Unity Christian School

Athletic Handbook

2026–2027

Index

1. Introduction
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Mission Statement
- 1.3 Athletic Department Core Values
- 1.4 Unity Athletic Programs
  - Varsity Sports
  - Junior Varsity Sports
  - Middle School Sports

2. GAPPS Sportsmanship Policy
- 2.1 Georgia Association of Private and Parochial Schools (GAPPS) Sportsmanship Policy
  - B. Ejections
  - C. Intentional Injury
  - D. Media Comments
  - E. Fireworks
  - F. Artificial Noisemakers
  - G. Officials' Dressing Area
  - H. Unsporting Acts
  - I. Public Protesting

3. UCS Athletic Department Expectations, Practices & Policies
- 3.1 Expectations Overview
- 3.2 Game Day Apparel Policy (Home & Away Games)
  - JV/Varsity Teams
  - Middle School Teams
- 3.3 Academic Policy & Extracurricular Eligibility
- 3.4 Participation Fees
- 3.5 Athletic Trainer
- 3.6 Strength and Conditioning
- 3.7 Annual Consent Forms
- 3.8 Transportation

4. Athlete Conduct & Discipline
- 4.1 Athlete Code of Conduct
- 4.2 Athletic Conduct and Discipline
- 4.3 Anti-Hazing Policy
- 4.4 Anti-Bullying Policy
- 4.5 Locker Room Policy

5. Attendance & Participation

5.1 Attendance at Practices and Games
5.2 Attendance at School
5.3 Handling Problems / Solving Disputes
5.4 No Quit Policy
5.5 Playing Time Policy
5.6 Multiple-Sport Policy
5.7 Off-Season Practice Policies
6. Safety
6.1 Accidents / Injuries
6.2 Bad Weather
7. General Information
7.1 Schedules
7.2 Team Pictures
7.3 School Equipment
7.4 Team Fundraising Projects
7.5 Extracurricular Conflicts
8. Communication
8.1 General Information
8.2 Cancellations
8.3 Parent Volunteer / Service Responsibilities

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Unity Christian School Athletics Handbook is a reference guide for coaches, student-athletes, and parents concerning the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Unity Christian School.

The coach of an athletic team reports to the Athletic Director and is primarily responsible for the compliance of his/her team members to the rules, regulations, and policies governing athletics at Unity Christian School. The Athletic Director will administer these rules and regulations as they relate to inter-team and inter-coach relationships. Sound reasoning, good judgment, and adherence to the school's core values will be the standard by which situations outside these stated rules and regulations are determined and evaluated.

Interscholastic athletics is a voluntary program. Students are not obligated to participate, and participation is not required for graduation. Thus, competition in high school athletics is a privilege and not a right. Accompanying this privilege is the responsibility to conform to standards established for the athletic programs offered at Unity. This privilege may be revoked if the athlete fails or refuses to comply with the rules.

It should be carefully noted that the policies and procedures detailed in this handbook are reflective of official action by administration. As such, all policies will be followed as written.

Thank you for your participation in our athletic program. May God bless you as you use your God-given athletic abilities and desire to serve Him in this integral part of school life.

1.2 Mission Statement

The mission of Unity Christian School is to partner with Christian parents in preparing their children to impact the world for Christ by pursuing their God-given potential in academics, leadership, and service.

1.3 Athletic Department Core Values

- Christ
- Integrity
- Work Ethic
- Trust
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Teamwork

1.4 Unity Athletic Programs

Varsity Sports

Fall	Winter	Spring
Cross Country Cheerleading Football Volleyball	Basketball	Track and Field Golf Baseball

Clay Targets		

Junior Varsity Sports

Fall	Winter	Spring
JV Volleyball	JV Basketball	Baseball

Middle School Sports

Fall	Winter	Spring
Cross Country Cheerleading Football Volleyball Clay Target	Basketball	Track and Field Golf Baseball

2. GAPPS Sportsmanship Policy

2.1 Georgia Association of Private and Parochial Schools (GAPPS) Sportsmanship Policy

GAPPS-member schools are required to conduct all relationships with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship.

