

TRINITY

TCA Athletics Handbook 2023-2024

Coach Dexter Williams, Athletic Director
Coach Darren Bowling, Associate Athletic Director

Trinity Christian Academy
10 Windy City Road
Jackson, Tennessee 38305
731.668.8500|www.tcalions.com

- The *TCA Athletics Handbook* constitutes an annual agreement between the school and each student-athlete and their parents.
- This handbook is updated annually and is accessible and available on TCA's website, www.tcalions.com.

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WELCOME

Dear Student-Athlete and Parent(s),

TCA is committed to help train and equip students to serve the Lord by working to prepare them spiritually, academically, and physically. Our primary goal in TCA athletics is to provide an excellent quality athletic program that seeks to glorify God. Athletics is a valued and integral part of ministry and discipleship in the TCA community.

The purpose of this handbook is for TCA student-athletes and parents to know the policies and procedures of TCA Athletics and to follow them respectfully. The *TCA Athletics Handbook* constitutes an annual agreement between the school and each student-athlete and parent.

It is important for each student-athlete and their parent(s) to understand that:

- It is a privilege and responsibility to represent TCA as an athlete.
- Dedication to excellence is a priority for TCA athletics, but is not limited to statistics or wins. TCA is dedicated to excellence of conduct, work ethic, and competition as individuals, as team members, and as representatives of Christ and the school.
- Our athletes are expected to be respectful, hard-working, and successful students in the academic classroom.
- TCA athletes are to strive to set a positive example of leadership in our school community.
- Our athletes and their families are to conduct themselves with integrity and self-control.
- TCA strives for each athletic team to be consistent with the teachings of the Bible, the policies of the school, and the school's governing athletic bodies.
- The success of any one person is always the result of dedicated effort on the part of many people. While we recognize individual performances, we place a greater emphasis on the achievements of the team.

We are honored to serve you at TCA in athletics. Please contact us directly if you have questions or concerns that relate to any aspect of TCA athletics or athletic facilities.

Go Lions!!

Coach Dexter Williams, Athletic Director
dexter.williams@mytcalions.com

Coach Darren Bowling, Assoc. Athletic Director
darren.bowling@mytcalions.com

WHO WE ARE

Mission

Trinity Christian Academy Athletics exists to glorify God through athletic programming that is Biblically based, developing Christ-like character, while honoring God through excellence in athletic competition.

Philosophy

Christian athletics is a ministry. When athletics are seen from the Christian perspective, winning has a broader definition and our athletes have a greater purpose. We want our coaches and athletes to be used by God in the lives of those they meet. Trinity Christian Academy athletics always aim to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit as our Lord opens doors for active ministry. *“Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve...”* (Matthew 20:26, 28)

Christian athletics is an arena for teaching the principles of God’s Word. Athletics is an opportunity to practice God’s principles. Examples of these principles are controlling the feelings that arise in competition, working together as members of the body of Christ, winning from God’s perspective rather than a person’s, being submissive to authority, and demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit during stressful situations. It’s our hope that our athletes are controlled by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) and produce Christ-like actions so that others may see Jesus through them.

Christian athletics is an arena used for teaching the importance of winning from God’s perspective. Scripture encourages striving hard for the goal, to be successful, and to win the prize. *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.* (1 Corinthians 9:24) Christ expects us to give a total effort in all that we do, and therefore, is not satisfied with anything less than our best in a practice session, a game, or in the classroom. *They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.* (1 Corinthians 9:25) Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Christian athletes learn to cherish eternal rewards as a treasure of great price. They learn that the most treasured reward often does not show up on the scoreboard, but in the lives of those who have developed a deeper desire for the things of Christ and in those whose lives were touched by the Christian athlete. Ultimately, winning is defined as *pleasing the Lord with our attitudes and actions.* This only begins when the athlete develops a desire to please the Lord rather than people. *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.* (Colossians 3:23) We want our athletes to catch the vision that our Lord attends every athletic event and is our primary audience.

Athletic Core Values

1. To glorify God (I Corinthians 10:31)
2. To emulate Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:1)
3. To develop Christian character (Luke 2:52)
4. To demonstrate exemplary sportsmanship (II Timothy 2:5)
5. To strive for God-honoring excellence in athletics and in life (Colossians 3:23)

TCA ATHLETIC VALUES

- Eternal perspective** - Each coach strives to see the lives of athletes, both team members and competitors, changed by encountering the Truth of Jesus Christ. Coaches are expected to actively mentor their team members through their instruction and example.
- Excellence** - By aspiring to do and be their very best, participants realize radical growth, please God, and inspire others through their commitment and achievement.
- Responsibility and integrity** - Coaches, staff members, and athletes will be known for doing what is right and keeping their word, even when it is not convenient. They will also be known for their reliability, following through on their commitments.
- Servant-leadership** - Service to others is the greatest good. Serving is the most effective and influential form of leadership.
- Sportsmanship** - The outcome of a competition is not merely measured by a win or a loss but in how the contest was waged and the sport itself was played. Coaches and athletes strive to demonstrate respect at all times.
- Teamwork** - By working together, individuals increase their potential for success. Members of a team promote high levels of achievement by providing accountability and encouraging optimal performance.

