

# ***GLOBAL OUTREACH CHARTER ACADEMY***



**ATHLETIC HANDBOOK  
2023-2024**

Revised 09/13/2023

# ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

## 2023-2024

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## Athletic Department Contact Information

### Team Information

For any and all team information and issues, the first point of contact is the Head Coach of the individual team. If the Head Coach cannot be reached, please contact the applicable division athletic director.

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**Justice Williams, Kodiak Cheerleading**

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## GOCA Mission Statement:

The mission of Global Outreach Charter Academy is to deliver a first-class academic program that offers a unique foreign language and multicultural curriculum, empowering students to become global leaders of tomorrow.

### GOCA Creed

I will lead, not follow  
I will believe, not doubt  
I will create, not destroy  
I am a force for good  
I will defy the odds  
I will set a new standard  
I will step up  
I am what I choose to be  
And every day, in every way  
I get better and better

### GOCA High Fives

High Expectations  
High Goals  
High Achievements  
High Performance  
High Scores

### GOAL:

Preparing **GOCA** student-athletes for success in whatever comes next.

### PLAN:

- Develop a commitment to good sportsmanship and respect for others
- Encourage the pursuit of athletic excellence
- Foster character qualities of honesty, effort, and discipline
- Define and identify opportunities for servant leadership
- Demand perseverance in the face of adversity
- Model humility in victory and grace in defeat
- Maximize proficiency in individual talents
- Recognize that the well-being of individuals takes precedence over athletic achievement
- Provide opportunities for developing student self-advocacy in and out of competition
- Partner with all GOCA community members to provide a healthy atmosphere in which student-athletes can apply principles learned in competitive sports to enhance their quality of life.

### **Lower School/Elementary Athletics:**

In the near future, GOCA athletics will reach all the way to our K-4 student population. We plan to expand these programs which will put a premium on participation and improvement as coaches endeavor to cultivate a love for the sport with the intent of having these students continue participation at the Middle and High School campuses.

### **Middle School/Early Middle Athletics:**

At the Middle School level, the goal is to lay an athletic foundation with quality skill and team-concept development. The philosophy at this level is for all athletes to participate equally in practice and earn appropriate playing time on game day to facilitate further development. The focus is striving for excellence in practice and games, and effort and intent are significantly more important than the final score. Some Middle School sports have open (no cut) rosters, but, in other sports, larger rosters mean less playing time for each participant, so rosters are limited, and cuts are necessary to provide beneficial playing opportunities for team members. In leagues that allow it, and if sufficient participation will support it, GOCA will sanction both a MS Varsity and MS JV team. Roster selection and participation are at full discretion of the coaching staff, and talent level is only one of several determining factors.

### **High School Athletics:**

At the high school level, the goal is to continue the skill and team-concept development begun at the Middle School level, with the intent of applying that acquired foundation to field competitive programs of excellence. GOCA teams are encouraged to play to win but to do so in a manner which reflects the Core Values of Global Outreach Charter Academy. In many cases, roster size is defined by the FHSAA, but, generally, varsity teams will be comprised of participants that do, or will, give our teams the best opportunity for competitive success during the entirety of their GOCA athletic career. Likewise, the bulk of participation time will go to those athletes that give their team the best chance of victory. High School team selection and participation is at the sole discretion of the coaching staff and talent level is only one of several determining factors.

### **Athlete/Parent Concerns:**

While we strive for every athlete and family to have a positive experience while participating in athletics at GOCA, inevitably, there will be a time when an athlete or parent may have concerns during the course of the season. In this situation, the following protocol should be followed:

1. Wait at least 24 hours
2. The athlete needs to take his/her concern to the coach. (We are teaching our young athletes to be responsible and confident. Articulating his/her concern to the coach is an important lesson of self-advocacy for the athlete to learn.)
3. If the athlete and coach do not reach a satisfactory understanding, the athlete should bring his/her concern to the Athletic Director who will make every effort to foster understanding and resolve the issue between the coach and athlete. The student-athlete may bring a teammate or parent to this meeting, but the procedure will be for the student-athlete to voice their concern.
4. If an understanding (not necessarily an agreement) has still not been reached, the parents and the athlete should request a meeting with the coach and Athletic Director. This meeting will be held at a mutually agreed time in the Athletic Director's office.
5. If further intervention is required, applicable school administration will be engaged at the next and final level of discussion.