1. It shall be the responsibility of a member school to use every means at its disposal to impress upon faculty, students, team members, coaches, and spectators the values of sportsmanship in preparation for the management of interscholastic contests. Contest officials have the authority to have all individuals removed from the confines of the contest whose behavior has become a distraction and/or hindrance to the administration of the event. This may include, but is not limited to, verbal and visual gestures.
2. The Executive Director shall have the authority to assess penalties against schools that create a distraction(s) that is considered counter to the mission of the organization. The Executive Director shall have the authority to assess penalties against coaches or other school personnel for conduct unbecoming professional educators at GAPPS' events. Penalties against schools may include fines, probation, or suspensions; and penalties against coaches and other school personnel may include suspension from GAPPS events.
3. It shall be the responsibility of the home or host school to take the following precautions at all interscholastic athletic events:
    a. Take proper steps and precautions to ensure crowd and spectator control, including having an administrator (or designee) from the host school to function as "Game Manager" at all GAPPS sanctioned events. EXCEPTIONS: Golf and Tennis.
    b. Read GAPPS "Good Sportsmanship Statement" before every competition (Appendix G).

c. Take steps to ensure the comfort and security of all players, coaches, and officials.
d. Have in place sufficient security personnel to handle any crowd-control problems that might reasonably be expected.
e. Security escorts must be provided to game officials by the host school at all GAPPS sanctioned contests, before, during, and following the contest—including to their vehicles.
f. Provide a safe and secure changing area for contest officials, free from traffic by school staff, students, and spectators.

4. Each school must develop a plan to handle fight situations that may occur during an athletic contest:
    a. Attention must be given to keeping substitutes on the bench areas throughout the fight, and to keeping spectators away from the competitive area.
    b. Schools whose substitutes leave the bench area to go to the area of a fight will be fined by the GAPPS Executive Director.
    c. All players who are involved in a fight and any substitutes who leave the bench area during a fight or potential fight and are ejected from the current contest will be subject to the sit-out rule.
    d. The GAPPS office may review film to determine participants in a fight situation, to determine athletes leaving their bench to go to a fight, or to verify the correct number worn by a player. Note: penalties may then be levied, modified, or changed based on this film review.
5. Players and coaches are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship before, during, and after the contest, even if the game officials do not have jurisdiction. Behaviors such as taunting, fighting, etc., are forbidden.
6. No coach may remove his/her team from competition before the end of the contest unless it is done in accordance with the playing rules of that sport.
7. Each school's student section is expected to treat both teams and the officials/referees with respect while cheering enthusiastically for their team. Taunting or any other act of intimidation towards the opposing team, individual players, or officials is strictly prohibited. Singling out an opposing player or official by name, number, or physical characteristics is strictly prohibited.
8. Any fan asked to leave the premises or acting in a manner subjecting an official to an undue threat by physical or verbal assault will be treated as an ejection, and said fan will not be allowed to attend the next game played by their team. If there is a second incident, that fan will be removed for the remainder of the season.

B. Ejections

Any player, coach, or team attendant who is ejected from a GAPPS contest shall be suspended from all levels of competition (i.e., varsity or sub-varsity) in that sport or activity (regular season or playoffs) until the period of suspension has expired. NOTE: Ejection penalties must be served at the next contest regardless of whether the school has received notice from the GAPPS office by that time.

