

True Cross Catholic School

Athletic Handbook 2025-2026

In Wisdom and Grace

In Sapientia et Gratia



Athletic Director: Dylan Whitehurst

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True Cross Catholic School offers a variety of competitive sports, including co-ed soccer, girls' volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball and coed track and field. Our athletic program is overseen by the principal, the athletic director and the coaches. Parents can check the school website for updated information and season schedules.

2025-2025 Sports Offered (providing number of participants is sufficient)

<u>Fall Sports:</u>	<u>Winter Sports:</u>	<u>Spring Sports:</u>
Cross Country Soccer Volleyball	Girls Basketball Boys Basketball	Track Track and Field

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the athletics program is to support the mission of the school. Faith, obedience, commitment, dedication, loyalty, teamwork, leadership, responsibility, and discipline are the very core of the Christian Athlete's service to the lord. The True Cross Athletic Program will teach and nurture such values in our young athletes.

GHCAA - GREATER HOUSTON CATHOLIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

True Cross Catholic School is a member of the Greater Houston Catholic Athletic Association. The G.H.C.A.A. is dedicated to fostering human development, within the framework of a Christian environment, encouraging a positive vision in our young men and women through exercise, positive athletic competition, and fully recognizing the dignity of each student in Christ's image.

All affiliated schools agree to the following goals:

- To build a community which strives to image Christ
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit and personal acceptance
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the life -styles of the participants
- To teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing and competing with dignity
- To develop an acceptance and appreciation of others
- To train and instruct in athletic rules
- To develop the student's physical abilities and coordination
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good health habits
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation

- To show the necessity of practice, work and management of time
- These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God

ELIGIBILITY OF ATHLETES

Enrollment: Athletes must be enrolled students of True Cross Catholic School.

Grade Level Requirements: We participate in a Junior High League. 6th, 7th, & 8th grade students may participate in all athletics offered. 5th grade and up may participate in Volleyball, Soccer and Basketball with participation at the coach's discretion and keeping the athletes' safety as a factor. 5th grade and up may participate in Cross Country and Track and Field. 3rd and 4th graders may be on the Elementary Track Team. 5th grade students may participate on either the Elementary Track team or the Junior High Track and Field Team.

Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right.

HEALTH PHYSICALS

Students must have a current physical done and signed off by a physician once a year (every 365 days) before a student can participate in any sport. These forms can be found in the office or online at our website.

ACADEMICS/BEHAVIOR

Students should maintain a minimum grade of a "C" average (78 or above) in all classes and a conduct grade of "S" or better in all classes during both progress report and report card grading periods. The athletic director will be notified if either a grade or conduct drops below the requirements.

- A student who receives a grade below 78 in conduct and effort may be deemed ineligible.
- A student who receives a grade below 78 in any one subject may be deemed ineligible.
- Should a student become ineligible, he/she will be placed on a 10-school-day probationary period. The probationary period shall begin on the day immediately following the reporting period. During this period, an ineligible student may not be allowed to participate in any practices, games, meets, or other school-sponsored athletic activities. It is expected that the student will use the two weeks to improve the grade(s) that resulted in the ineligibility.
- For those students who are deemed ineligible, a review of the subject area grades and/or conduct grades shall be made two weeks after the reporting period. If the grade(s) meet the requirements stated above, the student may be deemed eligible to return to full participation in extra-curricular activities. Eligibility shall be resumed on the day immediately following the grade check.
- If the student's grade or conduct is still unimproved after 3 weeks (21 days) the student may miss the remainder of the season for that sport.

- The student should then improve his/her grades before beginning participation in another sport.
- Any student suspended or expelled for behavior may not be allowed to participate in the current sport. If the current sport is more than halfway through the season, they may miss the second sport.

UNIFORMS

Uniforms are issued per sport at the beginning of each season. These are to be used exclusively for True Cross Catholic School games. These uniforms are to be treated with care as they are used for future teams. The student will be responsible for replacing lost or damaged uniforms. ***If a uniform is not turned in before the requested date or is not in good condition, a fee of \$75 will be charged.*** Students will not be allowed to participate in athletics until all fees are paid.

EQUIPMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY

As it is necessary to issue uniforms and equipment to athletes, the following policy applies:

1. Each athlete accepts full responsibility for his/her issued uniforms/equipment and is financially responsible for loss or damage (damage that occurs outside of games) of each piece of uniform/equipment. Damage occurring during a game will be replaced at no cost to the athlete.
2. Each athlete is responsible for having all necessary equipment for practice or games.
3. Uniforms will be issued at the beginning of the season and will be returned at the end.
4. Cleats, socks, shin guard, knee pads, spikes, etc. will not be provided by True Cross School.

