practice or athletic contests unless approved by the Head Coach.

## Athletic Handbooks for Member Schools

Every member school shall have an athletics handbook that governs the schools athletic programs. This handbook promotes the administration of quality athletics and the safety of student-athletes. Each school athletic handbook should include shall include at least the following:

1. Philosophy
2. Assumption of Risk Statement
3. Student-Athlete Eligibility Guidelines
4. Student-Athlete Discipline Guidelines
5. Student-Athlete Code of Conduct
6. Coaches Code of Conduct
7. Coaches Discipline Guidelines
8. Due Process Guidelines for Student-Athletes and Coaches
9. Coaching Certifications
10. Transportation Policies
11. Safety/Emergency Plans

## Coaching Certifications

### High School

Member schools are responsible for ensuring that all of their head coaches meet, and are current on, the following certifications guidelines:

- American Heart Association First Aid/ CPR/ AED Certified (Expires every two years)
- National Federation of High Schools Heat Illness (Expires every two years)
- National Federation of High Schools Concussion (Expires every two years)
- National Federation of High Schools Sportsmanship (Expires every two years)
- National Federation of High School Fundamentals of Coaching (No expiration)
- National Federation of High School Sports Specific Course (Based on the sport being coached, No expiration)

Certificates for every head coach shall be submitted to the PCSAA with the initial team roster. Head coaches who do not have the proper certification shall not be permitted to coach practices, scrimmages, and games until all certifications are submitted.

## Student-Athletic Medical Requirements

This will be a physical examination form that can be signed off by their primary physician, sickle cell testing examination results are also required, an emergency physician prescribed medicine is to be on hand at all times -- either by administration, nurse, athletic trainer, athletic director, or head coach that has been trained in administering such medicine to the student-athlete.

### Student Athlete COVID-19 Vaccination

Per the mandate of the District of Columbia, all students and student-athletes are required to have their COVID-19 vaccination, with proof, if over the age of 16. Exemptions include non-vaccination due to religious beliefs.

“Beginning this fall, for the 2022-23 school year, student vaccine requirements will include the COVID-19 vaccine for all students for whom there is a federally, fully approved COVID-19 vaccine. Unless exempted, children ages 12 to 15 will be required to receive a primary COVID-19 vaccine series, or to have started receiving their shots by Sept. 16, 2022. Similarly, all students 16 or older must have received, or have started receiving, their primary COVID-19 vaccination series by the beginning of the school year.”

### Student-Athlete Medical Examinations

It is the responsibility of every member school to ensure each of their student-athletes are medically fit to compete prior to participating in try-outs, practices, scrimmages, and competitions. In accordance with DC Code 38-621, all students must have a completed medical examination on file at the school. Medication examinations are valid for 12 months after the dates of examination. For student-athletes, a physician or nurse practitioner must formally clear the student-athlete for competitive athletics. As a part of Girls Global Academy Athletics, sickle cell testing records are required after formally being administered by a physician or nurse practitioner and kept on file for the duration of the student-athletes athletic participation. All participating student-athletes are required to provide confirmation of sickle cell trait status, either through: 1) existing documentation from birth, or; 2) recent screening within 12 months.

## Medical Coverage for Athletic Competitions

Physical forms (or an up to date copy with Physician's signature) will be required to participate at the beginning of every sports season. Sickle cell testing is not required for conference play, however strongly suggested to have on hand during any sports competition.

## Codes of Conduct

During Competition, it is the responsibility of all competing team's athletic directors and coaches to maintain a safe and organized sideline. Unauthorized individuals, including students (non-team members), parents, and children shall not be on sideline or playing area before,

during, or after a competition, Student team managers are considered a part of the team, but only a maximum of two (2) student managers may be present on the sideline before, during, and after the contest. Furthermore, student team managers must wear team uniform polo shirts to identify them as a team manager. --

### Student Handbook Violations

Disregard or repeated violation of Girls Global Academy Student Handbook will be considered a violation of the Athletic Code and will result in progressive disciplinary action up to and including complete removal from GGA Athletics. Any and all violations of MTSS during the school day will result in a subsequent disciplinary action.

### Out Of School Suspensions

Students who are issued out of school suspensions shall not attend practices or contests during the suspension. Repeated out-of-school suspensions will result in progressive discipline up to and including complete removal from athletic participation. Required to do logged study hall hours while on suspension (first suspension), serve a 3 game suspension once returned to school. Any suspension after first suspension is subject to immediate team dismissal for the remainder of the season.

### In School Suspensions

Students who are issued in school suspensions shall not attend contests on the day(s) of in school suspension. Repeated in school suspensions will result in progressive discipline up to and including complete removal from athletic participation. Required to do logged study hall hours during practice time with their coaches supervision.