1. Ejections are based on judgment calls by an official and are not reviewable or reversible.

2. A coach shall have no role nor be in attendance at pre-contest warm-ups or activities and shall not be in uniform in attendance at contests until the period of suspension has expired.
3. A player or team attendant may not be in the competitive area nor in the team bench area during any contest until the period of suspension has expired but is allowed to participate (not in uniform) in Senior Night recognition.
4. The period of suspension resulting from an ejection will expire as follows:
    a. Football: after the individual has been withheld from the next-scheduled game at the level at which the ejection occurred (and all contests at any other level).
    b. Soccer:
        i. One-Game Sit-out:
            1. Two yellow cards in the same game
            2. Deliberate handball to prevent a goal
            3. Red card for a foul on a player moving toward his goal in a scoring situation
        ii. Two-Game Sit-out with Red Card for any of the following: taunting, violent conduct, serious foul play, spitting on another person, foul or abusive language, leaving the bench area for a fight situation.
    c. Track and Field: after the individual has been withheld from the next scheduled contest. NOTE: All allegations of unsporting behavior must be referred to the "Jury of Appeals" for a final resolution on disqualification. A report must be submitted to the GAPPS office in the event of a disqualification.
    d. All Other Activities: after the individual has been withheld from the next scheduled contest at the level at which the ejection occurred.
5. To satisfy the penalty of the sit-out game(s), those games must have been scheduled at the time of the ejection and must be played to completion.
6. Penalties for ejections of a coach or player for unsporting acts shall be:
    a. First Ejection:
        i. Coach: $50.00 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws.
        ii. Player: Completion of the "NFHS Sportsmanship Course" online plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws.
    b. Second Ejection:
        i. Coach: $150.00 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws; and suspension until completion of the "NFHS Sportsmanship Course" online.
        ii. Player: $50.00 fine plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws. NOTE: When a player, coach, or team attendant has a second ejection in the same activity during a school year, that individual shall be withheld from competition for twice the time period of a normal suspension.
    c. Third Ejection:
        i. Coach: $200.00 fine, a season suspension, plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws; cannot coach in any activity at any GAPPS member school without clearance from the GAPPS Office.
        ii. Player: Season suspension plus penalties as per each sport's by-laws.

7. The President shall have the authority to levy additional penalties for repeat offenders.
8. If the ejection occurs in the last game of the season, the penalty carries over to the first regular season game in the next sport in which the student participates.
9. When a player or coach is ejected from a pre-season scrimmage (i.e., a practice game) in any sport, the school shall be fined a minimum of $100.00 and there will be no sit-out penalties imposed.
10. Game Incident Reports are due within 24 hours of the contest and are to be submitted via the GAPPS electronic reporting program.

C. Intentional Injury

Any student who intentionally injures or intentionally attempts to injure another student, coach, official, spectator, or other person immediately before, during, or immediately after any GAPPS-sponsored activity may be declared ineligible to participate in future GAPPS activities by the GAPPS Executive Director. NOTE: The notice, hearing, and appellate procedures set forth in the GAPPS Constitution shall be applicable to such a ruling.

D. Media Comments

Coaches, administrators, contest officials, or players are not to make comments in the media that are critical of officials and/or their calls in a game. Penalties that could be imposed by the GAPPS Executive Director include fines and/or suspensions.

E. Fireworks

The use of fireworks at any GAPPS-approved event shall be in strict compliance with the licensing and application procedures of Georgia law and under permit of the probate court in which the event is held.

F. Artificial Noisemakers

Artificial noisemakers are allowed at outdoor events except for air horns, whistles, or other similar devices that simulate the sounds of clock horns or officials' whistles. At any time that a national playing rule prohibits artificial noisemakers in a sport, that rule will supersede this by-law. The use of artificial noisemakers is prohibited at all indoor competitions.

G. Officials' Dressing Area

The officials' dressing area is "off limits" to school staff, students, and spectators one hour prior to game time, during the duration of the contest, and until the contest officials depart the facility.

H. Unsporting Acts

Unsporting acts committed by players or coaches will be handled as follows:

1. If the inappropriate behavior occurs after the expiration of a contest, but while the officials still have jurisdiction as referenced in the NFHS rule book, the official may eject the player or coach and published penalties for ejections will apply.
2. If the inappropriate behavior occurs after the officials' jurisdiction has ended, but the official(s) witness the behavior, a Game Report shall be filed with the GAPPS office and administrative penalties will be assessed against the school of the guilty parties by the Executive Director.

I. Public Protesting

1. Any school or member of a school that uses a GAPPS event for their own purpose of staging a public protest is out of compliance with the Sportsmanship Section of this manual and subject to league discipline, which could include immediate ejection from the league.
2. In the case of repeat offenders of unsporting acts, the Executive Director will be authorized to levy penalties against the school of the guilty parties regardless of whether an ejection has occurred.

