

Grand Canyon Phantoms



2026 - 2027

Athletic Handbook

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BACKGROUND

The Grand Canyon Unified School District Athletic Program functions within the adopted policies of the Grand Canyon Unified School District Governing Board and the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA). The Grand Canyon High School competes in Division 1A Central, 1A North, or Division 5, depending on the sport.

The Athletic Department provides a consistent set of rules and regulations for all athletic participation. All coaches, assistants, and volunteers must annually review and follow the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules for their particular sport. All head and assistant coaches must complete the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching course, or approved equivalent. Additionally, all head and assistant coaches complete the NFHS online education course entitled “Concussion in Sports – What You Need to Know” prior to starting coaching duties. Lastly, all head varsity coaches shall have valid Arizona Teaching Certificate, Arizona Coaching Certificate, or have completed the National Federation of State High School Associations Level I Certification. In Arizona, coaches and adult volunteers cannot work around kids without a background check and possess a valid fingerprint clearance card.

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Student participation in sports promotes a healthy lifestyle and offers opportunity for team building. Being a part of GC athletics is a privilege. While wearing the school uniform, you represent the Grand Canyon Unified School District and it is expected that your behavior reflects the pride in our school.

Our school offers the following programs:

Varsity Sports (High School)

1. Co-Ed Soccer (fall)
2. Girls Volleyball (fall)
3. Boys and Girls Basketball (winter)
4. Boys and Girls Track and Field (spring)

Middle School Sports

1. Co-Ed Soccer (fall)
2. Boys and Girls Basketball (winter)
3. Girls Volleyball (spring)

In order to participate, students must complete all athletic paperwork which includes: a physical examination performed by a licensed physician, and the emergency contact form. These forms must be signed by both the student-athlete and the parent/guardian. Students may not participate in practice until all forms have been received and processed by the Athletic Director and the front office.

All athletes must also complete concussion training.

Students must complete 8 days of practice before participating in an athletic contest.

If you are interested in managing one of these teams instead of playing, please sign up with the Athletic Director.

During practice, all athletes must be supervised by a certified coach or staff member. At no time may an athlete use equipment without supervision.

PARTICIPATION FEE

During the 2026-2027 School Year, middle school and high school athletes will not have to pay a participation fee. While a participation fee is not required, families can donate their tax credit toward Grand Canyon Athletics to support game and referee fees, uniform purchases, and updating equipment. If you have questions about donating your tax credit, please contact the Athletic Director or main office.

TEAM TRAVEL

- A. Music is permitted on buses only if used with headphones.
- B. Coaches are responsible for the behavior of students while traveling. Coaches are to sit in the back of the bus or midway to allow the team to be in his or her field of vision.
- C. Coed trips will require that the male and female participants sit in separate sections of the bus. Under no circumstances will athletes of the opposite sex be allowed to sit together. If there are relationships of the same gender, the student athlete would be treated the same as students in relationships of the opposite sex, including not sleeping in the same room on overnight trips.
- D. When events require overnight travel, male and females will be in separate sections of the same hotel, whenever possible. One sponsor will stay with each group.
 - a. Girls and boys are not allowed in each other's rooms.
 - b. During overnight and long travel days, team(s) must stay together as a group (i.e. dinner stops, discretionary time, and down time between games or contests).
- E. Athletes are required to travel as a team in the school provided transportation to school events and return in the school-provided transportation unless there is written permission for the student to ride home with parents.
 - a. Written permission may be given to the coach at the event. Without written permission, students shall ride the bus home. This requires the parent to make face-to-face contact with the coach so you know the child is with their parent/guardian.
 - b. One written permission note filed with the Athletic Director will cover the entire sports season(s) for the student to ride home with parents/guardians.
- F. When students travel, they will obey the bus rules as communicated by the bus driver and as posted on the bus.
- G. Staff is authorized to search personal bags when traveling to and attending school related activities in school provided transportation. On overnight trips, athletic bags may be searched prior to the bus departing.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

- 1. Uniforms will be issued to the student athlete and although it is the property of the School District it is the student's responsibility to properly care for the uniform. Please wash them, but don't put them in the dryer.
- 2. School uniforms should only be worn while participating in the scheduled contests.
- 3. Uniforms should be washed and turned in to the coach as soon as the season is completed.
- 4. Students shall turn in all athletic equipment/uniforms issued to them immediately after completion of their season.
- 5. It will be the responsibility of the student to pay for any uniform/equipment that is lost, stolen or damaged at the replacement value.
- 6. Students who fail to turn in or pay for their uniforms or equipment issued to them, will not receive awards or be permitted to participate in any other sport until the situation is resolved.

