

Tipton Christian Academy



Student-Parent Athletic Handbook 2025-2026

Introduction

This handbook is provided as a reference guide concerning the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Tipton Christian Academy. The policies, rules, and regulations presented hereafter have been condensed to address general situations. The TCA Student Handbook and TSSAA rules will be used to further determine necessary actions. Students and parents should contact the individual coaches or the Athletic Director for clarification or further information.

Tipton Christian Academy Mission Statement

The mission of Tipton Christian Academy's athletic department is to produce positive Christian student athletes who honor and serve the Lord, by exemplifying character and integrity on and off the field. It is our goal, through athletics, to equip athletes with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful models of Christ in our community.

Philosophy of Athletics

At Tipton Christian Academy, our athletes and coaches will compete at their highest levels to glorify God. Athletics offer us the opportunity to minister to others around us while also fostering the concepts of putting others before ourselves, and using our God given talents to achieve great things.

Tipton Christian Academy believes that participation in athletics both as a player and a student spectator, is an important part of the student's educational experience. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibility to the school, to the team, to the student body, to the community and the student himself. In both play and conduct, the student is representing all of these groups. Such experiences enhance the knowledge, skill, and emotional patterns possessed by students, thereby making them better people and citizens.

Tipton Christian Academy Athletics should provide an opportunity for others outside the TCA community to visualize actions and principals found in God's word. Tipton Christian Academy's athletic program will be used as an opportunity to minister to the non-Christian community through exemplary actions, Christ-like attitudes, and a high level of athletic skills. The challenge for our athletes, parents, and coaches is to adhere to the Colossians 3:17 mandate. "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him".

Athletic Department Core Values

1. **God** – Use our God given abilities to glorify Him in all aspects of athletics
2. **Family** – Build a family culture within our athletics
3. **Academics** – Exemplify the concept of the student athlete
4. **Community** – Use our platform to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community
5. **Athlete** – Compete at our highest levels while modeling Christ

Our Coaches

The coach is the “living curriculum” for the student athlete. Coaches at Tipton Christian Academy are the most significant components of the athletic program. They are both teachers and active participants at the same time. They have the responsibility to model Christ-like behaviors and attitudes at all times. In order to be an effective coach and role model, TCA coaches must also be thoroughly knowledgeable in their sport, capable of detailed preparation, able to motivate athletes, be able to make adjustments during competition, and work effectively under the authority of the athletic director and school administration. Our coaches take seriously the opportunity they have to mold young lives for Christ.

Our Parents

Parents of student athletes have a responsibility to both their child and to the team. Without strong parental support the student athlete will not be able to achieve his/her greatest potential and/or the team may suffer. It is important that parents provide positive reinforcement and understand their role as being part of the team. Parents, as well as players, should be supportive and encourage coaches and teammates at all times. Parents are not coaches and learning to trust coaches is a key step to learning the value of the life lesson experiences athletics provides. It is also important that parents honor the Lord when attending athletic events. In order for TCA’s athletic program to be successful, coaches, student athletes, and parents must make a firm commitment to glorify God at all times.

Our Athletes

Tipton Christian Academy athletes should be diligent in preparation, give 100% at all times, demonstrate personal discipline, be respectful in all situations, maintain self-control, show humility, and aggressively pursue excellence regardless of the score, opponent, time, referee, or situation. The ultimate and final responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the student athlete, for it is the student athlete who is accountable to his/her parents, coach, and the Lord.

Our Athletic Department

Is committed to:

1. Discipleship of our coaches and student athletes.
2. Outreach to opposing teams and fans and to the larger community outside of TCA.
3. Preparation of student athletes for both competition and life with Christ as our model.
4. Stewardship of our resources.
5. Pursuit of athletic excellence

Athletic Department Expectations, Practices & Policies

Eligibility for Interscholastic Participation

All student athletes at Tipton Christian Academy must be exemplary members of the student body. Participation in competitive activities as a part of Tipton Christian Academy's athletic program is a privilege and not a right. These requirements are aligned with the TSSAA. Therefore, standards of academic achievement have been adopted in order for student athletes to establish and maintain eligibility.