3. UCS Athletic Department Expectations, Practices & Policies

3.1 Expectations Overview

1. **Academics:** Unity Christian School academic standards are high. These standards acknowledge that academic achievement takes precedence over athletic participation, as well as specific eligibility/ineligibility information. Please see the section ACADEMIC POLICY AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES in the Unity Secondary Handbook.
2. **Conduct:** Each student-athlete is expected to conduct his/her life in accordance with the standards and principles set forth in God's Word. This includes adhering to all appropriate UCS standards of student conduct. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct could affect participation in athletic activities. It is also expected that student-athletes will conduct themselves at, during, and after practices and contests in ways that would glorify the Lord in all that they do or say. Violation of the Student Code of Conduct may result in revoking the privilege of playing sports. This decision will be made by the Headmaster, principals, and Athletic Director.
3. **Suspension from School:** A disciplinary action severe enough to warrant student suspension will eliminate the student-athlete from all participation in interscholastic sports for the duration of the suspension. Therefore, any suspension, whether in-school or out-of-school, will render a student-athlete ineligible to attend practice or any interscholastic contest. After serving the suspension, further disciplinary action will be assessed according to the Student Athlete Code of Conduct.

3.2 Game Day Apparel Policy (Home & Away Games)

To ensure a positive Unity Athletic Program impression among the school and general community, all Middle and High School teams will have a game day dress code for athletes.

JV/Varsity Teams

- On game days, teams will have the opportunity to wear their team gear. However, the whole team must participate and match. If anyone on the team is out of dress code, the High School Principal will communicate with the coach so that consequences can be administered. If a team does not match for a second time, the High School Principal and Athletic Director have the right to take away game day dress privileges.
- If a game day falls on a Friday, teams may choose to follow spirit wear guidelines (including team shirt), team gear, or normal uniform policy.

Middle School Teams

- Athletes will wear their regular school uniform bottoms (khaki skirts, shorts, or pants) with their team shirt or game day jersey.

- If game day falls on a Friday, teams may choose to follow spirit wear guidelines (including team shirt) or normal uniform policy.
- Middle Schoolers who dress up on JV and/or varsity teams should follow the JV/Varsity game day dress code policy.
- 5th graders who dress up to play middle school sports will follow the middle school game day attire.

3.3 Academic Policy & Extracurricular Eligibility

- Students who pass all their previous semester courses and maintain a 70 or higher average in all current courses are fully eligible for all extracurricular events.
- Students who fail a course in a previous semester and maintain a 70 or higher average in all current courses are eligible for all extracurricular events as long as they attend tutoring twice a week. Grades will be monitored by the principal every 3 weeks.
- Students who fail two or more courses in a semester are ineligible for the entire following semester.
- Students who successfully make up a course in summer school will be eligible for the fall semester.
- Students who fall below a 70 in any course during a current semester will be required to attend tutoring as follows:
    - One class — once a week
    - Two classes — twice a week
    - Three classes — loss of eligibility until grades are brought above 70. Grades will be monitored by the principal every 3 weeks.

3.4 Participation Fees

Participation fees are essential to help fund the cost of interscholastic athletics, transportation to athletic events, game officials, tournament entry fees, and supplementary equipment and supplies. Fees must be paid in full or set up through FACTS prior to the first official game for students to participate in practice and games.

Participation fees are not a guarantee of playing time on a team. Playing time is based solely on the coach's discretion and assessment of a student's athletic ability and game situations.

3.5 Athletic Trainer

Unity Christian School provides an on-site certified athletic trainer for varsity sports. The trainer is available to all athletes and usually arrives by 3:00 pm Monday–Friday. If your student-athlete becomes injured during practice or competition, please make sure that the trainer is aware of the injury right away.

3.6 Strength and Conditioning

Strength & conditioning coaches will be on campus and will work with our student-athletes during strength and conditioning classes, as well as providing team training if the coach schedules specific training sessions.

