



2019 – 2020 Xcel & J.O. Team Handbook

Granite City Gymnastics

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This team handbook is given to every competitive USAG gym member, including J.O & Xcel. The guidelines and rules are to be examined and read carefully by each parent/guardian and their gymnast(s). Included in this document is Granite City Gymnastics' team philosophy, mission, USAG levels explanation, GCG's mobility requirements, expectations for gymnasts, competition guidelines, expectations for parents and a team agreement. Both parents and gymnasts are responsible for knowing the policies outlined in this handbook.

The team agreement must be signed and handed in by **September 6th, 2019**. This handbook is essential in establishing the integrity of a team program and the rules that apply to it.

Thank you!
Granite City Gymnastics Staff

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Welcome, to Granite City Gymnastics! First, we would like to thank you for choosing gymnastics for your child! Gymnastics is a wonderful overall physical conditioning platform, as well as a mind training sport. Moreover, our gymnasts are consistently leaders in their academics and communities, in addition to on the competition floor.

About Granite City Gymnastics

Granite City Gymnastics was established in June of 2007. Our program continues to grow steadily within the community and is now a well-established, professional, successful gymnastics program. Some of the attributes that we strive to help your child achieve are:

Physical

- Strength
- Agility
- Balance
- Flexibility
- Muscular control & endurance
- Running speed & technique
- Kinesthetic awareness
- Grace
- Explosive power

Mental

- Positive self-image
- Concentration
- Enjoyment
- Self- motivation
- Patience
- Tenacity
- Courage

Other life skills

- Personal growth
- Time management
- Willingness to sacrifice
- Personal Responsibility
- Goal setting

The emphasis that gymnastics training places on developing these attributes will carry over into every area of their lives, and build a strong foundation for the skills they will need throughout adulthood.

Philosophy of Granite City Gymnastics

Gymnastics is the root of all sports; it encompasses the fundamentals of movement. Jumping, rolling, running, strength, and flexibility are essential in gymnastics, but also the basic aspects of many sports. No better foundation can be laid out for an individual than one built on the basic aspects of gymnastics. The staff at GCG holds a passion for the art and science of movement and skill development through youth gymnastics. We believe in a quality and enjoyable learning environment that positively encourages the body, mind, and spirit. With motivation and determination, success is achieved through coaches, parents, gymnasts, and teammates working together to form a desire, a dream, and a vision.

Though gymnastics is generally viewed as an individual sport, we believe in the importance of training and competing as a team. Not every child on our team can be an individual winner, but if we continually improve as a team we feel that each individual can feel prideful and accomplished in achieving this goal.

Our Mission

Granite City Gymnastics mission is to provide a safe and positive environment for students to excel in the sport of gymnastics. We strive to instill the mental and physical discipline needed for competition within the framework of encouragement and positive reinforcement. We emphasize fun, thrills, challenges, excitement, and most importantly, positive child development.

Our staff takes their role in your child's life quite seriously. We measure our success not so much by the number of awards and trophies we receive, but rather with what the child takes with them when they leave the sport. The happiness and well-being of the student-athlete will always be the first consideration for all members of our staff.

Our Mission Statement

Granite City Gymnastics strives to help your child excel in the sport of gymnastics while building a strong character and positive self-worth so that they can continue to excel in life, long after they leave the sport.

Communication

At GCG, we do our best to keep the lines of communication open and get you up-to-date information as soon as possible. We ask that you communicate with us in that manor as well. If you are unable to talk to a coach directly, an email to the gym is the best form of communication. Please let the coaches know if you have a question or concern. We cannot help if we are not aware that there is an issue. Coaches are typically available for a short time immediately before or after practice. If there is something you would like to talk about more in depth please email the gym and set up a time to meet with your daughter's coach(es) – meetings must be set up 24 hours in advance. There will be newsletters delivered via email, so please make sure you provide us with an up-to-date email address. **Email is our preferred form of communication.**

GCG Email: granitecitygym@gmail.com

Gym Phone: (320) 251-3547

USA Gymnastics Organization

USA Gymnastics is the sole national governing body for the sport of gymnastics in the United States. This designation comes from the U.S. Olympic Committee, and the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG). USA Gymnastics sets the rules and policies that govern gymnastics in the United States. USA Gymnastics has many responsibilities, including selecting and training the U.S. Gymnastics Teams for Olympic Games and World Championships; promoting and developing gymnastics on a grassroots and national level; and serving as a resource center for member clubs, fans and gymnasts throughout the United States. The organization has programs in women's and men's artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, trampoline & tumbling, and acrobatic gymnastics. GCG is under the USA Gymnastics Junior Olympic program in Region 4. Our region consists of seven Midwest states. MN USAG Board sets the rules and policies for our state.

