

GHHS Swimming & Diving Handbook 2025-2026

Purpose of the Team (Philosophy):

The GHHS Swim & Dive Team is intended to be part of the educational experience. The lessons that occur as a part of being a member of this team can have a life-long impact. This is the guiding principle for this program.

Coaching philosophy: to create an environment that encourages & challenges athletes to learn and develop in and out of the pool! Creating a positive learning environment during the ups & downs of training & competition.

I believe creating an environment that is supportive and conducive to learning is key. In addition, each swimmer needs to be aware of the expectations as a Bobcat team member and will model behavior to help create the optional learning/training environment. Learning that both you and your teammates will struggle at times. How you deal with challenges will determine your level of success.

The Reality of Swimming & Diving Sports:

It is important that students and parents understand that **this is a Varsity/Junior Varsity Sport and not a recreational program**. Swimming & Diving are tough and demanding sports. Participating on the HS team will take time away from other activities.

It is often assumed that there are no injuries in swimming or diving. The truth is, as with all athletics, injuries do occur in swimming/diving. And while the most common are repetitive stress injuries, swimming/diving, like all sports, has some risk of serious injury.

Student Athlete Responsibilities:

Students are expected to...

- Conduct themselves in a legal, moral, and ethical manner always.
- Treat team-members, officials, coaches, opposing team members, and themselves with respect always.
- Read and adhere to the Grandview Heights High School Student – Parent Handbook 2025-2026
 - Section IV: Students Rights, Responsibilities, & Expectations, “Code of Conduct” as it applies to students.
- Arrive On-time and Prepared for all team activities.

- Always behave in a positive manner.
- Keep negative thoughts and comments to themselves.
- Participate in all official team activities, practices, and swim/dive meets.
- Maintain or improve grades throughout the season.
- Perform to the best of their ability, at that time, every time they practice & compete.
- Help setup as needed- before and clean up after practices, meets and other team activities.
- Keep School issued equipment clean and in good condition.
- At meets stay with the team and cheer for teammates.
- Make a sincere attempt to learn the skills/tools taught by Coaches.
- Student athletes should contact Coaches by "Parent Square" or Grandview Heights District email only.

Social Networking Rules:

Adhere to GHHS student "Code of Conduct" & Grandview Heights Student Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy EDE on the district's website.

- Texting, Facebook, Instagram, and others are a great way to stay in touch with friends and family.
- Please keep these tips in mind:
 - Do not post anything (on your site or a friends' site) that you would not mind coaches, parents, principals, etc. seeing.
 - Assume that the person you'd least like to see your post will see it.
 - Do not think that what you post is private because you have a "private" profile. Many people know how to get around these barriers.
 - Maintain good etiquette about Facebook. Do not use inappropriate language, comments, etc. because it reflects poorly on you as an individual and on the team.
 - You may face Team & School discipline including removal from the team based on what is posted, texted, etc. so be careful.

GHHS Swimming & Diving Varsity Letter Policy 2025-2026:

Athletes expectations:

- Maintaining attendance throughout the season at all scheduled practices, meets, and team events
 - Swim practice (4-6 times a week)
 - Dive practice (3 times a week)
 - Strength & Conditioning 2-3 times a week
 - Winter break is during the HS Swim & Dive “PEAK TRAINING” for our season! The HS team will have 1-2 practices a day.
- Maintain 85% weekly practice attendance (swim/dive practice and strength & conditioning) knowing a school district: band, choir, academic club, or illness, or family emergency will conflict with a practice at some point during the season.
 - Athletes are expected to message (pre-planned absences) Coach Ferguson by parent square 7 days before the event (i.e. choir or band concert)
 - If the event conflicts with a dual/tri- meet, invitational early season- mid season, or team event notify Coach Ferguson as soon as possible (~14 days or more before the event)
- GHHS swimmers/divers – “swimming/diving out” with prospective USA club teams must maintain:
 - Minimum of 1- swim/dive practice a week with HS team.
 - This rule refers to any Bobcat HS swimmer training (short course) with USA club team starting in September 5-6 days a week, competing in USA meets prior to HS season in the Fall, and training/competing with club team during the long course season (April- July).
 - Or a diver practicing with ACE diving in central Ohio starting in September ~3-4 days a week
 - Prior to bigger meets and post season, swimmers or divers may be required to attend 2 practices that week. Team members will be notified ahead of time to plan accordingly.
 - Attend 2-3 “Strength & Conditioning” with GHHS Wellness Center w/Coach Sabalka
 - Please notify Coach Ferguson if you are planning on conditioning with the USA club team or private trainer.
 - All team will be entering days/times for strength training in a team google doc.
 - Enter all club practices attended weekly in google doc. demonstrating meeting practice attendance requirements for all team members during season.

