

**TATUM
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT**



**ATHLETIC CODE OF
CONDUCT
&
PARENT HANDBOOK
2025-2026**

ATHLETIC POLICIES FOR THE STUDENT ATHLETE **(THE ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT)**

TATUM ISD

Participation in the athletic program and/or University Interscholastic League contests is a **PRIVILEGE**, not a right. No student is required to take part in the contests or activities. Therefore, it is imperative that all students and parents of students taking part in the program understand the following Athletic Code of Conduct and conform to the rules and regulations therein and that the coaches of the sport or activities and the athletic director shall have every right to remove these privileges.

The goals of the athletic programs of TATUM ISD are designed to:

- Develop attitudes in each individual that will become an integral part of his/her quest for success
- Further an appreciation for optimum health and physical fitness of the participant
- Encourage the student-athlete to grow physically, mentally, and socially
- Develop the characteristics of sportsmanship, loyalty, discipline, training, courage, improvement, and pride in the student-athlete

The student-athlete must understand that both winning and losing are part of the game. A student-athlete must be disciplined to be a good loser as well as a gracious winner. The student-athlete must never use profanity or resort to illegal tactics. Excessive displays of temper, flagrant violations of contest rules, etc., will not be tolerated. Total respect to officials at all times is an absolute must. Any discussion of calls made by officials will be done by the coach. Any behavior contrary to the above or any other act that is not conducive to good sportsmanship may result in removal from the contest and possible further disciplinary action, including, but not limited to removal from the team.

ATHLETIC DRESS CODE

To participate in athletics in TATUM ISD, certain standards must be maintained, one of which is acceptable grooming and dress as determined by the district Board of Trustees, the Athletic Director, and the head coach of each sport. Specific standards of grooming are necessary in order to provide a safe and healthy athletic environment, to express uniformity among team members, and to promote self-discipline of the student-athlete.

The student-athlete should be in compliance with the student dress code as it appears in the Student Code of Conduct and student handbook. Also, the head coach of a sport may determine additional dress code requirements for his/her sport. The athlete should be neatly dressed for competition. Each team member is to be dressed the same as his/her teammates, while participating in an event. Equipment worn by the athlete should be identical to his/her team members, with the exception of shoes. Shoes, if different, should be of the same color when possible. Game uniform tops/shirts must be worn tucked in at all times unless the top is designed otherwise.

FAILING TO FULFILL COMMITMENT

A student should take his/her decision to join an athletic team seriously. Athletics takes much hard work, time, and dedication. Any participant who quits a sport after he/she has begun will not be allowed to participate in any other sport until the regular season has ended in the sport he/she quit. Unless he/she quits upon the recommendation of the coach.

CARE AND USAGE OF EQUIPMENT

The athletic budget provides money to field well-equipped teams in all sports. While this equipment is not always the most expensive available, it is always good equipment and provides adequate protection where needed. With proper care, this equipment can be kept in use for the duration for which it is designed, possibly allowing budget money designated for replacement equipment to be used in other areas of the athletic program. The athlete is financially responsible for all equipment that has been issued to him/her.

Proper care of equipment relies basically on the use of common sense by the student-athlete. This includes keeping equipment as clean as possible at all times and repairing equipment as soon as possible after it is damaged.

Poorly-fitting and/or damaged equipment can be a hindrance to any athletic team and can often lead to injuries. The athlete should ensure that equipment issued to him/her fits properly and is not damaged. If issued equipment does not fit properly or is damaged, the athlete should notify the equipment manager or coach.

Equipment not being used should be returned to the equipment manager or coach. Equipment should not be borrowed from other athletes. Report missing equipment immediately.

PRACTICE REGULATIONS

Practice is an integral part of developing into the best athlete a student can be. Therefore, all athletes are expected to participate to their fullest potential at all practice sessions. Absence from any practice must be approved ahead of time by the coach. Missing a practice without permission may result in suspension or removal from the team. When provided the opportunity, the athlete must attend the off-season program to participate during the regular season.

All athletes are expected to follow all rules and regulations set up by the coach. Unsportsmanlike conduct during practice sessions will not be tolerated. Poor effort during practice will not be accepted. Work as hard in practice as you intend to play in a game. Inappropriate effort in practice may result in reduced playing time or suspension from future athletic contests. Students are responsible for making contact with their coach well in advance before they miss practice or a game. The student will be responsible for making up any missed practices or games. Absences will be determined to be either excused or unexcused, depending upon the rules set forth by each individual program.

