

Greeneville Middle School

Home of the Greene Devils!

Athletic Department Handbook



**To provide Parent and Student Athletes with
Information, Policies, and Procedures
for Greeneville Middle School Athletics**

Go Devils!

Superintendent, Dr. Matthew Drinnon

Greeneville Middle School Principal, Dr. Rachel Adams

Greeneville Middle School Athletic Director, Jeremy K. Simerly

Greeneville Middle School

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<http://gms.gcschools.net/>

- Click on GMS Menu, then Athletics
- Click on individual sport for information

Follow Us on X (Twitter) :

Greeneville Middle School: @GMS_greeneville

Jeremy K. Simerly, Athletic Director: @jeremy_simerly

To Share Sports Scores, Pictures, and Information :

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I. Athletic Department Overview

1. Athletic Director’s Welcome

I would like to personally take this opportunity to thank everyone for your continued support of the many activities and athletic programs at Greeneville Middle School. Whether you are a parent, teacher, staff member, or a dedicated Greene Devil supporter, your involvement plays a vital role in our success, and we are truly grateful.

Participation in educational-based athletics provides our students with valuable life lessons, including teamwork, self-discipline, perseverance, courage, and the development of a positive self-image. With a wide variety of programs available, our student athletes have meaningful opportunities to discover and develop their skills and talents while contributing to our school’s proud tradition of excellence. While we strive for success in competition, we firmly believe that the greatest achievement is becoming honorable and responsible citizens.

Our school and community take great pride in upholding high standards of sportsmanship and conduct. We expect our student athletes and coaches to always model these values. As spectators, we ask that you

support and reinforce these expectations through your interactions with opposing teams, coaches, and contest officials.

The athletic department is deeply appreciative of the parents and members of the Greeneville community whose unwavering support, energy, and enthusiasm make a lasting impact on our student-athletes and programs.

Jeremy K. Simerly

Athletic Director

Greeneville Middle School

simerlyj@gcschools.net

2. Our Mission

The Greeneville Middle School athletic programs are committed to positively impacting the academic, personal, social, and athletic development of each student-athlete. Through our programs, we strive to build self-confidence, promote academic excellence, and enhance individual skills while fostering a well-rounded experience.

We provide a supportive and constructive environment where student-athletes can develop inner strength, learn valuable life lessons, and prepare for future success. Participation in athletics serves as a foundation for growth, teaching responsibility, perseverance, teamwork, and resilience.

Our coaches serve as mentors who instill core values such as character, courage, discipline, confidence, and respect. They guide student-athletes to pursue their goals with determination, build meaningful relationships, and make positive contributions to their communities.

Greeneville Middle School student athletes are expected to represent themselves and their school with pride by striving to be their very best in competition, in the classroom, and in the community.

3. Purpose of the Athletic Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a practical guide for student-athletes and their families, outlining the mission, philosophy, standards, policies, and expectations of the Greeneville Middle School athletic program. It is designed to provide clear direction and promote a shared understanding of the values and responsibilities that come with participation in education-based athletics.

Our goal is to provide as many students as possible with the opportunity to experience the benefits of interscholastic athletics. These benefits are best realized when student-athletes, coaches, parents, and administrators are informed, communicate openly, understand their roles, and work together to support the overall mission of the program.

By fostering a culture of accountability, respect, and collaboration, we strive to ensure that the principles of education-based athletics are consistently reflected in the daily operation of our programs and in the experiences of our student-athletes.

4. Athletic Opportunities

Greeneville Middle School offers a wide range of athletic opportunities throughout the year, providing student-athletes with the chance to participate in multiple sports and develop their skills across seasons.

Fall Sports

- Cross Country (B)(G)
- Football (B)(G)
- Volleyball (G)
- Soccer (G)

Winter Sports

- Basketball (B)(G)
- Wrestling (B)(G)

Spring Sports

- Baseball (B)
- Softball (G)
- Golf (B) (G)
- Track & Field (B)(G)
- Soccer (B)

Year-Round Programs

- Cheer (B)(G)
- Dance (B)(G)

Note: (B) = Boys, (G) = Girls

5. Head Coaches

Sport	Head Coach	Email
Baseball	Cody Baugh	baughc@gcschools.net
Basketball, Boys'	Andy Barnett	barnetta@gcschools.net
Basketball, Girls'	Jacob Hodge	hodgej@gcschools.net
Cheer	Brianna Allen	allenb@gcschools.net
Cross Country, Boys	Laura Lenker	lenkerl@gcschools.net
Cross Country, Girls	Kelly Lamons	lamonsk@gcschools.net
Dance	Missy Crouch	crouchm@gcschools.net
Football	Cody Baugh	baughc@gcschools.net
Golf	Jason Shelton	sheltonrj@gcschools.net
Soccer, Boys	Rustin Jones	Jonesr234@gcschools.net
Soccer, Girls	Rustin Jones	Jonesr234@gcschools.net
Softball	Terrance Johnson	johnsont@gcschools.net
Track & Field	Michael Bowman	bowmanm@gcschools.net

Volleyball	Beth Catron	catronb@gcschools.net
Wrestling	Jason Shelton	sheltonrj@gcschools.net

6. Conference Affiliation

Greeneville Middle School is a proud member of the **Middle 9 Conference** and is committed to upholding and adhering to all rules, regulations, and standards established by the conference. Participation in this conference provides our student athletes with meaningful competitive opportunities and promotes sportsmanship, integrity, and excellence.

The conference currently includes the following schools:

- T.A. Dugger Junior High School (*Elizabethton City Schools*)
- Ross N. Robinson Middle School (*Kingsport City Schools*)
- Greeneville Middle School (*Greeneville City Schools*)
- John Sevier Middle School (*Kingsport City Schools*)
- Tennessee Middle School (*Bristol City Schools*)
- Liberty Bell Middle School (*Johnson City Schools*)
- Sullivan Heights Middle School (*Sullivan County Schools*)
- Indian Trail Middle School (*Johnson City Schools*)

Please note:

- Some sports may include additional conference members, beyond those listed above.
- Teams may also compete against non-conference opponents at the discretion of the coaching staff.