- Exception, to above practice commitment during the week of prep prior to the Tim Meyers Memorial Short Course Senior Championship & Time Trials in November. Discuss plans with Coach Ferguson at the beginning of season.
- Competes in all regular season meets.
- Competes in all qualifying post season meets.
- Remains in good standing with the team during the 2025- 2026 winter swim season.
- A graduating senior at Coach's discretion based on work ethic, attitude, and remained in good standing during HS career
- Swimmers who provide documentation regarding illness/injury (and the dates for which they cannot participate) will not have those dates count against their attendance %.
- Special circumstances: will be reviewed by the GHHS Coaching staff on a case-by- case basis. Coaches always reserve the right to award a letter or withhold a letter in special situations.

Team Member achieving 1 or more of the following criteria:

- Qualifies in 1-2 individual events or as a member of a relay event for the OHSAA District Meet
- Qualifies in 1-2 individual events or as a member of a relay event for the OHSAA State Meet
- Qualifies for the OHSAA District Dive Meet
- Qualifies for the OHSAA State Dive Meet
- New School record in an individual event or relay

Swim/Dive Meet Etiquette:

Team Apparel: (day before or day of meet)-

- May consist of team or team warm up jacket or team tee boys & girls.

Apparel at meets:

- Team tee, warmups, & parka during meet (team uniform) only
- Bring 2-3 pairs of socks to wear with tennis shoes in between events to stay warm.
- Team suit for competition
- Tech suits at post season taper meet/s &/or prelim/final meets per Coach's discretion.
- NO wrist watch during competition
- NO hairbands can be worn on wrist or ankle during warm up or meet.
- GH swim cap only & GH team swimsuit

Transportation to & from meet:

- All swimmers and divers must ride the team bus to and from the away meet location (if bus provided both ways)
- Swimmers are not permitted to ride home with their parents or friends from away meets.
 - Special circumstances can be approved ahead of time to ride with parents through the AD's office.

Swim Cap:

- Swimmers need to wear team cap w/ Grandview HS logo. Caps with other team logos cannot be worn at a competition. Officials will disqualify any swimmer wearing a cap with another team logo.

Always stay on the deck:

- Swimmers/Divers are not permitted to go to the bleachers or leave the pool area at any time without the coach's permission.
- The team warms up together & warms down together at meets
- All swimmers should see a coach after each event to discuss the strengths of their race and areas of improvement.
- Display good sportsmanship with opponents and their coaches and officials.
- You can be disqualified during a meet for inappropriate behavior, which could also result in a one meet suspension.
- For all away meets athletes will travel with the team to and from the meet. Be sure you are ready at the bus loading site at least 5-10 minutes before the bus is scheduled to leave. If there are special circumstances that you would need to travel to or from with a parent, you must notify AD- Brad Bertani & Coach Ferguson ahead of time by email.
 - Please notify Coach Ferguson & AD- Brad Bertani for approval ~

72 hours prior to event.