Every athlete is welcome and encouraged to come to the athletic office and share his/her concerns at any time. He/She will be directed to follow the appropriate steps in the chain of command, but the door is always open for the student-athlete to come and talk to the Athletic Director or applicable Assistant Athletic Director. Often, the Athletic Director can help both the athlete and coach understand both sides of the issue after this meeting, alone. In meeting with the Athletic Director, please understand that student-athlete participation will generally not be a topic open for discussion.

### **Organizational Affiliation:**

Global Outreach Charter Academy is a member of the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA). As a member in good standing, we recognize and adhere to its guidelines and we submit to its authority in all athletics at the High School and Middle School levels. The FHSAA rules and regulations are outlined in its members' handbook, a copy of which is kept on file by the GOCA Athletic Director, and available online at [https://fhsaa.com/documents/2022/7/13//2223\\_handbook\\_website.pdf?id=3335](https://fhsaa.com/documents/2022/7/13//2223_handbook_website.pdf?id=3335)

Additional affiliations exist for sports not currently sanctioned by the FHSAA and for Middle School sports competing in local conferences and leagues.

**Programs Offered:**

Current interscholastic offerings at GOCA are the following:

**Fall Sports**

**High School**

Girls Volleyball  
Boys Cross Country  
Girls Cross Country

**Middle School**

Girls Volleyball  
Boys Flag Football  
Cheerleading

**Elementary**

**Winter Sports**

**High School**

Girls Basketball  
Boys Basketball  
Girls Soccer  
Boys Soccer  
Cheerleading

**Middle School**

Girls Basketball  
Boys Basketball  
Cheerleading

**Spring Sports**

**High School**

Girls Track and Field  
Boys Track and Field  
Girls Flag Football  
Boys Volleyball  
Baseball

**Middle School**

Girls Soccer  
Boys Soccer

**Elementary**

As the GOCA Athletic Department grows, efforts will be made to add sports in which there is sufficient student interest, and school facilities and resources to support a program.

**INSURANCE**

Family or individual primary insurance is the default insurance coverage for all athletic-related injuries at Global Outreach Charter Academy. GOCA offers secondary accident, catastrophic injury, and liability insurance, as required by the FHSAA, that will supplement your current coverage. This policy only takes effect when a student sustains an injury while participating in a GOCA sanctioned athletic activity and outside medical services are needed.

Families, not Global Outreach Charter Academy, are responsible for payment of all medical costs not covered by insurance.



## **INJURIES:**

All injuries should be reported to the Athletic Trainer (once brought on staff) AND the student-athlete's coach within 24-Hours of occurrence. In addition, any student-athlete who visits the doctor for any reason, must provide the GOCA Athletic Director with a medical release from the attending doctor prior to returning to active participation. Any injury requiring a doctor's care also requires a doctor's release to return.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

- 1. As a member of the Florida High School Athletic Association, GOCA follows the eligibility rules as outlined in the FHSAA handbook. A copy of this handbook is kept in the office of the Athletic Director and available on line. Since FHSAA eligibility rules are extensive, please feel free to contact the GOCA Athletic Director with questions prior to accepting an unclear interpretation or contacting the FHSAA office. These eligibility rules cover a range of subjects including, but not limited to, age, academics, transfers, outside participation, etc. FHSAA rules are available on the FHSAA website at [https://fhsaa.com/documents/2022/7/13//2223\\_handbook\\_website.pdf?id=3335](https://fhsaa.com/documents/2022/7/13//2223_handbook_website.pdf?id=3335)**
- 2. Global Outreach Charter Academy adheres to all FHSAA policies regarding the transfer of students during or between school years from one school to another. If you have participated in high school athletics at a previous school within the past year and are transferring to GOCA without a bona fide change of address, please contact our athletic director to discuss your eligibility.**
- 3. In addition to FHSAA academic eligibility policies, GOCA also employs its own policies regarding athletic suspension due to classroom absences and/or school disciplinary action, including a mandatory game participation suspension following an ISS or OSS penalty at the high school or a Level 2 or higher referral at the middle school.**
- 4. Once try-outs have been completed and the team has been established, team members are committed for the entire season. If you resign or are dismissed from a team during a season, you may not go to another sport in that season. You may also not go to another sport in the next season until the sport you left has concluded. This includes playoffs. Tryouts will be allowed (both coaches will agree on a timeframe) for the next sport season, but you may not begin practices and games until the previous season has ended, barring exceptional circumstances. You are expected to be on time, prepared (with necessary equipment), and focused throughout every practice or game.**