3.7 Annual Consent Forms

1. For a student to be allowed to try out for a team or practice with a team, he/she must have a current physical form on file in the Athletic Office.
2. For a student to be allowed to participate on any team, he/she and their parent/guardian must sign the following forms:
    a. Medical Release
    b. Student Athlete Code of Conduct
    c. Concussion Acknowledgement
    d. Consent for Athletic Training Services from Atrium Health Floyd
    e. Accident & Liability Waiver
    f. Heat & Humidity Policy
    g. Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness
3. Through our partnership with our athletic trainer, Unity will provide a day for annual sports physicals. Athletes from grades 7–12 will be able to attend and obtain a physical evaluation for the upcoming year.

3.8 Transportation

1. All team members are expected to ride with the team to contests when transportation is provided. The mode of transportation will be by either Unity activity bus or a chartered bus.
2. Students may be released to their parents after an away contest with verbal or written consent to the coach. Students may be released to another adult only with verbal or written consent from their parents.
3. At no time should students ride with a student driver without written or verbal consent by their parents.
4. Coaches are responsible to stay with student-athletes returning from off-campus events until all students have been picked up. Likewise, a coach must remain at an away event until all students have been picked up.
5. At any point, the head coach can use discretion and require team members to ride back on the bus following an away game.
6. Riding the bus with a sports team is a privilege, not a right. Taking care of the buses and keeping them clean is the responsibility of players and coaches. If the buses are not taken care of properly, athletes may be subject to punishment deemed by the coach and Athletic Director.

4. Athlete Conduct & Discipline

4.1 Athlete Code of Conduct

All student-athletes will adhere to the following code of conduct. A violation can result in suspension or expulsion from an athletic team.

4.2 Athletic Conduct and Discipline

Any violation or misconduct shall be subject to the disciplinary measures from the Head of School, Secondary Principal, and Athletic Director.

Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate the following behaviors and characteristics while in and out of school:

- Integrity in the keeping of one's word, speaking the truth, carrying out responsibility, and respecting authority.
- Respect for self, Unity Christian School, coaches, officials, fans, and the property of others.
- Courtesy extended in all relationships—athlete to athlete or athlete to coach—stewardship of the property, supplies, and equipment of Unity Christian School, as well as wise stewardship of personal items.
- Reconciliation through Biblical and appropriate repentance and forgiveness when offenses have been committed or received.

Any such misconduct violating these principles shall be subject to disciplinary measures.

Student-athletes are expected to refrain from the following behaviors and characteristics:

- Tardiness to practices or competitions
- Careless and/or reckless behavior
- The inappropriate use of cellular phones, cameras, and other electronic devices, especially while in the locker room areas
- Public displays of romantic affection (i.e., kissing, excessive hugging)
- Profanity and vulgar or offensive speech and/or gestures
- Inappropriate use of social networks or media outlets (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, blogs, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.)
- Dishonesty in any form, including lying, theft, or cheating
- Rebellious or disrespectful attitude
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information, including the distribution of sexually suggestive material via cell phones, cameras, computers, or "sexting" of any kind. The Unity Christian School definition of sexting is the act of sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, photos, or images via cell phone, computer, or other digital or electronic devices.
- Harassment or bullying in any form, both physical and/or sexual in nature. Sexual harassment includes all acts of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, which are unsolicited, unwelcome, inappropriate, and/or demeaning, which interfere with an individual's performance, or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive atmosphere. Physical harassment includes threats or intimidation of any nature, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct which creates a hostile, offensive, or fearful environment. Examples of threats or intimidation include, but are not limited to, provoking a fight, fighting, bullying, acts that inflict injury or damage, and/or acts intended to control by fear and/or intimidation.
- Hazing in any form.
- The use and/or possession of tobacco including vaping, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medication. Violations of this policy may also result in random drug testing, per Unity Christian procedures, at the expense of the student.
- Immoral sexual conduct
- Use or possession of weapons and/or dangerous items on school premises or at any athletic event (i.e., guns, knives, explosive devices, etc.)

