



Athletics Handbook

2026-2027

Town East Christian School

“A Christ-centered San Antonio School”

5866 Hwy. 87 East
San Antonio, TX 78222
(210)648-2601

Administration

Dr. Russell Riggs	<i>President / TEBC Senior Pastor</i>
Kevin L. Stephens	<i>Administrator / Principal / Athletic Director</i>
Kaidee West	<i>Assistant Athletic Director</i>
Lisa Gaulke	<i>Office Manager</i>

Town East Christian School is a ministry of Town East Baptist Church. We are a non-profit organization established for the purpose of creating and supporting a Christian school. TECS is accredited by the National Association of Private Schools (NAPS).

INTRODUCTION

The Town East Christian School Athletics' Handbook is a reference guide for coaches, student-athletes, and parents. The handbook states the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Town East Christian School. This applies to both Town East attendees *and* home school athletes participating in Town East Athletics.

The coach(es) of each athletic team reports to the Athletic Director and is primarily responsible for the compliance by his / her team members to the rules, regulations, and policies governing athletics at Town East Christian School. It is the responsibility of the Athletic Director to administer these rules and regulations in all matters involving relationships between teams and coaches, including the duties and functions of assistant athletic directors, to maintain program integrity and compliance with applicable policies. The Athletic Director, who also serves as the TECS Administrator, reports directly to the TECS President.

Prayer, sound reasoning, good judgment, and adherence to the values that God has instilled in us will be the standard by which situations outside these stated rules and regulations are determined and evaluated.

Interscholastic athletics is a voluntary program. Students *are not* obligated to participate, and participation *is not* required for graduation. Thus, *competition in middle school and high school athletics is a privilege and not a right*. Accompanying this privilege is the responsibility to conform to standards established for the Town East Christian School athletic program. This privilege may be revoked if the athlete fails or refuses to comply with the rules.

Thank you for your participation in our athletic program. May God bless you as you use your God-given athletic abilities and desire to serve Him in this integral part of school life.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission for Town East Athletics is to compete for the glory of God. We *cannot* do any of this without the help of God. Athletes should be a representation of Jesus Christ and Town East Christian School.

BIBLE VERSE TO LIVE BY

“²² Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God;

²³ And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;” (Colossians 3:22-23 KJV)

Coaches

Coaching is a privilege that God has given to each of them. Each of you have the opportunity to make a difference in your players lives. Coaches are one of the most important parts of the athletic program. They are both teachers and active participant in each practice and game. They have the responsibility to lead by example and exemplify Christ in everything that they do.

To be an effective coach and role model coaches must do the work to become knowledgeable in their sport, take the time to prepare for practice, be able to motivate athletes, and be able to make adjustments during competition. Coaches must be able to work under the authority of the Athletic Director and School Administration.

Coaching Policies

Each coach may establish additional rules or standards for the team or program for which they work that go beyond what is listed in this handbook. These rules may even be unique to that sport or program. The coaches' policies will be consistent with, and not contradict, other school practices or policies.

Our Parents

Parents of student athletes are given a great responsibility by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Parents have the greatest influence on their student athlete. Without strong parental support, the student athlete may not be able to achieve his / her greatest potential. It is important that parents provide positive reinforcement and understand their role as a part of the team. *Negative criticism does not benefit your student athlete or the team in any way.* As parents, *it is* our job to be the example for our student athletes [and exemplify Christ to the highest level possible].

Our Athletes

Town East Christian School athletes should give 100% effort at all times, be respectful at all times, and pursue excellence no matter the score, opponent, referee, or how much time is left in the game.

Every Town East Athlete should trust in his / her abilities to the fullest. No matter the situation – or how much negativity exists – each athlete was given the ability by Christ to play the sport they are participating in. The ultimate responsibility rest upon the shoulders of each student athlete. It is the student athlete who is accountable to his / her parents, the coach, and (most importantly) the Lord.