TEAM SELECTION

Try-outs will be held for each middle school sport and are held for all eligible grade levels. Selection is based on ability, skill level, and effort. All decisions as to team selections are made at the discretion of the coach and principal, and are final. All try-outs are closed to parents and the public.

Students in the 6th and 7th grades will be placed on Varsity or Junior Varsity teams according to the criteria listed above. All students in 7th grade or below may have the opportunity to rotate from JV to Varsity, with all players being guaranteed to get some playing time in their assigned division. Students in 5th grade will be considered developmental athletes. They will typically play at a Junior Varsity or C-team level.

TEAM MEETING

Coaches will hold a pre-season meeting to go over expectations. Attendance of at least one parent is mandatory. Students/Parents will be provided with a copy of the Athletic Handbook, fee requirements, transportation information, uniform details, and practice/game schedules.

TEAM PARTICIPATION

Team practice is one of the most important elements in any athletic program. A team is only as good as its best practice. We ask for a serious commitment and attendance on the part of the

athletes and support from the parents. If an athlete is unable to attend a practice or game, that coach should be notified prior to the event.

If a student is absent from school, he or she may not participate in any athletic events, including games or practices on that day. A student must arrive at school by 10:00 am in order to be eligible to participate in athletics that day, unless a doctor's note is provided.

Excused absences and/or tardies from practice(s) and game(s):

1. Personal illness
2. Death in the family
3. Medical appointment
4. Scheduled tutoring

Unexcused absences and/or tardies from practice(s) and game(s):

1. Forgotten equipment or uniform
2. Attendance of another club or intramural sport
3. Chores or errands

Please note that we take homework very seriously. It is important for athletes to learn to organize their time efficiently, so that the team may depend upon their attendance and performance.

Any unexcused absence and/or tardy from a practice and game may result in losing playing time in future games at the coach's discretion.

Excessive unexcused tardies and/or absences may result in an athlete being suspended from the team.

Attendance and tardiness is reviewed when considering athlete awards.

TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM PRACTICE AND GAMES

Students are not allowed to walk over to any practice field unattended or unsupervised by an adult.

Transportation to and from practices and/or games is the responsibility of the parent of the athletes.

Carpooling arrangements can be made off campus. If a student plans to ride with another parent to a game and/or home from the game, they must have a signed Transportation Release Form on file with the school or a signed and dated note from their parent/guardian to be presented to the coach on the day of the event.

Coaches should have visual confirmation that a student athlete is being picked up by a parent or other previously approved source of transportation. Student athletes will not be allowed to wait in front of the school or any other place that is not within sight of a coach.

Parents need to be on time for designated pick-up times from practices or games. Coaches should be notified if a parent is running late. Students will be sent and charged for after school care if they are not picked up within 5 minutes past scheduled time.

Games or practices might be cancelled without notice due to weather or other conditions that are beyond the school's control. We ask for patience and understanding when these situations occur. The coach/school staff will make every attempt to provide immediate notification of cancellations via email.

INJURIES

Students should never play with injuries. Every effort is made to ensure the safety of the athletes. However, there is always a risk of injury when participating in athletics. The school is not held responsible for injuries that occur during practices or games.

GENERAL RULES AND DISCIPLINE FOR STUDENTS

1. Athletes will always exhibit proper Christian behavior. Athletes need to remember that they reflect Christ and should strive to always reflect his love and compassion.
2. Athletes are responsible for all necessary game uniforms and equipment. Failure to bring required gear will result in not playing in that game.
3. Athletes must have the necessary practice clothes and equipment to stay and participate. No athlete may be taped or wrapped without notification of injury or need. Prolonged or improper taping of joints weakens the joint and makes it dependent on that support.
4. Disrespect, use of foul language, gestures, threatening behavior or physical violence will not be tolerated. Infractions could result in suspension from games, removal from the team, and/or barring participation in the next calendar sport.
5. If an athlete does not attend his/her first period class, he/she may not be allowed to attend practice and/or after school games unless a doctor's note is provided and the note indicates that the athlete is healthy enough to participate.

PLAYING TIME

Varsity: This is the highest level of competition. Each team member will receive playing time throughout the course of the season; however, there is no guarantee as to the amount of time. Varsity teams will be competitive, and all players may not have the opportunity to play in every game.

JV: Each team member will receive playing time in every game. It will be at the coach's discretion to determine how long each member of the team will play.

C-Team: Each team member will receive equitable play time to the best of the coach's ability.