MEMBERSHIP

Trinity Christian Academy is a Division II West Region Class A athletic school and is a full member of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association ([TSSAA](#)). [2023-2024 TSSAA Handbook](#)

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Trinity Christian Academy values a broad based curriculum that exposes students to a variety of experiences. We offer two or three levels for each sport. Most sports, depending on the number of players in the program, will have JV, and Varsity level teams.

High School Teams

TCA high school teams emphasize Christ-honoring attitudes and sportsmanship, athletic opportunity, skill advancement, tactics & strategies of the game, academic strength, and increased intensity of competition. Not all players will play in every game. JV Teams will be available as roster size allows to provide continued development opportunities for all athletes on the team.

Middle School Teams

TCA middle school teams emphasize Christ-honoring attitudes and sportsmanship, athletic opportunity, skill identification and development, tactics & strategies of the game, academic strength, and intensity of competition. Not all players will play in every game.

- Selected through a tryout process based upon TCA tryout policies
- Open to any enrolled student in grades 6-8 for the upcoming school year

- This tryout will take place in the spring of the previous school year
- Any student who enrolls at TCA after tryouts have been conducted will have an evaluation opportunity scheduled with the varsity coach to determine if they will be added to the roster
- JV Teams will be available as roster size allows to provide continued development opportunities for all athletes on the team.
- A JV team will be included in the middle school team's roster

6th Grade Basketball Team:

- Selected through a tryout process based upon TCA tryout policies
- Open to any enrolled student in the 6th grade for the current school year who is not selected for the Middle School Team
- This tryout will take place in the fall of the current school year

Lower School Teams

TCA Lower School teams emphasize fundamentals, teamwork, Christ-honoring sportsmanship, and developing a love for the sport. Competitive excellence will be taught, but not to the detriment of all athletes on the team having an opportunity to participate.

PAL Basketball

- PAL Basketball teams will be offered for grades Kindergarten through 4th grade.
- Age Groups
 - Kindergarten (Coed)
 - 1st and 2nd grade (Boys and Girls leagues)
 - 3rd and 4th grade (Boys and Girls leagues)
- Purpose of PAL Basketball at TCA: teams emphasize fundamentals, teamwork, Christ-honoring sportsmanship, and developing a love for the sport. Competitive excellence will be taught, but not to the detriment of all athletes on the team having an opportunity to participate.
- All players must be enrolled as full time students at TCA
- Each team can only have 2 coaches that participate in the player draft and on the bench for games.
- All PAL coaches for TCA will be required to submit a background check before working with TCA students.
- Every player who signs up will be placed on a team.
- All players will be given the opportunity to play at least the equivalent of a full quarter in every game.
- Parents are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that represents the mission of PAL league and TCA.
- Unsportsmanlike behavior displayed by any individual could result in ejection from the gym and possible ban for parent and/or athlete from future participation in PAL Basketball.

TCA Upper School (6-12) Tryout Policy:

- Students will receive at a least a week's notice in advance of the tryout date for a specific team.
- A TCA Varsity Coach will oversee all TCA team tryouts.
- No parent of a child trying out is allowed to coach or participate in the evaluation process unless that parent is an employee of TCA and directly coaching the specified sport at the Varsity level at TCA
- The cutting process will begin in 6th grade for sports at TCA when more students want to participate than there are available roster spots **and** the following criteria:
 1. Skill Level
 2. Emotional Control
 3. Social Maturity
 4. Physical Readiness
 5. Maintaining Good Academic Standing - Teacher Recommendations will be required to participate in TCA Athletics. The Teacher Recommendation must be done by a teacher in a Core Academic Class.
 6. Maintaining Good Disciplinary Standing - A student may be removed from any team, even after the tryout, based on poor academic progress and/or disciplinary issues.
- At the conclusion of tryouts, parents and students will be individually notified within 2 school days of their tryout results.

