

GERSTELL ACADEMY



FALCONS

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

2011-2012

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Athletic Mission Statement

The mission of the Gerstell Academy Athletic Department is to provide an athletic experience that reflects the school motto “**Leadership, Honor, Courage**” as well as the **Principles** and **Attributes**. Gerstell Academy athletics emphasizes lifelong physical fitness and teamwork to instill leadership, wellness and physical conditioning to be an inherent part of a healthy lifestyle. Teamwork is stressed in order to help learn critical aspects of leadership, setting and achieving goals, striving for improvement, and an appreciation of winning and losing as a team. Overall, the program strives to provide an environment for student-athletes to reach their full fitness and athletic potential.

Gerstell Athletics stresses the synergistic relationship between many of the didactic skills learned in the classroom and sport and fitness excellence. Our student-athletes, coaches, and parents are required to exhibit superior sportsmanship and behavior consistent with the Gerstell Academy motto, *Principles*, and Leadership Attributes as well as our desire to be the best!

<p><i>“Leadership, Honor, Courage”</i> Gerstell Academy Principles</p>	<p>Gerstell Academy Leadership Attributes</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Respect your parents, your teachers and those in authority. 2. Be honest, ethical, moral and true to your word. 3. Treat others as you want to be treated. 4. Be courageous in the face of adversity. 5. Strive for a positive attitude and to be civil at all times. 6. Approach every endeavor with passion, conviction and persistence. 7. Work to reach your full potential. 8. Take full responsibility for your actions and their consequences. 9. Be thankful for and generous with your time, talents and treasures. 10. Humble yourself before Almighty God and respect the Divine Nature of Life in the universe 	<p>L- Listen</p> <p>E- Express Appreciation</p> <p>A- Action</p> <p>D- Do the Right Thing</p> <p>E- Example</p> <p>R- Resourcefulness</p> <p>S- Sincerity</p> <p>H- Hope</p> <p>I- Instruct Others</p> <p>P- Perseverance</p>

Athletic Concepts

All Gerstell Academy student athletes should know and exemplify all of the following aspects of Gerstell Athletics. The coaches of Middle and Upper School athletics will focus on teaching these most basic athletic concepts:

- Participation
- Respect for self
- Respect for authority
- Attitude
- Perseverance
- Proper preparation
- Teamwork
- Competition
- Discipline
- Skill development
- Physical fitness
- Heart
- Importance of effort over winning and losing

Middle School Athletic Philosophy

“Champions aren't made in the gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them -- a desire, a dream, a vision.” -Muhammad Ali

The Gerstell Academy athletic program is structured to build upon and enhance the leadership program and give students an opportunity to develop and test leadership skills, teamwork, and provide a venue for physical fitness. Middle School athletics foster an environment in which children are able to grow and to learn how to reach their full potential emotionally, intellectually, socially and physically. Athletic concepts are extensions of the academic life and are introduced and taught to overshadow the focus on winning or losing athletic contests. Middle School athletics focus on participation and skill building. Although playing time may not always be equal, all students will make a team and will play. Coaches will stress the importance of team accomplishments over individual accomplishments.

Gerstell Academy student athletes are encouraged to vary their athletic experiences at the middle school level to allow them to learn and grow from different fitness experiences. Daily participation is required and necessary in the development of an understanding for athletics, physical fitness and the increased knowledge of basic athletic concepts and rules.

Upper School Athletic Philosophy

“Winning isn’t everything, but trying to is.” -Vince Lombardi

The Upper School philosophy differs from that of the Middle School. Upper School athletics still follow the basic philosophy of fitness for life and building a base for a healthy lifestyle. However, in the Upper School, athletics become more competitive and there is an increase in the emphasis on striving to win as a result of great effort, excellent attitude and exceptional fitness. Due to this competitiveness, tryouts may be required. All tryouts will be based on skill level, effort, attitude, performance and the specific numbers needed for a team. Superior sportsmanship, as in Middle School athletics, is expected and demanded. Information regarding all tryouts, Upper School teams, team schedules, and what each coach is looking for will be made available to our students. Parents should have frank discussions with their child to discuss realistic expectations, dedication, and commitment to a Varsity or Junior Varsity level sport.

