



2017-18 Athletic Department Handbook

Updated 8/14/17

PURPOSE:

The Athletic Handbook is to provide students, parents and coaches the mission and philosophy of the East Texas Christian Academy (ETCA) athletic program, eligibility requirements, and guidelines/regulations of participation. ETCA and Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) have certain requirements that an athlete must meet before he/she is allowed to practice and/or compete. Students are subject to the rules and regulations in the ETCA Handbook.

MISSION STATEMENT:

It is the responsibility of the ETCA athletic department to assist in training students to become individuals who are honest, sincere and enthusiastic; students who value education; students who become physically, mentally and spiritually stronger; competitors with class, total effort and a Christ like spirit.

PHILOSOPHY

We are committed to fostering an athletic program rooted in Christian values. It is important to the educational nature of athletic events to stress the type of Christian behavior that should be exhibited by all coaches, players, parents, and spectators at ETCA events. The positive actions by a coach, athlete, parent or spectator can influence how our school is perceived in our own community and the communities of those schools we meet on the field or court of play.

The administration of ETCA believes that athletics are an integral part of the total school curriculum. Participation should complement the total educational experience, contributing to the student-athlete's health, physical skills, emotional maturity, and moral values. A sound athletic program teaches the student the value of sportsmanship, teamwork, responsibility, and self-discipline. Our staff will encourage athletes to strive for the highest level of achievement, so in victory or defeat an athlete will learn lessons that will be beneficial throughout their lifetime.

We appreciate those who seek the athletic challenge as yet another way to honor our school and its athletic teams. ETCA Athletics stresses the cooperative team concept and development of qualities that are beneficial to the athlete after athletics. ETCA athletic programs are designed to develop athletic appreciation, confidence, and for teaching a positive, systematic approach to complex sport motions, situations, and competitions. Developing strong character traits are more important in ETCA programs than spotless win-loss records. ETCA athletes must agree to accept the responsibilities that accompany selection as a team member.

AFFILIATION

ETCA is a member of the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS), which governs both parochial and private schools throughout the state. The TAPPS website is <http://www.tapps.net>. The following TAPPS programs are offered by ETCA according to student interest:

Fall: 6-Man Football, Cross Country, Volleyball, Soccer
Winter: Basketball
Spring: Track & Field, Baseball
Softball, Tennis and Golf
Year Round: Cheerleading and Club Archery

ASSUMED RISK

Providing a safe environment for practice and competition is a priority of everyone involved in the athletic program. Every step is taken to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants. However, students and their parents must be aware that certain risks of injury are inherent in athletic participation.

Accidents ranging from minor to severe may occur. It is mandatory that the parents or guardians submit a signed participation form, proof of insurance, and current signed physical examination form before their student will be allowed to participate in ETCA athletics. By signing these forms, parents and guardians acknowledge the risks associated with playing sports.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In order to participate in any athletic activity (practice or game), **the student must attend school on the day of the activity**. Unless for a doctor's appointment with proper medical documentation, a student who misses 90 minutes or more in a day is considered absent for that day. If an athlete is dismissed early from school due to an illness, he or she may NOT participate in any activity on that day. When an activity is on a Saturday, the student must have been in attendance on the last school day prior to the activity. The Athletic Director, in concurrence with the Principal, may approve exceptions to this rule in extraordinary cases. Students are expected to be at practice every day. Any absences may result in diminished or no playing time not out of punishment, but rather in fairness to those who regularly attended practice. Repeated, unexcused absences **may result** in dismissal from the team.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

ETCA administration and coaches believe that more is expected of the student athlete. These students must commit themselves to the discipline necessary to improve their athletic skills and must conduct themselves with responsibility, both on and off the field or court. Athletes are expected to adhere to the following behaviors:

- All students are expected to maintain a solid academic standing. (See Student Handbook)
- All students are expected to abide by the rules and regulations set forth in ETCA Student Handbook.
- All students are expected to abide by the training, practice, and game rules their coach establishes for the team.
- All students are expected to respect their bodies by getting adequate sleep, maintaining proper nutrition, and keeping their bodies free from all harmful chemicals, including nicotine, alcohol, and other non-prescription medications.