Playing-Up Policy

4th and/or 5th grade students may participate at the MS level only if the following criteria are met:

- There are not enough students in grades 6-8 willing to participate in the given sport to complete a roster.
- The parents/guardians submit written permission to assume all liability and consent to the student playing at the middle school level.
- The student's family will pay the TCA athletic fee plus any associated team fees for the sport they are participating in.
- Elementary students can not participate on a middle school team from which students in grades 6-8 have been cut for any reason, other than disciplinary and/or academic issues.
- Elementary students **CANNOT PRACTICE** with a middle school team if they are not on that particular team.

8th grade students will be allowed to participate at the HS level only if they meet the following criteria:

1. They are eligible to participate in accordance with [TSSAA guidelines](#)
2. Parents/Guardians have been made aware of HS participation starting the student's eligibility "clock" with TSSAA and sign proper documentation acknowledging that TCA has made them aware of the policies in place.
3. The 8th grade student may join the HS team at the invitation of the HS head coach for that sport at the conclusion of their MS season.
4. An 8th grade student may forgo their MS eligibility in a sport and join the HS team if they are determined by the HS head coach and athletic administration to possess these qualities:

- The 8th grade student has the potential to improve the High School team.
- The student possesses the demonstrated physical, emotional, and social maturity to handle high school athletics and situations.
- The high school head coach and athletic administration determine that the athlete's skill and abilities are a better fit for HS than MS
- Parent/Guardian approval of forgoing Middle School competition for that sport

High School Sports

Fall - Cheer, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Girls Soccer, Volleyball

Winter - Basketball and Cheer

Spring - Baseball, Boys Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field

Middle School Sports

Fall - Cheer, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Girls Soccer, Softball

Winter - Basketball, Cheer, Volleyball

Spring - Baseball, Boys Soccer, Golf, Tennis, Track & Field

Lower School Sports

Fall - Football (beginning in 4th grade), Cross Country (beginning in 5th grade), Cheerleading (5th)

Winter - Basketball (PAL K-4th, 5th grade separate team)

Spring - Track & Field (beginning in 5th grade)

TCA Athletic Facilities

- Prior written approval is necessary for TCA to remain in compliance with aesthetic and building requirements and potential facility growth that may affect the intended donation.
- No one is to remove, alter, or add to TCA's athletic fields or facilities without advanced and written approval from the Athletic Director or Associate Athletic Director.
- No one should purchase or provide equipment or services for the school and expect payment without having prior written approval from the Athletic and Business Offices.
- Invoices for construction, services, or equipment not previously approved in writing through the Athletic and Business Offices cannot be paid by the school without donations to cover the invoiced costs or funds allocated from the connected sport.

TCA Athletic Donations

- TCA appreciates the generosity of those called by God to give to TCA athletics. We want to do our part as a school to honor our donors and to be responsible stewards of all gifts.
- All donations to TCA are to be made through the Heritage Fund in the Development or Business Office.
- One hundred percent of donations go directly where the donor specifies. If for any reason this is not possible, the school will communicate with the donor to discuss and offer reimbursement/return of the donation.

Athletic donations made through the Heritage Fund provide important information so that :

- TCA remains in compliance with facility aesthetic and building requirements and potential facility growth that may affect the intended donation
- Donors are acknowledged and thanked for their donation
- Head coaches, the Athletic Department, and the school are aware of the donation
- Donors may be communicated with regarding the application of donated funds, equipment, or services
- Donors may be communicated with regarding potential tax donation forms

Important Athletic Donation Parameters

- Donations may be specifically designated to an athletic team; however, these funds are under the complete oversight and professional discretion of the Head Coach and Athletic Director.
- In order to help protect the integrity and sustainability of a school-led and mission-focused athletic program, TCA will not accept donations to help pay or fund a specific person/coach in any sport. TCA coaches are solely employed by the school. Their hiring, retainment, and separation from the school are the sole responsibility of the Head Coach, Athletic Director, and applicable Administration.
- No one has the right or permission to remove, alter, or add to TCA's athletic fields or facilities without advanced and written approval from the Athletic Director or Associate Athletic Director.
- No one should not purchase or provide equipment or services for the school and expect payment without having prior written approval from the Athletic Office, which is required to be documented in the school's Business Office. Invoices for equipment or services not previously approved in writing through the Athletic Department and Business Office cannot be paid by the school without donations to cover the invoiced costs or funds allocated from the connected sport.
- Donations may be made through our website, in person in our Development or Business Office, or by mail.
- Donations given directly to coaches are required to be submitted to our Development or Business Office by coaches for proper processing.

Sample athletic designations for Check Memo, email, or note: Football Equipment; Soccer Scoreboard, Baseball Tarp; Tennis Lights; Basketball Tournament Expenses, Elem PE Equipment, etc.

