

GSL Church Fairness Policy on Practice Attendance and Game Playing Time

Dear Parent—

The Athletic Committee of Grace-St. Luke's Church has intently gathered feedback from its recently announced consideration of going to a system of Commitment Level and Recreation Level teams.

Consideration of a new system sprung from the frustration expressed by some parents and many coaches, arising out of the differing "commitment" of parents (and perhaps the children) to give priority to attending team practices. "Team-building" and skill development has been detrimentally impacted by the repeated absences of some players. The Athletic Committee, many parents and coaches believe this negatively affects the experience of "committed" children. This is seen as a negative for the whole program by many parents. The Athletic Committee is mindful of this responsibility and itself is committed to fostering excellence in the athletic program. This duty, and the negative impact of uneven commitment to practice attendance, moved the Committee to consider the idea for a two level system.

Out of genuine respect for the concerns of some parents, the Committee has decided to maintain the existing structure for the present, and to continue to divide its teams based on age and gender.

In order to address this attendance issue and the negative impact it causes to the program, however, the Committee is adopting the following **Fairness Policy on Practice Attendance and Game Playing Time**:

Team-building and skill development is detrimentally impacted if one or more of the players on a team repeatedly is absent from practice. Every coach of a GSL team is directed to consider whether a player's failure to attend multiple practices should affect the normal allotment of playing time* for that player in one or more league or tournament games. Therefore, the coach of a team, in consultation with the Church Athletic Director, may decide that as a matter of fairness and discipline, a player is not entitled to play the normal allotment of playing time in one or more league or tournament games, in consideration of that player's failure to attend multiple practices. Due consideration of the reasons for absence will be given before a reduction in playing time will be sought and enforced. In all circumstances, overall fairness to the child and to the team will guide these decisions. Such decisions will be regularly reviewed by the Athletic Director, on a game by game basis, but the Director will defer to the judgment of the coach unless the decision is clearly unjustified.

*Note: The normal allotment of playing time for recreational level sports is one-half of the normal length of the game, e.g. in a 32 minute basketball game, the normal allotment of playing time is 16 minutes. It is not required that all players be given the same amount of playing time.

It is our hope that the adoption of this policy will highlight the importance which the program attaches to committed practice attendance. We encourage you, as parents, to consider whether you and your child will be able to meaningfully commit to expected regular and timely attendance at all or nearly all scheduled practices, prior to signing your child up to play on a church team. As part of the Registration Process for each sport, the Athletic Committee will be asking parents to sign a statement that you and your child have discussed and that you understand the Fairness Policy on Practice Attendance and Game Playing Time, and that you commit to giving priority to practice attendance in scheduling for your child.

This new policy will take immediate effect for upcoming sport registration and team placement. It is being adopted for well-established reasons, but principally in fairness to participants in the program. If you have any questions, you may contact me, or any other member of the committee.

Sincerely,

Christi Authement

GSL Church Athletic Director