7. Greeneville Middle School Athletic Advisory Committee (GMSAAC)

The Greeneville Middle School Athletic Advisory Committee (GMSAAC) is dedicated to supporting and strengthening the overall athletic program by fostering collaboration, communication, and continuous improvement. The committee serves as a voice for student athletes and works to enhance the experience for all participants.

Purpose of the GMSAAC

1. To promote and facilitate communication between athletic administration and student-athletes regarding concerns, challenges, and suggestions.
2. To provide valuable feedback and insight into athletic department initiatives and issues.
3. To ensure student-athletes have a voice in the development and evaluation of athletic policies.
4. To continuously strive for improvement in all aspects of Greeneville Middle School athletics, including academics, programs, and facilities.
5. To foster a strong sense of community while encouraging unity, shared purpose, and camaraderie among teams and throughout the athletic program.

Committee Members

Name	Role	Email
Rachel Adams	Principal	adamsr2@gcschools.net
Bryan Everhart	Assistant Principal	everhartb@gcschools.net
Jeremy Simerly	Athletic Director	simerlyj@gcschools.net
Kelly Lamons	Cross Country Head Coach	lamonsk@gcschools.net
Laura Lenker	Cross Country Head Coach	lenkerl@gcschools.net
Andy Barnett	Boys' Basketball Head Coach	barnetta@gcschools.net
Michael Bowman	Track & Field Head Coach	bowmanm@gcschools.net

8. Athletic Training / Athletic Physicals

Greeneville Middle School is proud to employ a certified athletic trainer who works collaboratively with coaches and student-athletes to promote a safe, healthy, and supportive athletic environment. The athletic trainer plays a vital role in injury prevention, evaluation, treatment, and rehabilitation.

Student athletes who sustain an injury should first notify their coach. Coaches will then work with the athletic trainer to ensure the student-athlete receives proper care, evaluation, and guidance for a safe and appropriate return to participation.

Concussions and sudden cardiac arrest are serious concerns in athletics. All parents, coaches, and student-athletes are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the signs, symptoms, and appropriate responses for each condition. Prior to participation, all student-athletes and parents are required to complete and sign acknowledgement forms for both concussion awareness and sudden cardiac arrest.

In addition, all new student athletes are required to complete a baseline concussion assessment before their first competition. This evaluation is administered by the athletic trainer and serves as an important tool in the event of a head injury.

Athletic Trainer Contact Information:

Alisa Fillers

fillersa@gcschools.net

Athletic Physicals

All student-athletes are required to have a current physical examination on file prior to participating in any athletic activity at Greeneville Middle School. In accordance with TSSAA regulations, physicals must be dated **April 15 or later** of the current year to be valid for the upcoming school year.

Physical examinations must be completed by a licensed healthcare provider and include all required signatures and documentation. Student athletes will **not** be permitted to participate in tryouts, practices, or competitions until a valid physical has been submitted and approved.

Submission Process

- Completed physical forms should be submitted to the **Athletic Director**.
- Forms may be turned in through the school office or directly to the Athletic Director, as directed.
- It is the responsibility of the student athlete and parent / guardian to ensure all forms are completed accurately and submitted by the designated deadlines.

Timely submission of athletic physicals is essential to ensure eligibility and to allow student-athletes to safely participate in all athletic activities.

II. Communication & Relationships

9. Communication

Effective communication between coaches, student-athletes, and parents is essential to the success of our athletic programs. Clear and consistent communication ensures that everyone is informed, prepared, and aligned with team expectations.

Coaches will communicate directly with student-athletes and provide parents with specific methods for receiving important updates regarding practices, game schedules, changes, and cancellations.

Communication tools may include, but are not limited to:

- Team Reach
- Twitter
- Bright Arrow
- Team-specific sports apps

Parents and student-athletes are encouraged to stay connected and monitor these platforms regularly to remain informed throughout the season.

10. Parent and Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are challenging roles that require patience, understanding, and a shared commitment to the success of student-athletes. By establishing clear communication and mutual respect, parents and coaches can work together to create a positive and rewarding experience for all involved.

Parents have the right to be informed and to clearly understand the expectations placed on their child within the athletic program.

Communication Parents Should Expect from Their Child's Coach

- Expectations for student-athletes, including behavior, effort, and team role
- Practice and game schedules, including locations and times
- Team requirements, such as equipment needs, team rules, and off-season expectations

Communication Coaches Expect from Parents

- Concerns regarding their child should be communicated directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place

- Questions or clarification regarding team expectations
- Advance notice of any scheduling conflicts or absences

11. 24 Hour Rule / Parent Communication Chain of Command

The Greeneville Middle School Athletic Program strongly encourages the use of a “24 Hour Rule” when addressing concerns related to athletics. This approach promotes thoughtful communication, mutual respect, and productive problem-solving.

- **Allow a 24-hour “cooling off” period before addressing concerns.**

This time allows emotions to settle and provides an opportunity to reflect on the situation. In many cases, concerns may be resolved on their own, or the perspective may change once the moment has passed. If a meeting is still necessary, this pause helps ensure a more productive and respectful conversation.

- **Do not approach a coach immediately following a game or practice.**

Confrontations at this time are often emotional and may create uncomfortable or negative situations for all involved, including your child.

- **Review the expectations outlined in this handbook.**

Familiarize yourself with the program’s mission, values, and guidelines for appropriate topics of discussion. It is important that all parties share a common understanding and purpose.

- **Schedule a meeting appropriately.**

Contact your child’s coach and/or the Athletic Director via phone or email during normal business hours to arrange a meeting time.