BOOSTER CLUB

TCA's Booster Club is a parent organization whose mission is to enrich the school's Christ-centered mission through the athletic community by providing financial support, promoting an increased attitude of positive school spirit, and helping each student-athlete reach his/her highest potential. In addition, the Booster Club desires to be a positive public relations agency to our community and to promote a spirit of cooperation and unity between parents, students, coaches, teachers, and administrators. Responsibilities include: planning development events, praying for all of the student-athletes and their families, and financially assisting the athletics program at Trinity Christian Academy.

The Athletic Director serves as the liaison between the booster club and the school.

TCA's Athletic Booster Club is not a stand alone entity or organization and may only exist and/or operate under the umbrella of administrative approval of the school. TCA's Athletic Booster Club is a parent club that operates under the same tax exempt status and federal ID number as the school designed to support TCA's mission through school athletics.

STUDENT-ATHLETE, PARENT, & COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

Preseason Parent Meeting

Head Coaches will hold a parent meeting prior to the first practice date. During this time each Head Coach will share his/her transformational purpose statement, clearly communicate student-athlete expectations, and impart his/her vision for the program. This meeting is an important opportunity for you to hear and get to know the coach's heart for their program, as well as know how you can play a vital role in supporting your student-athlete.

Required Forms for Participation (Submitted through Final Forms)

In order to participate in athletics at Trinity Christian Academy, each student-athlete must have a current physical on file, as well as signatures from both the student-athlete and parent on the following forms:

- Updated Medical & Demographic Information
- Consent for Athletic Participation & Medical Care
- Student-athlete & Parent/Legal Guardian Concussion Statement
- Athlete/Parent/Guardian Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms & Warning Signs Statement
- PPE History Form
- PPE Physical Examination Form
- Signed TCA Athletic Handbook Form
- Student Transportation Consent for Athletic Events
- Teacher Recommendation Form

Parents must upload the athletic participation physical in their Final Forms account. **ALL** athletic documents must be signed by parents and student athletes through the Final Forms platform. **It is NOT necessary to submit hard copies of athletic forms to the athletic office.** The Director of Athletics will ensure that all forms have been signed and submitted for each student-athlete on each team's roster through the Final Forms Database.

Communication

As athletic administrators, coaches, parents, and student-athletes, being an excellent communicator is critical. We are asking for consistent and ongoing communication throughout the season. Please be proactive in making Head Coaches and/or Athletic Administrators aware of any potential conflicts or issues (educational, physical, mental, or emotional) that may arise or are ongoing that would distract you from being fully committed to your team. As an Athletic Department, email will be checked on a daily basis.

Community Communication to the Athletic Department

Communication from the TCA community is welcomed and a vital part of building and maintaining successful athletic programs. The preferred method of communication with the athletic department is through email. We will follow up in a timely manner.

Social Media

Student-Athletes are responsible for the information contained in written or electronic transmissions (e.g. email, texting) and any information posted on a public domain (e.g. internet, chat room, blogs, personal web pages, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.). Inappropriate or embarrassing information or pictures should not be posted in any public domain. Student-athletes are not precluded from participation in such online social networks; however, you serve as representatives of your team and Trinity Christian Academy. Any student-athlete who posts information that is derogatory, threatening, disrespectful, or bullying towards peers, coaches, opponents, teachers, administrators, and other community members or that is demonstrating/insinuating acts of drug/alcohol use, sexually inappropriateness, or any other inappropriate actions will be held to the same standards as if acting in person. The consequences could include suspension or dismissal from the team, suspension or dismissal from school, or legal ramifications.

Media

Coaches and their athletic teams may have opportunities to build positive public relations, not only in physical appearance, language, and coaching/playing style but also with the media. Often a reporter will speak to a student-athlete after a game to get quotes for an article, feature story, or sports column.

- Be positive at all times.
- If a comment cannot be made in an upbeat/positive manner, then the comment should not be said.
- Never criticize or demean a coach, player, opponent, official, or opponent's school to a member of the media.
- Remember, often what is said to a reporter is misquoted when printed, so please use caution.

Conflict

To provide consistency and clarity, the following protocol must be followed when there is any discrepancy in regards to communication or issues regarding player/coach, parent/coach, or player-parent/coach relationships. It is the goal of the Athletic Department to assist our student-athletes in taking responsibility to address issues in an appropriate and civil manner. The following communication policy and guidelines have been established to effectively resolve most issues. The following chain of communication must be followed whenever a question or issue arises involving athletics at Trinity Christian Academy:

24 Hour Rule

Parents and players are to wait 24 hours after a game or incident in practice to address concerns or a coach's decision.