It is a privilege to represent our school and our Lord by participating in interscholastic athletics. We are different at UCS in that our number one priority is to glorify God in everything we do. This is a tremendous responsibility, one that our student-athletes should always recognize.

All student-athletes shall adhere to the Athletic Code of Conduct as fully detailed in the Athletic Handbook. Any violation or misconduct shall be subject to the disciplinary measures deemed by the Coach, Secondary Principal, Athletic Director, and Head of School.

4.3 Anti-Hazing Policy

Hazing in any form is neither tolerated nor consistent with any spiritual, educational, or athletic goal at Unity Christian School.

“Hazing” refers to any activity expected of someone joining a student organization that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate.

Hazing activities are generally considered physically abusive, hazardous, and/or sexually violating. The specific behaviors or activities within these categories vary widely among participants, groups, and settings. Typical hazing practices would include personal servitude; sleep deprivation; restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling; swearing; insulting new members/rookies; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such substances on one’s skin; brandings; physical beatings; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault.

Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame, or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student, or that discourages the student from remaining in school is considered hazing. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or Unity Christian School policies or regulations is considered hazing.

Hazing in any form will not be tolerated at Unity Christian School and will result in disciplinary actions. There may be other disciplinary consequences as well, administered by the Coach, Athletic Director, Secondary Principal, and Head of School.

4.4 Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying in any form is neither tolerated nor consistent with any spiritual, educational, or athletic goal at Unity Christian School. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary actions.

4.5 Locker Room Policy

Just as participating in interscholastic athletics at UCS is a privilege, so too is the use of all athletic facilities and equipment. Great care should be taken to be respectful of all facilities, equipment, and resources that the Lord has provided.

Any misconduct or disrespect involving athletic facilities or equipment will result in disciplinary action from the Coach, Athletic Director, Secondary Principal, and Head of School. If materials or equipment are broken either by accident or purposefully, student-athletes may be held responsible for replacing broken items.

The Athletic Department reserves the right to open any student-athlete’s locker for due cause. In addition, the Athletic Department reserves the right to charge any offending student-athlete reimbursement for any abuse of athletic facilities and equipment that may result in financial loss.

NOTE: Use of cell phones and/or any kind of camera is STRICTLY prohibited inside locker rooms.

5. Attendance & Participation

5.1 Attendance at Practices and Games

Each member of a Unity Christian School athletic team must assume the responsibilities associated with such a position. The athlete has an ethical obligation to the team and the school. This obligation includes regular attendance at practices and athletic contests. Commitment to Unity teams should come before any club or outside team. If a practice or competition is missed due to outside commitments, there will be consequences for missing the Unity practice or competition.

It is possible, of course, that emergency situations may arise (e.g., illness, death in a family, etc.) that render it impossible for an athlete to attend a practice session or an athletic contest. Absences should be few and far between and arranged with the coach as early as possible.

At Unity Christian we allow coaches to discipline athletes accordingly, in line with the athletic handbook, for absences.

5.2 Attendance at School

Students must be present at school the FULL DAY in order to participate in any extracurricular activities or events that day, including games and practices. Some specific circumstances are as follows:

1. Students who are absent from part of the school day and are granted a non-illness-related excused absence (e.g., a dental appointment) will be allowed to participate in the practice or contest that day.
2. Any unexcused absence from school, regardless of whether it is only for a partial day, will render an athlete unable to participate in the day's events. This would include in-school suspension or skipping class.
3. Special circumstances will be reviewed by the Athletic Director, Secondary Principal, and Head of School.

5.3 Handling Problems / Solving Disputes

All disputes at Unity Christian School, including those related to athletic matters, should be handled in a Biblical manner. Unity Christian School encourages application of the "Matthew 18 Principle" when handling a problem or settling a dispute. This principle, in summary form, encourages the offended party to go directly to the one with whom he/she has a problem (e.g., student-athletes should talk to the coach at an appropriate time prior to parental involvement and prior to going directly to the Athletic Director). Please address disputes with a scheduled appointment.

