

# Gallatin Gateway School **Athletic Handbook**



Grades K-8

Updated: June 2023

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# Philosophy of Gateway Athletics

We believe that athletics constitutes a part of a balanced education and can be a training ground for a student’s maturation process. Participation in athletics will allow for an experience in the joy and excitement of team involvement, and satisfaction with intense effort, and the motivating influence of goal setting. Our teams will have unity and be concerned about each other just as a family. We believe our athletes should be role models for other students, be self-disciplined, and exert self-control. Our athletes will be given the opportunity every day to build character by performing the task at hand and develop a determination to succeed not only on the scoreboard but also in a steady progression of their abilities.

## Gator Graduate Profile



### Self-Directed and Resilient

The student demonstrates a positive work ethic through an understanding of how to manage time and priorities. Students can set and achieve goals. The student can reflect on their actions and decisions. Through persistence and a growth mindset, the student can overcome adversity.

### Citizenship

The student will impact the community responsibly, embrace diversity in person and thoughts, demonstrate civic responsibility, and show respect and empathy for others. Student positively

impacts the community.

### **Academic Proficiency**

Achieving their highest potential academically to meet their personal goals as an adult. Students embrace learning and academic challenges. The student is a lifelong learner and persists through difficulties.

### **Collaborator**

The student demonstrates leadership skills by effectively listening and interacting with others to accomplish a goal. The student understands the roles and responsibilities of the collaborative processes and can lead, formally or informally.

### **Healthy in Mind and Body**

Student demonstrates an awareness of wellness for mind and body through healthy habits.



Being a Gator – by Alexandria McConville

## **Sports Offered**

The goal for our students is to promote participation, therefore there are no tryouts, and everyone can participate. Team sports members will be given substantial participation time – meaning equal participation in practice and a reasonable amount of playing time in actual game situations. Players will be organized in teams respective to their grade levels. Often combined grades will form a team. For example, fifth and sixth graders will be a team; seventh graders will be a team. Schedules and

tournaments for team sports are coordinated by the Athletic Director and involve playing both home and away games. The individual sports of wrestling and track will have matches and meets at away locations.

Health benefits for all the sports listed below include physical exercise, social interactions, and sportsmanship.

### Girls Volleyball

All girls in grades 5 through 8 are eligible to play volleyball. The season starts in early September and continues into October. Volleyball improves muscle strength and tone, improves hand and eye coordination, reflexes, and balance.

### Girls Basketball

All girls in grades 5 through 8 are eligible to play basketball. The season starts in November and continues into December. Basketball improves motor skills, agility, and endurance. Cardiovascular health is a prime benefit.

### Boys Basketball

All boys in grades 5 through 8 are eligible to play basketball. The season starts in January and continues into February. Boys' basketball will also include strength training, development of concentration, and self-discipline.

### Cheerleading

All students in grades 5 through 8 can join the cheerleading squad. Cheerleaders attend all home boys' basketball games. They are to motivate fans, students, and parents to support the team with enthusiasm. Cheerleading improves coordination, and flexibility and builds relationships with fellow team members.

### Wrestling

All students in grades K through 6 are eligible to participate in wrestling. Students are divided by age and weight to wrestle during competitions. Wrestling is an individual sport that requires the support of other team members, parents, and friends. The activity helps teach discipline, self-confidence, and inner strength to overcome obstacles. The team wrestles in tournaments throughout southwest Montana. The season starts in February and continues into March.

### Track and Field

All students in grades 5 through 8 are eligible to participate in track and field. Track and Field is a great way to improve overall health and fitness, the most prominent being strength training and aerobics.

Track meets are held throughout Gallatin Valley and the surrounding area. Athletes can compete in several different events as individuals and in small teams. The season starts in March and continues to mid-May and is weather-dependent.

