



Takoma Academy Athletic Handbook 2025-2026



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PHILOSOPHY

Human beings possess five distinct dimensions encompassing their spiritual, physical, social, mental, and emotional aspects. The athletic department at Takoma Academy aims to provide every student participating in athletics with opportunities for growth and development across these five areas. To achieve this objective, a strong emphasis is placed on cultivating and expecting a high level of self-discipline from our student athletes. This self-discipline encompasses respecting and adhering to the rules and regulations set forth by the athletic department and its coaches, as these rules are designed to ensure safety and order for all participants.

It is essential for students, parents, and supporters to recognize that participation in athletics is a privilege rather than a right. Regulations and guidelines are put in place to prioritize the success of the program and the team as a whole, with consideration for individual growth as well. Student athletes at Takoma Academy are regarded as role models, impacting not only the student body but also the wider community. Their behavior while representing the school team is viewed as a direct reflection of Takoma Academy.

The policies of the athletic department align with the guidelines outlined in the Takoma Academy Student Handbook. Student-athletes should be mindful that violations of these policies may carry consequences that extend beyond their specific sport and even beyond the current school year.

ATHLETIC FEES

Athletic fees are collected for the purpose of funding the Takoma Academy athletic programs. The 2025-2026 Athletic fees are \$250. For Student Athletes who play additional sports, the fee is \$200 per additional sport. Payment is due the day after the final team is announced, or risk being removed from the team. A student who has outstanding Athletic fee balances may not be allowed to play another sport until the balance is satisfied.

AFFILIATIONS

Takoma Academy is a member and participant in the Metro Independent Schools Athletic League, MISAL

SPORTS SEASON

Upon engaging in a practice, scrimmage, or contest, a student becomes recognized as an athlete of Takoma Academy. This athlete status remains in effect until the conclusion of the season's final game. Consequently, students, who are considered athletes, are subject to



the regulations outlined in both The Takoma Academy Athletic Handbook and The Takoma Academy School Handbook.

ELIGIBILITY

The academic eligibility criteria for after-school sports at Takoma Academy are determined and enforced by the school administration and the Athletic Director. The academic eligibility standards at TA are outlined as follows:

- In the event that a student's progress report or report card reflects a grade of D or F for two or more consecutive weeks, the student will be placed on an academic plan to remediate the course. Failure to adhere to the expectations of the academic plan will result in removal from the sports team.
- Good behavior standing.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

In order to attend or take part in any after-school activity, a student must be present for school. If a student leaves school early due to illness, he/she will not be allowed to participate in any after-school activities on that day. However if a student has a valid excuse for leaving school early or for missing a school day, the student must request permission from the Athletic Director to participate. Valid excuses include, but are not limited to, college visits, funerals, court hearings, doctors appointments.

EARLY DISMISSAL EXPECTATIONS FOR ATHLETES

When student athletes have early dismissal for games, it is their responsibility to:

→ Communicate with their Teachers:

- ◆ **Notify Teachers:** Student athletes must proactively communicate with their teachers prior to the scheduled game, regarding the need for early dismissal.
- ◆ **Request Assignments:** Student athletes should request assignments or materials that will be missed during their early dismissal.
- ◆ **Respectful Interaction:** Students are expected to communicate in a respectful and professional manner when discussing early dismissal with their teachers.

→ Be Academically Responsible:

- ◆ **Record Assignments:** Student athletes should accurately record assignments, instructions, and any additional materials provided by the teacher for missed classes.



- ◆ **Assignment Completion:** It is the responsibility of student athletes to obtain and complete missed assignments promptly and submit them within the agreed-upon timeline determined by the teacher.
- ◆ **Quiz or Exam Arrangements:** If a student athlete misses a quiz or exam due to early dismissal, they must arrange with the teacher to make up the assessment by the following day.

→ **Behave Appropriately During Early Dismissal:**

- ◆ **Quiet Exit:** Student athletes must exit the classroom quietly, without causing any disruption to ongoing class activities or disturbing other students' learning.
- ◆ **Direct Reporting:** Upon leaving the classroom, student athletes should report directly to the designated location as instructed by the Athletic Director or Coach. Prompt attendance is essential to maintain team organization and prevent delays.

Student athletes who do not follow the expectations outlined in this policy, including disruptive behavior, failure to obtain assignments, or not adhering to quiet exit procedures, may face disciplinary consequences as per the Takoma Academy disciplinary guidelines. If a student athlete knowingly and consistently violates the policy, resulting in repeated disciplinary issues, he/she will be referred to the Takoma Academy Disciplinary Committee.