- First Conversation: Athlete to Coach
- Second Conversation: Parent to Coach
- Third Conversation: Athlete & Parent to Athletic Administration/Principal
- Fourth Conversation: Athlete & Parent to Head of School

Policing Against Hazing & Initiations

The Athletic Department believes that hazing demeans those who participate incompatible with the Gospel imperative that guides our school and its Athletic Program. Hazing and initiations are strictly prohibited whether or not the person has consented to participate in any hazing for any reason.

The School and Athletic Department are firmly committed to vigilant enforcement of this policy and will promptly and thoroughly investigate any allegation of hazing and initiation. Should a violation be found, the student–athlete(s) involved will face disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion. Student–athletes who are directly (participant) or indirectly (knowledgeable bystander) involved will be treated with equal regard in these matters. The Athletic Administration along with the respective Head Coach of the specified team, Principal, and Head of School and will conduct a timely, fair, and impartial investigation into the pertinent incident of hazing and initiation.

Dress Code, Changing for Practice, Practice Gear

In consistency with Trinity Christian Academy’s Foundational Doctrines and *Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality*, students and employees will dress in conformance with one's biological sex (with the exception of school-sanctioned school spirit events). (Added July 2021)

As representatives of Trinity Christian Academy, student-athletes are to dress in an appropriate manner for practice, travel to and after games, or other events. You may wear team uniforms, team warm-ups, team shirts, attire conforming to the school dress code, or clothing as designated by the Head Coach.

Student-Athletes must use designated locker rooms to change from school uniforms into game day uniforms or practice gear. All student-athletes are to dress in appropriate **modest** athletic clothing. Student-Athletes are not allowed to wear jewelry, including body piercings, during practices or games. Student-Athletes are NOT permitted to participate in a sports bra only.

Student-Athletes should avoid wearing clothing that displays the names of inappropriate slogans and advertisements. Ideally, Trinity Christian Academy student-athletes will wear purple, white, black, or gray colors.

Gameday Dress Code

→ Shirts: **Hoodies are not permitted at TCA on any school day.**

→ Coats/Jackets:

- Solid black full zipped jackets without a hood may be worn during the school day. A uniform shirt (chapel shirt with tie/polo/sweatshirt) must be worn underneath.
- Any Uniform Source jacket or pullover without a hood is acceptable during the school day.
- TCA athletic-team-issued black, full-zip jackets without a hood & letterman jackets are acceptable over a chapel shirt/polo/sweatshirt.
- Chapel attire **MUST** be worn on Chapel days

Equipment and Uniforms

Athletic uniforms are the property of Trinity Christian Academy and must be returned at the end of the season. Student-Athletes must pay for any lost or damaged equipment or uniforms. Coaches may require team members to purchase team apparel items, and practice clothing bearing the school name and sport. Team apparel is non-budgeted items paid for and kept by the student-athlete.

Transportation

- Trinity Christian Academy may provide transportation for student-athletes to school-sponsored athletic events designated by the head coach. Students may drive to games, matches, or meets within a 20-mile radius only when transportation IS NOT provided by the school. In such cases, the school is not liable for the actions of the driver. Parents will be notified when transportation will not be provided by the school. For games, matches, or meets outside a 20-mile radius, parents, coaches, and staff have been generous in providing transportation assistance.
- All volunteer drivers are adults and have completed and returned to the athletic office a volunteer driver form with copies of their driver's license and current vehicle insurance card. Volunteer drivers certify that they have adequate insurance, a valid license, and will only transport the number of students in accordance with the manufacturer's rated seating capacity for the vehicle. Students will not be allowed to transport other students (unless they are siblings) to school-sponsored activities.
- TCA requires volunteer drivers to have the following minimum amount of liability insurance: (1) \$100,000 liability per person for bodily injury; (2) \$300,000 liability per incident for bodily injury for all vehicle occupants; (3) \$100,000 liability for property damage. Each volunteer driver must consent for TCA to conduct a motor vehicle report as a supplement for this volunteer Driver information form. A new volunteer driver information form must be completed each school year. This policy helps to reduce the liability of the school and volunteer drivers by allowing TCA to be proactive in the selection of adult drivers.
- Student-Athletes are expected to behave properly on buses/vans to and from school-sponsored athletic events. Student-Athletes whose conduct is unacceptable will be temporarily, or permanently, prohibited from riding team transportation. In some cases, student-athletes may also be prohibited from participating in a game or practice. Offensive or repeated inappropriate behavior may cause removal from a team.

Early Dismissal

Student-Athletes are responsible for all work missed due to early dismissals for athletic contests. When a student-athlete knows he/she will miss a class for athletic reasons, it is strongly recommended that class and homework be obtained in advance. It is a priority for the Athletic Department to minimize the academic disruption caused by early dismissals and to leave student-athletes in class as late as possible, without distracting them from athletic preparation. TCA student-athletes are expected to be responsible and strong academic students.