USAG Levels

Levels 2: This level is considered "Pre-team" in our GCG organization. This is a developmental level focused on preparing a gymnast for competition.

Compulsory Gymnastics - Levels 3-5 are considered Compulsory Levels. In order to compete in these levels, the gymnast must learn and perform a specific routine on each event. These routines are designed to establish sound fundamentals and basics, prepping the gymnast for future training of high-level skills. The Compulsory competition season runs primarily from September to December. Competitive team athletes participate in invitational competitions in order to qualify for the State Championships for their respective levels.

-Level 3: This compulsory level is the entry level of competition in all of Minnesota. Athletes must be at least 6 years old in order to compete. Competitions include invitational meets and the State meet.

-Level 4: This can also be an entry level of competition. Athletes must be at least 7 years old in order to compete at this level. Competitions include invitational meets and the State meet.

-Level 5: This is the highest level of compulsory routines. Competitions include invitational meets and the State meet.

Optional Gymnastics - Levels 6-10 are considered Optional Levels. In these levels, gymnasts are required to design their own routines to highlight their strengths. The Optional competition season primarily runs from December through March, with post-season meets in March, April, and May. Within the Optional framework, gymnasts must achieve a qualifying score at a USAG sanctioned meet to advance to the State meet.

-Level 6: This is a beginner Optional level designed to give younger gymnasts experience and confidence as they enter Optional gymnastics. Athletes create their own routines but must include certain compulsory elements. Competitions include in/out of state invitational meets, the State meet, and Regionals.

-Level 7: This level mixes compulsory elements with more skill variety. These gymnasts create their own routines that follow certain guidelines while emphasizing their strengths within these routines. Competitions include in/out of state invitational meets, the State meet, and Regionals.

-Level 8: This level has restrictions on difficulty and modified rules with easier requirements than level 9 or 10. Competitions include in/out of state invitational meets, the State meet, and Regionals.

-Level 9: This level has few difficulty restrictions and increased value requirements. Competitions include in/out of state invitational meets, the State meet, Regionals, and Western Nationals.

-Level 10: This is the highest level in the USAG Junior Olympic program. Competitions include in/out of state invitational meets, the State meet, Regionals and Nationals. Athletes who place high enough in the all-around at Nationals will be considered JO National Team Members.

Xcel – The Xcel Program is designed to offer a broad-based, affordable competitive experience outside the traditional Jr. Olympic Program. It is a great program for kids involved in other sports, but still love gymnastics, and want to compete on a competitive team. Our XCEL Silver and Gold gymnasts practice 2 times/week, and our XCEL Platinum and Diamond gymnasts practice 3 times/week. You are required to pay for at least one day/week to save your spot on the team when we are not in the competition season, as spots on the team are limited. We encourage your gymnast to practice at least once/week during the off-season to keep up on her skills for the next season.

-Bronze: This is one of the entry levels to the XCEL program. Granite City does not offer this level. You must be 5 years old to compete.

-Silver: This is the entry level to the XCEL program at Granite City Gymnastics. You must be 6 years old to compete. Competitions include invitational meets, the State meet, and Regionals (if hosted in MN).

-Gold: Must be at least 7 years-old to compete. Competitions include invitational meets, the State meet, and Regionals.

-Platinum: Must be at least 8 years-old to compete. Competitions include invitational meets, the State meet, and Regionals.

-Diamond: Must be at least 9 years old to compete. Competitions include invitational meets, the State meet, and Regionals.

Qualifying all-around scores change each year, we will update you before the competition season begins. Below are the qualifying scores for the 2019-2020 season.