- **Include your child in conversation whenever possible.**

In most situations, it is beneficial for the student-athlete to be present. This encourages accountability, open communication, and ensures that all perspectives are accurately represented.

- **Seek all relevant information before forming conclusions.**

Situations may involve multiple perspectives, and information shared secondhand may be incomplete or misunderstood.

- **Follow the established communication process.**

Concerns should begin at the lowest appropriate level, typically with the student-athlete speaking directly with the coach. Most issues can be resolved through this initial step.

Exception: Situations involving unlawful activity, safety concerns, or suspected abuse should be reported immediately to school administration.

- **Document concerns if necessary.**

If an issue cannot be resolved informally, concerns should be submitted in writing with clear and detailed information prior to contacting the appropriate school personnel.

Parent Communication Chain of Command

To promote effective communication and ensure concerns are addressed appropriately, Greeneville Middle School Athletics follows a structured chain of command. Parents are expected to follow this process when addressing athletic-related concerns.

Step 1: Student-Athlete to Coach

- The student athlete should first communicate directly with their coach regarding any concerns or questions.
- This encourages responsibility, accountability, and the development of communication skills.

Step 2: Parent and Student-Athlete Meeting with Coach

- If the concern is not resolved, the parent should contact the coach to schedule a meeting.
- Whenever possible, the student athlete should be present during this meeting.

Step 3: Athletic Director

- If the issue remains unresolved after meeting with the coach, parents may contact the Athletic Director to discuss the concern.
- The Athletic Director will work collaboratively to help resolve the issue.

Step 4: School Administration

- If a resolution is still not reached, the concern may be elevated to school administration (Assistant Principal or Principal).

Important Expectations

- Always follow the 24 Hour Rule before initiating communication.
- Communication should be respectful, constructive, and solution focused.
- Concerns should begin at the lowest appropriate level before moving up the chain.
- Issues involving student safety, unlawful activity, or serious misconduct should be reported immediately to school administration, bypassing lower levels if necessary.

III. Student Athlete Expectations & Conduct

12. Student-Athlete Code of Conduct

1. *We believe in our unlimited potential*

We do not place limits on ourselves. We understand that growth comes from effort, determination, and willingness to improve. We strive to become the best version of ourselves, both on and off the field.

2. *We foster a culture of excellence*

We are committed to creating an environment where success is earned through teamwork, dedication, and mutual support. We recognize that our greatest achievements come when we work together.

3. ***We take responsibility for our actions***

We are accountable for our behavior, our preparation, and the outcomes of our decisions. We commit to being physically and mentally prepared in all situations.

4. ***We communicate with honesty and respect***

We value open and direct communication. We listen actively, speak respectfully, and strive to understand one another to build trust and strengthen our team.

5. ***We embrace the joy of competition***

We believe that effort and enjoyment go hand in hand. We approach practices, games, and team activities with enthusiasm, positive energy, and a commitment to making the experience meaningful and enjoyable.

13. Sportsmanship

Greeneville Middle School believes that athletic programs play an important educational role in the development of students. A fundamental component of this experience is the promotion of good sportsmanship. While the primary responsibility rests with student-athletes, achieving a culture of sportsmanship requires the collective effort of administrators, coaches, parents, and spectators. Administrators and coaches are expected to always model exemplary sportsmanship. Student-athletes will be taught these expectations and held accountable for their actions. Spectators are encouraged to serve as positive role models for all participants. Greeneville Middle School fully supports staff and administrators in enforcing sportsmanship standards at all athletic events, including the removal of individuals who violate school or district policies.

Expectations

All individuals involved in athletic activities representing Greeneville Middle School are expected to uphold the following standards:

School Administration

- Provide appropriate supervision at athletic events
- Recognize positive behavior and actively discourage inappropriate conduct
- Demonstrate commitment through regular attendance at school activities
- Enforce sportsmanship policies fairly and consistently
- Address participant and spectator behavior at both home and away events

Coaches

- Accept decisions made by officials
- Refrain from offensive language and gestures
- Demonstrate humility in victory and graciousness in defeat
- Avoid public criticism of officials

Student Athletes

- Show respect for coaches, opponents, and officials at all times
- Accept decisions of contest officials
- Avoid offensive language or gestures
- Display humility in victory and graciousness in defeat
- Respect for public property and equipment
- Represent Greeneville City Schools with pride and integrity

Spectators

- Refraining from criticizing or harassing officials and coaches
- Appreciate strong performances by all teams
- Show respect and appreciation for coaches and participants
- Remain off the playing area
- Respect public property and facilities
- Participate in positive cheers led by spirit groups
- Cooperate with school personnel to maintain order

Cheer, Dance, and Band

- Follow contest rules and perform at appropriate times
- Encourage support for injured players
- Show respect for all participants, officials, and spectators
- Lead positive and respectful cheers
- Respect for public property and equipment

Appropriate Behaviors

- Applauding during introductions of athletes, coaches, and officials
- Handshakes between participants and coaches at the conclusion of contests
- Applauding performances of all participants
- Showing concern for injured athletes
- Respecting other schools' traditions, symbols, and facilities
- Spirit leaders promoting positive and respectful fan behavior

Unacceptable Behaviors

- Disrespectful, taunting, or derogatory language, chants, or gestures
- Targeting individuals for inappropriate or insensitive treatment
- Ignoring organized cheers led by spirit groups
- Displaying signs with inappropriate language or imagery
- Throwing objects onto or near the playing surface
- Demonstrating anger toward officials' decisions

- Antagonizing opponents
- Refusing post-game sportsmanship gestures (e.g., handshakes)
- Entering opposing team or spectator sections without authorization
- Using profanity or behavior that detracts from the integrity of the event

Promotion of Sportsmanship

Greeneville Middle School promotes sportsmanship through the following :

1. Presentation of sportsmanship expectations at preseason team meetings
2. Parent meetings outlining expectations and standards
3. Messaging in game programs reinforcing sportsmanship
4. Communication of expectations at booster club meetings
5. Signed Codes of Conduct by student-athletes and parents
6. Pre-game announcements encouraging positive behavior
7. Recognition of exemplary sportsmanship through awards
8. Enforcement of disciplinary action for violations, including possible suspension from athletic events

14. Fan Ejection Policy

Policy Statement

Greeneville Middle School is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all participants and spectators at athletic events. All fans are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship, respect for others, and appropriate behavior always. Disruptive or inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated.

