

Thomas Sumter Academy



Athletic Handbook

2017-2018

All parents, student-athletes, staff, and coaches must read this document, along with the parent/student handbook. The policies and procedures presented in this Athletic Handbook will be the standards by which we are governed.

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HISTORY

As of 2007 and written by Joye Davis

On September 8, 1964, Thomas Sumter Academy breathed its first breath as a teaching institution. The 112 students enrolled in grades one through ten began fulfilling the long-term hopes and dreams of a handful of founding fathers.

On January 16, 1959, a group of community parents banded together and purchased the land and existing main building from the state, forming the Hillcrest Center, Inc. The original shareholders in the Hillcrest Center, Inc., were W.M. LeNoir, H.C. Edens, Jr., V.P. Dennis, A.W. James, C.A. McLaughlin, E.M. Dubose, A.M. Burrows, J.M. Edens, Jr., and J.B. Gaddy. Each contributed \$100.00 to the corporation to facilitate the purchase. The building was constructed in 1926 and housed Hillcrest School until 1958 when a new and modern facility was built just across from the old building at Highways 521 and 441. For six years, the building sat silent and living only in the dreams of a dedicated few.

In 1964, dreams became reality. By the time the school was ready to open its doors, several other community leaders had joined forces with the Hillcrest Center crowd, as additional investors and/or directors for the new institution, including R.V. Segars, Jr., J.E. Davis, W.J. Carter, M.S. McLaughlin, J.E. Sanders, Jr., J.R. Burrows, J.B. Pate, J.M. Brabham, E.C. Carter, Jr. and V. R. Dinkins. The school became real and continued to grow far, far beyond the greatest expectations of its founding fathers.

Thomas Sumter Academy began operations under the stern but loving hand of Mrs. Frances Mellette (“Fanny”) Dinkins. Mrs. Dinkins served as Headmistress from 1964 through 1966. She turned the helm over to W.W. Wannamaker, III in 1966. Mr. Wannamaker served as Headmaster until 1969, when the first senior class graduated from Thomas Sumter Academy. C.E. Owens III was hired in 1969 to replace Mr. Wannamaker, and continued in the position of Headmaster until 1996 when he resigned to focus full-time in the Episcopal ministry. Phillip W. Jackson, Jr., a 1984 graduate of Thomas Sumter Academy, took the reins from his former Headmaster and continued until 2004. Mr. William J. Hentges served as interim until Dr. Robert Mayfield joined the school family as Headmaster on June 1, 2006. Ms. Elena Gresham took the position as interim Head of School to complete the school year when Dr. Mayfield left. Long time Thomas Sumter General, Mrs. Debbie Nix accepted the position as Head of School in June of 2008. Her love of the school is evident in all she does.

Thomas Sumter Academy’s motto, “Acta Non Verba,” was engraved on the class rings of the first graduates in 1967; it has served as a prologue for the ensuing years. By the 1966/67 school year, the South Carolina Independent School Association had established intramural basketball, and Thomas Sumter Academy was ready with their first team. The school added bus services for students in the outlying communities in that same school year. On December 20, 1968, Thomas Sumter Academy established a Chapter of the National Honor Society for students excelling in Character, Scholarship, Leadership and Service. In the 1970-71 school year, the Mitch Edens III Memorial Gymnasium was constructed, and the Generals basketball team had played on their home court for the first time.

The school added a Bethel Campus in the 1970-71 school year, which operated in addition to the Dalzell Campus for fifteen years through the 1985-86 school year. Enrollment was an all-time high of 1125 when both

campuses were in existence during the 1984-85 school year. In the summer of 1986, the Bethel campus was closed, and the school's enrollment was reduced accordingly.

The 1971-72 school year produced the first Thomas Sumter Academy football team. In 1974, the school established a concurrent studies program with the University of South Carolina at Sumter, enabling Thomas Sumter Academy students to take courses at their campus for college credit. An additional library was added to the physical plant in 1976, followed by three science classrooms in 1979 and the Fine Arts Building in 1984. The Lower School library, a chorus room and dance studio, and more classrooms were added in 1985. The following year, an after-school daycare was initiated under the direction of Mrs. Renee Langston. In 1987, the academic program was strengthened by the installation of the Lower School science and computer labs.

In 1989, Hurricane Hugo hit Dalzell with force, destroying the old auditorium and causing more than \$300,000.00 in damage to the school. The spirit of the Generals would require more than a hurricane to destroy it. Renovations were completed in 1990, and the school had a beautiful new auditorium in addition to other repairs and improvements to the physical plant. In 1990, Thomas Sumter Academy was fortunate enough to acquire additional property to be used for sports, and the school activities continued to expand. Studio Art was added to the school curriculum in 1991, and a three-year art program for the upper school was added in 1992. In 1993, the academic program received an added boost when the relationship with the University of South Carolina at Sumter expanded, allowing students to receive college credit for courses taken at Thomas Sumter Academy's Dalzell campus.