Expectations of Student Athletes

The Athletic Department expects each participant in the school's athletic program:

- To honor the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in everything we do.
- To be a Christ-like representative of teammates, coaches, and the school community by following the expectation of this handbook.
- To maintain health and fitness levels by giving 100% in the training prescribed by the coach.
- To show up to every practice ready to practice unless worked out with the coach, or due to appointment or illness.
- To understand that commitment to victory is nothing without commitment to hard work in practice.
- To understand that you are a student first and an athlete second by giving 100% in the classroom and achieving the necessary grades to pass all classes.
- To accept the responsibility of being a team. That *not* one person makes a team or is better than the team. That you *cannot* win games without the rest of the team.

- To keep a positive attitude and refrain from any demeaning or negative comments about coaches or players.
- To prioritize the sport that is currently going on. In season sport is given priority to include all games, practices, and scrimmages.
- Quitting a sport before the season ends *may* result in an athlete not being permitted to participate in the next sport season. This decision will be made by the Athletic Director and / TECS Administrator.
- If a student gets a penalty for foul language or excessively pushing and fighting with a referee, the student will serve a minimum one (1) game suspension. If this occurs additional times this may result in a longer suspension or being expelled from the team.

Expectations of Parents

As members of the Town East Christian School athletic community, you are a vital success to our athletic events. You may be asked to work at the concession stand, entrance gate, or sport books for the sport your student athlete is participating in. It is crucial to the success of our sports programs that parents step up and volunteer to help. We must have all duties covered at each event for the event to be successful. The coach will be able to be a better coach if parents do their part and help out.

PARENT / COACH COMMUNICATION

Parent Meetings

The coaches for each sport will hold a parent meeting prior to the first game in each sport. One parent of each student athlete is required to be in attendance. If you *are not* able to attend, you are required to set up a one-on-one meeting with the coach and Athletic Director to be given the information discussed in this meeting. *Not attending this meeting can hinder your student athlete's ability to participate in the sport.* This meeting allows for parents to meet the coach for their athletes' sports, to ask any questions, and to receive all pertinent information to the season.

Communication Tools

Coaches will communicate regularly with parents and athletes in person, via a school organized group texting app (Group Me) or by phone. Text messages or "*drop by*" visits *are not* acceptable. Should in person meetings be requested, an appointment will be required.

Practice and Game Cancellation

In the event that the coach must cancel a practice, it is the responsibility of the coach and / or Athletic Director to notify the team and parents.

- Media report or warning of inclement weather will not determine whether practice will be held; the coach will make that determination after consulting with the Athletic Director.
- If a change is made to the practice schedule, the parents and athletes will be notified as soon as possible.
- In most cases, it is the responsibility of the host school to make decisions regarding game cancellations.

- When hosting an event, Town East Christian School will make every effort to make decisions by 2:00 p.m. on the day of the event.
- In the event that a game is cancelled the coach may choose to have practice in place of the cancelled game. If this decision is made, the coach will notify the parents and student athletes as soon as possible.

Addressing Concerns or Issues

Step 1:

One of the greatest opportunities for student athletes is learning effective conflict resolution. When there is a concern, athletes are encouraged to speak with their coach directly. It is a great opportunity to strengthen the relationship the athlete has for his / her coach.

Step 2:

If the coach and athlete are unable to resolve the issue together, then parents may contact the coach. If a parent has a concern to discuss with the coach, the parent *should* contact the coach at an appropriate time for both parties. This should be done by contacting the coach via the chosen communication app by the coach. An upset parent should wait at least **24-hours** before approaching a coach or parent after an athletic event. Under no circumstances should a parent approach a coach – or another parent – in a harsh manner, or immediately before, during, or after practice or a game. Taking time to reflect on the situation will allow for more effective dialogue between all parties involved.

It is inappropriate for a parent to request feedback from a coach about team strategy, playing time, play calling, or other student athletes. It is inappropriate for a parent to say and / or shout disparaging remarks from sports bleachers and / or fan areas.

It is appropriate for a parent to contact the coach with concerns about their son / daughter's behavior and for physical treatment advice.

Step 3:

If the discussion with the coach *does not* resolve the issue, parents and coaches may contact the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

Step 4:

If the Athletic Director is unable to provide a satisfactory resolution, the parents may arrange a meeting with the TECS School Administrator and President by contacting the TECS Office Manager.

All discussion regarding a coach or your student athlete must be resolved in this order.