1. Academics –The academic standards at Tipton Christian Academy are high; therefore, these standards acknowledge that academic achievement takes precedence over athletic participation. These standards, as well as specific eligibility/ineligibility information, are as follows:
 - a. All student athletes must be enrolled in and receive grades at the quarter and semester in at least six classes.
 - b. Grades in all classes will count and will be weighted equally.
 - c. Each student athlete is assumed to be eligible for athletic participation until a declaration of ineligibility is made by the principal or the athletic director.
 - d. For the purpose of ineligibility declaration, a student's progress report and 9-week grades will be used for consideration. Progress reports can help a student regain eligibility.
 - e. To be eligible, students must maintain a "C" average or above (2.0 GPA) while in middle school and a 2.0 GPA in high school; no "F" in a class at the end of a progress or report card grading period for middle school or high school.
 - f. Students who receive an "F" at the quarter grading period will be placed on Academic Notice and may lose eligibility if their grade does not improve by the next grading report. If a student becomes ineligible, they will be reevaluated at the next progress report or quarter to determine eligibility to resume participation.
 - g. Any time a student athlete is ineligible twice during the same athletic season (defined as the time tryouts are held until the last interscholastic contest is completed), that student athlete will be dropped from the team.

- h. Students whose grades drop below a “C” average (2.0) for the semester will be removed from participation by the Administration.
 - i. In the event a student athlete has met all academic standards but drops significantly in academic performance during a time period when he/she is in no immediate danger of being declared ineligible, the coach has the authority to institute measures of accountability to help the student athlete get back on track.
 - j. Student athletes who must leave for a contest before school is dismissed are expected to turn in all assignments due (the day of the contest) to the teacher whose class they will miss. Student athletes are also responsible for work missed on that day.
2. Trying Out for a Team if Ineligible –A student athlete who is ineligible for athletic participation at the time team tryouts are held will be allowed to try out for the team. It should be clearly understood this will be a major consideration on behalf of the coaching staff when selecting team members.
 3. Remaining on a Team After Being Declared Ineligible –It is entirely possible that a student athlete will be eligible when trying out for a team, will make the team, and will become ineligible after making the team, either before or after the season has started. If this occurs, the student athlete will, of course, be ineligible for the prescribed period of time. If this student athlete fails to re-establish eligibility at the completion of the first period of ineligibility (progress report update), the student athlete will be dropped from the team.
 4. Participating in summer work-outs, practices and camps while ineligible will be at the coach’s discretion with the approval of the Athletic Director.
 5. Conduct–Each student athlete is expected to conduct his/her life in accordance with the standards and principles set forth in God’s Word. This includes adhering to all appropriate TCA standards of student conduct. Violations of the Student Code of Conduct will affect participation in athletic activities.
 6. Suspension from School –A disciplinary action severe enough to warrant student suspension will eliminate the student athlete from all participation in interscholastic sports for the duration of the suspension. Therefore, any suspension, whether in-school or out-of-school will render a student athlete ineligible to attend practice or any interscholastic contest. After serving the suspension, further disciplinary action will be assessed according to the Student Athlete code of conduct.

Participation Fee

Participation fees are essential to help fund the cost of interscholastic athletics; game officials, tournament entry fees and supplementary equipment and supplies. Participation Fees are not a guarantee of playing time on a team. This fee is not assessed if an athlete does not make the team. Fee:

- High School Students (9th-12th) will pay a one time Athletic Fee - \$325
- Middle School Students (5th-9th) will pay a one time Athletic Fee - \$300

Concussion

See TSSAA Concussion and Return to Play Policy

Heat Policy

See TSSAA Heat Policy for Member Schools

Injury/Insurance Policy

1. When/if there is an injury, report the injury to the coach and athletic director.
2. Your insurance always acts as the primary health insurance for injuries sustained while participating in athletics.
3. Out of pocket costs can be covered through school policies. This can be complicated, remain in direct contact with the athletic department to be directed to the appropriate channels.

Physical Form and Parental Consent Form

1. For a student to be allowed to try out for a team or practice with a team, he/she must have a current Physical Form on file in the Athletic office. Physicals are good for one year after the day it was completed. Physicals dated after April 15th will be good for the next school year. These forms are available in the athletic office or on the TCA athletics website.
2. For a student to be allowed to participate on any team, he/she and their parent/guardian must have signed and returned the athletic handbook compliance form, all physical paperwork, and sudden cardiac arrest/concussion forms. These can be turned into the athlete's coach or the athletic director.

Attendance at Practices and Games

Each member of a Tipton Christian Academy athletic team must assume the responsibilities associated with such a position. The athlete has an ethical obligation to the team and the school. This obligation includes regular attendance at practices and athletic contests. Commitment to TCA teams should come before any club or outside team.

Absences should be few and far between and arranged with the coach as early as possible. If a conflict arises and the athlete may have to miss a practice, it is of utmost importance that the athlete communicates this with the coach immediately knowing that consequences may follow.

Continued absences from practice sessions or athletic contests may result in being dismissed from the team.