Behavior Expectations

All spectators attending Greeneville Middle School athletic events are expected to:

- Exhibit respect toward athletes, coaches, officials, and other spectators
- Maintain appropriate language and behavior
- Support all participants in a positive and sportsmanlike manner

Grounds for Ejection

The following behaviors may result in immediate ejection from a Greeneville Middle School athletic event:

- Use of profane or inappropriate language or gestures
- Verbal or physical harassment of athletes, coaches, officials, or spectators
- Throwing objects onto the playing surface
- Violation of state or local laws
- Any behavior deemed disruptive, unsafe, or detrimental to the event
- Ejection by a contest official

Ejection Process

- When an incident occurs, a designated game administrator or security personnel may issue a warning when appropriate.
- At the direction of the game official, a fan may be ejected immediately without warning.
- If behavior continues after a warning, or if the situation warrants immediate action, the individual will be ejected and escorted from the premises by appropriate personnel.

Consequences of Ejection

- Any individual ejected from a Greeneville Middle School athletic event will be suspended from attending all GMS athletic events for one week from the date of the incident.
- A \$250 TSSAA fine will be assessed. Failure to pay this fee will result in suspension from all GMS athletic events for the remainder of the school year or until the fine is paid.
- TSSAA penalties may increase depending on the severity of the violation.
- The school principal reserves the right to review and modify any suspension.

Appeals Process

- Individuals who believe they were wrongfully ejected may submit an appeal to Greeneville Middle School administration within 24 hours of the incident.
- Appeals will be reviewed by school administration and the Athletic Director.
- A decision will be communicated within three (3) school days.

Compliance

All spectators are expected to adhere to this policy. Failure to comply may result in ejection and/or additional disciplinary action as determined by school administration.

By following these expectations, Greeneville Middle School strives to maintain a safe, respectful, and welcoming atmosphere for all student-athletes, staff, and fans.

15. Discipline

Discipline is a foundational principle of the Greeneville Middle School Athletic Program. Student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on their team, school, and community always.

Participation in athletics is a privilege, and student-athletes are held to high standards of behavior both in and out of school. Actions such as theft, fighting, or any other prohibited conduct will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

Student-athletes are also expected to comply with all school rules and expectations. Consequences issued during the school day—including, but not limited to, lunch detention, after-school detention, in-school suspension (ISS), or out-of-school suspension (OSS)—may result in additional athletic consequences, including restricted participation, suspension from games or practices, or removal from the team, depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior.

Coaches have the authority to address behavior that is detrimental to the team, including removal from practice or team activities. Repeated violations will result in involvement from the Athletic Director and may lead to further disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal from the team. Serious violations may result in immediate removal from the team, depending on the nature and severity of the infraction.

16. Anti-Hazing

Greeneville Middle School maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** regarding hazing. Hazing in any form is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated within any athletic team, activity, or organization.

At Greeneville Middle School, all student athletes are valued equally and are expected to be treated with dignity and respect. Hazing undermines the integrity of individuals and the athletic program by promoting behavior that is harmful, demeaning, and inconsistent with our core values.

Hazing is defined as any action or situation—whether intentional or not—that is required for initiation, admission, or continued membership on a team or group, and that results in physical, mental, or emotional harm. This includes, but is not limited to, actions that are humiliating, intimidating, degrading, or placing an individual's health or safety at risk.

Any student-athlete found to be involved in hazing—whether as a participant, organizer, or bystander who allows it to occur—will be subject to disciplinary action. Consequences may include suspension or removal from the team, as well as additional school disciplinary measures in accordance with district policies.

17. Substance Abuse, Tobacco, and Vaping Policy

Greeneville Middle School is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, and substance-free environment for all student athletes. The use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, tobacco products, or **vaping/electronic nicotine delivery systems (e-cigarettes, vape pens, etc.)** is strictly prohibited.

Any student athlete found to be in violation of this policy will be **immediately suspended from all team activities**, including practices, games, and tournaments, while the incident is under review. This review will be conducted by the coach, Athletic Director, Athletic Advisory Committee, and school administration. Greeneville Middle School reserves the right to impose disciplinary action or additional conditions deemed appropriate based on the nature and severity of the violation.

Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Extended suspension from athletic participation
- Removal from the team for the remainder of the season
- Dismissal from the athletic program for the remainder of the school year

All disciplinary decisions will be made in accordance with school and district policies, with an emphasis on student safety, accountability, and maintaining the integrity of the athletic program.

Key Expectations

- Student-athletes will remain free from the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and vaping products
- Participation in athletics is a privilege that requires responsible decision-making
- Violations will result in immediate and appropriate consequences

18. Social Media Policy

Greeneville Middle School Athletics is committed to developing student-athletes into leaders who excel in competition, academics, and character. As representatives of our school and community, student-athletes are held to a high standard of conduct both on and off the field, including in their use of social media.

While student-athletes are not prohibited from using social media, they must understand that any content shared—regardless of privacy settings—reflects on themselves, their team, and Greeneville Middle School. All online activity is expected to align with school policies and standards of appropriate behavior.