If an athlete chooses to play two sports whose seasons overlap, the athlete will complete the season for the sport that began first before beginning the next sport. By doing this, it eliminates conflict for both the athlete and the coaches so that no one player would have to choose which game to attend, for which sport, on a particular night.

TRAVELING TO OFF-CAMPUS CONTESTS

All student-athletes in junior high and high school in TATUM ISD are representatives of our community, school, and coaches. Therefore, it is expected that all student-athletes will dress in an acceptable manner on trips and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects pride in themselves and the community. At a minimum, the school dress code should be worn at all times when representing a TATUM ISD athletic program. Coaches may impose stricter dress requirements on athletes. Violations may result in suspension and possible expulsion from the team or athletic program.

Athletes are expected to be on time for all contests. Time of departure will be set by the coach. Tardiness may result in discipline consequences within the program.

Traveling representatives of TATUM ISD should show respect for opposing teams' facilities and any other venues visited. Abuse of any facilities will not be tolerated. Behavior in restaurants and other public places must be appropriate at all times.

Athletes will be expected to make all trips to and from contests on district-provided transportation. Athletes will be expected to return on this transportation unless there is an emergency situation or when parents are present and prior arrangements have been made for the student-athlete to leave with them. Arrangements for alternate transportation after an athletic event must be made between the parents and the head coach. This arrangement must be in writing and signed by the parent with whom the student will leave. Athletes will not be allowed to leave with anyone other than their own parent(s).

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR / SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Student-athletes are expected to be leaders inside and outside of the classroom. Therefore, a student-athlete who is a habitual problem in the classroom and/or receives repeated poor conduct grades may be suspended from a team on a temporary or permanent basis. In addition, a student-athlete may receive additional athletic consequences for inappropriate behavior in the classroom or for other violations of the Student or Athletic Codes of Conduct. Serious violations of any part of the above mentioned codes, including those involving off-campus placements, will be referred to the Athletic Director.

LISTENING TO INSTRUCTION

To be a part of the TISD athletic program, all athletes are expected to be well behaved and disciplined. They must be coachable. Coaches want to see every student be as successful as they can in school, athletics, and in life. Insubordination, disrespect, and disobedience to coaches will not be tolerated. Student-athletes will face disciplinary action for bad behavior toward coaches that could lead to being disciplined in athletics, suspension, or in cases of repeated insubordination, removal from the team or program. We cannot win with undisciplined players and it should not have to be tolerated.

PARTICIPATION

The following items must be on file in the Athletic Department before you gain eligibility to participate in any athletic/extracurricular practice session or game. In addition, the final requirement deals with extracurricular eligibility at the beginning of the first nine weeks.

A. Physical Examination

A pre-participation physical evaluation is required bi-annually (every 2 years) for all students, grades 7 through 12. An UIL approved physical examination form is available in the Athletic Director's Office or the Athletic Training Office. (Be sure to use only the approved UIL Form to record physical examinations). The physical covers all sports for a two-year period. Each Spring, our Athletic Training Staff schedules a group physical session for all Junior High and High School athletes provided at little to no cost.

B. Athletic Department Forms Packet

This Packet includes:

- 1.) UIL Acknowledgement of Rules
- 2.) Medical History Information
- 3.) Personal Student and Parent Information.
- 4.) General Eligibility Rules
- 5.) Transcript Release (Every Sophomore, Junior and Senior must sign this form in order for their transcripts to be released to colleges and/or college recruiters. This form is made available through the THS Counselors Office.)

Special Note: Please make sure this packet is filled out completely! Do not leave any requested information blank.

C. Acknowledgement of TISD Athletic Handbook

The student/athlete and the parent/guardian should sign the Handbook Acknowledgement Form. This verifies the receipt of the Athletic Handbook and acknowledges that the student/athlete and parent/guardian will comply with the expectations and policies therein.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE

Players must understand that they are representatives of our program and that use of these substances is a negative reflection of our program.

TISD HAS A RANDOM DRUG-TESTING PROGRAM FOR IN WHICH ALL STUDENT-ATHLETES GRADES 7-12 ARE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE.