- All students are expected to accept and understand the seriousness of their responsibility, and the privilege of representing their school and community.

Any action caused by a student that is in violation of the Handbook will be reviewed by the Athletic Director and Administration.

Besides the infractions listed in the Student Handbook, an athlete may be disciplined for the following:

- Unexcused absence from practice, game, or match (disciplinary reasons for missing are not excused)
- Failure to attend team meetings
- Being tardy to a practice, game, or match
- Lack of sportsmanship
- Failure to contribute your best effort
- Breaking training rules

Disciplinary consequences may include:

- Extra physical activity (i.e. push-ups)
- Benching (sitting out of 1 or more games)
- Suspension or expulsion from the team

DISMISSAL POLICY/QUITTING A SPORT

Students with discipline issues (school/team/community) will be excused from a team while under review of the Athletic Director and Administration. During this review period, the student and parent(s) shall be notified of a hearing before the Athletic Director, Head Coach and other school administrators and will have the opportunity to be heard at said meeting. If a decision is rendered dismissing an athlete from a team, this student will not be able to participate in another sport until that sport in which the infraction occurred is over.

A.) QUITTING A SPORT

Quitting a team is never a good option unless it is for health, family, or academic reasons. Should a student elect to quit a team once the season has started, the following will occur:

- A conference between the Athletic Director, the athlete, the athlete's coach, and possibly the athlete's parents.
- The student will not be allowed to participate in another sport until the season of the original sport has ended.

DRESS CODE

Students and coaches should be dressed properly when representing ETCA. This includes practices, game day, and road trip attire. Teams should be dressed in like manner for practices and games. Expectable attire includes black, blue, grey, or white shirts and shorts with minimum, appropriate wording or print.

EARLY RELEASE

On occasion, an athletic team may have to participate in a contest during a school day. When this occurs, notification will be communicated to all school personnel by the Athletic Director. Each student athlete will be required to visit with their respective instructors confirming all assignments have been obtained and/or turned in, and all tests/quizzes have been

taken or arrangements have been made to take these tests/quizzes at a later time. Each coach shall communicate early dismissals one week in advance.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to participate in any sport, the following requirements must be met:

- Satisfy all school academic and behavioral requirements.
- Present to the Athletic Director a signed physical examination. Physicals are good for 1 year from the date it was given.
- Provide proof of medical insurance.
- Be in compliance with TAPPS eligibility requirements.

- Academic Eligibility Standards:
 - Student must maintain an average of 70 in all classes
 - Citizenship in Good Standing – (No “N” or “U” in conduct)
- Regaining Eligibility:
 - Athletes can regain eligibility at the end of a 3-Week Grading Period if they are passing the classes that were failed at the end of the 6-Weeks, but they cannot lose it during this abbreviated grading period.

END OF SEASON CEREMONY

Each team may conclude its season with a ceremony that may be conducted on or off campus on a pay-as you- go basis. This type of ceremony is a time for in-depth reflection on the season and team and individual accomplishments. At the end of the athletic year, the Athletic Department will have an athletic program honoring all athletes. ETCA events must be approved by administration. School rules and Code of Conduct will be enforced!

GAME ADMINISTRATOR

A game administrator will be assigned to all TAPPS varsity athletic events and for all home contests. The Game Administrator is to report to the Athletic Director an athlete’s conduct which violates the school handbook.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS

Gifts or donations to the Athletic Department, or specific athletic program shall be referred to the Business Office. If you become aware of an individual wishing to make a gift or donation, please notify the Athletic Director or President of ETCA.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the case of inclement or threatening weather, the Athletic Department will attempt to make a decision by 2:00 p.m. regarding the status of practices or athletic competitions for that day. If a game/match or practice is cancelled due to inclement weather, a message will be placed on the Athletic Department’s Web Calendar and/or RenWeb. A message will also be communicated to the students. Students will be allowed to use the office telephones to call their parents.