ELIGIBILITY

A. Full-time enrollment (5 classes) in Grand Canyon School or approved home school program.

B. Must meet AIA Eligibility requirements (HS only)

C. Grand Canyon Unified School District Eligibility Policy and Procedure:

- Grades will be checked by the administration at 1:00 p.m. each Monday (Tuesday following a Monday holiday).
- If a student has less than 70% in any class, **that student will be ineligible for all extra-curricular activities until 1:00 p.m. the following Monday.** An Incomplete (I) as a grade is considered a failing grade.
- To regain eligibility the student must have a **70% or higher** in all classes. Once it is determined that a student is ineligible, **the student must attend daily tutoring sessions** (4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.) prior to practice. Any student on the ineligibility list may not travel with the team, sit on the bench for away games, nor dress with the team during home contests. If a student is declared ineligible before a school holiday, the student will remain ineligible until grades are checked after the holiday period.

Study sessions for ineligible students will be held daily from 4:15pm to 5:00pm. Student-athletes must be on time to tutoring, and attend all sessions in order to regain eligibility for the next week's athletic/extracurricular event. Failure to attend, or being tardy may result in further suspension from games.

* Students who qualify for special education services may have unique eligibility requirements.

* Transfer students will become eligible to compete in interscholastic competition after they have been registered for 2 ½ calendar weeks (10 school days), providing other A.I.A. eligibility requirements are met. They may begin practicing upon completion of the enrollment process.

* Unique individual circumstances may be reviewed by the administration.

Attendance Eligibility:

To participate in any extra-curricular activity that is scheduled to take place on a school day, a student must attend school on the day of the competition or activity for at least half of his or her scheduled classes unless the student is involved in athletic travel for the entire day. If a competition or activity is scheduled over a weekend, a student may be absent on the school day before the weekend and still participate over the weekend at the coach's discretion.

Behavior Eligibility:

Student athletes will have a two (2) week grace period from the beginning of that particular sport season in which to leave the team. **A student athlete who chooses to quit the team is responsible to inform the Athletic Director and return all uniforms and equipment issued to them within 72 hours of notifying the coach that they quit.** After the two (2) week grace period, any student athlete who leaves a team (quits) will be interviewed with the Athletic Director and Principal in order to determine the continuing eligibility for any other interscholastic activity.

Suspension or Expulsion:

If you are suspended from school, you are ineligible for the period of suspension. You must also attend a day of practice for every day of suspension before you can participate in a contest.

Grand Canyon Unified School District and the Arizona Interscholastic Association have a Drug Free/Smoke Free Policy.

The following infractions will be **cause for automatic suspension for the athletic season:**

1. Drinking of alcoholic beverages on or off campus at school related events
2. Smoking: the act of smoking or use of tobacco in any form in the school area (ARS 133622).
3. Possession, use, or transfer of any stimulating, or behavior altering substance without a medical prescription, any form of hallucinogenic drug, marijuana, alcohol or being a party there to, including possession of drug paraphernalia will result in immediate removal from the team.
4. The list is not all-inclusive as dangerous substances are constantly introduced to the marketplace.

The following infractions may be **cause for automatic suspension for one fiscal calendar year:**

1. Theft or Vandalism may result in automatic dismissal from all interscholastic participation for one fiscal calendar year from the date of the infraction. In addition, referral to legal authorities will occur for theft or vandalism on school property and restitution whether on school property or the property of another school.
2. Conviction of a minimum of a Class One misdemeanor is cause for automatic suspension from interscholastic/athletic program for one fiscal calendar year from date of conviction.

Behavior During Contests:

The following actions (but not limited to) will be cause for automatic suspension for a period of time commensurate with the severity of the offense (minimum one game) as observed or verified by a Coach, Principal, or Administrator. (To be determined by the A.D. after meeting with the Principal.)