VARSITY SPORTS

Participation in a varsity level sport on the TA campus allows students to earn 0.5 Physical Education credits. Nevertheless, the number of half credits a student can acquire in a school year is limited to two.

RELEASE FORMS

In order for a student athlete to be eligible to participate in interscholastic practices and competitions, they must have a signed parent permission form on file in the athletics office. Parents must also provide the athletic physical for their student athlete to the Athletic Director.

PRACTICES

Here are the steps regarding athlete attendance, notice, absences, disciplinary measures, overnight stays, and MISAL events:

Attendance at Scheduled Practices:

- Athletes are required to attend all scheduled practices.



- In the event of a necessary absence, the head coach must receive notice from the athlete 24 hours prior to the practice.
- Failure to provide prior notice may result in the absence being considered unexcused.
- Absences from practice will be categorized as either excused or unexcused based on the athletic policy.
- Absence Thresholds and Disciplinary Measures:
 - If a student athlete accumulates an excessive amount of excused or unexcused tardies or absences, disciplinary action may be taken, which may include removal from the team or other appropriate measures.

Overnight Stays and Early Dismissals:

- Overnight stays or early dismissals may be necessary due to travel distance or game schedules.
- Approval for these arrangements must be obtained from the school administration and Athletic Director.

Attendance at MISAL Sponsored Events:

- Attendance at MISAL-sponsored events such as games and award ceremonies is considered approved school events.
- Students will not face penalties for missed work during these events; however, it remains the responsibility of the student athlete to make up any missed work.

PLAY TIME GUIDELINES FOR ATHLETES

Our sports program promotes fair and equitable playing time for all athletes. Coaches strive to provide opportunities for each athlete to participate in games and competitions. Playing time may be influenced by an athlete's skill level, performance, commitment, and effort during practices and games. Coaches aim to foster skill development and growth among athletes, considering both individual progress and team dynamics. Playing time decisions are influenced by team strategy, game situations, and the need for specific skills on the field or court. Coaches make game-time decisions that they believe will contribute to the team's success.

Regular attendance at practices and commitment to team expectations are factors considered in determining playing time. Athletes who consistently attend practices, show dedication, and display a positive attitude are more likely to receive playing time opportunities.



Athletes are encouraged to maintain open communication with their coaches regarding their goals, concerns, and aspirations. Coaches are available to discuss playing time matters and provide feedback to athletes seeking to improve their performance.

TRANSPORTATION

Student Athletes are expected to ride to all athletic events on school arranged transportation. This may include school arranged buses or parent drivers. Students who plan to ride to an athletic event with a family member/friend may do so with notification from the parent. Notification must be given to the Athletic Director or head coach in writing. Otherwise, the coach is legally bound to make sure each student rides to the game location on school sponsored transportation. Students who violate this rule may be subject to disciplinary actions and denial of participation.

USE OF EQUIPMENT AND FACILITY

No athlete should use the equipment or facilities of the gymnasium, team rooms, locker rooms, weight room, or athletic fields outside of scheduled practice times without the approval of the Athletic Director, Head Coach, or School Administration. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Activities will not be conducted on days when school is not in session due to severe weather, unless approved by the Principal.

FUNDRAISING

The Athletic Department will sponsor numerous fundraising efforts throughout the school year to help support and offset the cost of the athletic department and sports trips. All fundraisers must be approved by the Principal.

UNIFORM POLICY

Uniforms will be provided to students for use during the athletic season only. Uniforms are to be returned to Mr. Long or his designee **ONLY**. Uniforms are to be cared for properly (please follow the cleaning instruction on the label). Any student who returns a dirty uniform will be charged a cleaning fee of \$20. Any student who returns a damaged uniform or does not return a uniform within two-weeks after the season's end will be charged a uniform fee of \$250.



ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Coordinate transportation, game schedules, and practice sessions with coaches.
- Disseminate information regarding practices and games to families at least one week prior. Communication with families should be frequent, clear, and professional.
- Manage sports fees, uniform distribution and collection for each season.
- Prepare and share team performance with various stakeholders (i.e. parents, school administrators, teachers, etc.)
- Mediate disputes between coaches and athletes, with the support of the Vice Principal.
- Attend league meetings, as necessary.
- Check on the academic progress of sports students, and maintain a line of communication with teachers to ensure each player's success.
- Plan fundraiser events that support the athletics department.
- With the support of the Vice Principal, prepare budgets for all sports, track funds, and allocate funds as necessary.
- Be present and visible at games.
- Organize, attend and support the Sports Tournament(s).
- Ensure that both boys' and girls' sports teams equally receive attention.
- Promotes competition in a healthy way that does not discriminate or diminish the value of any of the players.
- Upholds the mission, vision, and values of Takoma Academy.

COACH DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- All Coaches must adhere to the Takoma Academy [Seventh-day Adventist] Sabbath principles by not scheduling secular outings, practices, or games between sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. In addition, coaches should ensure that all student athletes, regardless of religious faith, respect the Sabbath.
- Communication by coaches should be shared with student athletes and their parents. This means that students' messages from coaches on a text thread should include parents.
- All practices and game schedules for summer league, and leagues throughout the school year must be indicated in writing to all members of a team, and should include their parents.
- All student athletes should expect to be treated as integral parts of a team, regardless of their skill set.
- All conversations should be positive and respectful with athletes and their peers. The use of profanity will not be tolerated by any members of the coaching team. Verbal



humiliation should not be used as an acceptable means of communication with students.

- Coaches should set up a pre-season meeting with student athletes and their parents to provide pertinent information about their sports season.
- Coaches should follow the rules and regulations that are outlined in the athletic handbook.
- Coaches must ask for approval from school administration to participate in games that are outlined during the school day (i.e. games that are not toward the end of the school day).
- Coaches should encourage each participant to work to their full potential, and that no individual participants will be singled out or blamed for the team's failures.
- Coaches should maintain a level of professionalism, and embrace sportsmanship toward officials, players and their assistants.

PARENT-COACH COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIP

The parent and coach relationship can be challenging. By fostering mutual understanding between parents and coaches, we can more effectively appreciate each other's actions and ultimately enhance the experience of our student-athletes. As parents, it is only natural for you to seek clarity regarding the expectations set for your child when they become involved in our program. Clear communication from the coaches serves as the foundation for establishing this understanding.

Communication expected from the Takoma Academy Athletic Department Game schedules

- MISAL Code for High School Athletics
- Address to athletic events
- Athletic department philosophy and procedures
- Weight & Training Room Procedures

Appropriate concerns to discuss with the coach

- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior or academic progress
- The mental or physical treatment of your child

Acknowledging that your son or daughter may not receive as much playing time as you desire can be challenging. It is essential to recognize that coaches are professionals who make judgment decisions with the team's best interests and your child's development in mind.



Concerns NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

Parent-Coach Conference

There may be situations that require a conference between the coach and parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's positions. When these conferences are necessary, the procedure listed below should be followed to help promote a resolution of the issue or concern.

- First, encourage your child to speak with the coach.
- If the issue is not resolved, make an appointment to meet with the coach. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach.

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?
Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.

Expectations for Parents and Guardians

1. Parents are asked not to attend practice.
2. Parents are asked to behave appropriately during games.
3. Parents are asked to use appropriate tone and language when communicating with the coaches and athletic director.
4. Parents are asked to support the school by helping us demonstrate that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by applauding the team and being respectful to the opposing team.
5. Parents are asked to recognize that the primary purpose of high school athletics is to promote physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well being to the players through the medium of contests, victory or defeat is in reality of secondary importance.
6. Parents are asked to treat visiting teams and officials as guests extending to them every courtesy. Respect the judgment and integrity of the officials, realizing that their decisions are based upon game conditions as they observe them.
7. Parents are asked to be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
8. Parents are asked not to have noise makers during indoor interscholastic athletics.

*Failure to comply with these expectations may result in the removal of your student from a team.



PARTICIPANT PERMISSION FORM

Complete and return to Coach.

EMERGENCY CONTACT *(if neither parent/guardian can be reached):*

Emergency 1:

Name:	Home:	Cell:
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Emergency 2:

Name:	Home:	Cell:
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PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT:

I give my permission for my son/daughter to participate in interscholastic sports. I realize that such activity involves the potential for injury, which is inherent in all sports. I realize that on rare occasions injuries can result in permanent disability, paralysis, or even death. In the event of injury or illness, school/athletic personnel may take whatever action is deemed necessary to insure proper care and treatment for my child.

Student Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Parent/Guardian Name Printed: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____