Due to the competitive nature of Upper School Athletics and the expectation of excellence at Gerstell Academy, our student-athletes are required to be in top physical condition at all times. Pre-season practices will help to ensure that Gerstell Academy student-athletes are the best conditioned and most prepared athletes on the field.

Pre-Season Parent Meetings

It is Gerstell Academy policy to hold a pre-season meeting for parents of children who are interested in participating on any athletic team. This meeting will give the coaches, the Athletic Director and the parents a forum to discuss the upcoming seasons. Coaches will present their expectations for their respective team. In addition, the following will be discussed:

- Coach's expectations of the student athlete
- School's academic expectations
- Communication process and contact information
- Level of commitment for specific sport
- Schedule of practices and games
- Question and answer period

Athletic Hotline

The Gerstell Academy Athletic Hotline gives the coaches and Athletic Director the ability to forward important information to all student-athletes and parents involved in Gerstell Academy Athletics. It is imperative that all parents call the hotline on a daily basis to get updated information on practices, games, and schedules. The hotline will be updated at noon with any cancellations, time changes, or other modification to athletic practices or contests. The hotline may be reached by calling **410-861-4408**. In addition to the Athletic Hotline, we make every effort to send e-mails, update our website, and use the “Rained Out” program if there are any changes to a practice or game.

Chain of Communication

Occasionally during a season, issues will arise that affect players, coaches, parents, and the Administration. We ask that all issues are first brought directly to the coach. If the difficulty cannot be resolved with the coach, we ask that the following chain of communication be followed:

1. Head Coach/Assistant Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Head of School/Assistant to the President
4. President of the School

Issues may include, but not be limited to:

- Playing time
- Hazing/bullying
- Player/coach relationship
- Practice absence
- Competition absence
- Academic eligibility
- Effort
- Sportsmanship

Parent and Student-Athlete Concerns

Interscholastic athletics provide a wonderful opportunity for children to grow both physically and emotionally. With this opportunity, parents and students can expect new challenges that may be different than those dealt with in previous recreational athletic experiences.

- Each student athlete must realize that their coach is going to push and challenge them to meet and exceed limits previously achieved.
- Each student athlete must expect to receive frank and genuine feedback from the coaches on their performance.
- Each student athlete must expect that playing time is no longer always going to be equal among teammates. The coaches strive for maximum playing time for all players; however, there will be some inequalities.
- Each Student athlete must realize that it is the responsibility of the coach to designate playing positions.
- Each student athlete must understand the idea of subordinating themselves for the good of the team.
- Each student athlete must understand that correction, instruction and encouragement is sometimes given in a direct, urgent, and emotional manner during athletic contests.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

The use or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs while participating at Gerstell Academy or while on an athletic team at Gerstell Academy is against the law and prohibited. Illegal drugs and alcohol can hinder a student-athlete's ability to reach their full potential and is not an attribute of a student-athlete following the Gerstell Academy Principles. A full policy of training rules and regulations is being compiled by the Gerstell Academy Athletic Department. Until the completion of the training rules, all matters dealing with illegal drugs or alcohol use will be dealt with in adherence to the rules and regulations stated by the school Administration with full support of the Athletic Department, the Director of Athletics and the coach.

Scheduling and Attendance

It is the policy of the Gerstell Academy Athletic Department to adhere to the school's academic calendar. Practices and athletic contests can be held on any day that classes are in session. If a practice or contest should take place on a day when a student-athlete observes a religious holiday that is not recognized by the school, the student will be excused from that day's activity by notifying the coach in advance.