1. If a student tests positive for illegal drugs or alcohol, that student will be suspended from any extra-curricular event for 30 days. Any student who does test positive will then be automatically selected to test again at every testing date for the remainder of the year.
2. If a student has a positive test a second time, that student is suspended from all extra-curricular activities for one calendar year. After the year and completing a drug awareness class the student may return.
3. If a student tests positive a third time, they are suspended from all extra-curricular activities permanently.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

At TATUM we want to see all of our athletes being good citizens and role models on and off the field of play. Trouble with civil authorities could lead to suspension from athletics. Any of the following are considered major violations: possessing, selling, delivering, or using drugs/alcohol/tobacco or paraphernalia, vaping, juuling or using any look-alike drugs; stealing, vandalism; any conduct resulting in an arrest and/or Class B Misdemeanor; assault; indecent exposure or sexual gestures; unlawful carrying of weapons; or membership in a gang or participation in gang like activity.

Any of these could remove you from the Team. It will be up to the Coaches discretion. We will go by the Student Code of Conduct from The School.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media is a tool used for communication and supplying information. Social Media being used to demean or attack a student, coach, administrator or a parent will not be tolerated. That individual will be disciplined by the Athletic Director. We want to create a family atmosphere in our program and expect our staff, athletes and community to support all programs. Inappropriate use of Social Media that is related to the Athletic Program could result in suspension and/or removal from Athletics.

TEAM TRAVEL

1. **ALWAYS DRESS APPROPRIATELY!!!** How you look says a lot about who you are and who you representthe **TATUM EAGLES** Athletic Program.

2. **ALWAYS BE PROMPT/ON TIME!!!** The bus will leave at the designated time.
3. Remember our purpose. The trip to the game should be used for mental preparation, building team chemistry and connecting with your teammates. Please note that MP3's, iPod's, etc. will be allowed; however, make sure that you do not disturb those around you!!! We encourage you to carry cell phones on athletic trips; please be sure to silence them as you board the bus for the journey to the game. Cell phones will not be allowed to be accessible during a game or contest. They may be turned on with coach's approval upon the conclusion of the final competition.
4. When missing a class or classes due to an athletic event, it is the responsibility of the athlete to inform his/her teacher the day before departure in order to make arrangements for makeup work to be completed. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher so be very respectful, polite and schedule your time wisely.
5. **Our staff desires each athlete to return to TATUM with their TEAM!** If there is a special circumstance and an athlete needs to ride home with his/her parents, the immediate team coach must be personally contacted *prior* to departure from the *game* and **a signature must be recorded by the parent.** Emergency situations will be left up to the coach's discretion; however, proper documentation must be recorded.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

- Grades 7, 8, & 9: The student must have been promoted from previous grade
- Grade 10: The student must have completed at least five credits
- Grade 11: The student must have completed at least ten credits or must have earned five credits during the previous twelve months
- Grade 12: The student must have completed at least fifteen credits or must have earned five credits during the previous twelve months.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY & DAEP PLACEMENT

- A student is ineligible for athletic participation during any off-campus disciplinary placement (DAEP). He or she may not participate in games or practices.
- With head coach and Athletic Council approval, a student returning from off-campus placement may enter an off-season program.
- With the approval of the Head Coach, a student returning from off-campus placement may enter an in-season program.
- If an athlete is allowed to return to the athletic program, coaches are to provide appropriate conditioning opportunities that will prepare the athlete for a return to competitive physical activities.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY & ISS PLACEMENT

- If a student-athlete is placed in ISS, then the following consequences will be issued:

- The student-athlete is ineligible to compete in a game until the disciplinary assignment for the day is completed.
- The student-athlete is eligible to practice after school on days that they are assigned to ISS. The student-athlete is expected to be in attendance at practice every day after school while in ISS.
- During the off-season, a student-athlete assigned to ISS will be expected to make up their missed athletic period workout.

HAZING

Hazing is any action or activity that, regardless of location, intent, or consent of participants, causes or intends to cause: 1) physical harm, 2) mental harm, 3) anxieties, or 4) degrading or disgracing a child for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in an organization. Hazing has long been a tradition for many organizations, clubs, and sports teams, causing members to endure physical or mental abuse in the name of brotherhood, sisterhood, and unity.

Hazing is an illegal activity (Texas Education Code 37.151-37.157) and is also a violation of the TISD Student Code of Conduct. Therefore hazing under any circumstances will not be tolerated in the athletic programs of our school district. Students found to be in violation of this portion of the Athletic Code will be subject to disciplinary action through the athletic program, the school district, and the judicial system.