### Dress

Athletes should be dressed appropriately for all contests, practices, and workouts—undergarments should be completely covered. When participating in any GGA Athletics events, student athletes should be in appropriate GGA Athletics attire.

### Hazing

Hazing and/or bullying in any shape or form will not be tolerated in part with GGA Athletics and its affiliates. Participating in such activities should expect to be disciplined by GGA AD, Principal, Coaching staff and/or any combination of the above mentioned and subject to immediate disciplinary action up to dismissal from GGA Athletics.

### Safety/Emergency Plans

Girls Global Academy and/or schools hosting an athletic competition are responsible for the safety of all student-athletes, coaches, officials, vendors, and spectators. Each school shall develop safety/emergency plans for each of the athletic facilities we participate on:

1. Locker Room (student-athletes -- home and away teams and officials)
  - a. Showering and use of post competition changing areas to collect apparel
2. Procedure for ingress and egress of players, coaches, officials, and spectators



3. Posts and responsibilities for security, administration, athletic staff, and coaches
4. Procedure for evacuation of competition in case of emergency and/or inclement weather
5. Procedure for ingress and egress of emergency medical personnel
6. Address of competition venue --
7. Contact information of emergency personnel and athletic director

### Quitting/ Being Removed from a Team

Athletes quitting or being removed from a team before the official end of the season will not be able to start conditioning for another spot until they are released by the head coach or the season is complete. Should a coach believe it necessary to remove a participant from an athletic team, he or she should have a conference with the athlete, parent, and Athletic Director before such action is finalized.

### Sportsmanship

The following rules are to be followed by ALL PARENTS, MANAGERS, COACHES, and PARENTS. (Reminders of these rules will be placed in all athletic programs and prominently displayed at all athletic venues.)

1. Remember, this is a school athletic event and mistakes will be made. Do not criticize athletes, encourage them.
2. Always respect opposing players, coaches, and spectators. NEVER cheer if one is injured.
3. Respect Game Officials. Understand they are people, like you, who are doing their best to support our youth.
4. Never use inappropriate language.
5. Encourage those fans around you to model appropriate behavior.
6. Remember, a ticket to a school athletic event is not a license to verbally assault anyone, including officials, coaches, school staff, and players from either team.

### Holiday & Snow Day Practice

There shall be no practices on Federal Holidays, School off days, Religious Holidays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and after 12 noon on December 24th without special circumstances. If a practice is held the morning of December 24th, the attendance shall be optional. When school is not in session due to weather conditions, practices will be scheduled only with permission of the Athletic Director. When students are sent home early from school due to weather conditions, no practices are to be held that day.

### School Attendance

Morning Arrival - Participants who are not in school by \_\_\_\_\_ AM shall not practice or participate in a contest, unless cleared by the Principal or his/her designee. An exception is made for appointments, funerals, and other family emergencies with appropriate documentation and approval of the Principal and his/her designee. **(This policy is unrelated to GGA attendance policies regarding tardiness or truancy. It exists assuming the student is ill**

**and has been excused through the GGA attendance office with the student's parent/guardian. It is the philosophy of the athletic department that a student must be in school for the majority of the day to practice or play that day. \_\_\_\_\_ AM is the cutoff that has been determined.)** --If a student-athlete leaves school early for illness, they are not allowed to participate in any athletic contests or practices that day or night.

## Parent Meetings

Parents of athletes are strongly encouraged to attend an athletic department meeting at the beginning of each school year. The meeting will provide parents with necessary information about athletic department procedures and policies. Head coaches of each sport are also asked to hold a meeting at the beginning of each sports season for parents to explain team rules, etc. The fall individual sport parent meetings may occur on the same evening of the department meeting immediately afterward. The athletic department parent meeting will include the following topics:

1. Introduction of Athletic Staff
2. GGA Athletic Department philosophy and principles
3. GGA Athletic Code
4. ImPACT testing and concussion policy
5. Transportation policies
6. Athletic Eligibility
7. Hazing and other safety issues for athletes
8. Secondary Insurance policy

Parent meetings will be held near the beginning of each season and should include the following:

1. Athletic award requirements for that specific sport (letting policy)
2. Tentative description of practice sessions concerning time, length, etc.
3. Program goals and objectives
4. Coach's expectations of athletes and parents
5. Other items considered important by the coach (approved by AC/AD)

## Transportation of Athletes

Only transportation authorized by the Athletic Director shall be used for athletic contests and/or practices. There can be no student drivers at any time. Athletes must remain under the head coach's supervision until their return to Girls Global Academy. Exceptions may be made by mutual consent of the coach and parent if the PARENT IS IN ATTENDANCE AT THE CONTEST or PRACTICE AND THE ATHLETE WILL BE RETURNING WITH THE PARENT. A written note describing these circumstances must be signed and submitted to the coach or Athletic Director by the parent prior to the trip. The parent must meet the coach face to face at the event when the parent retakes responsibility for the athlete. It is the intent that all team members depart as a team and return to GGA as a team.