Thomas Sumter Academy proudly celebrated its fiftieth anniversary during the school year 2014-2015. Celebration events included a worship service, Founders Day Assembly, 50 year class reunion, former faculty/staff luncheon, and our General Gala. In honor of our 50th anniversary, several of our original students and founding fathers led the commencement processional at the graduation ceremony of the TSA Class of 2015. All Generals strive to represent the ideals of our founding fathers and continue the great legacy of Thomas Sumter Academy for the next 50 years.

In the summer of 2016, TSA opened the Columbia Campus with 16 students. This new campus was under the tutelage of Mrs. Jody Murphy. With the graduation of the Class of 2017, Thomas Sumter celebrated the graduation of the 50th graduating class. The Class of 2017 had a combined scholarship tally of \$5.5 million to colleges and universities such as Washington & Lee, Wofford, The Citadel, University of South Carolina – Beaufort, Francis Marion, Erksine Collge and many others. In June 2017, Thomas Sumter Academy said good-bye to a legend at Thomas Sumter --- Mrs. Debbie Nix --- who after 39 years of faithful service to TSA retired. Mrs. Nix served as the eighth Head of School for Thomas Sumter. Not only had she served TSA as the Head of School, Mrs. Nix served as a teacher and Development Director. She is green and gold thru and thru! Thomas Sumter Academy's ninth Head of School is Dr. Frank L. Martin III beginning July 2017.

All Generals strive to represent the ideals of our founding fathers and continue the great legacy of Thomas Sumter Academy for the next 50 years.

MISSION

The mission of Thomas Sumter Academy is to develop, in a safe and Christian environment, well-rounded individuals who are fully prepared for college and life.

VISION STATEMENT

Thomas Sumter Academy strategically envisions becoming the top college preparatory principled leadership K-12 school in South Carolina.

PHILOSOPHY

“Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge.”

Thomas Sumter Academy is an educational institution serving students in an environment of Christian love and discipline within which students learn to link bodies of knowledge and develop an enthusiasm for living. Recognizing that academic success cannot stand alone, Thomas Sumter Academy places importance on participation in interscholastic athletics, fine arts, and extracurricular activities, in conjunction with the development of their faith, personal skills and attitudes in leadership, dependability, initiative, and fairness. A primary goal of TSA is to assist each student in maximum growth toward independence in thought and action.

Expectations are high, and the calling to be one's best is very real.

CORE VALUES

Core values are a critical components of the school/organization's character and brand. The school's character defines its culture, and its culture defines its destiny. TSA affirms the following core values:

- Thomas Sumter Academy's motto, "Acta Non Verba," is the foundation for each and every student, faculty and staff member --- Action Not Words is paramount.
- Maintain high academic standards through research based effective and collaborative learning.
- Honor: To be honorable in everything --- words and deeds.
- Commitment: To fully engage in every aspect of life at TSA in order to maximize each potential in body, mind, and spirit.
- Fidelity: To be faithful in everything - Faithful to God, country, parents, faculty and Thomas Sumter Academy.

Athletic Purpose Statement

The purpose of athletics at TSA is two-fold: first, as a school, athletic competition is part of the development of young men and women and should be done with the same excellence and emphasis as academics. Second, athletics provides opportunities for many of our students to apply their faith in multiple ways. Our desire is always to provide our students with coaches who will expose them to the truth of the gospel as well as train them properly in their sport.

At TSA we desire to provide quality coaching, teaching, and competitive experiences from a Christian perspective, all designed to prepare and enable each individual student to grow in Christ and strive for excellence by way of athletics.

Middle School: At the middle school level, our goal is to lay an athletic foundation of a Christian worldview, quality instruction, and a fundamental approach to each sport. This instruction is fulfilled through coaching that is marked by our desired dual focus: a mature Christian faith coupled with excellence in the sport coached.

High School: At the high school level, our desire is to continue the quality instruction of the middle school. All of our coaches are encouraged to play to win but to do so in a manner which brings glory to our Lord and Savior. What does this mean? It means we field a team that plays hard, fair, and aggressive in order to win, but that team does not play, win, or lose in a way that taints the name of our Lord and Savior.

Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is expected of everyone involved in athletics at TSA. What is good sportsmanship? It means players, coaches, and fans consistently demonstrate an attitude resembling Christ. Fans from a rival school are welcomed into our home arena with a cooperative spirit; when we play in an opposing arena, we do so in a way that honors our Lord by being good stewards of the facility, playing hard and fair, and winning or losing with the grace of the gospel. Everyone representing TSA is expected to treat opposing players and coaches, referees, and opposing fans with respect and courtesy at all times.

At TSA, how we do something is as important as what results from doing it. Our play must be a testimony to those who are watching. Our fans and the way we cheer also must be a testimony. We feel so strongly about this that we ask the entire TSA community to abide by the following:.

- Our school and witness are characterized by our conduct.
- We always appreciate a good play, regardless of the team.
- We never ‘boo’ or criticize a player, coach, or official.
- We are humble in victory, praiseworthy in defeat.
- Character, not victory, is the most important thing.

Sportsmanship Code of Conduct: On behalf of Thomas Sumter Academy we ask fans to use good judgment and Christian character in rooting for your respective teams. Your attendance and support of the student-athletes and coaches is appreciated by member schools competing. Though both teams are rivals, they are expected to exhibit the qualities of good sportsmanship throughout the contest and the administration of both schools request the same from all fans.

The athletes, coaches and officials are guests of Thomas Sumter Academy. ALL fans are asked to respect the effort each of them has put forth preparing for today’s/tonight’s contest. We ask all attending to show courtesy and respect for fellow fans, officials, coaches, those administering the contest and of course – your team and your opponent. And, as important today as ever, PLEASE “Respect the Game”.

Parental Code of Conduct: Parents will be required to sign the Parent's Code of Conduct. The Code must be followed at all times and parent may be asked to leave if not followed. If a parent is asked to leave the game, the parent will be not allowed to watch the next three games.

1. The 24-Hour Rule

At Thomas Sumter Academy, in accordance with who we are in Christ, we ask all parents to wait at least 24 hours before speaking to any coach about matters related to game decisions. We ask parents to abide by the following procedure when communicating with any TSA coach:

Step 1) Player to Coach Interaction

- Allow the student athlete to communicate with the coach about any issue he or she has. This will allow both parties to participate in open dialogue about the issue at hand.

Step 2) Player & Parent to Coach

- If the matter is not resolved, please schedule a time when both the student athlete **AND** the parent can meet with the coach.

Step 3) Parent, Head Coach, and Athletic Director

- In certain circumstances, a meeting between the parents, head coach, and athletic director may be required. This meeting will be scheduled by the athletic director.

If the need arises to have a discussion with a coach, the discussion must be limited to your student-athlete. In meeting with any coach, please understand that playing time as well as other student-athletes will never be topics open to discussion. You are the advocate for your student-athlete; conversations outside that realm can result in gossip and rumor, which TSA takes a strong stance against.

2. Organizational Affiliations

Thomas Sumter Academy is a member of the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA).

3. Programs Offered (Depending upon interest)

Interscholastic offerings at TSA are the following:

- I. Fall Sports: Middle School & Varsity Football, Middle School & Varsity Cheerleading, Girls JV and Varsity Volleyball, Girls JV and Varsity Tennis, Cross Country, Swimming
- II. Winter Sports: B-Team, JV & Varsity Basketball, Bowling
- III. Spring Sports: Track, Middle School & Varsity Baseball, Middle School & Varsity Softball, Co-Ed Soccer, Golf, Archery
- IV. Year Around Athletics: Equestrian, Speed & Strength, Sporting Clays

Coaches

A goal of TSA athletics is to provide Christian coaches of integrity who have the highest possible skills in their respective sports. Whenever possible, qualified faculty members are used to fill coaching positions. The athletic director is responsible for the overall athletic program and supervises all coaches.

4. Insurance/Injuries

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to provide health insurance for their children who are participating in athletics at TSA. Athletes are covered under a student accident insurance program through TSA. It is for accidental injury expenses only and is only for injuries occurring during participation in TSA practices or contests.

Each athlete's physical well-being is of prime importance to TSA. Therefore, all injuries must be reported promptly to a student's coach and the athletic director.

5. Academic Eligibility

All academic standards apply to all students who participate in TSA athletics, regardless of the school he/she attends.

TSA Athletic Academic Standards:

- a) A student will be deemed academically ineligible if he/she fails two or more classes during a quarter **OR** fails to maintain cumulative 'C' average (70% or above) or better. Also, the student must be in good standing with absences and tardies to participate.
- b) Grades will be reviewed at interim and at the end of each nine weeks to determine eligibility.
- c) For eligibility purposes, special recitation may not be given for the purpose of making a student eligible.

The administration and athletic director reserve the right to deviate from any TSA policy if the need arises due to special circumstances and situations.