NOTE: Lack of playing time at the varsity level is not considered a dispute and should not be addressed with the coach by the parent (refer to Playing Time Policy).

If the situation is not resolved, the offended is encouraged to seek a solution by speaking to the next person in authority. In simple terms, an athlete should approach the coach first; and if unresolved, the athlete, parent, and coach should meet; if still not resolved, then meet with the Athletic Director. If the athlete and parent do not feel that proper process was followed, they

may take the matter to the Unity Christian School Head of School by providing their concerns in writing.

5.4 No Quit Policy

If a high school or middle school student has signed up to participate on one of the Unity athletic teams, it is important that he/she make a firm commitment to that team. Therefore, quitting a team after signing up is strongly discouraged. Quitting requires a formal conversation between the athlete and coach. If any student-athlete quits a team after the first contest, that student-athlete is prohibited from trying out for another Unity Christian School team or extracurricular activity during the same season. The student will be obligated to pay for any player pack items that were ordered and 100% of the participation fee. Furthermore, quitting a team in one season may impact a student's ability to participate in a sport the following season. A student-athlete also will not be allowed to work out or practice with the next season's sport until the team that he/she quit has finished their season. This includes the postseason playoffs.

Note: In the event of an injury, players are expected to continue practice attendance unless actively involved in rehab therapy during practice time. Game attendance is expected. Students who are injured are still expected to pay 100% of the sports fee.

5.5 Playing Time Policy

While it is true that our coaches and administrative personnel believe it to be important to broaden the experience of Unity Christian School athletes, and that broadening is enhanced by playing time, it is also an important goal of the Unity Christian School athletic program to strive toward excellence. Therefore, no minimum per-game playing time provisions or minimum numbers of athletic contests in which athletes must compete are established. Playing time decisions are left up to the individual coaches.

5.6 Multiple-Sport Policy

To fully accomplish the mission statement of UCS Athletics, we—the coaches and athletic administrators—must encourage all our student-athletes to participate in multiple sports. A multiple-sport athlete has two to three times the opportunity to develop Christian friendships, Christian character, competitive experience, and the benefits of cross training than a single-sport athlete.

If a student-athlete approaches a coach or athletic administrator about his/her thoughts on the pros and cons of being a multiple-sport athlete, it is our job to carefully give the student-athlete an objective evaluation of his/her options. Never should a coach discourage participation in other sports. Coaches should share as much information with the student-athlete as possible to help him/her make the best-informed decision he/she can make.

Athletes are able to play more than one sport in a season. If the athlete chooses to do so, they are still responsible for paying both sports fees. In playing two sports there will be schedule conflicts of events. Before the season starts, the athlete must make it known to both the athletic department and coaches which sport will be #1 and which will be #2. When conflicts arise, the athlete will go to their #1 sport. Never will the athlete miss a sporting event for their #2 sport for a practice of their #1 sport.

Beginning Fall 2023, student-athletes will be limited to two sports per season, reiterating that academics are always the priority.

5.7 Off-Season Practice Policies

In order to perform well during the season, off-season practice and work-out/conditioning is required. These expectations will be communicated by the coach during the season. These activities include:

1. Open Gyms, Scrimmages, Pick-Up Games
2. Conditioning
3. Weight Training
4. Skills Practices
5. Drills

Student-athletes may choose to participate in non-UCS off-season sports outside the UCS campus. This is permissible, but “club” sports must take a backseat to the athlete’s UCS team when it comes to schedule conflicts.

6. Safety

6.1 Accidents / Injuries

Athletic trainers are on campus for nearly all varsity practice sessions and will attend all home games and many varsity away games. If an accident or injury occurs, the athlete will be evaluated by our trainer. If the injury is serious, the coach will call emergency services and the parent(s). All coaches are trained and tested on the Athletic Department Emergency Action Plans annually before the start of their season in the event of an injury.

All injuries should be treated with caution and handled with care. The parents will be contacted in the event of severe or significant injuries and consulted on any decisions made regarding treatment and rehabilitation. Unity Christian School has an athletic trainer to help with the care and rehabilitation of injuries. The athletic trainer will recommend doctors and/or treatments to care for the student, but the final treatment decision rests with the parents.