During tournaments, play-offs and championship games, individual participation is at the coach's discretion meaning that not every team member is guaranteed playing time.

Play time is determined by a variety of factors: skill, strength, physical development, academic grades, attendance, following directions, dedication, aggressiveness, attitude, respect, willingness to be coached, and effort applied at practices.

QUITTING

Should an athlete decide to quit, we ask the student to first meet with the coach to discuss reasons. Should the athlete quit the program, he/she will not be allowed to rejoin that same sport for the remainder of the season. Should a student quit two sports (fall & winter) within a school year, they may be ineligible for spring sports.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Students must be in good financial standing with the school, including tuition, lunch fees, library fees, etc. to participate in after school athletics. After school sports are not part of the tuition and therefore have a fee. This fee pays for coaches, referees, GHCAA dues, specific sport needs, trophies, plaques, equipment needs, and when possible uniform updates. ***It does not include tournaments.***

FEES

Athletic fees must be paid by the first practice, or the student will not be allowed to participate. If additional time is needed, please communicate your needs with the coach. **All athletic fees are non-refundable or transferable except in the case of a student injury that prohibits participation in the sport.** Tournament fees will be requested as needed.

PARENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Family support is essential for a successful athletic program as with most Catholic Schools. It is because of family support that we can achieve our school mission. Some of the main areas that a coach may need help with include: scoreboard operator, stat keeper, fundraising, concession

stands and end of season celebrations. Please prayerfully consider which area(s) you can help with during your child's sport season and let Coach know how and when you'll participate.

Please refrain from sideline coaching your child. Often it becomes confusing for the athlete as to whom they should listen. The coach will communicate their expectations with the athletes, and each athlete's unique role in the game. Praise and celebrate those moments with cheers of support and accept mistakes as just that, a mistake. Give your child the opportunity to recognize and make the necessary corrections. The coach will take care of the rest.

The True Cross Catholic School Athletic Handbook may be amended at any time at the discretion of the principal. Athletes will be notified of all changes made.

THE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP CODE

THE ATHLETE SHALL BE...

- Honest, humble and gracious. Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend.
- Positive and encouraging to opposing players and teammates through words and actions. Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a courteous manner following either victory or defeat
- Respectful of the judgment of referees and coaches
- Accept responsibility as a team member on and off the court/field. It is your responsibility to maintain your grades and conduct

THE ATHLETE SHALL NOT...

- Cheat
- Lose one's temper
- Speak negatively of teammates, coaches, referees, and opposing players
- Blame teammates for mistakes or a poor team performance
- "Trash talk" and/or taunt opponents
- Showboat
- Argue referees' calls and judgments

SPECTATORS SHALL:

- Remember that you are at the contest to support your team and to enjoy the skill and competition.
- Remember that school athletics is a learning experience for students and mistakes are sometimes made.
- Learn the rules of the game and the league, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student/athlete, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.

- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
 - Use only cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
 - Be a positive role model at events through your own actions.
 - Please respect the buildings and property of the facilities that are used.
 - Ensure the safety of children who are spectators by supervising them at all times.
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- **THE SPECTATOR SHALL NOT...**
 - Intimidate or ridicule the other team or its fans.
 - Lose one's temper
 - Speak negatively of teammates, coaches, referees, and opposing players
 - Blame teammates for mistakes or a poor team performance
 - "Trash talk" and/or taunt opponents
 - Showboat
 - Argue referees' calls and judgments

SPORTS TRANSPORTATION RELEASE FORM 2025-2026

Athlete's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Sport: _____

Parent's Name: _____ Phone No.: _____

Email address: _____

During the above sports season, ordinarily my child will be transported to the games by:

Name: _____

Phone No.: _____ Cell No.: _____

Name: _____

Phone No.: _____ Cell No.: _____

After each game, ordinarily my child will be picked up by:

Name: _____

Phone No.: _____ Cell No.: _____

Name: _____

Phone No.: _____ Cell No.: _____

If there is a change, I will send an email to Coach Whitehurst at dwhitehurst@truecrosschurch.org

All drivers must have proof of insurance and a copy of a valid driver's license on file in the school office. All children are to have their own individual seat belts and must be belted in their seats. Drivers are not to take or make any unscheduled stops (i.e. for food, etc.) Drivers are responsible for the children assigned to their vehicles throughout the trip. No child is to be left alone or allowed to go off alone. Vehicle assignments are not changed without Coach Whitehurst's permission.

I herewith release True Cross Catholic School from liability and from any and all claims against school authorities, individually or collectively from any injuries which might be received during the Sports Trip, either at the destination or in traveling to or from said destination.

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____