

Taft ISD

Athletic Handbook



2018-2019

District Approved:
June 1, 2018

Parent/Athlete/Coach Communication Guide

Taft Athletics Philosophy

- Athletic achievement requires commitment from all athletes, parents, coaches, and administrators. For all of us to be successful, effective communication must occur.
- The school athletic department and administration believe strongly in being accessible to parents and supportive of the coaching staff.
- We are continually attempting to improve communication with the students and parents. For our programs to be truly successful, it is necessary that everyone understands the focus and direction of the program.
- The Taft Athletic System will strive to employ coaches with social abilities in their field who will teach individual and group skills. But more importantly, these people should encourage participation in all sports and instill a love for competition. They shall work hard to field the best possible teams, yet always keep the welfare of the student-athlete uppermost in their minds.
- No student is required to take part in athletics, nor is participation necessary for graduation. Belonging to a team is a privilege for any student who is capable of competing and is willing to conform to the high standards and ideals of athletics. Special standards for participation will be expected, and when an individual fails to comply, the privilege will be revoked.

Your Expectations

- A. It is reasonable to expect your child's coach to inform you:
1. When and where practices and contests are held.
 2. About his/her coaching philosophy.
 3. About the expectations he/she has for all athletes on the squad as well as your individual child.
 4. What is required to be a part of the team, i.e., fees, special equipment, off season conditioning, lettering requirements, etc.
 5. If your child is injured during participation in a practice or contest.
 6. Whenever any disciplinary action results in your son/daughter being denied participation in a practice or contest.

- B. Typical concerns of parents that are appropriate to discuss with a coach are:
1. Any unhealthy mental or physical strain you detect in your child at home, especially when it affects his/her academic performance.
 2. How you can contribute to your child's skill improvement and development.
 3. Any dramatic changes you detect in your child's behavior.

Our Expectations

- A. It is **inappropriate** to discuss with a coach:

1. Athlete playing time.
 2. Team strategy or play calling.
 3. Other athletes.
- Coaches are professionals. They make judgments based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position.

- B. Coaches often need parents to tell them:

1. Any specific health concerns about their son/daughter expressed directly and informally to the head coach at a mutually convenient time.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Your commitment to the program, and how you plan to make a contribution to the program's success. For example, one way is to be sure your youngster is at practice each day on time and to make sure that your child gets enough rest and nutrition at home.
4. Strategies that have worked for you in encouraging your son's/daughter's success.

- C. The procedure to follow to discuss a concern with a coach:

1. Make an appointment with the coach of your child. Never approach the coach after a game unless the coach requests this discussion.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator to set up a meeting.

3. Please do not confront a coach before, during, or following a contest or practice. These may be busy and emotional times for both the parent and the coach, and this period does not promote objective analysis of the situation.
- D. What should you do if the meeting with the coach does not result in a resolution to the problem?
1. Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator to discuss the situation.
 2. At this meeting, an appropriate next step can be determined.
- E. Students who wish to participate in a “team” sport must be enrolled in the athletic period. Team sports are recognized as: football, volleyball, basketball, softball, and baseball.
- Exceptions will be made at the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator discretion. For example: Special Academic circumstances.
- F. Participation in the Program

It is the goal of this athletic department to offer the opportunity of participation to every student who has the ability and desire to do so. Interscholastic athletics fosters competition and cooperation. It also serves to teach the life lessons of dedication, perseverance, preparation, courage, poise, class, honor, discipline, time management, teamwork, sacrifice, unselfishness, service and the pursuit of excellence. All of these are traits that lead to success.

No student is obligated to participate in the program nor is participation in athletics required for graduation. It is also very important to note that the student athlete and parents understand that participation in athletics is a privilege and NOT a right. It is stressed to each participant and parent that this privilege can be revoked by the head coach and/or administration.

Student athletes and parents understand that extra-curricular activities are programs in which the student volunteers to participate knowing that they will accept and follow the standards that have been set by the district and any additional standards set by the head coach.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM

- I. To contribute to the total education process by:**
- A. Developing physical fitness and proper health habits.
 - B. Emphasizing and encouraging self-discipline.
 - C. Developing pride and confidence.
 - D. Encouraging spirit of good sportsmanship.
 - E. Emphasizing growth in the areas of physical, mental, social, psychological, and moral development.