General Information:

- Please be sure to eat healthy and try to get as much rest as possible especially during the intensive training phase.
- Be prepared for the weather!
- When it starts getting colder, dress in dry clothes, coat, hat, gloves, and shoes to leave the pool.
- Be sure to dry your ears after swimming or diving, try not to get sick.

Practice information & attendance:

What to bring to practice:

- Swimsuit
- Tee shirt, shorts, & tennis shoes for dry land/active stretching on deck
- Equipment bag w/gear, swimsuit, cap, goggles
- Towel extra warm clothes to go home in (coat, hat, gloves)
- Winter break practice attendance (double practice days) is an expectation of all team members. This year we will have 2-4 doubles with yoga & swim practice.
- Swimmers/Divers should arrive at practice ready for active/dynamic warm-up before getting in the water or dryland.
- If you need to be taped, see the trainer after school before evening practice. If needing to wear during competition, School trainer needs to provide a note to give to Meet official.
- Any changes to the originally published practice schedule will be emailed in a weekly team email and updated in Parent Square calendar!
- In the event of a fire alarm grab your shirt & towel and exit the building in an orderly manner. Coaches will meet the team outside of building.
- Everyone is responsible for the care and use of equipment & team gear handed out.
- We are not the only people who use the locker rooms, so be sure to bring all valuables/coats/bags out of the locker room.

Planned absences & illness during season:

Any planned absence- to be considered “**EXCUSED**” must be communicated prior to the scheduled practice or team event.

- All swimmers/Divers are required to submit a written or email notice (with parent/guardian cc'd or signature) within **7 days prior to the conflicting event:** examples- GHHS District: school, band, choir, or ACT/SAT testing. **If the event conflicts with a swim or dive meet or team event notify Coach Ferguson at least 14 days or more prior to the event.** Meet deadlines for bigger non-conference championships/ post season meets are typically 14 days prior to the event.
- If a student has a doctor's appointment during practice time- please bring a note the next practice day. (Reminder, Athletes must notify coach prior to practice they need to miss)
- If a student/athlete is ill during school day- practice is excused.
 - *Students are not permitted to practice or compete if they are absent from school unless they are excused from school for a college visit.*
- If a student misses more than 1 school day in a row, an email from parent/guardian is required to update Coach on illness. An MD's note may be required to return to practice.
- **Reminder-- Winter Break training-** is the "Peak training" of our HS season. It is extremely important to attend winter break training as this training is key to the team's success at end of season (i.e. CBL Championships & Post Season Taper Championship meets).
 - **We will have scheduled doubles over winter break.** (ie. yoga/swim or 2 swim practices in a day)
- If you fail to notify the coach prior to a practice or event about an excusable planned absence, the practice will be unexcused. (If you have a special circumstance, see the coach!)
- To be eligible to swim in a meet –NO unexcused absence within the last calendar week. NOTE: This means that it is possible for you to miss more than one meet because of missing only one practice that week.
- Student/athletes should send a "PARENTSQUARE" text message to Coach Ferguson if running late to practice.
- If a Bobcat USA club swimmer is a "guest" planning to train with another USA team when traveling out of town, proof of attendance by Head Coach will be accepted and not counted against attendance.

Swimmer/Diver not meeting Team Expectations- Please Review!!

- If any swimmer/diver has not met practice requirements the week of any Swim or Dive meet, they will receive-
 - 1st warning
 - Warning from Head Coach by email, Parent Square, or in person
 - Swimmer/Diver may be removed from meet line up and/or relay for that meet.

- Swimmer/Diver will be expected to attend the meet with team.
- IF swimmer/diver is not meeting practice requirements after 1st warning-
 - A meeting will be scheduled with the Head Coach, Assistant coach, Parent/Guardian, & Swimmer/Diver to discuss practice attendance & continued participation on the team.

GHHS Issued Equipment:

Students are financially responsible for the equipment that is issued to them. This means that if a student's equipment is not returned in good shape, that student will pay to replace the equipment. The athlete will not be allowed to participate in the next sport season if equipment is not returned or paid for.