	Mobility	State	Regionals	Westerns/Nationals
Level 3	None	32.00 AA	N/A	N/A
Level 4	34.00 AA	32.00 AA	N/A	N/A
Level 5	32.00 AA	32.00 AA	N/A	N/A
Level 6	32.00 AA	32.00 AA	34.00 AA @ State	N/A
Level 7	32.00 AA	32.00 AA	34.00 AA @ State	N/A
Level 8	32.00 AA	32.00 AA	34.00 AA @ State	N/A
Level 9	34.00 AA	32.00 AA	34.00 AA @ State	Top % determined by # of gymnast @ Regionals
Level 10	N/A	32.00 AA	34.00 AA @ State	Top % of each age group @ Regionals
Silver	N/A	34.00 AA	35.5 AA @ State	N/A
Gold	31.00	34.00 AA	34.00 AA @ State	N/A
Platinum	31.00	32.00 AA	33.50 AA @ State	N/A
Diamond	31.00	32.00 AA	33.50 AA @ State	N/A

Mobility

Granite City Gymnastics is dedicated to developing happy, healthy, confident and successful gymnasts. We believe the way to meet this goal is to place each gymnast in the level where they can be confident, safe and successful. This means that the athletes must be able to perform the skills and routines on all four events at or above the average level. The skills should not be on the edge or beyond her ability. We can never ask or expect our athletes to perform skills or routines in a competition, which they cannot perform consistently at practice.

Although USA Gymnastics has a pre-established mobility score, which the athletes MUST obtain before moving levels, we believe it is very important to insist that our athletes master the basic skills at each level with proper form and technique. Our experience has taught us that taking the time with the basics provides the best learning tool for more advanced skills.

Parents will only be able to register their child for the next level up if the gymnast's mobility requirements have been met. Mobility begins at the beginning of the Summer session, after all competitive teams have ended their season.

Please understand that we would like every single girl to be able to master all of the skills and move up as quickly as possible. However, we do not wish to sacrifice your child's safety or self-esteem. We are very confident in our system of progression through mastered basics.

Expectations for GCG gymnasts

1. Attend all practices. Coaches **MUST** be notified if your gymnast will be late, leave early, or will not attend practice that day. Appropriate methods of notification include a written note, emailing or calling the gym. If a gymnast will be arriving consistently late to practice due to distance from the gym, a one-time note is sufficient. There are no make-ups for missed practices.
2. Arrive on time and stay until practice is over. In the event that a gymnast arrives late or leaves early, the coach should be notified prior to practice.
3. Warm-ups are designed to increase flexibility and prevent injuries. If a gymnast arrives late, they are required to complete their entire warm-up, and may miss out on time at their first event.
4. Ask permission to leave your event or the gym. This applies to leaving early, going to the restroom, getting something from your bag or locker, etc. The main reason is so that your coach always knows where you are.
5. Gymnasts must keep their locker and locker rooms clean – anything left outside the lockers, at any point, is subject to getting tossed. It is not ok to go in anyone else's locker. Do not leave any personal items in the lockers after practice, including leotards, grips, wrist guards, etc. Absolutely **NO FOOD** is to be left in your lockers after practice hours. Granite City Gymnastics is not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged items. Lockers are the gym's property; any disrespect or abuse may result in the loss of locker privileges.
6. Cell phones are to stay in your lockers and can only be used in the case of an emergency or to contact their parents.
7. You represent Granite City Gymnastics. We love that you share your experiences on Social Media. Please only keep these posts positive and appropriate – posting negative or inappropriate posts while representing Granite City Gymnastics will result in serious consequences.
8. Treat other gymnasts with respect. Be kind to your teammates and do not consider yourself as being better than other gymnasts. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Gossip and bullying in anyway will not be tolerated.
9. Always act in a way that shows respect for yourself and the gym. We want the gym to be happy and motivating – there is no place for rude comments, displays of anger, talking back to the coach or other adults, or crying publicly because of frustration or fears – these types of behaviors will not be tolerated and will result in serious consequences.
10. Keep all gym talk appropriate. Our teams have a wide range of ages – some subjects may not be appropriate for all ages. A good rule of thumb is that if you wouldn't say it in front of your Grandma, you probably shouldn't say it at the gym.
11. Balking is not allowed during practice. Balking is when the gymnast begins to attempt a skill, and then suddenly stopping before it is completed. This is extremely dangerous and we ask that each parent and gymnast understand that this rule is purely based on safety reasons.
12. Injuries that affect a gymnast's ability to practice must be addressed by a doctor's note. Gymnasts are not to attend practice if they are ill and have missed school.
13. If a serious injury does occur, a meeting must be set up between parent, gymnast, and coaches to come up with a plan for practice before returning to working out.
14. Provide your body with proper food and drink at all times. Gymnasts should bring a nutritional snack and water bottle to practice. Gymnasts with practices for four consecutive hours will receive a 10-minute break. Breaks may be taken away if gymnasts