Student Conduct and Discipline Every TISD student athlete is held to the highest standards of character, discipline and responsibility. There may be instances when students fail to uphold these standards and the coach or administration needs to apply disciplinary measures. These are a few examples of reasons in which a student athlete may be suspended or dismissed from the team or entire athletic program.

- Violating the Taft Independent School District Student Code of Conduct
- The use of any substance that is harmful. (Drugs, alcohol and tobacco) (also see below)
- Is disrespectful to coaches, teachers and administrators
- Repeatedly misses practices
- Is not representing the school, district and community in a positive manner.

B. Student Conduct

1. Athletes will be expected to show respect for all other athletes, coaches, teachers, and administrators.
 2. Athletes will be expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at school and on trips.
 3. If an athlete is placed in In-School Suspension or DAEP, he/she will not participate in practice or games until he/she has been released from In-School Suspension or DAEP.
- Continuous placement in ISS/OCS/AEP may result in dismissal from athletics.
4. Stealing from teammates will not be tolerated and can result in a one year suspension from the athletic program.
 5. Profanity will not be tolerated.
 6. Be in class. Be on time. If you miss an athletic period or practice, be sure that it could not be avoided. If you must be absent, call and talk with one of the coaches. You will be required to make-up work missed. Repeated absences may result in dismissal from the team.
 7. **“Hazing”** is against the law and will not be tolerated in the athletic department. **“Hazing,”** means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off school property directed against a student, by one person alone, or acting with others that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are to include other students. Involvement in any **“hazing”** incident can result in a one-year suspension from the athletic program. **“BULLYING”** – Any type of bullying, including “social media” bullying will not be tolerated, and can result in suspension or removal from the athletic program, or an athletic contest.

8. If a student athlete fails 2 six weeks or more, he/she may be removed from the athletic period for the remainder of the year. He/she may participate in athletics after school.
9. Once a student is removed from athletics for disciplinary actions, the student will not be able to try-out for other sports for 1 year.
10. Social Media is an essential tool used today, but it can also be detrimental. Student athletes posting inappropriate comments or pictures that attack the integrity of the program or other student athletes may result in physical retribution, suspension from an athletic contest or removal from the program.

Further, any communication including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, photo sharing, inappropriate texting that is published or appearing on the internet is public domain even if it is marked private. Any member of the TISD athletic program who is involved in inappropriate, disruptive, negative, lewd, obscene, or sexual pictures, comments, or statuses on any social network may result in suspension or removal from the program.

- If it becomes necessary to consider removing a student from a team or the athletic program, the coach of that team will notify the Athletic Director. The student will have the opportunity to confer with the coach and the Athletic Director. Parents will receive notification and be invited to attend the conference.

B. Department Training Rules (in-season and off-season during the school year)

1. **Drugs**

- a. Possession or being under the influence will not be tolerated.
First Offense - Suspension from the Taft Athletic program for one (1) year from the date of dismissal. If another offense occurs, the athlete will then be terminated from the athletic program.
- b. Drug Testing (SEE DISTRICT LOCAL POLICY FNF); attached

2. **Tobacco and/or Alcoholic Beverages**

- Possession or being under the influence will not be tolerated.
First Offense - Conference with the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator and his/her coach, disciplinary action, which will consist of running 2 miles a day for 10 days and probation within the athletic program for one (1) year from the date of the conference. If any athlete refuses disciplinary action, he/she will be terminated from the athletic program.

3. **Felony**

Students charged with a Felony may be placed in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program and may be prohibited from participating in UIL activities.

C. Dress Code (In-Season and Off-Season)

1. Moustaches, beards, hickies and sideburns below the bottom of the ear are not permitted.
 - Violations of this rule can result in a student athlete not participating in school competitions.
2. Athletes hair must be kept neat. Tails, hair below the collar, hair in the eyes, and on the ear will not be permitted.
3. Earrings are not to be worn in the field house, gym, practice fields, weight room, athletic trips or athletic functions/games.
4. Athletes will follow the dress code policy when representing Taft Independent School District at any athletic function.