The safety of our students and coaching staff is paramount. If weather conditions warrant the cancellation of a game/match/practice, the decision will be made by ETCA administration, even if conditions in other parts of the city are contrary to the school locale.

LETTERS/AWARDS

An Athletic Banquet is normally scheduled at the end of the school year to honor our athletes.

PARENT/STUDENT COMMUNICATION

Parenting and coaching are each difficult vocations. Understanding each other's roles and following the proper channels of communication will enable parents and coaches to effectively work together to provide a meaningful experience for students participating in ETCA athletics.

At ETCA, coaches should communicate the following to parents:

- Philosophy of the coach, both generally and specific to their sport
- Locations and times of practices and contests
- Expectations of the players and the team
- The number of players per team
- Team rules and repercussions for violations
- Injury and emergency medical procedures
- Role of parents in terms of volunteer help, team meals, game day help, etc.

Parents should communicate to the coach the following:

- Any health issues concerning their child
- Any schedule conflicts well in advance
- The treatment of their athlete, both mentally and physically
- Ways to improve their athlete's skills or development
- Academic support and college opportunities

At the core of any good relationship is trust. It is imperative parents and students trust that our coaches are trying to do the right thing for the team and all individuals involved. It is important to understand that the coaches are the ones with the team on a daily basis in practice and competition and therefore, will make judgment decisions based on what they feel is in the best interest of the team. Playing time, players' positions, and strategy should be left to the discretion of the coach.

There may be times when it is difficult to understand how playing time is allotted, why people are playing certain positions, strategy, etc., or when things do not go the way one wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged and the following communication protocol should be followed:

- The athlete first speaks with the coach. Coaches will welcome discussion and listen to the concerns.
- The parents and athlete request an appointment to meet and speak with the coach.
- The parents and athlete request an appointment to meet with the Athletic Director and coach.

It is important **NOT** to confront a coach before or after a game or practice. These can be emotional times and not best for resolving conflicts. A 24-hour waiting period is recommended to address any concerns and a convenient appointment time should be made.

During any meeting, the following will NOT be a point of discussion:

- Team strategy
- Other students on the team

PLAYING TIME

Because our teams will consist of members whose abilities vary considerably, every effort will be made to provide playing time for all team members. However, we will not jeopardize the collective efforts of the team in order to play everyone or provide playing time to an individual. Playing time can be reduced or taken away due to disciplinary issues, lack of practice participation, or injury. The coach should communicate clearly to the player, the player's parents, and the Athletic Director prior to the next scheduled contest discipline or other issues that will result in loss of playing time.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Respect, commitment, dedication, and hard work are values an ETCA family member has and are the same attributes an opponent brings to a game. By treating an opponent with courtesy and respect, an ETCA coach, student, or parent demonstrates respect for themselves, their family, their teammates, their community, and their school. For every TAPPS or UIL competition, an ETCA member is expected to bring an attitude that they will do their best to win, that they will strive to achieve and to excel.

Competition is designed to be played using the highest standards of fair play and within the rules of the game or match. To win by bending the rules means that we are unable to win by following them. Students must display good sportsmanship and follow the rules of competition in every contest in which they participate. If not, students may be barred from participation for a period of time.

The Athletic Director will suspend any student who is ejected by an official from any contest from further competition pending a review of the facts and circumstances. After consultation with the Principal and President, the Athletic Director will prescribe the appropriate corrective action and associated TAPPS fines to the athlete and head coach.

The following sportsmanship guidelines are expected from our coaches, students, parents, and all spectators to follow at an athletic event:

- Be a positive role model at events through your own actions.
- Use positive cheers and support for your team.
- Be aware of capabilities and limitations of people; don't have unrealistic expectations.
- Contribute to school unity and spirit.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups.
- Accept both victory and defeat with pride and compassion.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of coaches and game officials.
- Know, understand, and appreciate the rules of the contest.
- Respect the property of the schools and the authority of school officials.
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Be attentive to the needs of students and fellow players.