## Acknowledgment of Risks

Gateway will provide properly trained coaches, safe equipment, and facilities and make reasonable efforts for everyone to be safe. Nevertheless, because activities can involve injury to the participants, you must be warned of dangers to make an informed decision as to whether to have your child participate in a respective activity. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to learn and understand the risks involved and to inquire from coaches, physicians, and other knowledgeable persons about concerns you may have. Concussions can happen in any sport and are explained in this handbook.

- Volleyball: Injuries to hands, feet, ankles, and other body parts can result from contact with the ball, players, playing surface, and other solid objects in and around the court.
- Basketball is a sport involving contact – which involves risk of injury. Common injuries include ankle, knee, back, head, and leg injuries. Bruises, muscle strains, and cramps are also possible.
- Cheerleading involves running, jumping, and flipping. While ankle sprains are most common, injuries to knees, wrists, neck, and back are possible.
- Wrestling involves take-downs, sparring, and hard landings. Common injuries may occur especially to ligaments and knee.
- Track and Field is a sport involving sprinting, running, throwing, and jumping. Common are muscle and tendon issues, shin splints, and hamstring pulls. Weather conditions may also cause colds, flu, and respiratory problems.

## Expectations, Eligibility Policies and Guidelines

### Enrollment Criteria

Athletes enrolled academically full and/or part-time are eligible to participate in all sports.

Athletes in the Gallatin Gateway School (GGS) district but not actively enrolled in the school can join a team by writing a letter to the Superintendent stating his/her reasons for wanting to join a team. This request must be made *at least seven days before* any regular school board meeting. The board shall make the final decision on the acceptance of the student.

All students outside the district who are not academically enrolled are not eligible to participate in any sports.

### Joining a Team

All student participants should plan to start practice on the scheduled first day of practice. No student will be allowed to join a team after the first two weeks of the season unless they obtain prior approval from the Athletic Director and/or Superintendent.

## Attendance Policy

Gallatin Gateway School believes that school attendance is extremely important, and absences should be kept to a minimum. To participate in sports, students must be in class for all classes the entire day to participate in a scheduled activity that same day. Exceptions are made for medical appointments accompanied by a doctor's note or family emergencies as communicated by a parent or guardian. Athletes are to inform coaches when practices must be missed.

## Academic Requirements

All athletes are considered students first and their responsibility as students takes precedence over their athletic involvement. The Superintendent has the discretion to retain a student from games and/or practices if she/he has not completed assigned work, or if her/his behavior reflects disrespect or dishonesty. Athletes must recognize that participation in athletics is a privilege and the athletic director and teachers expect all athletes to be model students in and out of the classroom.

All students must have a "C" or better to participate in athletics. Any student-athlete who has D's or F's will be on probation until grades have improved. While a student is on probation, students will be required to attend Learning Lab until their grades improve or their homework is completed. Students will be ineligible for competition. Daily grades can be checked online, at [www.gallatingatewayschool.com](http://www.gallatingatewayschool.com), and/or teachers can be contacted directly by calling 406-763-4415. Students may provide a signed document from the classroom teacher indicating improvement in grades/completion of assignments.

## Participation Fee

Participation fees for athletes are \$100 per sport. Fees must be paid before a student is eligible to participate in an activity. Fees are used to pay coaches, referees, tournament fees, and other related costs to the sport. Fees will be refunded for a student who decides not to participate before the start of the season. Once a student begins a program, however, fees will not be refunded. If financial circumstances make it difficult to have your son or daughter participate, please request a sports scholarship form from the school administration office. In addition, for Booster Club Volunteers who act as Team Managers, fees may be able to be waived per activity.

## Scholarship Form

Parents may complete the athletic scholarship form to assist with fees experienced through athletics. Parents must complete the free and reduced lunch application to submit the form. The form is at the end of this packet.

## Uniform Responsibility

All athletes must wear school-issued uniforms when participating in games. Uniforms are bought and paid for through donations and fees paid to Boosters. They should be used solely for sports play related to Gateway school events. Lost uniforms are subject to replacement fees. No athlete can

compete in another sport until the uniform from a previous activity is returned. Late fines can be levied for late returns.