Gerstell's Upper School programs will have team activities outside of the normal school calendar. This may include practices and/or games on weekends, summer break, spring break and winter break. This schedule is common at the Upper School level and has been incorporated into our program.

Absence Policy

All Gerstell student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and games throughout the duration of the season. The athletic department will recognize and deal with two types of absences.

1. Excused Absences:

- Absence due to missing school because of sickness
- Absence due to a death in the family
- Absence due to any religious holiday
- Absence due to academic help with a Gerstell teacher (tutorial)
- Absence due to other obligations

*** All students who miss practice due to excused absences must present a letter or note to the head coach from a parent, teacher, or doctor upon their return to practice.**

2. Un-excused Absences:

- Absence due to any event not accompanied by a letter of explanation
- Absence due to detention or any other behavior issues at Gerstell

*** Un-excused absence is not acceptable for any coach or player. The student athlete will receive an oral and or written warning from the coach when the first offense occurs. Continual breaking of this rule will result in suspension from the team as decided by the head coach and the Athletic Director.**

*** In general, any student arriving to school after 12:00 PM WILL NOT be permitted to participate in any after school athletic games and/or practices for that day.**

Ineligibility

Students who are identified as having two “D’s” or one “F” in either academics or in leadership at any time during the academic year, including Interims and Report Cards, will be ineligible for participation in athletics and extracurricular activities which include on-going clubs or scheduled athletic clinics. The ineligibility status commences the day following the determination of ineligibility is made. This does not include school field trips. It is the intent to notify parents as soon as possible when there is a change in the eligibility status.

The span of ineligibility begins the day following the determination of ineligibility. This status continues until all eligibility requirements have been met by the student. The final eligibility decision by Administration takes place on Friday of each week. Eligibility decisions may not be made before Friday. The return to eligibility status begins the following Monday. Students may begin the process of regaining eligibility immediately upon learning of the ineligible status. Students can become academically ineligible at any point in the academic year when a teacher has a sufficient number of grades to determine a baseline of academic standing for that trimester. Interims will often be the point at which a student’s general standing is determined.

A serious infraction or cumulative misconduct involving discipline or honor can result in a determination of ineligibility from the Administration. This policy is intended to assist students who need additional support with their academics or their leadership behavior. Determination of academic ineligibility and eligibility will be based on a representative number of grades in a course sufficient to accurately assess and reflect their standing in that course. Grades of “D” or “F” must be improved to a grade of “C-” or better. Leadership ineligibility and eligibility will be based on an assessment of the student’s behavior across time and various school settings.

Students seeking to regain eligibility are strongly encouraged to attend study halls, tutorials, and/or to meet regularly with their Advisor.

Students will be responsible for having an Eligibility Form completed and signed by the subject area teacher(s), their Advisor, Athletic Director (if applicable), their parents and the Administration.

Students will regain eligibility when they have earned and demonstrated improved grades and/or behavior as determined by the involved teacher(s), the student’s Advisor, the Athletic Director, and Middle School Administration. Students may be required to present themselves, in person or in writing, to the above members as a group, to assist them in making their decision.

Concussion Protocol

Concussions have become a growing concern in athletics at all levels. As a leadership school, Gerstell Academy strives to educate our student-athletes, coaches, and parents about concussions and their lasting effect on any player. All Upper School student-athletes will be baseline tested by our Head Athletic Trainer and/or our Team Doctor prior to participating on an athletic team. Our Head Athletic Trainer will work closely with all student-athletes and their parents who have any concussion issues throughout the year.

Varsity Letters/Varsity Jackets

Any student-athlete who participates as a player or a manager on any Varsity athletic team will be eligible to purchase a Varsity Letter Jacket. The jackets are purchased through Neff Company at www.neffco.com/neffjacketshop using the Gerstell passcode: 035698. All jacket orders will be finalized after approval of the Athletic Director.