choose to abuse break time, or fail to pick up their mess. We have team members that have food allergies, please make sure snacks are picked up, put away, and hands are washed before entering the gym.

15. Always wait inside for your ride. Be sure that your parents always know what time practice is over and pick you up in a timely manner.
16. Every athlete will wear a leotard to every practice. No t-shirts or sweat suits are allowed. Hair will be pulled back prior to practice. No jewelry other than stud earrings are allowed.
17. You are only allowed to wear grips/wrist guards if they are yours – borrowing these items from a teammate or the gym is prohibited – this is for your safety.
18. A gymnast must attend (and practice) at ALL practices two weeks prior to a meet. There are few exceptions to this rule – and vacations aren't one of them.
19. Serious consequences to any misbehavior as stated above will result first in the gymnast being asked to leave the gym and will not be allowed back until a coach is available for a conference with both parent and gymnast. If misbehavior continues, a gymnast will be given a suspension period for a given amount of time, decided on by the coach. If bad behavior is not taken care of by this point, the gymnast will be asked to withdrawal from our team program.

Competition Expectations

1. You have made a commitment to our team program, and with that comes competition season. We assume that your gymnast will be competing in every meet that GCG is attending unless notified otherwise and with good reason. Families who choose not to attend all meets may be asked to reconsider their commitment to the team program.
2. Arrive at the competition site promptly at the scheduled check-in time. Late arrivals may not compete.
3. Gymnasts should arrive at all competitions wearing their competition leotard, warm-up jacket and pants. Hair should also be done upon arrival and pulled back tightly so it is not a distraction.
4. No fingernail polish or jewelry is allowed on the competitive floor. Undergarments including sports bras may not show, and underwear should be black or nude.
5. When the gymnast arrives at the competition, she should report to her coaches immediately and stay with them for the duration of the meet. Gymnasts will not be allowed to have contact with their parents until the competition has ended. Please contact one of the coaches if you need to get a message or item to your child.
6. Gymnasts should bring their gym bag to all competitions. The contents should include a healthy snack, water bottle, and grips. It can also contain bandages, tape or braces if needed. Do not pack extra items. Jackets and shoes should be left with parents.
7. Gymnasts should not keep track of their scores or anyone else's during the competition. Coaches (and parents) will take care of this duty. We prefer that our athletes concentrate on their upcoming event.
8. Gymnasts will be expected to deal with frustration in a disciplined manner. A gymnast who shows signs of a poor attitude or becoming emotional will be allowed a brief period of time to correct their behavior otherwise gymnast may be asked to leave the remainder of the competition.
9. We pride ourselves in sportsmanship. Gymnasts should always cheer for their teammates and be courteous to gymnasts from other teams.

10. Gymnasts should always show respect for the judges and other coaches at the competition.
11. Gymnasts should stay at their last event and be respectful, until the last athlete has finished the competition. Coaches will dismiss the athletes for awards.
12. Gymnasts should stay for awards and remain in their competition leotard and warm-up suit. They may not wear jeans or other street clothes during the awards ceremony. (This is a USAG rule).
13. During the National Anthem and while on the awards stand, gymnasts will show proper etiquette by standing at attention.