Use of Locker Rooms, Restrooms, Field House, and Other Facilities

In consistency with Trinity Christian Academy's Foundational Doctrines and *Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality*, students and employees will use the restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities conforming with one's biological sex. (Added July 2021)

The athletic facilities at Trinity Christian Academy should be used appropriately at all times and under the supervision or direction of the Athletic Department and/or contracted coaching staff. Only the locker room should be used for changing and getting ready for practice and games. Student-Athletes are expected to act appropriately at all times in the locker room and respect each other and each other's privacy and personal property. The use of the field house, athletic fields, and courts will be under the direction and supervision of the Athletic Department and/or contracted coaching staff. Coaches are responsible for staying with student-athletes after practices and games until all have been picked up.

Relations with Officials

As a representative of Trinity Christian Academy, coaches are to display professional character and discipline towards officials. Under no circumstances should a Trinity Christian Academy coach or student-athlete berate or criticize an official. Officials agree to and follow a strict code of ethics and they are a very necessary part of the game. While you may not agree with all of their calls, do not harass or taunt them. The officials are in charge of the contest and have complete authority to have unruly spectators /coaches / student-athletes removed.

CONDUCT:

Student-Athletes

As members of athletic teams, student-athletes are high-profile representatives of Trinity Christian Academy. Student-Athletes are expected to act in an appropriate manner. The following behaviors are inappropriate and will not be tolerated: fighting, profanity, use of or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs, unsportsmanlike conduct, rude or disrespectful behavior on and off the field/court, taunting opponents or officials, destruction of property, obscene gestures, derogatory or degrading comments. Student-Athletes who exhibit any of the above behaviors or any other inappropriate behavior could be suspended or completely removed from athletics pending further investigation. The Athletic Director, the Head Coach, and the Upper School Principal will determine the length of the suspension.

Parents and Spectators

Being a parent of a student-athlete can be a great experience. Parental participation and support is very important to their student-athletes, our school, and the community. Everyone associated with an athletic event plays an important role in seeing that standards of sportsmanship are upheld. Parents and spectators are reminded that their sportsmanship and behavior reflect upon the reputation of Trinity Christian Academy. To make this experience the most rewarding for all concerned, the following are expectations for being a supportive TCA Parent.

- Be Positive – Do not let playing time dictate your student-athlete’s success or happiness. Celebrate the fact that he/she is part of the team. It is especially important to remain positive when things are not going well for your student-athlete or their team.
- Effective Communication – To promote effective and enhanced communication with the Athletic Department, please adhere to the communications policy stated within this handbook. All questions or concerns in regards to the day-to-day operations of the department or any of its athletic teams should be addressed to the Athletic Director: dexter.williams@mytcalions.com.
- Be Supportive of the Coaching Staff – Nothing can injure teamwork faster than student-athletes and/or their parents doubting the capabilities of their coaches. The coaches are doing their best at all times to be proper role models, as well as teachers of the game. If you have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact the Head Coach or the Director of Athletics.
- Winning and Losing – It shall be our coaching staff’s goal to pursue excellence in the school’s athletic program, through motivating student-athletes to achieve to the best of their ability in all things, while honoring Christ with their talents. TCA does not support a ‘winning is everything’ philosophy..
- Expectations – Having lofty expectations for your student-athlete is a normal and healthy goal. In striving for these expectations, we must also be realistic. Not everyone can receive a college athletic scholarship. Remember, athletics is only a vehicle for the college process, not the primary reason to go to college!

While attending Athletic Events

- Demonstrate good sportsmanship
- Respect, cooperate and respond enthusiastically to cheerleaders.
- Diplomatically censor fellow spectators who display negative behavior.
- Cheer for your team and not against the opponents – Matthew 7:15-20.
- Coaches and/or on-site administrators who observe inappropriate behavior from our parents and spectators will address it personally and inform the Athletic Director of such behavior. Inappropriate conduct may result in being removed from the venue and subject to further action.

Music

Training Young Champions for Christ requires focused intentionality in the lives of our students and fixing our thoughts on what is “true and honorable and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable” (Phil 4:8 NLT). As a result, our music choices for all school events should serve only to help us accomplish that vision. Athletics gives us a platform to make a positive impact in the lives of students and families within the Trinity and Jackson communities who attend and support our athletic teams. In addition, we will host several visiting teams who do not identify themselves with Christ but recognize that our institution does. In light of our desire to represent Christ with excellence and accomplish our mission, the following guidelines will be used when preparing music for practices, pre-games, warm-ups, walk-ups and between halves/innings, etc.

- Head Coaches (**ONLY**) may submit a list of songs to an Athletic Administrator at least two weeks prior to the date that the music is needed.

