



ATHLETICS PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Sports are powerful. They are a crucible in which our young men and women have the opportunity to prove themselves. They are a force in our students' lives because they allow them to test themselves against each other in a public arena where some will win and some will lose. The wins and losses of the playing field, track, pool, course or court simulate the wins and losses that our students will face in their future lives and begin to produce now the stamina needed to prepare for and weather them. They also have the ability to allow students to experience the God given joy of their athletic ability. When we enjoy God, we bring Him glory. When we bring God glory, we enjoy Him more.

Anything powerful can be used for good or evil. Our own experiences in local arenas demonstrate that arrogance, selfishness, envy, anger and nearly every other vice flourish in every sport, at every age, and every competition level.

For these reasons, at Geneva we play sports for only one purpose: to develop virtue in our athletes, coaches, spectators, and parents.

I. WHO WE ARE

Fortitude: We are courageous

Our players must develop courage: the courage to try out for the team, to expose one's skill and lack thereof to teammates and ultimately spectators; to face difficult, older, or stronger opponents; and to risk defeat. Our parents demonstrate courage in allowing their athletes to risk themselves in competition, physically and emotionally. Our coaches demonstrate the courage to be honest with players and parents, holding both accountable with love.

Prudence: We are wise.

We seek the wisdom to judge rightly; to remember in all circumstances that athletics matter but are not the ultimate goal. We desire to be wise in how we allow athletics to shape us and those for whom we are responsible.

Justice: We are humble.

We desire the maturity to reject envy and pride. Rather, we admire what a teammate or opponent does well. We quickly and genuinely give others credit while honestly recognizing where we fall short. We refuse to make excuses and we embrace every opportunity to learn. We give credit and take blame.

Temperance: We are disciplined.

We value the daily self-control that embraces hard and mundane practice and sacrifices for future improvement. In the heat of competition we resist the impulse to be less than who we know we should be in word or deed. We know that the discipline of the tongue is as important as the discipline of the body.

Faith: We are constant.

We have confidence that God will work all for good and we remember this even when His goodness is not immediately evident. We desire to respond with faithfulness by being who He has called us to be at all times and in all places. All our competitions are opportunities to win and lose to the glory of God. In all scenarios we desire to image His character in each victory and defeat.

Hope: We are confident.

We remind ourselves of the words of Romans 5:3-5 “And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” We know that our choices under hardship forge our character. Godly character will give us hope. Worldly character leads ultimately to despair. We choose hope.

Love: We are generous.

Ultimately, athletics must shape us to love: love our teammates even though we did not choose them as friends, love our bodies and the God who made them, love the discipline that allows us to improve, love the correction of the coach or official that reveals our shortcomings, love the opponent who allows us to test ourselves and in turn is tested by us.

II. WHO WE ARE NOT

We are not teammates, competitors, coaches or spectators who condone unvirtuous behavior. While we compete hard, even fiercely, we always do so within the spirit and the letter of the rules. We do not take the cheap shot, taunt or belittle each other, officials, opponents or opposing fans. We do not run up the score. We are not concerned with our own statistics. We are not prideful or boasting privately or publicly.

Within this framework:

III. LOGIC SCHOOL: DEVELOP AND RECRUIT

Logic School sports have two purposes: 1) to develop the skills and competencies of young athletes, including those who do not yet know that they are athletes; and 2) to serve as the recruiting grounds for our high school athletics program. For these reasons, Logic sports and

PE are focused on athletic skills development and improvement. Rhetoric varsity sports coaches are involved in developing those programs and relationships with the athletes in them. Logic coaches must balance the long-term needs of the athletics program by developing *all* the athletes on their teams. This will typically mean that coaches will give all athletes some opportunity to play in competition, but those opportunities may not be equal.

We do not recruit athletes from outside of Geneva. Our admissions standards remain the same for all students regardless of athletic ability.

IV. RHETORIC SCHOOL: COMPETE WITH HONOR

The Romans took the concept of virtue from the ancient Greece word “arete” which meant excellence at what a thing was designed to do. Rhetoric athletics are designed for competition, and we expect Rhetoric athletes to be excellent competitors.

We expect our Rhetoric athletes to be self-disciplined and courageous and therefore we expect their collective effort to yield results that exceed their individual abilities. We expect them to “punch above their weight.” We play Rhetoric sports to win but never at the expense of honor. We expect our Rhetoric athletes to compete fiercely but with generosity to each other and opponents. We expect them to be virtuous.

We will win and lose with honor, humility, and generosity. We will always remember that no victory is an individual’s because no one competes without the support of the team, coach, fans, school, and parents that make the opportunity available. And no loss is someone else’s fault. Each could have done more and all share in the need to learn and improve.