Attendance at School

A student athlete must attend school on the days of an athletic practice and contest in order to participate in that practice or contest. Some specific circumstances are as follows:

1. Student athletes must attend a cumulative 3.5 hours the day of the event in order to be eligible to participate in the day's activities. Activities include, but are not limited to: practices, games, fundraisers, camps, or any other events officially organized by the school or its associated groups.
2. Students not in attendance on the day of any activities may not participate in the activities unless you have a doctor's excuse for the hours missed. The doctor's excuse must indicate the time spent at the appointment.
3. If a student is absent the day before an activity held when school is not in session, they cannot participate due to unmet requirements. (For example, if a game is set for Saturday morning, but the student missed school on Friday without a doctor's excuse, they will not be eligible to play in the game.)
4. Any Unexcused Absence from school, regardless if it is only for a partial day, will render an athlete unable to participate in the day's events. This would include in-school suspension or skipping class

Practice

Athletic teams shall not practice before the dates established by the TSSAA. All practice standards shall be followed to uphold the integrity of the relationship with the TSSAA.

There will be no scheduled practices after 5:00 PM on Wednesday night. Practice can be held on Sunday, only between the hours of 2:00-4:00 PM and 7:00-9:00 PM

Handling Problems and Solving Disputes

At Tipton Christian Academy, we follow the Matthew 18 Principle:

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over; if he will not listen, take one or two other along so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Matthew 18:15-16

Parents, if you have a dispute or disagreement with a coach, we ask that you go to him/her with an attitude of appeal. Be respectful and understanding of his/her response. Most situations are misunderstandings and can easily be resolved. If you are not satisfied with the resolution, please contact that athletic director to schedule a meeting with all parties involved.

Follow the 24-hour rule:

Parents should not contact and express negative comments or complaints to a coach on the day of a game or event. Never approach a coach with an issue right before a game or practice.

Playing Time Policy

While it is true that our coaches and administrative personnel believe it to be important to broaden the experience of Tipton Christian Academy athletes, and playing time enhances that broadening, it is also an important goal of the TCA athletic program to strive toward excellence. Therefore, no minimum per game playing time provisions or minimum numbers of athletic meets in which athletes must compete are established at the Middle and Upper School. Playing time decisions are left up to the individual coaches.

Quitting Policy

Any athlete who quit a sport during a team's season will not be allowed to work out or practice with another sport until that sport in season has concluded. In the case that a student incurs fees beyond the athletic fee, it is the responsibility of the student-athlete to ensure payment is completed.

Use of Facilities

All events or teams wishing to schedule use of facilities must consult with the athletic director's office which will confirm space and availability. A staff person or approved volunteer must be present when any school facility is being used. Anyone wishing to conduct camps or tournaments in a gym or athletic field must receive permission from the athletic director and complete the proper paperwork.

Parent Meetings

Parent Pre-Season Meetings –All parents of student athletes are required to attend a pre-season meeting with the coaching staff of that sport. The meeting shall be held before the first contest. Parents will be informed of all rules for their sport as well as the rules of Tipton Christian Academy.

Parent Expectations

Our goal is for all of our athletes to have the most positive athletic experience possible. This goal cannot be accomplished without the positive effort of parents. Playing sports takes a huge commitment on the part of parents and athletes. Commitment can be defined as a promise to be loyal to someone or something or the attitude of someone who works very hard to do or support something. In order to have successful, committed athletes, we have to have a commitment from parents. It requires a great deal to participate in sports. It takes time, money, energy and copious amounts of practice and patience on everyone's part.

As 1 Peter 3:8 states' "We should be of one mind. Be tenderhearted and keep a humble attitude."

Parents should always:

- Encourage all players in a positive manner
- Support umpires, referees, officials, judges, coaches, and players on our teams and opposing teams
- Use appropriate language and keep a positive attitude
- Use the proper chain of command (coach/sponsor first, then Athletic Director) if a parent has a concern regarding any decision made by the coach
- Adhere to the 24 Hour Rule – Do not contact a coach/sponsor to express negative comments or complaints until 24 hours after the game or event
- Discuss playing time with the coach or sponsor and do not include evaluations of another athlete
- Understand that being a member of TCA athletics is a privilege and a full-time commitment and participation in all practices and games or events is required unless an absence has been discussed and approved well in advance with the head coach or sponsor
- Expect to volunteer in areas to help with the sport
- Refrain from coaching their athlete during practices and games allowing the coaches to coach
- Encourage their athletes to follow the Athletic Code of Conduct
- Monitor their athletes grades making sure they are maintaining a “C” average (2.0 GPA) in their academics
- Stay alert in your communications with the athletic department and coaching staffs.

Parents and spectators deemed not following proper spectator etiquette will be asked to leave the sporting event. Further action will be taken if more than one occurrence takes place.