- Printed lyrics or a web link for every song must be included. Even if you are only Including instrumental music you must still include the lyrics.
- Pursue those music choices which both inspire our teams and fans and equip our students to live out Philippians 4:8 in their lives.
- No music with any sexual or drug innuendos will be approved.
- No music with expletive/inappropriate language or bleeped words will be approved.
- No music that has been edited to take out expletive/inappropriate words or innuendos will be approved.
- Only TCA Athletics Ipad Minis will be used to play music at ALL TCA athletic events. No personal devices may be used.

GENERAL STUDENT-ATHLETE PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

In order to participate in athletic practices or games at Trinity Christian Academy, the student-athlete must adhere to the following:

Student Handbook Policies

All students must adhere to all school policies as stipulated in the Student Handbook. This applies to all student-athletes participating in practices, games, and while being transported to and from practices and games. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Daily Attendance

All student-athletes are expected to be in attendance during the regular school day to be eligible to participate in the athletic activities for that day. **For a student-athlete to be considered eligible for practice or competition they MUST be in school for half of the school day (3 hours).** If an administrator grants an excused absence in advance for a pre-scheduled activity or an unforeseen emergency, the student may participate on that day.

Academic Eligibility for Sports

The Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) sets specific standards for academic eligibility for participation in athletic activities. In addition, the TSSAA allows districts and nonpublic schools to adopt more stringent requirements for academic eligibility than the minimum requirements established by TSSAA. TCA's academic eligibility for athletic activities includes both quarter and semester grades. A marking period extends from the date the report card with the failure is issued until the report card for the next marking period is issued.

- According to TSSAA Article II: To be eligible, student-athletes shall be regularly enrolled, in regular attendance, and carrying at least six full courses or the equivalent.
- To be eligible to participate in athletic contests during any school year, all credits must be earned by the first day of the beginning of the school year. Academic eligibility for a student-athlete is based on the requirements of the school the student-athlete was attending at the conclusion of the previous school year.
- A student-athlete, who is performing unsatisfactorily, may be placed on academic and/or athletic

probation.

- All student-athletes are required to maintain a passing average in all subjects. If a student-athlete has a failing report card grade he/she will be put on athletic probation for a minimum of 2 weeks. During this probation period, the student-athlete may practice with the respective team, but cannot participate in any athletic competition.
- At the end of the probationary period, an administrator will recommend one of two things: 1) that the probation be lifted; 2) that the probation be extended. The Principal may make a student-athlete ineligible for practice or games at any time if he/she feels it is in the best academic interest of the student-athlete. The Principal will communicate his/her decision to the parents and Athletic Department. Trinity Christian Academy strictly adheres to TSSAA rules regarding eligibility.

Dual Enrollment Courses

Students enrolled in a dual enrollment or online college course will have their grades reviewed by Administration on an individual basis.

Quitting a Team

Student-athletes, who “quit” a team after the first official contest of the season, will **not** be permitted to participate on another team during that season of play. Trinity Christian Academy Administration reserves the right to review all situations and reserves the right to allow or not to allow the student-athlete to compete in the next season/year. Leaving a team does not relieve the student-athlete from his/her financial obligations nor does it release him/her from the liability for returning issued equipment.

Athletic Fee

This one-time flat fee of \$130 per athlete (\$300 max per family) helps offset athletic costs associated with our annual maintenance of facilities, transportation, and the athletic operation budget.

This one time fee will be deducted from your FACTS account during the following months

Fall Sports - October

Winter Sports - February

Spring Sports - April

If annual tuition is already paid in full, then you will receive a bill for your student’s athletic fee.

NCAA Eligibility Center

If you are a prospective student-athlete at the NCAA Division I, II, III college or university level, you have certain responsibilities to complete before you may participate. Information concerning your registration and what documents need to be submitted can be found in *The Guide for College Bound Student-Athletes* on the NCAA website; www.ncaa.org. It is the student-athlete’s responsibility to begin this process and request items from the school as needed. It is recommended that you begin this process

during or after your freshman year.

College Athletic Signings

- All college athletic signings need to be submitted to TCA Athletic Administration and the TCA Guidance Department.
- A copy of an official offer letter/National Letter of Intent provided by the college must be verified by a TCA Athletic Administrator before any signing ceremony is scheduled.
- The student must also be registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center or NAIA Eligibility Center before signing a National Letter of Intent in a public ceremony.
- Preferred Walk-Ons/Roster invites may also be publicly announced but must be verified by TCA Athletic Administration.

PROSPECTIVE AND NEW STUDENT ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Only fully enrolled students may practice with any athletic team.