- Fighting with an opponent and/or teammate
- Insubordination to any coach/official/teacher
- Unsportsman-like conduct
- Throwing equipment that causes game disruption
- Ridiculing any coach, teammate or official
- Any conduct that is disruptive to the continuation of the athletic contest
- Any conduct that might endanger a student or teammate
- Excessive technical fouls/warnings in any sports season
- Ejection from an athletic contest
 - End of season ejection – Penalty shall be enforced at the beginning of the subsequent season of competition (one game suspension).

The following will result in discipline from the school principal based on the Student Handbook.

Discipline can range from warning to expulsion from school:

- Violation of bus rules during team trip
- Hazing
- Possession of a weapon of any kind
- Bullying

The following will result in discipline from the coach based on team standards and guidelines.

- Violation of travel rules during team trip
- Disruption of team morale
- Abusive/ Profane language
- Late for scheduled practices
- Late for team trips
- Insubordination
- Disruptions that interfere with practice sessions, team trips, and or specific, written team rules

Spectator Behavior:

We certainly want to invite and encourage you to attend both home and away games. You are a role model for your child and they look up to you for guidance on their behavior. Please keep in mind that AIA sets forth guidelines for spectator behavior. Those guidelines can be found at <https://aiaonline.org/files/14046/2021-2022-aia-constitution-bylaws-policies-and-procedures-book.pdf> (page 60). Thank you for conducting yourselves responsibly and with respect.

DUE PROCESS:

Everyone has the right to tell their side of the story before discipline is applied. It is always the goal that any disputes are resolved at the lowest level possible. Parents will be notified as soon as possible as to any change in their child's eligibility or status. The following is the due process allowed to every student-athlete:

- A. Level One – Coach
 1. Coach/Player Conference
 2. Coach/Parent Conference
 3. Coach/Parent/Player Conference
- B. Level Two - Principal/Athletic Director
 1. Principal/AD/Player/Coach Conference
 2. Principal/AD/Coach/Parent Conference
 3. Principal/AD/Parent/Player Conference
 4. Principal/AD/Coach/Player/Parent Conference
- C. Level Three – Athletic Council
 1. Principal
 2. AD
 3. Coach
 4. Faculty Member selected by the student
- D. Level Four – Superintendent
 1. Superintendent/ Parent/ Player
 2. Due process, as outlined in the student handbook, will be followed.

Function of Due Process:

1. Resolves problems with students/coaches/parents in the following areas: Eligibility, behavior and discipline, and makes recommendations on the same to the Superintendent. Its purpose is to hear appeals.
2. Athletic Council shall follow adopted policies of the Grand Canyon Unified School District Governing Board and Arizona Interscholastic Association.

Due Process Procedures:

1. Request an Athletic Council meeting in writing to the Principal by the affected student, coach and/or parent/guardian.
2. Principal will send written notification of the time, date, place and the purpose of the meeting to the affected student, coach and/or parent/ guardian and the athletic council members.
3. Athletic council meeting will be held within two (2) school days after receipt of written request, with consideration for special circumstances.
4. The student will be temporarily suspended from practice and interscholastic competition pending resolution of the matter.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

After the conclusion of all high school sports seasons, the Athletic Department and Booster Club hold a High School Athletic Awards Banquet, where student-athletes grades 9-12 are recognized for their accomplishments.

Varsity Lettering:

A Varsity letter may be earned when the athlete is eligible for state competition, which begins in 9th grade. To earn a letter in a sport, the following standards must be met. An athlete must:

- attend practice and games on a consistent basis
- have a cooperative attitude with the coach, teammates and opponents
- show respect for others on and off the field
- observe all rules and regulations as outlined in this handbook
- play on the varsity team 75% of the sport's scheduled competition

Participants involved in special situations during the season may receive recognition appropriate to his/her level of participation based on the coaches' recommendation and athletic director's approval. Varsity managers are eligible to letter in the sport they manage.

Yearly Awards:

A. Sportsmanship Award

This award is intended for a student athlete who exemplifies an attitude of fairness, ethics, respect, and enjoying the game simply for the sake of playing. Being a "good sport" involves being a "good winner" as well as being a "good loser." Fair play refers to all participants having an equitable chance to pursue victory with honor and acting toward others in an honest and dignified manner even when others do not play fairly. It includes respect for others including team members, coaches, opponents, fans, and officials.