*** Athletic Opportunities for High School and Middle School ***

*** All sports seasons are subject to change dependent upon participant number and coaches' availability. ***

Fall Sports

HS / MS Volleyball
HS Boys 6 Man Football
HS / MS Girls Cheer

Winter Sports

HS / MS Boys Basketball
HS / MS Girls Basketball
HS / MS Girls Cheer

Spring Sports

HS / MS Boys Track
HS / MS Girls Track
HS Boys Baseball (Tentatively)
HS / MS Boys Golf
HS / MS Girls Golf

*** High School sports may separate into Junior Varsity and Varsity depending on the number of participants.

*** 5th and 6th graders may have the potential to participate on a team, but this *is not* guaranteed. It will be based on current readiness, ability, and needs of the team.

Conference Affiliations

All high school and middle school sports participate in the Texas Association of Independent Athletic Organization (TAIAO). All administrators, coaches, student athletes, parents, and spectators are expected to be familiar with – and abide by – the rules set forth by TAIAO. For more information about TAIAO, please visit their website at <https://taiao.org/>

Team Schedules

The Athletic Director, with the assistance of the assistant athletic director and / or coaches, will schedule all games for each sport season. Athletic schedules will be given out to each parent and student athlete. They will be posted on the school's Facebook page, school website, and other appropriate electronic locations.

ATHLETIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Team membership

Middle School

Town East Christian School is committed to providing all middle school students, interested in competitive athletics, the opportunity to participate when available. Failure to attend practices or abusing their privilege of participate can lead to disqualification from the team. Middle school athletics is an opportunity for players to get an introduction to the sport they are playing. Because of the importance of learning the skill and fundamentals of the sport, the emphasis of middle school sports will be developing skills and habits. The level of high school success is directly tied to the skills developed through the middle school program.

High School

All sports teams may have player limits set forth by the Athletic Director and / or Head Coach. Failure to attend practice may lead to disqualification from the team.

Required Forms for Participation

Prior to the start of each sports season, all parents and student-athletes must complete the following forms

- Town East Christian School **Contract for Athletic Participation**
- Town East Physical Examination Form

Start of Season Requirements

TAIAO will regulate the earliest that we can start sport practices. This will be dependent on the sport and season. This information will be passed to you by the Athletic Director or coaching staff.

Students will have two weeks from the start of practice or before the first game, whichever comes first, to get the medical physical and required documents signed and returned. After this time period, participation in practices and games *will not* be allowed. **There will be no exceptions to this rule.**

Participation Fees

Equipment and uniforms are paid for by Town East Christian School through athletic fees. Some parts of the uniform may be required to be paid for by the parents; example baseball pants. All shoes needed for the sport *are not* paid for by the school.

Participation fees are essential to help fund the cost of our athletic programs, transportation to athletic events, game officials, tournament entry fees, and supplementary equipment and supplies. **Fees are due prior to the start of the first game.** ***Fees are per sport / per athlete. ***

<u>High School</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u>Middle School</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Football	\$350		
Volleyball	\$250	Volleyball	\$200
Basketball	\$300	Basketball	\$250
Track	\$200	Track	\$200
Cheer	\$200	Cheer	\$200
Golf	\$200	Golf	\$150
Baseball	\$300		

*** These fees are based on TECS student athletes. *All homeschool athletes will pay an additional \$50 per athlete [per sport]* ***

Practice Times

All practice times will be dependent on coaches' availability. Athletes and parents will be notified of practice times before the season starts. Practices and games are held rain or shine, unless the coach and / or Athletic Director cancels a practice. Parents and student athletes will be notified as soon as possible of any cancellations.

Playing times

We believe in our coaches' knowledge and ability. A coach's job is to manage and direct their sport. Each coach is responsible for evaluating athletes on their teams. Coaches will evaluate all skills necessary for the sport that they coach. Our coaches will determine playing time based on these evaluations. Playing time *is not* guaranteed. Athletes must demonstrate the ability to execute the game plan, adapt to changes during the game, and walk in a Christ-like manner on and off the playing field.

ATTENDANCE

Games and Practices

Attendance at all practice sessions and games is mandatory for all team members.