- Enrollment must be verified in writing through the Admissions Director (katy.simpson@mytcalions.com) prior to allowing any student to practice any TCA sport at any time of the year.
- Parent and/or student communication does not verify enrollment. Each coach must have emailed verification of full enrollment from Admissions prior to allowing any student to practice or participate in any TCA sport.

Homeschool Participation

Homeschool students will be allowed to participate in TCA athletics given they meet the following criteria:

1. The sport is not at the high school level
2. Homeschool students can not participate on a TCA team from which enrolled TCA students have been cut.
3. There is a demonstrated need for more players, as determined by athletic administration, in that particular sport after interest has been determined from current TCA students.
4. The homeschool family must be in agreement with the TCA mission, and submit a signed *Statement of Faith*.
5. The homeschool family will pay a \$200 athletic fee per sport to TCA plus any associated team fees for the sport in which they are participating.
6. Homeschool participation on teams will be on a sport-by-sport basis and year-to-year basis. This will be determined by the TCA Athletic Administration.
7. Homeschool participation will only be allowed if current TCA students can not fill out the roster.

Outside School Participation

Outside school students may only participate in TCA athletics given they meet the following criteria:

1. If the sport is offered at the student's school at their grade level, they are not eligible to participate in TCA athletics.
2. Outside school students cannot participate on a TCA team from which enrolled TCA students have been cut for any reason, other than disciplinary issues.
3. The sport is not at the high school/varsity level.
4. There is a demonstrated need for more players, as determined by athletic administration, in that particular sport after interest has been determined from current TCA students.
5. The student's family must be in agreement with the TCA mission, and submit a signed *Statement of Faith*.
6. The student's family will pay a \$200 athletic fee to TCA plus any associated team fees for the sport they are participating in.
7. The student may not have a current disciplinary record from their school.
8. Participation on teams will be on a sport-by-sport basis and year-to-year. This must be justified by limited roster size and approved by TCA Athletic Administration.

VOLUNTEER COACHES

- Beginning in the 5th grade, all coaches must be contracted employees of Trinity Christian Academy. Being contracted is defined as follows:
 1. Submitting a volunteer coach application
 2. Submitting and passing a background check
 3. Being interviewed by athletic administration
 4. Adherence to all TCA employee/athletic policies
 5. Signed documentation. Documentation will contain a detailed outline of coaching expectations and duties as a coach representing TCA.
- All volunteer coaches are held to the same standards as faculty coaches. They are a representative of Trinity Christian Academy and responsible for and will be held accountable for all Trinity rules and procedures.
- All volunteer coaches are required to submit and pass a background check in order to work with students at TCA.
- All volunteer coaches must be approved by athletic administration prior to coaching.
- Any coach not in adherence to TCA employee/school/athletic policies will be subject to removal from their coaching role.
- High School Varsity coaches are responsible for the oversight of volunteer coaches and EVERY detail of their teams in their particular sport(s). This also includes tryouts, homeschool students, and making sure that volunteer coaches have read and signed off on the Athletic Coaches Handbook.

FREQUENTLY ASKED TCA ATHLETIC QUESTIONS

- *How do I help advance TCA's athletic facilities?* Schedule a meeting with Dexter Williams, Athletic Director.
- *How do I join TCA's Booster Club?* Sign up at this link: <https://www.tcalions.com/booster-club>
- *Who do I contact to advertise my business through TCA Athletics?* Email or call Dexter Williams, Athletic Director: dexter.williams@mytcalions.com or 731-668-8500, ext. 178.
- *Is it possible for any TCA student to receive a scholarship at this time?* No.
- *What determines financial aid awards at TCA?* TCA offers need-based financial aid for students in grades PK – 12 to qualifying families. Financial need at TCA is only determined by FACTS, a third party vendor. Financial Aid offered by TCA cannot exceed the evidenced-need recommended by FACTS.
- *Is it possible for anyone to donate directly to the school for a specific student or family and receive a tax credit?* No.
- *Is it possible for a TCA parent/family to give money to another family directly to help with their child's tuition?* Yes, but the school must not be involved as it implies recruitment.
- *Is it possible for a TCA student to qualify for 100% need-based financial aid at TCA at this time?* No.
- *Are there certain travel/club teams that are officially affiliated with TCA?* There are no travel/club teams officially affiliated with TCA. TCA coaches may work with different organizations outside of TCA, but TCA does not sponsor, determine rosters, or endorse any travel/club organization.
- *Do travel/club teams have permission to use the TCA name, logo, or school colors?* No. Travel/club teams may NOT use the school's name, logo, or purple for their team.
- *How do I access current TSSAA rules?* [2023-2024 TSSAA Handbook](#)