III. Student Participation

- A. There will be no recruiting by a coach from another sport at the expense of that sport.
- B. An athlete that quits or is dismissed from a sport may not begin working with another sport until the season ends in the sport he/she quit or was dismissed. If an athlete quits athletics, he/she will not be allowed back into the program for a year beginning from the date he/she quit. For example, if an athlete quits in January, he/she will not be allowed to participate until the following January.
- C. Athletes are encouraged to ride to and from a contest in school vehicles. If there is a need to travel another way, it needs to be cleared with the coach and a signed letter from the parents is needed.
 - No student athlete will be released to ride home with anyone other than their parents, unless previously arranged with the administration and a letter must be signed by the school Principal, Assistant Principal, Athletic Director or the Girls Athletic Coordinator.
 - Athletes must turn in their letters stating they will be riding home with someone other than with school transportation *PRIOR* to leaving school.
- D. The Junior High Program will be maintained on a total participation basis.
 1. Unless for disciplinary reasons or not attending practice, all athletes on the team will play in every game for the equivalent of at least $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time.

2. This time may come throughout one (1) quarter of the game or spread out through its entirety.

E. Attendance is Necessary for Participation.

1. An athlete must be in school at least ½ day on the day of competition to be eligible to participate. If an athlete is going to miss practice, please contact the coach's office at **528-2636 ext. 3452**.
2. If an athlete misses a practice, he/she may not start (excused or unexcused). He/She will still be responsible for making up the practice according to the sport.
 3. If an athlete misses two (2) practices, he/she may not play (excused or unexcused). He/She will still be responsible for making up the practice according to the sport. If unexcused, the athlete will not dress out or travel with the team for that upcoming game.
4. Doctor's excuses for not participating are always to be respected. All notes must have nature of injury and restrictions.
5. Excused absences will be left to the discretion of the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator and coach involved.
6. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated. Athletes who miss ½ day or more (unexcused) will not be able to participate in practice that day (refer to E-2). Chronic unexcused absences may result in dismissal of the team or program.

F. Athletes are responsible for all equipment issued to them. If he/she fails to return the equipment, he/she will be responsible for paying for the loss of the equipment or he/she will not be allowed to participate in any UIL activities until the equipment has been returned or paid for by the athlete. Students are encouraged to provide their own locks. *Senior athletes who fail to return or pay for lost equipment may have their diplomas withheld.

G. Club Sports: a club is a sports program outside of the school that is not affiliated with UIL athletics. We feel our athletes' obligations should be to their school team first. We will not excuse our athletes to miss a school contest or practice for a club event.

- All situations which may occur cannot possibly be addressed in this handbook; however, they will be handled appropriately by the Athletic Director when they arise.

IV. Letter Jacket Requirements

A. Lettering Policy

An athletic letter award (jacket) should require serious sacrifices on the part of the student athlete. The award should be a symbol of not only school pride, but also of the

hard work and dedication in the classroom and on the playing field/court. Student Athletes may receive only one major school award during their high school career (jacket). (UIL Constitution and Contest Rules). In order to letter, you must be on a varsity team and finish the season in good standing. After receiving the one major award, certificates or similar awards (called minor awards by the UIL) shall be awarded by the respective coach. The coach of that sport must recommend the athlete. In making recommendations, the coach will take into consideration the following:

- **Conduct**
- **Attendance**
- **Participation – fulfillment of specific criteria for each sport as determined by the coach of that sport in cooperation with the Athletic Director**
- **Finish the season in good standing**

B. Additional participation requirements

1. **Football** – must play in approximately 50% of the games or have made a major contribution to the team, in the opinion of the coaches (the latter subject to approval by the Athletic Director).
 2. **Volleyball** – must play in approximately 50% of the games or have made a major contribution to the team, in the opinion of the coaches (the latter subject to approval by the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator).
 3. **Basketball** - must play in approximately 50% of the games or have made a major contribution to the team, in the opinion of the coaches (the latter subject to approval by the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator).
 4. **Baseball** - must play in approximately 50% of the games or have made a major contribution to the team, in the opinion of the coaches (the latter subject to approval by the Athletic Director).
 5. **Track** – must score at least 10 points at the meets during the season or place at the district meet or have made a major contribution to the team, in the opinion of the coaches (the latter subject to approval by the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator).
 6. **Tennis, Golf, Cross-Country** – must score ten points during the season (1st = 10 pts., 2nd = 7 pts., 3rd = 4 pts., 4th = 1 pt.) or place at the district tournament (1st, 2nd, or 3rd individual or team) or have made a major contribution to the team, in the opinion of the coaches (the latter subject to approval by the Athletic Director/Girls Athletic Coordinator).
- B. Special consideration will be given to seniors competing on the varsity teams but not fulfilling the participation requirements.
- C. Special consideration will be given to athletes injured during the season and unable to complete the remainder of the season to fulfill participation requirements.