Expectations for Student-Athletes

Student athletes are expected to:

- Follow the rules and guidelines of all social media platforms
- Avoid posting private, confidential, or sensitive information
- Refrain from posting negative, disrespectful, or harmful comments about teammates, coaches, administrators, or others
- Avoid sharing content that includes inappropriate language, harassment, or behavior that could be considered offensive, demeaning, or inflammatory

Guidelines for Responsible Use

To support positive and responsible social media use, student-athletes should:

- Think carefully before posting—if it is not appropriate for parents, coaches, or school staff to see, do not share it
- Remember that content posted online is permanent, even if deleted
- Be aware that posts may be viewed by a wide audience, including peers, families, and community members
- Communicate in a respectful, positive, and professional manner
- Be honest and take responsibility for any mistakes
- Understand that coaches and administrators may monitor social media activity
- Recognize that social media can impact future educational and career opportunities
- Use privacy and security settings appropriately; while understanding they do not guarantee privacy

Consequences of Violations

Violations of the Social Media Policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to:

- Meeting with the Athletic Director, Head Coach, and/or school administration
- Required removal of inappropriate content

- Temporary or extended suspension from team activities
- Suspension from the team for a specified period
- Indefinite suspension or dismissal from the team

Final Expectation

Student-athletes should take pride in representing Greeneville Middle School by demonstrating integrity, respect, and responsibility in all forms of communication, including social media.

IV. Academic Policies & Eligibility

19. Academic Expectations (Eligibility)

Eligibility

Participation in athletics at Greeneville Middle School is a privilege, not a right. This privilege is earned through hard work, dedication, commitment, and self-discipline. Students in grades 6–8 who are in good academic and behavioral standing are eligible to participate in middle school athletics.

Academic Expectations

Student athletes are expected to:

- Maintain passing grades in all classes, including both academic and related arts courses
- Demonstrate consistent attendance
- Exhibit positive behavior and conduct in the classroom

If a student-athlete receives a failing grade (“F”) in any class, they will be placed on academic probation for a minimum of one week and will remain on probation until the grade is brought up to a passing level.

While on academic probation:

- Student-athletes may continue to practice with their team
- Student athletes are not permitted to participate in games or competitions
- Student athletes are expected to remain engaged with their team and fulfill all team responsibilities

Behavioral Eligibility

Student athletes who commit Level III offense or higher, resulting in consequences such as suspension, Alternative School Assignment (ASA), or other disciplinary action, are not eligible to participate in practices, games, or team activities until cleared by Greeneville Middle School administration.

Mandatory Academic Tutoring (MAT) and Athletics

Student athletes assigned to the Mandatory Academic Tutoring (MAT) program must continue to meet all MAT requirements in addition to athletic expectations.

- Students may choose either an A.M. or P.M. MAT session
- A.M. sessions are structured to avoid conflicts with after-school athletic practices
- Athletic eligibility does not override MAT requirements

For example:

If a student-athlete is placed in MAT due to academic performance and falls under athletic probation, improving grades to regain athletic eligibility does not remove the requirement to continue participating in the MAT program.

Key Expectations

- Academic success is the top priority for all student-athletes
- Students must remain in good standing both academically and behaviorally
- Athletic participation supports—but never replaces—academic responsibility

20. Academic Grade Policy

The Greeneville Middle School Athletic Program conducts official academic eligibility checks at the midpoint (4½ weeks) and at the end of each 9-week grading period. These grade checks determine the eligibility status of all student-athletes currently in season.

In addition, classroom teachers reserve the right to notify the Head Coach and Athletic Director of any student-athlete who is not performing satisfactorily at any time during the grading period. Eligibility decisions may be reviewed and determined based on current grades in the PowerSchool gradebook, along with input from the classroom teacher.

Academic Probation

- If a student-athlete receives a failing grade (“F”) during a grade check, they will be placed on academic probation.
- The Head Coach will notify the student athlete of their ineligibility and probation status.
- The student athlete will remain on probation until all failing grades are raised to a passing level.

While on academic probation:

- Student athletes may continue to practice with the team
- Student athletes are not permitted to participate in games or competitions

Eligibility Across Grading Periods

If a student athlete remains in season beyond a grading period in which they were declared ineligible (for example, failing a class at the end of the 2nd 9-week grading period and continuing into the 3rd 9 weeks), the following guidelines will apply:

1. Break Period Ineligibility

- The student athlete will remain ineligible for all contests during any break between grading periods (e.g., holiday break, tournaments).

2. New Grading Period Requirement

- The student-athlete will begin the new grading period on academic probation for a minimum of one week

- Eligibility will only be restored after grades improve to passing and are verified by the classroom teacher, Head Coach, and/or Athletic Director

Key Expectations

- Academic performance is continuously monitored throughout the season
- Student-athletes are responsible for always maintaining passing grades
- Communication between teachers, coaches, and administration is essential to support student success

21. Academic Grading & Parent Communication

Student-athletes and parents are expected to respect the integrity of the academic process. Requests for grades to be changed or for assignments to be graded specifically for athletic eligibility will not be made on a regular or consistent basis.

Appropriate communication includes:

- Seeking clarification on assignments
- Requesting feedback on completed work
- Asking questions to better understand expectations or areas for improvement

Student athletes are strongly encouraged to take responsibility for their academic success by completing assignments daily, submitting work on time, and maintaining proactive communication with their teachers.

Key Expectations

- Academic responsibilities take priority over athletic participation
- Communication with teachers should be respectful, appropriate, and focused on learning
- Eligibility is a result of consistent effort—not last-minute requests

22. Sport-Specific Grade Policy

Head Coaches within the Greeneville Middle School Athletic Program may establish additional academic expectations for their teams that go beyond the standard eligibility requirements. These sport-specific policies may include stricter grade requirements or guidelines regarding continued participation for student-athletes who remain on academic probation for extended periods of time.

Any additional academic policies must be **reviewed and approved** by Greeneville Middle School Administration and the Athletic Director prior to implementation.

If a program adopts a sport-specific academic policy, it will be clearly communicated to student-athletes and parents during the team's **annual preseason parent meeting**.