Expectations of GCG parents

The parents are as much a part of the team as the athletes and coaches! We encourage all our parents to attend and sit together for every competition and be involved in our program. As parents you are also representing Granite City Gymnastics. With that in mind, here are a few expectations for our parents during competitions and in the gym.

1. Please make sure that you discuss any problems, questions, or concerns with the coaches before practice begins, after practice is over, or set-up a time for a face-to-face conference. Do not interrupt a coach while they are working with the gymnasts, or contact at an unreasonable hour, unless it is an emergency.
2. When in the viewing areas or in parking lot, please refrain from any negative gossip about other parents, gymnasts, or coaches. It is best to be supportive in all areas when coming into the gym. If there are any major frustrations, please contact the gymnast's coaches.
3. It is important to pick up your child in a timely matter or have a ride set up for her after practice.
4. A **30-day written notice** is required if you choose to leave the program for billing purposes.
5. Please get your child to the competition on time! You should arrive early enough so that your gymnast can check in and prepare herself to be ready when stretching begins. We understand that sometimes the weather gets in the way, but please take all of the necessary steps to be prepared and arrive on time. Late gymnasts may not be able to compete.
6. Cheer loud and often (but tastefully) for all members of our team and for any good performance that you see. Promote Granite City Gymnastics in every way that you feel appropriate: sweatshirts, jackets, signs, cheering – but never speak in a negative way about another club, coach, gymnast or judge.
7. Under no circumstance should a parent approach a judge before, during or after a competition to comment on, complain about or even ask about a score or performance. Under USAG rules, only USAG professional members, judges, and persons assigned to assist with the competition are allowed on the competitive floor.
8. Do not contact or talk to your gymnast once they are on the competitive floor. We want them to focus all their energy on the competition with as few distractions as possible. After the meet is over, they will come to see you.
9. Ultimately, coaches will have the final say if a gymnast will be allowed to compete or not. Under no circumstances should a parent contact a meet director or other gym about registering their daughter for a meet.

10. In the case of an injury during the competition, please do not come onto the competition floor. There are medical personnel at every meet. In most cases the injury will be relatively minor and the coach and/or trainers will take care of it. Your daughter will continue her competition and she will need to maintain her focus. In the case of a more serious injury, one of the coaches will come get you.
11. The physical health of our athletes is something we take very seriously. If your child is ill and has stayed home for school – they are not allowed to attend practice. This rule is for your child's safety and to keep our other athletes healthy.
12. Please think about what you say to your child before and after the competition. Your child only wants your love and praise for her performance (no matter how it went).
13. Always keep control of yourself and in-check, it would be a shame to have to dismiss a gymnast based on their parents bad behavior.
14. Your child is an individual. Your child will progress at her own pace based on her own special talents and abilities. Please do not compare your child to others in the gym. Our athletes, although receiving the same coaching on every event, will progress at different paces. Fear, work ethic, attitude as well as talent will all play a role in your child's progression. Allow your child to progress at her own pace and realize that the most important thing is that your child is happy and safe.

Delinquent Tuition

Tuition is due on the first of every month. Please turn it into the front desk to be recorded in your gymnast's team account, or pay online on your Parent Portal account – automatic payments are also available to set up for your convenience. If a payment is not received by the 10th of the month, you will be charged a \$10 late fee. If a family is more than 30 days behind on tuition, gymnast will not be allowed to practice. You must be current with tuition to compete in a meet. If you have a special circumstance, please talk to one of our staff members – we are able to be somewhat flexible if need be, but you MUST communicate.

Choreography (Levels 6-10 & Xcel)

The girls will be able to choose their own music at these levels. Some popular places to find music are floorexpressmusic.com, floortracks.com or recycled music that the gym owns. A CD copy of the music is not necessary. Although it is not required, we suggest that these gymnasts use their routines for 2 years before choosing new music and choreography. Once the gymnast has chosen music, they will need to choose a choreographer. Some coaches may be able to do choreography for your gymnast, but you are not prohibited to looking outside the gym for a choreographer. The choreography is a service of the coach, and they will set their own price. Please note that the choreography is NOT a service of the gym.