## Chemical Use

Confirmed student use or possession of alcohol or any non-prescription substance defined by law as a drug or confirmed use or possession of any tobacco product will result in ineligibility. District handbook rules apply. Possible suspension or removal from the team or sport may result.

## Harassment

All student-athletes are under the district handbook policy for harassment, hazing, intimidation, bullying, and/or menacing. Any violation will result in reduced playing time or suspension from the team as determined by the Superintendent, Athletic Director, and Coach.

## Cellphone and other Electronic Devices

At no time shall any student operate a cell phone or other electronic device with photo, audio, or video capabilities in a locker room, bathroom, or any other location where such operation may violate the privacy right of another person. No comments or pictures deemed inappropriate by the Superintendent and/or Athletic Director may be posted on social networking sites on the Internet and violations can put athletic participation in jeopardy.

## In-School Suspensions

Any member of an athletic team who has an in-school suspension will automatically be ineligible to play in competition. The Superintendent, Athletic Director, and Coach will jointly make the final decision regarding reinstatement.

## Coaches Rules

Coaches/Supervisors of extra-curricular activities may establish, publish, and enforce additional activity participation guidelines and training rules that must be followed by a student if he/she wishes to participate in that activity.

## Conflict Resolutions

Gateway intends to provide a positive experience for your son or daughter in athletics. If there is a concern you have and wish to discuss the situation, the following procedure will be followed. Please give yourself time to understand your concerns before approaching a coach. Attempting to confront a coach before, during, or immediately after a game or practice is unacceptable. A "cool off" time of 24 hours is requested.

In resolving a conflict with coaches, the following steps of communication will be followed:

- Player and Coach



- Player & Parent – Coach
- Player & Parent – Coach & Athletic Director
- Player & Parent – Superintendent

If you are not satisfied with your student-athlete and coaches' conversation, call the coach to set up a face-to-face meeting.

If the concern is not satisfactorily resolved after meeting with the coach, the athletic director will be involved in the discussion. The athletic director will investigate the concern through discussion with the coach and will observe practice or game situations if it relates to the concern. The athletic director will document the results of the investigation and subsequent action(s) to be taken to resolve the conflict. If the formal complaint is not satisfactorily resolved by the athletic director, the athlete and/or parent may appeal in a face-to-face meeting with the Superintendent, who will meet with the parties involved in a further attempt to resolve the situation.

If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved at this level, the conflict may be presented to the school board in a formal written correspondence.

## Booster Club Invitation

The Booster Club is a great way to be positively involved in your child's activities. The club is a volunteer community/parent-member board that is formed to help raise funds for Gateway School athletics. The Booster Club is a 501(c) and all donations are tax-deductible. Funds are raised from community businesses for game promotions and advertisements, and by memberships. The Booster Club meets quarterly. The district via the Athletic Director submits their list of needs that the school does not fund. The Booster Club votes on which requests to fund. The Booster Club also hears requests and participates in discussions related to capital improvements for various fields, courts, equipment, etc.

Booster Club members also may volunteer to help the Athletic Director and Coaches as "Team Managers" with various tasks such as assigning uniforms, game/scoreboard bookkeeping, and administration handbook checks. With a minimum of eight (8) hours of volunteer work within one sport, participation fees will be waived. The maximum number of volunteers eligible as team managers will be determined by the Athletic Director and Superintendent based on financial need, skill qualifications and first to volunteer.

# Concussion Information

Because of the passage of the Dylan Steigers’ Protection of Youth Athletes Act, schools are required to distribute information sheets to inform and educate student-athletes and their parents of the nature and risk of concussion and head injury to student-athletes, including the risks of continuing to play after a concussion or head injury. Montana law requires that each year, before beginning practice for an organized activity, a student-athlete and the student-athlete parent(s)/legal guardian(s) must be given an information sheet, and both parties must sign and return a form acknowledging receipt of the information to an official designated by the school or school district prior to the student-athlete's participation during the designated school year. The law further states that a student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from play at the time of injury and may not return to play until the student-athlete has received a written clearance from a licensed healthcare provider.