- If an athlete will not be attending a practice, meeting, or athletic contest, the coach must be notified *at least* one (1) day prior to the event. Failure to fulfill aforementioned requirements may result in a coach's determined consequence.
- Any athlete who has more than three (3) absences from practices and / or games during a season – excluding long medical injuries – may result in limited playing time or removal from the team.
- Practice is held rain or shine [unless otherwise noted by the coach].
- If an athlete is absent from school on a game day, they *are not* eligible to participate in that day's game or practice.
- Any student-athlete who leaves an athletic event without the permission of the Head Coach will be subject to suspension from the team.

Holidays and Early Out Days

In order for teams to remain cohesive, effective, and competitive, athletes may be expected to play and / or practice during non-religious Holidays (i.e. Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, Summer Break, Labor Day, etc.) and early out days. We will not have games during these extended breaks, but may have one on an early out day. These dates and time will be communicated by the coach as early as possible in an effort to allow families to plan accordingly. If there are any questions about these dates, please contact the coach and / or Athletic Director.

**** *Parents of athletes are asked *not* to schedule family vacations once a season has started. *****

Illness and Injury

All injuries should be reported to the coach and / or Athletic Director at the time they occur so further injury can be avoided. If you are injured, remember the following:

- Tell the coach that you are injured before leaving the court / field.
- Any athlete who becomes sick, nauseated, dizzy or overheated during a practice or game should notify the coach immediately.
- Coaches **MUST** be contacted ahead of time if an athlete will miss practice for any reason to include illness.
- A doctor's note is required if an athlete is not able to attend a practice or game due to an injury.

- If the injury is a long-term injury (longer than a week) then a second doctor's note will be required to end the physical restriction.
- If an injury occurs in a game or practice, the Head Coach will be responsible for communicating with the athlete's family ASAP depending on the severity of the injury, but ALWAYS no later than the end of the day.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Uniforms

Town East Christian School athletic uniforms are to be worn only during games. Launder uniforms in cold water. *Do not* use bleach. Uniforms should be dried with low heat. **All uniforms must meet the schools length requirement [there are no exceptions to this rule].**

Athletes are responsible for all uniform items assigned to them. Failure to return issued uniforms before the next season starts will prevent the athlete from participating in the next season until all items are paid for or returned.

To promote games, the athletes may be allowed to wear jerseys on certain school days. **The following rules must be followed and all final permission will be given by Administration.**

- During the season, Athletes may wear jerseys on home games [not to exceed once per week].
- Team practice athletic wear, such as sweats and warm-ups, *may not* be worn during the school day.
- Town East spirit shirts must be worn under all jerseys.
- Additional uniform items may be requested to be purchased by the athlete.

Practice Uniforms

Athletes will wear the Town East Athletic Shirt to practice unless the coach provides a practice jersey for that practice.

Travel

Town East Christian School will provide transportation to practices and away games.

- Athletes may drive themselves to and from any athletic practices. All other athletes will be transported with the team.
- If an athlete *is not* returning to Town East Christian School from practice or scheduled game, verbal or written permission must be given to the coaches.
- Athletes must give written permission (unless parent is present) for them to leave with someone other than their parent.
- Athletes may ride with their parents to regional and state tournaments unless otherwise stated by the coach or Athletic Director.
- The Head Coach of a team will make travel arrangements for practices and scheduled games.

Travel on the van / shuttle / bus

- Students / Athletes are EXPECTED to behave according to Town East guidelines
- Passengers are EXPECTED to clean up the van /shuttle / bus after using it. It *is not* the responsibility of the coach to clean up.
- Passengers may not stand up while the vehicle is moving. They must remain seated at all times.
- Any repeated negative behavior can result in the athlete's inability to travel on the van / shuttle / bus.
- Parent drivers of the shuttle / van need to have proper documents submitted to the school before driving any sports team to an athletic event.

Club / Select Teams

Town East Christian School will take precedence over club or league competitions and practice sessions. Athletes will not be excused from Town East practices or games in order to attend games or practice session for club or league teams. It is the responsibility of the athlete to communicate his / her participation on club or league teams prior to the start of the season [so any potential conflicts may be worked out]. Failure to communicate before the start of the season may result in the removal of an athlete from the team.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

All athletes at Town East Christian School must be exemplary members of the student body. They are students first and athletes second.

All Town East / home school students wishing to participate in middle school athletics must be 11-years old on or after June 1 (except football, you must be 12) and *cannot* turn 14 before June 1 of that school year without a waiver.