TEN COMMANDMENTS **OF CHAMPIONSHIP PARENTS**

1. Be positive with your child; let him/her know they are accomplishing something by simply being part of the team. Don't put them down.
2. Don't offer excuses for them if they are not playing. Encourage them to work harder and do their best.
3. Don't put down their coaches, teachers, etc. Remember, these represent the "boss", the "authority", the "parent", the "law", etc. If you are constantly bad-mouthing the coaches, how can you expect the youngster to play for them? By doing this you are, in effect, teaching them to be a complainer, not a doer.
4. Encourage your child/daughter to follow team rules. Whether he/she is first string or third string, players must follow rules. Athletics are very demanding, and coaches must concern themselves with a player's off-the field activities in order to get the maximum physical and mental performance from them.
5. Insist on good grades. If he/she doesn't pass, he/she doesn't play.
6. Don't try to live your life vicariously through your child. This is a kids' game; let them play it. Don't show animosity or jealousy to any of your child's teammates. This type of envy rubs off on your child, and it can devastate a team. Who cares who scores, etc. as long as everyone plays their role to the fullest.
7. Don't be a know-it-all. The coaches work hard with the players 10 months a year, and they know what a player can and cannot do. As a fan, you are entitled to scream your head off, but please don't become belligerent and arrogant toward the players. They are amateurs and your children. Respect that.
8. Insist on your child's respect for team rules, school rules, game officials, and sportsmanship. Don't let him embarrass their family, school, and team by some "uncalled-for" gesture. Self-respect begins with self-control.
9. Encourage your child to improve their self-image by believing in themselves. Every child has been created with worth and value. Always remind your child of this fact. Don't compare and contrast your child with family members who played previously or with other team members. Every youngster is different.
10. Encourage your child to play for the love of the game, not for a scholarship or something that is in the hands of a college recruiter. Insist on unselfishness. Usually good things happen to the unselfish, hard working athlete.

PARENT / COACH RELATIONSHIPS

Both parenting and coaching are very difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding between coaches and parents, both are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a more positive experience for everyone. Parents should be informed of the expectations placed on them and their children by the coach. Coaches should be afforded the opportunity to meet and discuss any concerns of the parent at the appropriate time and place.

Communication parents should expect from their child's coach:

1. Coach's philosophy.
2. Expectations the coach has for the student and others on the team.
3. Locations and times of practices and contests.
4. Team requirements (team rules, off-season expectations, special equipment needs, fees, etc.).
5. Procedures that will be followed if the student becomes injured during participation.

Communication coaches expect from parents:

1. Concerns regarding the student expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place.
2. Specific concerns in regard to the coach's philosophy and/or expectations.
3. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with a coach:

1. The mental and physical treatment of your child.
2. What your child needs to do to improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very important to understand your child may not be playing as much as you may hope. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe is in the best interests of all students participating. As you can see from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those listed next, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues NOT appropriate for discussion with your child's coach:

1. How much playing time each athlete is getting.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Any situation that deals with other student-athletes.

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. These are not discouraged, as it is important for each party to have a clear understanding of the others' position. **Parents seeking a resolution conference for athletic concerns should not approach the coach immediately following an athletic contest or practice.** Coaches have responsibilities at these times that limit the time they have available to meet with parents. In addition, the time immediately following practices or games can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution of the situation and can often escalate it. When these conferences are necessary, the following steps are suggested to help promote resolution to the issue.

1. Conflict resolution should occur in the following order:
 - A. Player speaks with the coach
 - B. Parents speak with the coach of the particular sport
2. Decide exactly what you expect to accomplish as a result of the meeting.
3. Stick to discussing the facts, as you understand them.
4. Listen to the coach's response.
5. If the concern is still not resolved, a conference involving the student and/or parent, head coach of the sport, and the Director of Athletics should be scheduled.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

The purpose of participating in high school athletics should not be a quest to win a scholarship to perform at the collegiate level. The following information is provided to help parents and athletes realize the difficult task faced by a high school athlete to earn a free college education through athletics and the even more difficult task it is to become a professional athlete.