Athletic Code of Conduct

All student athletes shall adhere to the Athletic Code of Conduct. Any violation or misconduct shall be subject to the disciplinary measures contained herein, above and beyond those rendered by the appropriate authority. It should be noted that the Athletic Code of Conduct both includes and is in addition to the Tipton Christian Academy Code of Conduct.

The student athletes conduct at Tipton Christian Academy in or out of school shall be as follows:

1. Not to reflect discredit upon our school, teammates, coaches, or Jesus Christ
2. Not to create a disruptive influence on the discipline, moral, or educational environment in our school

Any such misconduct violating these principals shall be subject to the disciplinary measures about and beyond the Tipton Christian Academy Code of Conduct. The Athletic Director and coach of each sport shall enforce all rules and regulations as described in the Code of Conduct for athletes.

Athletic Conduct

Student athletes are expected to demonstrate the following behaviors and characteristics.

1. **Respect for myself, teammates, coaches, game officials/umpires, opponents, and equipment**
 - ❖ “Show proper respect to everyone.” 1 Peter 2:17
 - o Never underestimate your opponent
 - o Listen to and obey those God has placed above you
 - o Take care of equipment and return all TCA issued equipment at the completion of each season
2. **Maintain a positive attitude at all times**
 - ❖ “Be made new in the attitude of your minds.” Ephesians 4:23
 - o Remember that a great effort is usually the result of a great attitude
 - o Talent is overvalued; character wins out
3. **Give my best effort at all times**
 - ❖ “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.” Colossians 3:23
 - o Play the game hard at all times regardless of the score
 - o Don’t worry when we are down, and don’t relax when we are ahead
4. **Support and encourage your teammates**
 - ❖ “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up.” 1 Thessalonians 5:11
 - o Never use negative words towards your teammates
 - o Never demean another teammate
5. **Never use inappropriate language**
 - ❖ “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths.” Ephesians 4:29
6. **Play without fear of failure**
 - ❖ “For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power.” 2 Timothy 1:7
7. **Never give up in any sport**
 - ❖ “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 2 Timothy 4:7
 - o Give 100% each practice and game and you will have done your best and will be a winner regardless

Student-Athletes are expected to refrain from the following behavior and characteristics:

- Tardiness to practices or competitions
- Careless and/or reckless behavior
- Inappropriate use of cellular phones, cameras, and other electronic devices while in the locker room areas
- Inappropriate public displays of romantic affection (i.e. holding hands, kissing, excessive hugging)
- Profanity and vulgar or offensive speech and/or gestures
- Inappropriate use of social networks or media outlets (i.e. Instagram, Snapchat, etc.)
- Dishonesty in any form including lying, theft, or cheating
- Gambling

- Rebellious or disrespectful attitude
- Flagrant disrespect and disobedience
- Possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information, including the distribution of sexual suggestive material via cell phones, cameras, computers or “sexting” of any kind
- Harassment in any form, both physical and/or sexual in nature.
- Hazing in any form
- Use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and abuse of prescription medication
- Immoral sexual conduct
- Use or possession of weapons and/or dangerous items on school premises or at any athletic event

Anti-Hazing Policy

Hazing in any form is neither tolerated nor consistent with any spiritual, educational or athletic goal at Tipton Christian Academy. “Hazing” refers to any activity expected of someone joining a student organization that humiliates, degrades, or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or TCA policies or regulations is considered hazing. Hazing in any form will not be tolerated at Tipton Christian Academy and will result in disciplinary actions.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Tipton Christian Academy will not tolerate any behavior that is considered bullying, intimidation, or harassment of another student(s). Students who choose to initiate and/or participate in bullying activities of any kind will be subject to intervention and/or disciplinary action. Consequences can include loss of designated school privileges and opportunities, suspension, expulsion or legal action by the police and/or courts.

Appeals Process

Appeals will be handled through the athletic director. A meeting will be setup between the athlete, the athlete’s parent/guardian, the athletic director and the coach. At the conclusion of the meeting, the athletic director will determine the outcome of the appeal process and determine if another alternative outcome is necessary.

Tipton Christian Academy

Student Athletics Handbook Compliance Form

I have read and understand the rules, regulations and guidelines set forth in this handbook. I agree to abide by these rules, regulations and guidelines, and I will faithfully support the coaches, athletic director and administration of Tipton Christian Academy. I also understand that if I fail to comply with these guidelines then I will accept the consequences.

Athlete's Signature

Date

By signing this form we/I as parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student athlete acknowledge that my/our child has read the handbook and understands the guidelines and the consequences for not following them. We also agree to hold our student athletes accountable as well as ourselves.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date