11. Attendance/Eligibility

Full Day Attendance/Dismissal/Quitting:

All student-athletes, in order to be eligible to play on the day of an athletic contest or practice, must be in attendance for at least half of the school day. The Head of School and athletic director reserve the right to deviate from this stipulation as circumstances and situations arise.

Eligibility

All student-athletes are expected to avoid the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products as well as avoid any illegal activities on campus or off campus. Any student-athletes choosing to engage in any of the above will forfeit their right, honor and privilege of representing Thomas Sumter in any sport for one year.

All student-athletes are expected to honor their commitment to their teams if they are selected to represent TSA in any sport. Any Thomas Sumter athlete who quits a team before the completion of that season will not be given the privilege of participating in another sport until the completion of the prior sport's season. Any student-athlete who quits a team is automatically off the team for the remainder of that season. The player may be reinstated at the discretion of the coach.

Students are expected to remain committed to the sport during the season. The current sport takes precedence over all other non-school activities.

General Policies

a. Team Selection: The makeup of each individual team is at the discretion of the head coach. Middle school teams are made up of 6th-8th graders. High school teams are made up of 9th-12th grade players. Any deviation of these policies is at the discretion of the athletic director.

b. Tryouts: Any interested student who meets the TSA eligibility requirements may try out for a team. Coaches determine which players are selected to the team.

c. Parent Information: After a team has been determined, the coach will call a parent meeting to go over logistical matters, expectations, and requirements of the athletes and parents in regard to the season at hand. Parents will be given an opportunity to ask the coach and the Athletic Director questions. Parents will be required to sign the Parent's Code of Conduct. The Code must be followed at all times and parent may be asked to leave if not followed. If a parent is asked to leave the game, the parent will be not allowed to watch the next three games.

d. Playing Time: Determining how much playing time each player gets is up to the discretion of the head coach.

e. Practices: All athletes are expected to be present and on time to all practices. Practice time is not arrival time. All student-athletes are also expected to stay at practice until dismissed by the coach. Student-athletes should inform the coach in advance when absences are anticipated, and determination of whether the absence is excused or unexcused will be according to the coach's discretion. Recourse for missing practices is at the discretion of the coach. Coaches may call a non-mandatory practice on days of school cancellations.

f. Gender specific facilities: Sample definition: Biological sex means the biological condition of being male or female as determined at birth based on physical difference, or when necessary, at the chromosomal level.

Student restrooms, locker rooms, and showers that are designated for one biological sex shall only be used by members of that biological sex. In any other school facilities or settings where a student may be in a state of undress in the presence of other students, school personnel shall provide separate, private areas designated for use by students according to their biological sex.

g. Varsity Letters:

- Varsity athletes who remain as members of the team in good standing throughout the full season are eligible to earn a varsity letter, subject to the provisions below.
- Injured athletes depending upon the time of injury may be eligible to receive a letter.
- Managers who have held the position for at least two seasons in the same sport may earn a letter. Only those who, in the judgment of the coach, have made a significant commitment of time and effort shall be awarded the letter.
- Letter Jacket: Students may purchase a letter jacket after they receive their first varsity letter.
The Criteria for a varsity letter is awarded based on the following criteria:
 - Character
 - Commitment/Participation
 - Attitude

Transportation

a. Practices: It is the parent's responsibility to arrange for transportation to and from practices. Athletes are expected to be picked up immediately after a practice session. Coaches are required to supervise athletes until they have left the school premises. We will make every effort to provide transportation for practices which are held off campus.

b. Away Games: When school provides transportation to away games, all athletes are required to ride with the team. Exceptions must be authorized by the team coach. If parents provide transportation for their athletes and/or other players, by signing the Code of Conduct, each parent understands their responsibility. Those student athletes who have licenses to drive are NOT authorized to transport other student athletes.

14. Athletic Fees

Some sports at Thomas Sumter Academy require additional fees in order to participate in team camps or purchase additional equipment. Thomas Sumter's athletic teams are encouraged to participate in fundraising to assist in some of the added costs.

15. Right to Amend

Policies and procedures remain under revision. Thomas Sumter Academy reserves the right to make necessary changes and adjustments in policies and procedures throughout the school year.

Thomas Sumter Academy
Code of Conduct Handbook-Players

As a player representing Thomas Sumter Academy, you will adhere to the following:

1. I will treat my teammates, coaches, referees and/or officials, opponents, spectators and all others involved in our athletic events with respect at all times.
2. I will give my best efforts and full attention to my coach, and do my best to follow their instruction.
3. I will attend all practices and games as detailed on my schedule.
4. I will encourage and help my teammates and others who may not be as skilled as I am.
5. I will work to personally improve each day.
6. I will have fun.