## Be Prepared

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can occur in any sport or recreation activity. So, all coaches, parents, and athletes need to learn concussion signs and symptoms and what to do if a concussion occurs.

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS OR GUARDIANS	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY YOUR CHILD OR TEEN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Appears dazed or stunned</li> <li>•Is confused about events</li> <li>•Answers questions slowly</li> <li>•Repeats questions</li> <li>•Can’t recall events prior to the hit, bump, or fall</li> <li>•Can’t recall events after the hit, bump, or fall</li> <li>•Loses consciousness (even briefly)</li> <li>•Shows behavior or personality changes</li> <li>•Forgets class schedule or assignments</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Thinking/Remembering:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Difficulty thinking clearly</li> <li>•Difficulty concentrating or remembering</li> <li>•Feeling more slowed down</li> <li>•Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Physical:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Headache or “pressure” in head</li> <li>•Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>•Balance problems or dizziness</li> <li>•Fatigue or feeling tired</li> <li>•Blurry or double vision</li> <li>•Sensitivity to light or noise</li> <li>•Numbness or tingling</li> <li>•Does not “feel right”</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Emotional:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Irritable</li> <li>•Sad</li> <li>•More emotional than usual</li> <li>•Nervous</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Sleep*:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Drowsy</li> <li>•Sleeps less than usual</li> <li>•Sleeps more than usual</li> <li>•Has trouble falling asleep</li> </ul> <p><i>*Only ask about sleep symptoms if the injury occurred on a prior day.</i></p>



## A Fact Sheet for **ATHLETES**

### **WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?**

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a bump or blow to the head
- Can change the way your brain normally works
- Can occur during practices or games in any sport
- Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out
- Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged"

### **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?**

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light
- Bothered by noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Difficulty paying attention
- Memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?**

- **Tell your coaches and your parents.** Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.

- **Get a medical checkup.** A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.
- **Give yourself time to get better.** If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.

### **HOW CAN I PREVENT A CONCUSSION?**

Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

- Follow your coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:
  - > The right equipment for the game, position, or activity
  - > Worn correctly and fit well
  - > Used every time you play

**Remember, when in doubt, sit them out!**

Links to Other Resources:

- CDC—Concussion in Sports
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/index.html>
- National Federation of State High School Association/ Concussion in Sports
  - [www.nfhslearn.com](http://www.nfhslearn.com)
- Montana High School Association – Sports Medicine Page
  - <http://www.mhsa.org/SportsMedicine/SportsMed.htm>



## A Fact Sheet for PARENTS

### WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

### WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

#### Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

*If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:*

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily • Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can’t recall events after hit or fall

#### Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion

### HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

- Ensure that they follow their coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

- 1. Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
- 2. Keep your child out of play.** Concussions take time to heal. Don’t let your child return to play until a health care professional says it’s OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
- 3. Tell your child’s coach about any recent concussion.** Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child’s coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

## Gallatin Gateway School District Student/Parent Pledge

Student Pledge: As a student participating in extracurricular activities, I am a role model. I will refrain from engaging in all types of disrespectful behavior, including inappropriate language, taunting, trash-talking, and unnecessary physical contact. I know the district, conference, and state expectations; and I accept the responsibility and privilege of representing this school and community as a student.