Key Expectations

- All student-athletes must first meet the standard academic eligibility requirements
- Additional expectations may be implemented at the team level with proper approval
- Clear communication of all policies will be provided prior to the start of the season

V. Participation Requirements & Attendance

23. Player Pre-Season Requirements

To participate in any Greeneville Middle School athletic program, all student athletes must complete the following requirements prior to tryouts, practices, or competitions:

1. Athletic Physical

All student-athletes must complete and submit a current athletic physical to the Athletic Director and/or coach. A valid physical must be on file before participation in any athletic activity is permitted.

2. Player/Parent Agreement

Student-athletes and their parent/guardian are required to review and sign the **Player/Parent Contract Form**, located at the end of this handbook, acknowledging understanding of all policies and expectations.

3. Concussion Baseline Testing

Student-athletes must complete a concussion baseline assessment administered by the athletic training staff prior to participation in their sport.

Tryout Information

Tryout dates and information will be communicated through multiple platforms, including:

- Sport-specific webpages
- School announcements
- Athletic bulletin boards
- Athletic Director and school social media accounts

Key Expectations

- All requirements must be completed **before participation is allowed**
- It is the responsibility of the student-athlete and parent/guardian to ensure all forms are submitted on time
- Timely completion ensures a safe and organized start to each athletic season

24. School, Game, and Practice Attendance

Consistent attendance and punctuality are essential expectations for all Greeneville Middle School student-athletes. Being present, prepared, and on time demonstrates commitment to the team and respect for coaches and teammates.

Attendance Expectations

1. Punctuality and Participation

Student-athletes are expected to arrive on time for all practices, games, and team travel. Arriving early is strongly encouraged to allow for proper preparation. Practice will begin promptly at the scheduled time.

2. If a student athlete is present at school, they are expected to attend practice unless prior arrangements have been made with the coach. Communication regarding absences or tardiness must come directly from the student-athlete or parent/guardian. Messages delivered through other students or individuals will not be accepted.
3. Absences During the School Day
If a student-athlete is absent from school, they must contact their coach before 2:00 p.m. on the day of the activity to communicate their status.
4. Coach contact information can be found in the handbook or on each sport's webpage.
5. Conflicts with School-Sponsored Activities
Greeneville Middle School makes every effort to avoid scheduling athletic events on the same nights as academic or performing arts events (e.g., band or chorus concerts). However, conflicts may occasionally occur.
6. In these cases, academic obligations take priority. Student athletes are required to attend the school activity if it is part of a graded course requirement.

Key Expectations

- Be present, on time, and prepared for all team activities
- Communicate directly and appropriately with coaches
- Prioritize academic responsibilities when conflicts arise
- Demonstrate accountability and commitment to the team

25. Absences (Excused and Unexcused)

Regular attendance is essential for success in both the classroom and athletic participation. Student athletes are expected to attend school, practices, and games consistently and to communicate appropriately regarding any absences.

Excused Absences

To be eligible to participate in athletic activities on a given day, a student-athlete must be present for at least half of the school day:

- From the start of school until 11:30 a.m., or
- From 11:30 a.m. until the end of the school day

An excused absence from practice or a game is defined as any absence that has been communicated and approved in advance by the coach. Examples of excused absences may include:

- School-sponsored activities
- Illness
- Church activities
- Family emergencies
- Funerals

For all absences, the coach must be notified before or on the day of the absence, no later than 2:00 p.m.

Unexcused Absences

- Any student-athlete with an unexcused absence during any portion of the school day will not be permitted to participate in practice or games on that day.
- An unexcused absence from practice or a game is any absence that is not communicated and approved by the coach in advance.

Key Expectations

- Attendance at school is required for participation in athletic activities
- Communication with coaches must be timely and appropriate
- Excused absences must be approved in advance whenever possible
- Unexcused absences will result in loss of participation for that day

26. Suspensions

Student athletes are expected to always maintain appropriate behavior and adhere to all school rules and policies. Disciplinary actions issued by the school will directly impact a student athlete's ability to participate in athletics.

Any student-athlete who receives in-school suspension (ISS) or out-of-school suspension (OSS) is not permitted to participate in any athletic activities, including practices, games, or team events, for the duration of the suspension.

If a scheduled game or competition does not occur during the suspension period, the student athlete will be required to sit out the next scheduled contest following their return to school. In addition, missed practices or games during the suspension period will be considered unexcused absences.

Key Expectations

- School discipline takes precedence over athletic participation
- Student athletes must be in good standing behaviorally to compete
- Suspensions will result in immediate and additional athletic consequences

VI. Practice & Competition Guidelines

27. Practice Duration

Practice is designed to be efficient, purposeful, and respectful of student-athletes' overall responsibilities. When practice plans are followed, most team practices will conclude within the timeframe established by the Head Coach and communicate in advance.

Our athletic program recognizes that student-athletes have commitments beyond athletics, including academics and personal responsibilities. Coaches will make every effort to balance preparation with the physical and mental well-being of student-athletes. However, there may be occasions when practices extend beyond the scheduled time at the discretion of the Head Coach.

Team practices are closed to spectators, including family members and friends. Practice time is essential for focused skill development, team building, and game preparation, and student-athletes are expected to use this time without distractions.

Key Expectations

- Practices will typically follow the scheduled timeframe
- Occasional adjustments may be made based on team needs
- Student athletes are expected to remain focused and prepared
- Practice environments are structured to maximize learning and development

28. Open Gyms and Weekend Practices

Open gyms and weekend practices may be scheduled periodically throughout the athletic season. When scheduled, these sessions are considered an important part of team development and are treated the same as regular practices, unless otherwise specified by the coaching staff.

Student athletes are expected to attend all scheduled open gyms and weekend practices. Coaches will provide advance notice to ensure that student-athletes and families have sufficient time to plan accordingly. If a student-athlete is unable to attend due to prior commitments—such as travel or other obligations—it is the responsibility of the student-athlete or parent/guardian to communicate directly with the Head Coach in advance.