Weather Cancellations

If a practice is cancelled due to the weather, an email will be sent out. You can also call the gym at (320) 251-3547 with any questions or check our Facebook page.

Breakdown of Costs for Team Program

Team Tuition: Monthly tuition is to be paid to Granite City Gymnastics on the first of each month. Tuition amount varies per level.

USAG Membership Fee: This allows a gymnast to be eligible to participate in competitions. You can expect this fee in June. Each family must register for your child's membership(s) online. GCG will send you a link from USA Gymnastics to either renew or invite you to register. We will register for meets for the upcoming season each July. A gymnast must have an active membership before we can do this.

XCEL Bronze and Silver: \$29/year

All JO and XCEL Gold, Platinum, and Diamond: \$61/year

Head Tax: This \$15 fee is used to sponsor the State and Regional competitions. You can expect this fee in June, and may be added to your tuition if you choose.

Competition Leotard: New leotards will be purchased every 2 years. This will be the 2nd year with our current leotards. The 2018-2020 leotard is \$240 (prices will vary from year to year). Warm up jackets (\$55), capri pants (\$25) and backpacks (optional, \$55) will remain the same for 3-6 years. We provide a place to sell/purchase used competition leotards and warm-ups in an effort to keep costs down.

Optional Floor Music and Choreography: Please see Choreography section.

Grips and Wrist Guards: This equipment is needed on an individual basis. The coaches should be consulted before this equipment is purchased because your daughter will need to be sized to ensure proper fit.

Tape: Tape is available in our pro-shop for \$2.50/roll, gymnasts are responsible for supplying their own tape.

XCEL Meets: You will receive the meet schedule for the upcoming season in June each year. Once you commit to a meet, Granite City will register your gymnast and submit your registration fee to the host gym. You are responsible for the fees associated with this once you commit, as registration fees are difficult to get refunded unless an unfortunate injury occurs and a doctor's note is provided before the deadline that is set by the host meet.

Granite City will plan 5 regular invitational meets during the season. At these 5 meets, your gymnast will have the opportunity to qualify for the state meet by obtaining an all-around score set by USAG each year. At the state meet, your gymnast has the opportunity to qualify for the regional meet. All meets are optional, but we recommend that you participate in as many as possible.

Fees associated with each meet varies. Once we determine how many gymnasts will be attending, how many coaches are needed, and how many sessions GCG will be attending, this fee will be divided amongst the team and added to their registration fee for the meet. Each meet fee will be posted to your parent portal account, and is **due one week before the competition.**

To give you a good idea, last season, regular meets were around \$125/meet, the state meet was \$165, and the regional meet was \$220. The regional meet will be held in Madison, WI this competition season, so this meet fee may increase. Exact meet fees cannot be determined until about 2-3 weeks before the actual meet is to be held. Once a meet schedule is published, we will narrow down the day/time your gymnast will compete during that meet weekend. A meet session is usually around 4 hours. Your gymnast will compete in one session at each meet.

Central MN Gymnastics Association (CMGA)

This is a parent-ran booster club for JO gymnasts. Any questions that you have about CMGA should be directed to a member.

President: Kelly Anderson	ajkjanderson@msn.com
Vice Presidents: Heather Wensel	wenselheather@gmail.com
Dawn Koeniguer	dawnkoeniguer@gmail.com
Treasurer: Mollie Garden	rmgarden@charter.net
Secretary: Rhonda Alvord	rhondaalvord@gmail.com
Member at large: Lois Lommel	louielimone@yahoo.com

JO CMGA Membership Fee, and JO Meet/Coaches Fees are handled by the CMGA. Please contact Mollie Garden, the treasurer, for additional information.

Team Agreement

As parents/guardians and gymnasts, I have read through each section of the Granite City Gymnastics' handbook and have understood all guidelines and regulations. I realize it is very important to our coaching staff to maintain and build a quality competitive gymnastics program. I will do my very best at all times to follow each guideline and know that there are consequences if I do not.

****Team Agreement must be signed before an athlete will be allowed to compete.
Please return this page by September 6th, 2019.*

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Gymnast Signature: _____ Date: _____

Gym Director Signature: Thomas F. Rodine Date: 8 / 27 / 2019