- D. Managers may be recommended for lettering purposes if they serve as full-time managers for 2 years of service in 2 or more sports per year.

V. **Limitation on Awards**

- Schools may give one (1) major award, not to exceed \$70.00 in value, to a student during High School enrollment at the same school for participation in one of the interschool competitions. One additional symbolic award, not to exceed \$10.00 in value, may be presented for participation in each additional UIL activity.

VI. **Insurance**

- Taft ISD provides coverage for our student athletes. This is a co-insurance policy, which means that you must also make a claim with your insurance provider in case of an accident. Your insurance policy is the primary insurance provider and the district's policy is the secondary policy. If you have no insurance coverage on your child, our policy will act as the primary insurance carrier; however, it must be understood that the parent assumes responsibility for any claims not covered by the insurance policy.
- When an athlete suffers an injury, you will be given a claim form to complete and take with you to the emergency room or doctor's office. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our insurance policy or insurance coverage options for your child, please call the Executive Director of Human Resources at **528-2636 ext. 2241**.

VII. **Training Room Procedures**

- Taft ISD offers athletic training services to our athletes. Our athletes are expected to see the trainer when they have an injury so that our trainer can treat the problem. When an athlete is injured, our trainer requires the athlete to immediately report the injury and receive care so that he/she can recover sooner. Athletes can receive treatment before school or after school. Unless the trainer requests, athletes will not receive treatment during the athletic period or practice. Athletes will not be allowed to miss class time in order to receive treatment. The athletic trainer or coach must approve any workout missed due to an injury prior to the workout.
- We ask that in the event of an injury, our athletes see our trainer before going to the doctor on their own. This will ensure that our trainer can thoroughly treat the athlete and prevent the parents or guardians from any unnecessary medical cost.
- Please feel free to contact the trainer's office at any time for assistance.

Athletic Trainer: CJ De La Garza
528-2636 ext. 3477

Taft Athletic Handbook

TAFT INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT PARENT-STUDENT ATHLETE AGREEMENT

We understand that participation in the Taft ISD athletic program is a privilege and NOT a right. Being a member of a school team is an honor that comes with responsibility and accountability. A TISD student athlete is expected to be a role model and must make the commitment to the following:

1. Abstain from the use of illegal chemical substances including drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
2. Follow the spirit and letter of the rules and regulations of the TISD Student Code of Conduct as well as the TISD Student-Parent Athletic Handbook.
3. Attend school daily, be prompt to all classes and attend all practices and games.
4. Maintain passing grades in all classes to remain eligible throughout my career as a student athlete.
5. Treat teachers, administrators, coaches, teammates and opponents with respect.
6. Refrain from the use of profanity, poor sportsmanship, hazing, bullying and the negative use of social media.
7. Be a positive role model for my school in my attitude, appearance and behavior.
8. Treat TISD and opponent's facilities with care and respect.
9. Follow and trust the decisions of the coaching staff and understand that the head coach will make decisions based on what is best for the team and not the individual.
10. Understand that extra-curricular activities are voluntary and we accept any additional team rules by head coaches for their respective programs.

As a participant in the TISD athletic program, we voluntarily pledge to follow the standards that are stated in this handbook. We understand that failure to satisfactorily fulfill those commitments may lead to suspension and/ or removal as a member of the team and athletic program.

We understand and consent to the responsibilities outlined in the Taft Athletic Handbook. We also understand and agree that _____ (student) shall be held accountable for the behavior and consequences outlined in the Taft Athletic Handbook. We understand that any athlete who violates the Athletic Code of Conduct shall be subject to disciplinary action. We also understand that the student will not participate in any game or scrimmage until this sheet is signed and returned to the coaches.

Student Athlete _____ Date _____

In recognition of this student-athlete's commitment to the program at TISD, we pledge our support in helping him/her honor those commitments.

Parent(s) / Guardian _____ Date _____

If you have any questions or concerns, please call 528-2636 ext. 3452 or ext. 3432.

Thank you,

**J.J. Suarez
Athletic Director
Taft ISD**

**Tasha Wilson
Girls Athletic Coordinator
Taft ISD**