Key Expectations

- Open gyms and weekend practices are considered part of regular team activities
- Attendance is expected unless previously communicated and approved
- Timely communication with coaches is essential for any conflicts

29. Holidays and Breaks

Athletic practices and competitions may be scheduled during school holidays and designated breaks throughout the school year. These opportunities are an important part of team preparation and seasonal competition schedules.

Coaches will provide advance notice whenever possible to allow families to plan accordingly.

If a student athlete is out of town or unable to attend due to prior commitments, it is the responsibility of the student athlete or parent/guardian to communicate directly with the Head Coach in advance.

Key Expectations

- Attendance is expected unless prior arrangements have been made
- Clear and timely communication with coaches is essential

30. No School / School Cancellations

The safety and well-being of our student athletes is the top priority in all decisions regarding practices and competitions.

If school is cancelled due to inclement weather, athletic activities, including practices and games, may also be cancelled. These decisions will be made with careful consideration for student safety. Coaches will communicate any cancellations or schedule changes to student-athletes and families as soon as possible. If school is dismissed early due to weather or other emergencies, all athletic activities will be cancelled unless otherwise approved by the Greeneville City Schools Superintendent and/or the Greeneville Middle School Principal.

In situations where school is cancelled for reasons unrelated to weather (e.g., scheduled closures or other circumstances), athletic activities may still take place. In these cases, decisions regarding practices and competitions will be made at the discretion of the Head Coach and Athletic Director.

Key Expectations

- Student safety is the primary factor in all cancellation decisions
- Communication will be provided in a timely manner when changes occur
- Not all school cancellations result in automatic cancellation of athletic activities

31. Playing Time

The goal of team selection is to provide opportunities for both participation and success. Coaches strive to place each student athlete in a role where they can contribute meaningfully, develop their skills, and experience growth through their athletic participation.

We recognize that not all students will receive equal playing time, and disappointment can be a part of competitive athletics. During these times, it is essential that student-athletes feel the support of their coaches, teammates, and families.

Coaches are entrusted with the responsibility of managing and directing their respective programs. This includes evaluating and selecting team members and determining appropriate playing time. These decisions are made thoughtfully and are based on a variety of factors, including:

- Skill level
- Athletic ability
- Physical conditioning
- Position-specific needs
- Attitude and effort
- Coachability and teamwork
- Punctuality and commitment

Participation on a team requires each student-athlete to understand and accept their role. Team success depends on individuals who are willing to contribute to a variety of ways and demonstrate qualities such as

respect, accountability, and a strong work ethic. Student athletes are expected to approach all practices and competitions with effort, enthusiasm, and a team-first mindset.

Student athletes are encouraged to communicate directly with their coach if they have questions about their role, performance, or ways to improve.

Key Expectations

- Coaches make all decisions regarding playing time
- Student-athletes should focus on effort, improvement, and team contribution
- Open communication should occur between the student-athlete and coach
- Team success is built on acceptance of roles and commitment to the group

VII. Equipment, Uniforms, & Appearance

32. Athletic Dress Code

Dress code expectations for practices, competitions, and team-related activities will be established by each sport's coaching staff. These expectations may include guidelines for practice attire, game-day uniforms, and team travel or event dress.

Coaches will clearly communicate all dress code requirements to student-athletes and parents prior to the start of the season and as needed throughout the year.

Student athletes are expected to follow all team dress code expectations as a part of representing their sport, team, and Greeneville Middle School in a positive and professional manner.

Key Expectations

- Dress code requirements will vary by sport and be determined by the Head Coach
- Expectations will be clearly communicated in advance
- Student-athletes are responsible for complying with all team guidelines

33. Equipment

Equipment issued to student athletes by Greeneville Middle School is the property of the school and is provided for use during the athletic season. All issued uniforms, gear, and equipment must be returned in good condition at the date and time designated by the Head Coach.

Student athletes are responsible for the proper care and timely return of all issued items. Any equipment that is lost, not returned, or returned damaged beyond normal wear and tears will result in the student athlete being charged for the replacement cost.

At the conclusion of each season, an inventory of all distributed equipment—including uniforms, gear, and warm-ups—will be reviewed. A report of outstanding items and associated replacement costs will be submitted to the Athletic Director.

For additional details, please refer to the Required Athletic Forms, Uniform Policy

Key Expectations

- All equipment must be returned on time and in good condition
- Student-athletes are financially responsible for lost or damaged items
- Failure to comply may result in school record holds or additional consequences

VIII. Health, Safety, & Medical Information

34. Illness and Injury

The health and safety of student-athletes is a top priority at Greeneville Middle School. All injuries and illnesses must be reported promptly to ensure proper care and to prevent further complications.

Student athletes are expected to follow these guidelines:

1. Report All Injuries Immediately

Any injury sustained during practice or competition must be reported to the coach and athletic trainer before leaving the activity.

2. Seek Proper Evaluation and Treatment

All injuries—regardless of severity—should be evaluated by the athletic training staff to ensure appropriate care and recovery.

3. Participation Clearance

Student athletes should not miss practice due to injury or illness without the approval of a licensed physician or the guidance of the athletic trainer.

4. Practice Attendance Expectations

Student athletes are expected to attend team practices on days they are present at school, even if they are unable to fully participate, unless otherwise directed by the coach or athletic trainer.

5. Report Symptoms of Illness

Any student athlete experiencing symptoms such as nausea, dizziness, overheating, or other signs of illness should notify the coach and/or athletic trainer immediately.

Injury Reporting and Documentation

- The Athletic Director will be notified of all serious injuries
- An accident report will be completed for any significant injury

For additional information regarding athletic training services, please refer to Section 8: Athletic Training.