All students wishing to participate in high school athletics must be 14 on or after June 1 and *cannot* turn 19 by May 31 of that school year [without a waiver].

Academics

Students are required to maintain passing grades in all classes. Academic achievement takes precedence over athletic participation. Standards at Town East Christian School are higher than at most schools. These standards, as well as specific eligibility information, are as follows:

- All students must receive passing grades at the close of each 6 weeks in order to be eligible for athletic participation.
- A passing grade is a 70% or higher in each class that is taken.
- Grades will be checked every week by the Athletic Director and passed on to the coach.
- Anyone who participates in practice not as a player, such as a team manager, fall under these same rules.

Classwork

Town East Academics is a priority. Athletes are expected to be fully engaged academically and responsible for all classwork.

- When an athlete must miss classwork to participate in a scheduled athletic event, they are responsible for turning in classwork the day the work is due.
- If an athlete misses class on a test date, it is the responsibility of the athlete to ensure they study for the test and are ready to test on the day the teacher decides. It is up to the teacher's discretion on when the new test day will be.
- Students are expected to be respectful to the teachers in the classroom. Any report that an athlete is not respectful to TECS staff will be reported to the coach and / or Athlete Director and may result in a coach's determined consequence.

A grade check will be performed weekly. If an athlete receives a grade below 70% in a class at the mid-term period, of each 6-week grading period, the athlete will be notified and is expected to improve this grade. If the athlete still has a grade below 70% at the end of a 6-week period, they will be placed on academic probation for a period of three weeks. The student will be expected to seek tutoring from the appropriate teacher.

If the student-athlete receives a grade of 70% or higher in that same class at the end of the three-week probationary period, they are eligible to participate in their sport.

If the athlete does not improve this grade, they will remain ineligible on a weekly basis until grades are improved to passing.

Practicing with the Team if Ineligible

Athletes are still required to practice with their teams unless they are actively involved in completing assignments and / or tutoring during the same time practice is held [to improve their failing grades]. Students will be encouraged to seek tutoring as much as possible and will be expected to do their best to work around both their team and their class schedules.

Athletes who are placed on academic probation are required to practice with the team, but may not play in games or travel with the team to an athletic event.

ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT

Each student athlete is expected to conduct his / her life in accordance to the principles and standards set forth in God's Word. This includes adhering to all Town East Christian School guidelines, to include things such as dress and hair length. Any athlete who *does not* adhere to these standards can be subject to behavioral probation that will follow the same guidelines as academic probation.

After School Detention

After school detention requires you to miss one practice. Getting after school detention can result in a coach's determined consequence. Multiple after school detentions can put an athlete on behavioral probation.

Substance Abuse and Hazing

Any student athlete found to be in violation of the school's substance abuse policy will automatically be suspended from all team activities including practices, games, tournaments, dinners, etc., while the reported offense is under review by the coach, Athletic Director and School Administration. The Athletic Director will work with the School Administrator and / or President on a disciplinary plan for the athlete. This may include suspension from the athletic team for the remainder of the season; This may include expulsion for all athletic programs for the academic year.

Town East Christian School forbids any bullying. Bullying is defined as *"to seek harm, intimidate, or coerce (someone perceived as vulnerable)"*. This includes making fun of a student, calling them names, or telling jokes that may be offensive. Any report of bullying to the coach and / or Athletic Director will result in a coach's determined consequence. Multiple reports of bullying can result in suspension from the team for any amount of time. This includes bullying in the classroom, during a game, or during travel to a game.

Failure to Complete a Sports Season

Leaving a sport during a season is highly discouraged. Athletes are expected to honor their commitments to their teams. If a student still decides to drop a sport, he / she must follow the guidelines below:

- The student-athlete must first talk to the coach to see if a solution can be reached.
- A conference with the parents, athlete, coach and Athletic Director is required before a student leaves the sport.
- If an athlete leaves a sport, he / she must return all equipment used by the end of the sports season. It must be clean and undamaged.
- Failure to complete a season for any other reason other than medical (documented physician's order) or hardship (Administrative approval required) will result in consequently making the student ineligible for the next sport season. The next sport season may be within the same school season or next school year (as in the case of spring sports).

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