Any student-athlete who participates on a Varsity team will also receive a Varsity Letter at the Upper School Athletic Banquet held in the spring. Along with the Varsity Letter, student-athletes will receive a pin for the first year that they participate on a Varsity team. Each additional year that the student-athlete participates in that sport, they will receive a “bar” pin to represent that year. Captains will receive a special captain pin and managers will receive a pin recognizing them for their service as a team manager.

Travel Policy

Student-athletes are expected to ride on the team bus to all athletic contests with their respective team. Parents/guardians **are not** permitted to transport any student-athlete to away contests unless written notice has been approved by the Director of Athletics.

Parents, legal guardians, or any other adult listed on the Athletic Travel Policy sheet **may** take a student-athlete home directly from the field after an away contest. If no authorized driver is there to pick the student-athlete up, that student will return to campus on the bus with the head and/or assistant coach.

It is asked that if a student athlete will be riding home with someone other than a parent or guardian, their coach be notified in writing the day of the event. This includes drivers already listed on the travel policy sheet.

Parent Code of Conduct

All Gerstell Academy parents are expected to show pride in the hard work and dedication that their child and the other student-athletes put forth. Yell and cheer appropriately, but do it with the superior sportsmanship that is expected and demanded by Gerstell Academy. We welcome the presence and support of visiting/opposing families and fans. We will be expected to set the *positive example*.

- All Gerstell Academy parents are expected to exhibit superior sportsmanship at all times. All parents must follow the motto “Leadership, Honor, Courage,” the Principles, Attributes, and demonstrate positive support for all officials, coaches, and players during any sporting event or practice.
- All Gerstell Academy parents are expected to have an understanding of the athletic mission statement and must be willing to abide by the standards set forth in the athletic handbook.
- All Gerstell Academy parents are expected to respect the judgment of the coaching staff and accept that molding student-athletes into healthy, confident, hard-working, leaders is more important than winning at all costs.
- All Gerstell Academy parents are expected to aid in the prevention of the use of alcohol and illegal drugs by Gerstell Academy student-athletes. Parents must understand that a student must be in top physical shape to reach their full athletic potential and the use of drugs and alcohol undermine that progression.
- All Gerstell Academy parents are expected to support the coaches in all of the decisions that they make. Any differences in opinion should be discussed directly with the coach and not with other parents or students.
- All Gerstell Academy parents must realize that it is best to avoid sensitive discussions with coaches just before, during, or after a game or practice. Please schedule a time to address these concerns away from the field.

Stadium Expectations

- During athletic contests, family, friends, and other fans **are not permitted** inside the fenced area of the stadium.
- This includes during pre-game, halftime, and post game. This is for the safety of the student-athletes and the fans around them.
- All fans are expected to sit in the bleacher area or stand outside of the track and fenced area.
- Food and drinks are permitted in the stadium bleachers and outside of the fenced field area, but are banned on the playing surface.
- Pets **are not permitted** in the bleachers or on the turf and/or track at any time.
- Bicycles, skateboards, in-line skates or any other mobile devices **are not permitted** in the stands, on the ramps, on the steps leading to the stadium, nor on or around the turf and/or track at any time.
- Gerstell Academy is a **non-smoking, non-gum chewing** campus. We ask that all students, parents, fans and visitors respect this rule while in and around the stadium and/or around Gerstell's campus.
- Please encourage our students and any visitors to use the open gates to enter the turf and track area. Jumping the fence is not permitted and can lead to injury to fans/players and can damage the fencing.

Cell Phone Use

- No cell phone use is permitted in the locker rooms or in transition to and from athletic contests. (this includes phone calls, photographs and/or text messaging) All phones should remain off at all times while on campus or in transition to or from school events or athletic events.
- Today cell phones have the ability to record digital pictures. There are many instances where by inappropriate photographs have been recorded with and without the knowledge of the victim and suddenly appear on Facebook or Myspace.com and other social networking sites. This is inconsistent with Gerstell Academy Policy.