## General Policies:

1. The makeup of each individual team is at the discretion of the Head Coach/Coaching Staff. In the FHSAA, high school teams may only include students enrolled on our Kodiak campus. Middle School teams typically include 5<sup>th</sup> thru 8th graders, but specific league rules may limit participation on MS JV and Varsity rosters. Exceptions must be communicated to and approved by the Athletic Director after consultation with the Head Coach and school administrative personnel.
2. Tryouts are held in conjunction with FHSAA start dates found on the FHSAA website and announced via usual team and school communication avenues. Some sports may opt for an extended evaluation period throughout the summer prior to an official tryout during the sport season, and the FHSAA allows for Cheerleading tryouts to occur in the previous school year. Any interested, enrolled, GOCA student who meets FHSAA and GOCA eligibility requirements may try out.
3. After a team roster has been defined, the coach will call a **MANDATORY** parent meeting the evening following the final day of tryouts to define logistical matters, expectations and requirements of the athletes and parents in regard to the season at hand. Parents will be given an opportunity to ask questions of the coach and Athletic Director. **All eligibility forms and athletic fees are due at this meeting. Students may not participate in practice nor be issued a uniform nor equipment until all forms and fees have been submitted or an agreement has been reached with the Athletic Director.**
4. Determination of playing time is at the discretion of the team's coach(es). However, there are some general goals for which our programs strive.
  - At the High School level, playing time is not guaranteed. Each program strives for excellence in practice and games, and the coach is expected to utilize his/her roster in a way that, in his/her opinion and experience, gives the team the best opportunity for a successful outcome during the FHSAA championship season.
  - At the Middle School level, instruction and active participation are the primary goals, but competition is also an important aspect. The intent is for every athlete to participate in every contest; however, some teams, as noted earlier, do not have open rosters, and it's impossible to guarantee that all players will enjoy identical playing time.
  - Elementary School teams will strive to provide equal participation and instruction time to all team members. Each student-athlete's skill level will determine the intensity of instruction provided by the coach.
5. All athletes are expected to be present and on time to all practices and expected to stay at practice until dismissed by the coach. Student-athletes must inform their coach in advance when absences are anticipated, and determination of whether the absence is excused will be at the coach's discretion.

## **Transportation:**

- 1. GOCA will make every effort to provide transportation to practices held off campus and back to school at the practice's conclusion. The preferred method of pick up is for parents to meet their student at the practice site at the end of team activities. If parents are not present at the scheduled end of practice time, coaches will transport the students back to campus for pick up. In the event that transportation to practice cannot be secured, the coach and parents will be given as much notice as possible, and parents may be asked for assistance. Athletes are expected to remain for the entire practice session and to be picked up immediately upon its conclusion. If it is logistically more efficient, students may be allowed to drive their personal vehicle to the practice site with prior written permission from a parent. Likewise, prior written permission must be submitted for a student to ride with another student to and/or from the practice site. Permission should be submitted to the coach who will keep it on file for the season.**
- 2. Global Outreach Charter Academy will make every effort to provide transportation to and from all away games played by GOCA student-athletes. That is the preferred method of team travel. However, when games start late or on weekends within a reasonable proximity to the GOCA enrollment community, the Head Coach may have the team meet at the game site. Athletes will be allowed to ride home from a game site with their parents after the parent has communicated directly with the coach. Any deviation from this policy must include expressed permission of the Athletic Director after consultation with the applicable division Principal. Students riding with another student must also provide written permission from a parent or guardian.**
- 3. GOCA will provide transportation to and from games played outside the immediate Jacksonville area. Coaches may upgrade the method of transportation via use of fund-raising money or family contribution of the difference in the cost of standard school transportation. Student-athletes are required to ride with the team to these contests, accompanied by members of the coaching staff. Exceptions must be authorized by the team coach and Athletic Director, in writing, prior to the scheduled departure. Athletes will be allowed to ride home from the game site with their parents after the parent has communicated directly with the coach. The cost of any overnight, in-season trips must be borne by the team's fund-raising account or family contributions. The coach will gain approval from families for trips of this nature prior to the season, at the post-tryout parent meeting, or before.**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES:**