Coaches treat any acknowledged condition in the confidential manner with which the information is related by the parent or guardian. If an athlete misses practice on the request of a physician, the athlete must have a medical note of clearance before returning to practice.

6.2 Bad Weather

Lightning, severe storms, hot and cold extremes: The Athletic Director, in consultation with the coach, trainer, and officials (during contests), will make decisions based on the GAPPS guidelines for student-athlete safety. On the day of games, decisions are made by the host school as close to team departure time as possible.

7. General Information

7.1 Schedules

The scheduling of all athletic events and practices is determined by the Athletic Director in cooperation with each coach. The coach will issue a schedule to the students and parents as soon as possible in each season. If practice is understood to be every day, there may not be a printed practice schedule issued. Athletic contests are rarely scheduled on Wednesdays, and all practices will end by 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays for high school sports and 5:15 p.m. for middle school sports. Athletic practices may be scheduled on Saturdays. On occasion, an athletic event may be scheduled on a day or weekend when school is out on vacation. When this is

determined to be necessary, the dates will be given out as far ahead as possible and all athletes are expected to be in attendance.

7.2 Team Pictures

A photographer will take team and individual pictures early in each season.

7.3 School Equipment

1. Students are responsible for all equipment issued to them. Athletic uniforms are supplied for the sole purpose of athletic participation. This equipment is not to be used for any other purpose.
2. When the season is over, all equipment and uniforms are to be returned to the coach, who will keep inventory of all items issued to the team. The coach will then submit the end-of-season inventory list to the Athletic Director in a timely manner following the season.
3. The parent is responsible for the dollar replacement cost of any lost or damaged school-issued equipment or uniforms.
4. Uniform budget will be allocated and reviewed by the Athletic Director according to a rotating schedule.

7.4 Team Fundraising Projects

All team fundraising projects must be presented to and approved by the Athletic Director and Advancement Office. Only after the project has been approved is the team allowed to go ahead with the fundraiser.

7.5 Extracurricular Conflicts

If a conflict arises involving an athletic contest and an event related to another school activity, the coach and teacher/sponsor will discuss whether accommodations can be made to allow the student to participate in both events. If an agreement cannot be reached in this manner, the student and parent(s) will decide how best to proceed, keeping the best interest of the student in mind. Teachers and coaches may assign alternative work/tasks in place of the missed event. No additional or punitive penalties may be assessed beyond the loss of benefits (e.g., grades, participation) inherent in the event itself. It is understood that postseason contests/performances will take priority over regular in-season contests/performances.

8. Communication

8.1 General Information

The Athletic Department has adopted the use of GroupMe as the primary source of parent/coach/player communication. Another communication resource is our Athletics website. Each sport has a dedicated page with links to direct communication from the coach, schedules, required forms, and rosters.

8.2 Cancellations

It is necessary, at times, to cancel games and practices at the last minute due to inclement weather. If it is a home event that we have scheduled, the Athletic Director will try to make the cancellation call by 2:30 pm if possible. If it is an away event, the opposing school's Athletic

Director makes the cancellation decision. As soon as we receive that information, we will update parents and the website accordingly. The cancellation will be announced immediately from the respective school office, and students will be allowed to call their parents at that time to make arrangements for pick up.

8.3 Parent Volunteer / Service Responsibilities

The primary goal of the Booster Club is to help give all students the opportunity to participate in top-notch athletic programs, while also providing access to quality athletic facilities, equipment, and coaches. Members help with fundraising and serve on support committees. Along with the necessary financial costs, parents should be aware of the necessary service needs associated with athletic participation in their athlete's sport. This participation, which is required of all parents, includes, but is not limited to, the following: concession sales, transportation, basic clean-up assistance at home contests, special events/tournaments, and others as directed or requested by that team's coach.

In order for things to run smoothly, parents are expected to sign up to serve at least 2 times during the season. Sign-up-to-serve options and schedules will be sent out weekly from the athletic department.