Coach Code of Conduct

- Gerstell Academy coaches shall uphold the motto “Leadership, Honor, Courage” and the Principles of the school. Coaches must set a positive example when dealing with officials, student-athletes, parents, opposing coaches and the public.
- Gerstell Academy coaches must have a clear understanding of the motto “Leadership, Honor, Courage,” the Gerstell **Principles** and **Attributes**, the athletic mission statement and a vision for their program. All of these attributes must be clearly communicated to players, parents and assistant coaches alike and coaches must strive to weave the **Principles** and **Attributes** into their coaching philosophy on a daily basis.
- Gerstell Academy coaches shall strive to incorporate the Principles of the school in all aspects of a sport.
- Gerstell Academy coaches shall take an active role to instill the values of a healthy lifestyle and fitness for life. Coaches must aid in the prevention of alcohol, drug and tobacco use and abuse, and support the school and athletic department’s policies as they relate to these matters.
- Gerstell Academy coaches shall strive to provide an equal opportunity for each child to grow and learn all aspects of a particular sport. Coaches shall encourage and assist their players in the setting of goals in athletics, academics, but most importantly, in life.
- Gerstell Academy coaches must believe in the leadership Principles and instill them in their players the Principles, the attributes of a leader and the values of superior sportsmanship over winning at all costs.
- Gerstell Academy coaches must respect the authority of officials, and the integrity of the game at all times.
- Gerstell Academy coaches must be humble in victory and gracious in defeat. These values must be reinforced and instilled in all Gerstell Academy student-athletes.
- Gerstell Academy coaches must have the ability to inspire their student-athletes to “work to reach their full potential” and to face and overcome adversity both on and off the athletic field.

Student-Athlete/Parent Contract

The following contract is to be read, discussed, and understood by both the parents and the children involved in Gerstell Academy athletics. Please understand that by signing the contract, you and your child will be held to the standards set forth by the Gerstell Academy Athletic Department.

Student-Athlete Contract

Principle 8: “Take full responsibility for your actions and their consequences.”

As a member of a Gerstell Academy athletic team you will be held to the highest of standards. Both on and off the field you will represent your team, your school, your family, and most importantly, yourself. Gerstell Academy student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner at all times to ensure that the standard and tradition of Gerstell Academy and Gerstell Athletics is maintained. With this in mind, the Gerstell Athletic Department has guidelines that must be understood and followed at all times. In order to participate in Gerstell Athletics both you and your parents/guardians must read and agree to all guidelines and accept your coach’s authority to enforce these rules.

1. *Principle 9: “Be thankful for and generous with your time, talents and treasures.”*

Gerstell Academy student-athletes have the **responsibility** to be on time and prepared for all practices and athletic contests. Consistent lateness or unexcused absences may result in decreased playing time. This will be at the discretion of the head coach and may result in suspension and possible discharge from the athletic team.

2. *Principle 6: “Approach every endeavor with passion, conviction and persistence.”*

Gerstell Academy student-athletes are expected to compete at their personal best. It is our expectation that all student-athletes give their best to improve both as a student, an athlete and as a person throughout the duration of the season.

3. *Principle 7: “Work to reach your full potential.”*

Gerstell Academy student-athletes are expected to have the determination to be in top physical condition at all times. Alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs have a detrimental effect on your personal health and ability to participate in athletics and in turn will effect negatively the entire Gerstell Academy athletic environment. The use of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substance will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to the rules stated in the Student/Parent Handbook. Students and parents are reminded that under age drinking and illegal drug use are a criminal offense and may be handled by the school as such.

4. Principle 1: “Respect your parents, teachers, and those in authority.”

Gerstell Academy student-athletes are expected to respect all aspects of their sport including the coaches, the teammates, the opponents, the fans, the rules and the officials. When wearing the Gerstell Academy name and/or Falcon logo you represent yourself, your family and your school. Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated and will be dealt with accordingly by the Athletic Department and by the Administration.