## High School Awards System Information

The requirements to earn a varsity letter are different from sport to sport. The head coach should make all athletes aware of the lettering procedure for their sport prior to the start of the contest season. All athletes must finish in good academic standing and good standing with the team in order to receive post-season awards and varsity letters.

1. Major Letter Awards-- All recipients of a major letter award must complete the sport in good standing and meet criteria for each individual sport as determined by the head coach.
2. Minor Certificate Awards -- An athlete will receive a minor certificate award if she does not meet the requirements for a major letter award and has completed the season in good standing.

### Awards Programs

Letters, sports emblems, chevrons, and certificates will be presented to the athletes by their respective coaches at their awards night held at the end of the sport season. All-conference awards, All-state and district awards, sportsmanship awards and others will be awarded at the athletic department's awards program. All major and minor awards must be recommended by the head coach and approved by the Athletic Director.

### Sportsmanship award

Each team will award one member of their team with a Sportsmanship Award to be awarded at the department's Award's Program and the discretion of the Head Coach. Award-winners will be chosen based on the following definition of sportsmanship.

### Athletic Participation Outside of GGA and PCSAA Interscholastic Sports

GGA and PCSAA athletics are to be valued above all other athletic events not sponsored by our school. Club/AAU/Travel types of teams are an option chosen by families, never necessary for GGA participation, and should never come before GGA practices or contests. If conflicts arise, regardless of the reason, all GGA athletes must attend their GGA practice or contest to the full satisfaction of their coach. This policy is effective for all in-season PCSAA sports. Off-season and summer workouts can never be made mandatory by coaches; however, the spirit of this policy is still intended to encourage all athletes to value their GGA teammates above other similar groups.

### Cell Phone Usage

Under no circumstances are cell phones to be used by athletes in the locker rooms. Athletes who must use their phones should step outside first-- if in the case of an emergency.

## Concussion Policy

After suffering a concussion, no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play if their symptoms resolved within 15 minutes of the injury. Studies have shown that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to safely return to activity in such a short time.

Concerns over athletes returning to play too quickly have led state lawmakers in almost all states to pass laws stating that no player shall return to play that day following a concussion, and the athlete must be cleared by an appropriate health-care professional before he or she is allowed to return to play in games or practices.

The laws typically also mandate that players, parents and coaches receive education on the dangers and recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion.

Once an athlete no longer has symptoms of a concussion and is cleared for return to play, he or she should proceed with activity in a stepwise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exertion. On average, the athlete will complete a new step each day. An example of a typical return-to-play schedule is shown below:

- Day 1: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight-lifting.
- Day 2: Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.
- Day 3: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight-training can begin.
- Day 4: Full contact practice or training.
- Day 5: Game play.

When the athlete has completed the above steps, the return to competition is at the discretion of the coaching staff and athletic trainer/medical professional. Moreover, if the athlete begins to have concussion symptoms after any of the above step-wise days, they will return to day one protocol, until they have five consecutive days of no concussion symptoms and full practices.

In many cases after the injury, it is best to decrease the athlete's class load early in the recovery phase. This may include staying home from school for a few days, followed by academic accommodations (such as a reduced class schedule), until the athlete has fully recovered. Decreasing the stress on the brain and not allowing the athlete to push through symptoms will shorten the recovery time. ***\*To be used on a case by case basis, after medical attention has been sought and a plan of action has been compiled by coaching staff, AD/AC, administration, teachers, and their families.\****

## Dual Participation

Participation of student-athletes in two sports during the same season is discouraged. However, a student-athlete may participate in Dual-sports during the same season if she meets the following requirements.

1. Both coaches involved must approve the dual sports participation.

2. A schedule must be developed prior to the beginning of the consete season that specifically identifies practice and contest attendance and resolve conflicts.
3. The schedule must be approved by coaches, student-athletes, and the parent/guardian.
4. The student-athlete must not quit one sport in favor of the other. If she quits one sport, she must quit both sports.
5. If the student-athlete commits a code violation, the consequences will be served in both sports.
6. The student-athlete must be established already in one sport having earned a major letter already in that sport. The established sport will serve as the primary sport and favored when conflicts arise.