Key Expectations

- Prompt reporting of all injuries and illnesses
- Compliance with medical guidance before returning to play
- Commitment to team responsibilities, even when limited by injury

35. Insurance

Greeneville City Schools provides a secondary insurance policy through Kid Guard Insurance to assist with the cost of medical treatment for injuries sustained during school-sponsored athletic activities. This policy is secondary to the student-athlete's primary insurance and may help cover eligible expenses after the primary insurance has been applied.

This does not replace a student-athlete's personal insurance coverage.

https://kidguardinsurance.com/pages/parent_pages/420

The TSSAA also provides a secondary catastrophic insurance policy to assist with the cost of medical treatment for injuries sustained during school-sponsored athletic activities. This policy is secondary to the student-athlete's primary insurance and may help cover eligible expenses after the primary insurance has been applied.

This does not replace a student-athlete's personal insurance coverage.

<https://cms-files.tssaa.org/documents/tssaa/2026-27/2026-27CatastrophicInsuranceInformation.pdf>

Injury Reporting Requirements

To be eligible for coverage under this policy:

- All injuries must be reported immediately to the athletic coach and athletic trainer at the time they occur
- Required injury and insurance paperwork must be completed promptly following the incident
- Failure to report injuries in a timely manner or complete the necessary documentation may impact eligibility for insurance benefits.

Claims and Questions

All insurance-related requests, questions, or documentation should be directed to the Athletic Director:

Jeremy K. Simerly

simerlyj@gcschools.net

Important Reminder

Prompt reporting of injuries is essential not only for insurance purposes but also to ensure proper medical care and to prevent further injury.

For additional information regarding injury procedures, please refer to Section 34: Illness and Injury.

IX. Travel, Events, & Team Activities

36. Transportation

Transportation to and from athletic events is an important part of team organization, safety, and unity. Student athletes are expected to follow all transportation guidelines established by Greeneville Middle School and the coaching staff.

Team Travel Expectations

- Student athletes are required to travel to contests on team-provided transportation, typically the team bus.
- In certain circumstances, such as with specific sports (e.g., Baseball, Golf), travel arrangements may include approved carpooling coordinated by the coaching staff.
- Riding together as a team promotes accountability, supervision, and team unity.

Transportation Return

- If a student athlete needs to leave an event with their parent/guardian or another approved adult, a transportation release form must be completed and submitted at the beginning of the season.
- This form can be found in the attachments section at the end of this handbook.
- Student-athletes will only be released to individuals authorized through this process.

Behavior at Away Events

- If teams are required to remain at an event before or after their competition, student athletes must stay together in a designated area as directed by their coach.
- Student athletes are expected to always conduct themselves appropriately and remain under the supervision of their coach.

Key Expectations

- Team travel is required unless prior arrangements are approved
- Parents must complete proper documentation for alternative transportation
- Student-athletes must remain with and always represent their team appropriately

37. Sports Banquet

At the conclusion of each athletic season, the Head Coach may organize a team banquet to recognize and celebrate the efforts and accomplishments of participating student-athletes. This event provides an opportunity to reflect on the season, acknowledge individual and team achievements, and strengthen connections within the program.

Sports banquets are typically semi-formal events, and parents/guardians are encouraged to attend and join in the celebration of their student-athlete's experience.

Details regarding the date, time, location, and any additional information will be communicated to student athletes and families as the season ends.

Key Expectations

- Attendance is strongly encouraged by student-athletes
- Parents/guardians are welcome to participate
- Event details will be shared in advance by the coaching staff

X. Support Organization & Fundraising

38. Booster Club and Fundraising

Greeneville Middle School Athletics encourages the support and involvement of families and the community through fundraising efforts that benefit our student-athletes and athletic programs. Parents and supporters can participate in these efforts through sport-specific booster clubs.

All fundraising activities must be approved in advance to ensure alignment with school and district policies.

Prior to initiating any fundraiser:

- A fundraising request form must be completed and submitted to the Athletic Director
- The request must receive approval from the Athletic Director, GMS Principal, and Greeneville City Schools Director of Schools

No fundraising activity may begin until all approvals have been granted.

Participation in fundraising activities is not required for student athletes to be eligible to participate in athletics at Greeneville Middle School.

Booster Club Information

Information regarding Greeneville Middle School Athletic Booster Clubs, including membership and contact details, can be found on the Greeneville Middle School Athletics website.

Key Expectations

- All fundraising activities must follow the approved process
- Booster clubs serve as a valuable support system for athletic programs
- Participation in fundraising is voluntary for all student-athletes

XI. Forms & Final Information

39. Required Athletic Forms

Once a student athlete has been selected for a team at Greeneville Middle School, a parent and/or guardian must complete all required athletic forms prior to participation in team activities.

All forms are located on the Greeneville Middle School Athletics website under the section titled “Required Athletic Forms.” It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that all forms are completed accurately and submitted in a timely manner.

The Required Athletic Forms include:

- Acknowledgement of a current athletic physical on file
- Player/Parent Contract
- Concussion Awareness Form
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Form
- Review acknowledgement of Greeneville City Schools Board Policy related to transportation
- Review acknowledgement of the Equipment Policy

Student athletes will not be permitted to participate in practices, games, or team activities until all required forms have been completed and verified.

Key Expectations

- All forms must be completed after team selection and prior to participation
- Parents/guardians are responsible for submission
- Timely completion ensures eligibility and promotes the safety of all student-athletes

40. Reminder

The Greeneville Middle School Athletic Department reserves the right to take additional disciplinary action for any violations of policies outlined in this handbook.

School administrators, the Athletic Director, and the Athletic Advisory Committee will review and address unique situations, exceptions, or concerns on a **case-by-case basis** as they arise.

While every effort has been made to include comprehensive guidelines, it is understood that not every possible situation can be anticipated. Any circumstances not specifically addressed in this handbook will be handled at the discretion of the **Head Coach, in collaboration with the Athletic Director and the Athletic Advisory Committee.**

We are committed to maintaining a fair, consistent, and student-centered athletic program. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, we encourage you to bring them to our attention.