5. Principle 3: “Treat others as you want to be treated.”

Any behavior, as determined by the head coach, assistant coach, athletic director, Administration, or the president of the school that violates any rules stated by either the team or the athletic department could result in decreased playing time, suspension or discharge from the team at any time.

6. “Leave it as you found it or better.”

It is the responsibility of each student-athlete, their coaches, their family, their friends, and anyone else associated with Gerstell Academy Athletics to uphold this ideal. This includes, but is not limited to Gerstell Academy and its opponents’ field, locker room space, stadium, and campus. These areas should be left “as you found it or better”. If there is trash or debris in your area when you arrive, it is appropriate to clean your team’s area even though you may not have placed the debris there. It is the responsibility of the **athletes** to be sure that all athletic equipment, water jugs, medical kits, and anything else used during a game or practice is returned to the Paterakis Athletic Center before any players depart.

STUDENT-ATHLETE CONTRACT AND RELEASE FORM

I am a voluntary participant on a Gerstell Academy athletic team and in good physical condition. I understand that athletics may include physical contact with other players and equipment. I hereby assume full responsibility for any injury or accident, which may occur during my participation in this sport or while on the campus of Gerstell Academy or any opponent's campus. I hereby release and hold harmless Gerstell Academy, its coaches, its athletic training staff, and any other individuals associated with the school and/or the sport being played from any claims I may have arising out of my participation in this sport, including personal injury or damage suffered by me or others, whether caused by negligence or otherwise.

As a member of a Gerstell Academy athletic team I have read and understand the above rules and regulations and I agree to abide by them at all times. I accept my coach's, Athletic Director's and the school's authority to enforce the rules and administer the penalties if the rules and regulations are not followed accordingly.

Student-Athlete Name (Please Print)

Student-Athlete Signature

Date

As a parent/guardian of a Gerstell Academy student-athlete, I have read and understand the above rules and regulations. I accept my son/daughter's coach's and Athletic Director's authority to enforce the rules and the penalties if the rules and regulations are not followed accordingly.

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

ATHLETIC TRANSPORTATION FORM

Child's Name

Grade

My child has permission to ride home from games with the following people:

Parent or Carpool Driver

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

** If an individual or family member is restricted from picking up your child, Gerstell Academy requires legal documentation to enforce the restriction.*

Contact information of drivers authorized to transport my/our child:

(Name) (Relationship) (Home #) (Work #) (Cell #)

(Name) (Relationship) (Home #) (Work #) (Cell #)

(Name) (Relationship) (Home #) (Work #) (Cell #)

(Name) (Relationship) (Home #) (Work #) (Cell #)

Signature of Authorizing Parent /Date

Signature of Authorizing Parent /Date

410-861-3000 ♦ Fax: 410-861-8730

Gerstell Academy
Athletic Emergency Information Form

Athlete's Name (print): _____ Sex: Male Female

DOB: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Home Phone: _____

Sports Being Played (one form per year):

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Mother/Guardian Work Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Father/Guardian Work Phone: _____ Cell: _____

In an emergency, if parent/guardian cannot be reached, please call:

1st Choice: _____ Phone: _____

2nd Choice: _____ Phone: _____

Hospital Preference: _____

Physician's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Dentist's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name of Primary Insurance Company: _____

Policy Number: _____ Ins. Co. Phone: _____

Emergency Medical Data

Place an "x" if any of the following apply to the athlete:

Diabetes Epilepsy Asthma

Other Health Concerns: _____

Date of last known tetanus shot: _____ Glasses/ Contacts: _____

Current Medications: _____

Allergies: _____

Medication Allergies: _____

Emergency Medical Release

In the case of an emergency, I give my consent for coaches and/or school nurse to use their own judgment in securing medical aid and ambulance services.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian must sign and the athlete must return this form prior to the first practice.