### Student Code of Conduct

- I will strive for academic excellence and remain in good academic standing
- I will arrive on time for all practices, meetings, and contests
- I will show respect for authority, other athletes, and students
- I will conduct myself in a manner that fosters an environment free from intimidation, harassment, discrimination, and bullying, including cyberbullying
- I will set a good example in school and within the community
- I will refrain from the use of any tobacco products or alcoholic beverages
- I will refrain from the use of performance-enhancing or mind-altering drugs
- I will comply with all school/team rules and policies
- I will demonstrate and encourage good sportsmanship on and off the playing field
- I will report any injury to the coach

Parent Pledge: As a parent, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I will remember that school activities are an extension of the classroom, offering learning experiences for the students. I must show respect for all players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. I understand the spirit of fair play and good sportsmanship is expected by our district, conference, and state. I accept my responsibility to be a model of good sportsmanship that comes with being the parent of a student.

### Parent Code of Conduct

- I will cheer positively and display appropriate game behavior
- I will focus on the performance and effort of the student-athlete, not on the outcome. Winning or losing does not define success
- I will never approach a coach, athlete, referee, or school official regarding a ruling on the field of play, directly after or during the contest.
- I will encourage my child to talk with the coaches. If I have a concern about my child, I will discuss my concerns with the coach only after my child has expressed this same concern with the coach, at an appropriate time, not directly after or during a contest.
- I will avoid making derogatory remarks while in a public place and support the program while in the presence of my athlete and other fans.
- I will supervise my other children at all times at home and away games.

The above is the Gallatin Gateway School District Activities Pledge, we ask that you and your child abide by this Pledge during his or her participation in any District activity. By signing this, I agree to abide by the Pledge and accept any consequences for violating the Pledge.

# Pre-Participation Requirements

The following forms and fees must be completed and turned in by the school secretary before participation can take place.

**Medical Insurance Requirement**

The Gateway School District #35 DOES NOT provide medical insurance benefits for students who choose to participate in the interscholastic and/or intramural program. Medical insurance must be provided for the student to participate. For those students who have no medical insurance, the school district can provide information on affordable and seasonal insurance from (SMIC) Special Markets Insurance Consultants.

**Physical Evaluation**

All students participating in an interscholastic sport are required to have a yearly physical examination by a certified licensed medical professional. This is a MHS A requirement and GGS requires written proof before your son or daughter can compete in any practices. Standard MHS A-issued physical forms must be used and are available from the Athletic Director or school office. The school will provide one annual opportunity for students to receive a physical examination at no charge from the school nurse.

**Student Transportation Liability Release Form**

Parents and participants must arrange their transportation to and from games, as buses are not provided. This allows your student to ride with approved drivers to athletic events.

**Parent and Student Pledge**

**Concussion Statement**

**Volunteer Auto Insurance Request Form**

**Background Check for Parent Volunteer Drivers**

**Athletic Registration**

Both parents or legal guardians must sign this form. If only one parent/guardian is living or has sole custody, then only that person needs to sign. The signing parent/guardian, however, is obligated to notify any non-custodial parent/guardian of the contents of this document.

**Pay Athletic Fees**

# Handbook Receipt Acknowledgement

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT AND READING OF THE ATHLETIC AND ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK AND ALL REQUIRED FORMS (Concussion, Medical Insurance, Physical, Transportation, and Pledge forms)

We have read this Athletic Handbook and are familiar with its contents. We understand that it is our responsibility to follow the guidelines set for athletic success. Both parents/guardians are required to sign this form. If only one parent/guardian is living or has sole custody, then only that person needs to sign. The signing parent/guardian, however, is obligated to notify the non-custodial parent/guardian of the contents of this acknowledgment. One parent/guardian must sign this form in the MAIN OFFICE with a school district representative present.

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Athletic Scholarship Application

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Scholarships are available on a need basis. Please provide a brief description of why your athlete would be a good candidate for an athletic scholarship.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you able to put any money towards the athletic fee? \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, how much? \_\_\_\_\_

If a scholarship is granted, we ask that you as the athlete's guardian, sign up for at least four shifts of working the score table to help offset the scholarship cost. The athletic director will assist you with scheduling.

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Use Only

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Application for FRL Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Decision: Approved/Denied

Parent Notified: Yes/No

Scholarship Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signed up for score table: Yes/No

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_