As a member of TSA, I understand that I am responsible for my conduct at all times during practices and games. I agree to conduct in a Christian manner and to show good sportsmanship at all times.

It has been made clear to me that one incident of unsatisfactory conduct will result in my sitting out for one game. The second offense will result in dismissal from the team.

Unsatisfactory conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Rude or discourteous behavior to the coach, referee, teammates, or spectators
- Displaying an attitude, which shows I am not taking responsibility for my own behavior
- Any use of inappropriate language towards the coach, teammates, referee, or spectators
- "Fooling around" at practice or a game
- Being "red carded" or ejected from a game
- Behavior which would place my teammates and myself in an unsafe situation.

As student athletes, academic activities must come first. All players must follow TSA academic policies. Grades must be maintained with a C average (70% or above) or better in **all** classes and the student must be in good standing for absences and tardies to participate. Students with grades below 70% will be on put on probation. Probation will be handled as the athletic handbook states. Grades will be reviewed at interim and at the end of each nine weeks to determine eligibility.

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Thomas Sumter Academy
PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT
2017-2018

The philosophy of Thomas Sumter Academy's athletic program is an integral part of the educational program and is designed to have a positive influence on students. In addition to athletic skill development, we are charged with the responsibility of instilling in our athletes proper attitudes and behaviors that reflect the ideas of citizenship, sportsmanship, and cooperation, as well as building self-discipline and self-esteem. These goals can best be achieved through a successful partnership between student athletes, coaches, and parents.

Player/Coach Communication – It is the responsibility of the student athlete, not the parent, to notify the coach well in advance of any scheduling conflict that may involve an absence from practice or a game.

If your son/daughter has a concern, encourage him/her to resolve it directly with the coach. The majority of issues are successfully resolved through direct communication between the student athlete and the coach. There is an open door policy for players. Players need to have confidence that their concerns will be heard and addressed with respect and confidentiality in a timely manner.

Parent/Coach/Player Communication – If an issue is not resolved after the student athlete has met with the coach, the student athlete's parent should then contact the coach directly at school via email. Leave your name, number, a short message, and the best time to call. The coach will contact you in a timely manner.

Please be prudent with your decision when to contact the coach. Coaches spend a good amount of time preparing for, and supervising practices and games. Moreover, the period of time after a game is an emotional time for student athletes, parents, and coaches, and therefore is less conducive to solving problems rationally. We respectfully request that you abide by the 24 hour rule, which states that you wait 24 hours after a game to contact/discuss any issue or concern with a coach.

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you had hoped. Yet, coaches make decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all student athletes involved. **Therefore, coaches are not expected to respond to parents' questions about amount of playing time, positioning, team strategies or tactics, or any discussion about another student athlete.**

Player/Parent Communication – Understand that you are a role model for your son/daughter. Emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play, and your child will too.

If your child's performance produces strong emotions in you, maintain a calm demeanor. Your relationship with your child remains long after competitive sport days are over. Keep your goals and needs separate from his/her experience.

**Thomas Sumter Academy
Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct 2017-2018**

Thomas Sumter Academy's motto, "Acta Non Verba," is the foundation for each and every student and coach. We ask that all parents and guests strive to follow this motto at all athletic events.

Therefore I agree:

1. I will let the coaches do the coaching for all team members.
2. I will respect the integrity and judgment of sports' officials.
3. I will eliminate criticism of coaches, this only diminishes my child's respect and has no place in high school athletics.
4. I will model good sportsmanship at all times during games.
5. I will encourage my child to speak directly to his/her coach if he/she is having difficulties in practice or games or can't make a practice.
6. I will support the 24 hour rule: *Parents are not permitted to discuss athletic concerns with the coach for at least 24 hours after an issue arises at a game, practice, or other instance.*
7. I will conduct myself in such a manner as to bring positive feedback to our athletes, our school, and our community.
8. I will remember that the game is for the students-not the adults.
9. I will demand that my child treats other players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect.
10. I will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing, taunting, and using profanities.
11. It is never acceptable for a parent to attempt to discuss a child's playing time during a game or practice. It is NEVER acceptable for a parent to attempt to discuss another student's playing time or performance.
12. I understand that any violation of this code will result in possibly being asked to leave the game. If asked to leave, parents will not be allowed to watch the next three games.

I have read, understand, and agree to the parent's code of conduct at all Thomas Sumter Academy sporting events.

Student Athlete Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Date signed: _____

*This form must be returned to the Athletic Director prior to participation. Athletes will not be allowed to participate without completion of form.