B. Female and Male Athlete of the Year

The Female/Male Athlete of the Year recipient is the athlete who:

1. Excels as an athlete, showing outstanding athletic ability in multiple sports. (Season stats, varsity letters, and/or conference and state recognition demonstrates said ability.)
2. Maintains an excellent attitude throughout each athletic season in which they participate. (Demonstrates appropriate and respectful behavior and language on the field, the court, the classroom, and in all other capacities representing GCHS.)
3. Attends practice on a consistent basis. (Shows dedication in achieving individual and team goals.)
4. Demonstrates leadership. (Examples of this trait include: sacrifice own stats for the good of the team, encourage team/teammate morale, help when help is needed (teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, etc).)
5. Maintains eligibility throughout the season.

C. Debbie Clancy Award

The female scholar athlete is intended for a junior or senior who excels in both athletics and academics, as well as sportsmanship, attitude and overall behavior.

1. The student is a scholar athlete with a minimum GPA of 3.25
2. The athlete is involved in a minimum of two sports
3. The athlete may be in grades 11 or 12
4. The athlete is expected to be a role model who excels in athletics and other extracurricular activities.

Criteria to be considered:

- High athletic skill level (Varsity team athlete who is on the playing field)
- Outstanding attitude regarding language, effort, attendance, and relationships to other team members and models the core values of Grand Canyon Athletics.
- The athlete is eligible during every week of in-season competition.
- 100% dedication to the sport in season
- The athlete is a team player and positive influence
- The athlete has no discipline referrals or athletic code violations
- Regional and state recognition
- Record holder of school record

D. Hugh Shevlin Award

The male scholar athlete is intended for a junior or senior who excels in both athletics and academics, as well as sportsmanship, attitude and overall behavior.

1. The student is a scholar athlete with a minimum GPA of 3.25
2. The athlete is involved in a minimum of two sports
3. The athlete may be in grades 11 or 12
4. The athlete is expected to be a role model who excels in athletics and other extracurricular activities.

Criteria to be considered:

- High athletic skill level (Varsity team athlete who is on the playing field)
- Outstanding attitude regarding language, effort, attendance, and relationships to other team members and models the core values of Grand Canyon Athletics.
- The athlete is eligible during every week of in-season competition.
- 100% dedication to the sport in season
- The athlete is a team player and positive influence
- The athlete has no discipline referrals or athletic code violations
- Regional and state recognition
- Record holder of school record

The Debby Clancy Award and Hugh Shevlin Award do not have to be given each and every year. If no eligible candidates are identified, awards will not be given. If an athlete has had an infraction as listed in handbook he or she will be disqualified and not eligible for these awards.

****Coaches will meet in April to discuss nominations for Male and Female Athlete of the Year, Sportsmanship Award, Debby Clancy Award and Hugh Shevlin Award****

State and Regional Awards will be designated by the coaches of the 1A division.

Senior Night

At the end of each high school sport, the Athletic Director will work with the Booster Club to host a Senior Night. This night is traditionally held at the last home game of the season to honor our senior athletes. Senior athletes are given 2 roses to hand out to their parents. Parents may bring items to celebrate such as posters, balloons and bouquets. It is the responsibility of the AD to ensure communication has gone out to parents and this event is on the school calendar. The AD will also ensure each student has a poster for this evening. The AD is responsible for having a speaker for this event. At no time, shall the microphone be given to a student.

RESOURCES

1. Athletic Schedules - Grand Canyon School Website – grandcanyonschool.org and AZPreps365.com
2. National Federation of State High School Associations - nfhs.org
 - The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) is the body that writes the rules of competition for most high school sports and activities in the United States.
3. MaxPreps - maxpreps.com
 - MaxPreps is America's source for high school sports. Find rankings, stat leaderboards, schedules and scores of your high school teams and players.
4. Arizona Interscholastic Association: aiaonline.org
 - The AIA by-laws, rules and regulations for all sports as well as power ratings, state tournament info, articles on high school sports, and AIA programs offered are all found at the link above.



GRAND CANYON
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #4

Athletic Handbook Signature Page

I have read the information enclosed in its entirety and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in this Grand Canyon Unified School District Athletic Handbook.

Student Signature

Printed Name

Date

I have received and read the information enclosed in its entirety and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined in this Grand Canyon Unified School District Athletic Handbook.

Parent Signature

Printed Name

Date