- 1. An Athletic Participation Fee of \$100 (\$80 for Middle School students) is required to participate in the first sport of each student's academic year to help offset all GOCA athletic expenses (equipment, officials, entry fees, etc). Fees for all subsequent sports within the academic year will be reduced by 25%. Fees will be collected at the post tryout parent meeting, prior to the issuing of uniforms. Upon receipt of the Athletic Fee, each family will receive discounted admission to all home, regular season, GOCA High School and Middle School athletic events. Families of winter and spring sport student-athletes may pay in advance, by check, in the athletic department to obtain their passes in time for sports occurring in a season prior to theirs. Refunds will not be issued.**
- 2. The FHSAA and Global Outreach Charter Academy require that each athlete submit a few forms for safety and eligibility purposes. The physical examination form must be submitted before a student-athlete may participate in tryouts, practices or games. Each physical is valid for one calendar year. Annually (typically in early June), we will attempt to secure local physicians to perform these examinations on the GOCA campus at a lower cost than most insurance copays. All required forms (EL2 and EL3) and instructions can be found on the [www.GOCA.us/athletics](http://www.GOCA.us/athletics) website or by contacting the GOCA Athletic Director.**
- 3. Throughout the year, many paid and volunteer community members work diligently to stage GOCA Athletic Events. In as equitable manner as possible, teams will be asked to help stage events for other GOCA sports in an effort to further extend the GOCA core value of servant leadership across sport-specific lines. Many of the logistics of staging events can be handled by our student-athletes who can utilize this experience to build their college application and/or job resume' as well as accumulate necessary Service Hours for graduation.**
- 4. While participating in sports at GOCA, there are certain equipment items, including most uniforms, which the school will supply. These items are the property of the school and must be returned at the end of the season or a charge will be made to the family to facilitate replacement of the items. The minimum charge will be \$100 per item but could be greater in the case of a higher replacement cost, and grade reports/diplomas may be held until payment is secured.**
- 5. Throughout their careers, our student-athletes earn the right to be recognized as letter-winners in their sport. Generally, completing a full season with a varsity team will secure that designation. GOCA acknowledges that achievement with a framed "**GOCA**" letter, awarded on the student-athlete's Senior Night honoring their achievement as a varsity letter winner in that sport.**

# ***WE ARE GOCA***

At Global Outreach Charter Academy, the way you conduct yourself during practice, at a competitive event, and after a competition is as important as winning or losing. Judgment calls - by coaches, teammates, and officials - are made in good faith and should be respected. Spectators should support both of the teams by refraining from derogatory or demeaning comments. If a coach, administrator, or student-athlete is fined by the FHSAA for unsportsmanlike conduct, that individual will be responsible for the amount of the fine. Positive values like respect, self-control, and kindness do not undermine GOCA's focus on excellence or fostering a competitive intensity second to none. We appreciate your commitment as athletes, administrators, parents, coaches and students in exemplifying these values at every athletic event.

Student-athletes are expected to be dressed appropriately (shirts must be worn at all times). Proper language (profanity will not be tolerated) must be used in practice and games, and in the locker room. It is important that athletes represent Global Outreach Charter Academy values on and off the field, including, but not limited to, posting on various forms of social media, and in the variety of music played in and around our athletic facilities. Discipline will be administered to athletes not abiding by these standards.