Estimated Probability of Competing in Athletics Beyond the High School Level (Information furnished by the University Interscholastic League)

	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	Football	Baseball	Men's Soccer
High School Athletes in U.S.	549,500	456,900	983,600	455,300	321,400
HS Senior Athletes in U.S.	157,000	130,500	281,000	130,100	91,800
NCAA Student Athletes	15,700	14,400	56,500	25,700	18,200
NCAA Freshman Positions	4,500	4,100	16,200	7,300	5,200
NCAA Senior Athletes	3,500	3,200	12,600	5,700	4,100
NCAA Athletes Drafted	44	32	250	600	76
Percent High School to NCAA	2.9%	3.1%	5.8%	5.6%	5.7%
Percent NCAA to Professional	1.3%	1.0%	2.0%	10.5%	1.9%
Percent HS to Professional	0.03%	0.02%	0.09%	0.5%	0.08%

COLLEGE RECRUITING

What we can do-

1. Remind students to take the ACT and SAT test.
2. Put emphasis on a high grade point average.
3. We, as coaches, will assist all student athletes with questions, making individual highlight tapes, and any other help we can give with regards to the recruiting process.
4. We, as coaches, will give positive feedback to college recruiters. We will send video anywhere the student desires us to.

What you can do-

1. Make good grades and maintain a high GPA.
2. Take the ACT and SAT test as many times as necessary to obtain a qualifying score.
3. Complete your paperwork regarding FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
4. Create a certified account for the NCAA clearinghouse
5. Go to college mini-camps or combines.
6. Assist with making individual highlight videos to send to colleges.

Recruiting Process-

1. Colleges send questionnaires and enter kids into databases.
2. Colleges select players and send your child letters and questions.
3. Colleges ask for video to analyze potential selected players and ask high school coaches about grades, character and college playing potential.
4. Colleges invite and rank kids at their camps.
5. Colleges assess their program needs and rank the top high school prospects in order to recruit.
6. College recruiters will recruit multiple high school players for each position and each scholarship.
7. College recruiters will offer scholarships to their top prospects only. If that prospect signs or commits to another program they will go to their second choice. (All the time “stringing along “ all possible recruits for that position until they sign who they want.)
8. After signing day many Division II and III colleges will sign prospects who were overlooked or ask recruits to walk on with limited or no money offered for college.

LETTERING POLICIES

Each Head Coach is responsible for establishing and adhering to the criteria by which an athlete may letter. As the demands and expectations of each sport are different, so will be the letter criteria. Basic considerations such as attendance, eligibility, sportsmanship, citizenship, training rules, participation and general attitude will be included in each coach's criteria. It is up to each Head Coach to inform his/her athletes of the TISD Athletic Award guideline criteria prior to the start of his/her specific season. Lettering criteria for each sport should also be submitted to the AD for approval before communication to the parents of athletes via pre-season parent information meeting.

Letter Jacket -- Awarded one time during an athlete's high school career. A letter jacket is received for the first letter an athlete receives. A student/athlete quitting a sport after the first contest will forfeit any award for that sport. If a Freshman letters in a sport they can receive their Jacket. There will be a spring and a fall fitting for letter jackets.

The athletic secretary will notify coaches when Letterman jacket packets are delivered from the vendor. Each head coach must distribute a packet to each athlete who has earned a jacket. There will also be posters throughout the school so students will be aware of when/where to order jackets.

General Requirements for Lettering

1. If an athlete fails a class that affects the season it could be considered grounds for not lettering based upon the judgment of the Head Coach.
2. If a player is injured in a sport, it is up to the Head Coach as to whether that athlete will letter.
3. Managers/Student Athletic Trainers -- Managers will receive appropriate awards based upon recommendation of Head Coach. Student Trainers will receive appropriate awards based upon recommendation of Head Athletic Trainer.
4. A player of a team sport (not tennis, golf, powerlifting, cross country or track) is eligible for a jacket if they have been on the varsity for at least 75% of the season or more.
5. An athlete in tennis, golf, cross country, or powerlifting is eligible for a jacket if they qualify for regionals as a team or individual.
6. An athlete who participates in track and field is eligible for a jacket if they place first through sixth at district in varsity competition.

The lettering policy for TISD is as follows: all student-athletes that participate in fifty percent of district competition in their sport qualifies them for a letter in that sport. (Track/Cross Country) the student athlete must compete on Varsity for the entire season or score at the varsity district meet . Final decision is at the coaches discretion based on Eligibility, character, work ethic and attendance.