The following behavior will not be tolerated:

- Criticism of the coaches, players, or officials for any reason, either verbally or in writing, including, but not limited to social media, i.e.: Facebook, Twitter, texting, etc.
- Disrespectful or derogatory cheers, yelling, chants, songs, or gestures.
- Do not applaud errors by opponents or penalties inflicted upon them.

- Uncontrolled displays of temper after an official's call.
- Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances.
- Use of profanity or displays of anger that draw attention away from the game.

STUDY HALL/TUTORIALS

Graduation is our immediate goal. Grades are important beyond staying eligible to play a sport. Athletes who struggle from time to time will be given the opportunity to gain extra help from their coaches, teachers and staff at ETCA. Tutorials can be made mandatory and will be scheduled by the athlete and monitored by the coaches.

SUPERVISION

Students using any athletic facility must be under the direct supervision of an ETCA coach. Under no circumstances should any workout be unsupervised. Individual workouts in or out of season should be in accordance with TAPPS Rules and Regulations and approved by the Athletic Director. ETCA personnel will supervise the gym and other athletic facilities at all times. Students wanting to use those facilities must check with the appropriate coach.

TRAINING RULE

Injured athletes are required to attend practice unless rehabilitating the injury prevents it. Students missing practice for training must first get permission from their coach.

TRANSFERS

When a student transfers from another high school and participated in a sport at his/ her former school, a Previous Athletic Participation Form will be required. Certain TAPPS guidelines must be met before a student may become eligible to compete on the varsity level. If a student at their previous school participated on a non-school team (i.e. AAU, American Legion, club, etc.), which is affiliated with or coached by a coach from ETCA, it will be assumed the student has been recruited to attend the school and may be ineligible for one year. All transfer protocol and decisions will abide by the TAPPS guidelines.

UNIFORMS

All uniforms or equipment issued to athletes remain the property of ETCA and are worn only when representing the team at sanctioned school events. Students must clean and turn in all issued equipment and uniforms as instructed by the coach or Athletic Director at the end of the season. Failure to return school property or excessive damage beyond normal wear will be billed to the parents/guardians. Report cards and transcripts may be withheld for unpaid fees or for non-returned uniforms.

East Texas Christian Academy Athletic Code of Conduct Contract

I, _____, have read and understand the expectations and requirements of an East Texas Christian Academy Student-Athlete. By signing this contract, I am agreeing to uphold the standards of this handbook as well as the Biblical mandate for a follower of Christ.

I will do my very best to represent God, my family, my school, my team, and myself with respect, pride, class, dignity, character and integrity. I also realize that if I ever fall short of the standards outlined in this handbook, I will have to suffer the consequences which are punishments designed to build my character and make me a better individual.

Player Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

I, _____, am a parent/guardian of an East Texas Christian Academy Student-Athlete. I have also read and understand the expectations and requirements of my son/daughter. By signing this contract, I agree to assist my child in upholding the standards of this handbook as well as the Biblical mandate as a follower of Jesus Christ. I will do whatever is necessary to aid their development and promise to support the coaching staff of ETCA in all aspects.

I will do my very best as a fan and parent to represent God, my family and my son/daughter's school as well as their team with respect, pride, class, dignity, character and integrity. I also realize that if my son/daughter ever falls short of the standards outlined in this handbook, he/she will have to suffer the consequences which are punishments designed to build their character and make them a better individual.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

**East Texas Christian Academy
Athlete Emergency/Medical Information**

Student Information

Student Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Grade Level _____

Student Home Phone _____

Student Cell Phone _____

Student Email _____

Custodial Parent Information

Parent/Guardian _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Business Phone _____

Parent/Guardian Email _____

Preferred Emergency Contact: Circle One

In case of emergency, the school should contact the people listed below in the following order.		
Name	Relationship	Phone Number
1.		
2.		
3.		

Insurance Information

Insurance Company _____

Policy/Group Number _____

Policy Holder's Name _____

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date