

The Tome School Athletic Handbook  
2009-2010

The purpose of this handbook is to provide coaches, athletes and their families some guidelines that they may find useful throughout each season. It is the intent of this handbook to make available information regarding athletics at The Tome School to all athletes who participate in our program. We ask that you and your parents review the handbook carefully.

Tome School provides the following sports:

Season	Boys	Girls
Fall	Soccer (V, MS*) Cross Country (V, MS)	Field Hockey (V, MS) Cross Country (V, MS) Volleyball (V, JV)
Winter	Basketball (V, JV)	Basketball (V, JV) Cheerleading (V, Junior Titans)
Spring	Baseball (V, MS) Tennis (V, MS*)	Softball (V) Tennis (V, MS*) Soccer (V)

\*MS-Middle School Soccer and Middle School Tennis are co-ed

Tome School requires each student in athletics to complete a Physical Examination form signed by a physician stating the individual is physically able to participate in athletic practices and contests. The medical form is valid if issued on or after June 1 of the current calendar year. Students may NOT even practice until this form in the school office.

The program seeks the highest development of all participants, is committed to high standards of ethics, sportsmanship and personal conduct, and respects the individual dignity of every athlete. Being a member of the The Tome School athletic program is a **privilege**. Student-athletes have the opportunity to participate in a wonderful athletic tradition that has taken decades to build. Participation carries certain responsibilities on and off the field, on campus and off campus. During a season, athletic guidelines are a twenty-four hour commitment.

### **Mid-Atlantic Independent League (MIL)**

The Tome School participates in the Mid-Atlantic Independent League (formerly the Maryland Independent League) since 2003 for some sports. The league provides a competitive environment for small schools. The League strives to facilitate lifelong traits such as leadership, collaboration and teamwork, and stresses good sportsmanship and attitude. Its motto is:

Let the players play, let the coaches coach, and let the spectators be positive.

Tome school participates in the MIL for the following sports: Boys' Soccer, Girls' Soccer, Volleyball, Cross Country, Basketball, and Baseball.

The following schools are also members of the MIL: Aquinas Academy, Greater Grace, West Nottingham Academy, Delaware School for the Deaf-Sterck, New Castle Christian Academy, Tall Oaks Academy and Lighthouse Christian Academy.

### **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

When you are part of an athletic team, you are a representative of The Tome School. You are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior on and off the field/court. Quality people and quality athletes create a quality athletic program. Quality athletes are good winners as well as good losers and display good sportsmanship at all times.

Each student athlete is required to sign a "Code of Conduct" that stipulates the expectations of being a Tome athlete. The Code of Conduct details the behavior expected of a Tome athlete. We encourage each student and parent to read the code carefully and support it throughout each season. A copy of the "Code of Conduct" is included in the back of this handbook.

### **Making the team**

The Tome School recognizes that squad size limitations be imposed on some sports in order to conduct a safe and educationally viable program. Some teams may conduct a try-out to determine the make-up of the team. The result of the try-out will be announced in a timely manner. Individual team coaches will be responsible to establish and to announce the guidelines for their own team's try-out procedures to the prospective squad members at the start of the try-out period.

If space is available on a given team after the try-out period or after the start of a season, a student may still join that team with permission from the Athletic Director. The student must practice for a minimum of two weeks before playing in any games.

### **Playing time as a member of a team**

Student-athletes EARN the privilege to play increasing amounts of time at the discretion of the coach. Student athletes who have not attended practice consistently or whose efforts in practice are detrimental to the team dynamic may not receive playing time.

At the Junior Varsity level student athletes earn the privilege to play in each contest. Skill development is especially important since the main objective of this level is to prepare students for varsity play. Team membership does not guarantee more than limited game time.

The best student-athletes, at the coaches' discretion, play as much as required in an attempt to achieve competitive excellence. Membership on a team does NOT guarantee playing time.

### **Attendance at Practice**

1. Attendance will be taken at every practice and excused/unexcused absences noted. If a coach is unable to resolve the nature of an absence through a discussion with a student, the athletic director will be asked to assist in determining the status of the absence. An excused absence would include academic tutoring or academic after school help.

2. Consequences for an unexcused absence will include reduced or no playing time in a subsequent event. Dismissal from a team may also occur under these circumstances.

3. Students who have academic conflicts or require additional contact with academic faculty must honor those commitments. The student should make a reasonable attempt to reach a member of the coaching staff or a team captain in advance when unable to attend a practice for academic reasons.

#### **Attendance at school as it pertains to practice and games**

In order to participate in athletics a student must check in at school by 8:10 a.m. and may not miss any more than two classes any time during the day. If a student leaves school during the day because of illness, he or she will not be able to participate in athletics for the remainder of the day.

However, classes missed because of doctor appointments or other excused absences will not affect participation if it is approved by Head of School. Excessive absences during a semester may result in loss of the privilege to participate in athletics.

#### **Academic Issues**

An athlete who is failing one or more classes has a mandatory suspension from the team:

- 1-week minimum for a failing grade at mid-quarter (progress reports) and
- 2-week minimum for a failing quarter grade.

An ineligible student must meet with the Head of School to develop a plan to bring the grades up to passing. At the end of the mandatory suspension period, the student must obtain signatures from EVERY academic teacher verifying passing status.

A student who has not regained passing status by the end of the next period is excluded from participating on the team for the remainder of the season. Ineligibility will result in forfeit of the varsity letter, forfeit of the team position, and forfeit of all awards associated with that team.

#### **Illegal substance abuse**

The athlete's code of conduct states: "I understand that possession of alcohol, or illegal use of a drug substance, including performance enhancing steroids, is strictly forbidden and will result in my immediate removal from the team".

Use of illegal substances, including underage tobacco use, will not be tolerated and is not part of a Tome athlete's life.

#### **Transportation and travel for students**

The Tome School will provide transportation to most events that are considered away contests. Transportation is provided through Tome's contract with Marshall's Bus Service. A transportation fee is to be paid at the end of each season. All athletes are expected to ride the team bus.

Students are NOT permitted to drive to and from contests unless:

- a) previously arranged with appropriate parental permission for a specific sport (i.e. a team with only a few members), or
- b) on a case by case basis, previously arranged with the Athletic Director AND Head of School with written parental permission. (ex. a contest is held in Harford County and the student lives in Harford County)

Coaches will NOT provide transportation to and from practices or contests unless previously arranged, and authorized by written parental permission.

All students and parents are required to sign a transportation release form for each sport that remains on record in the school office.

Schedules may on occasion, require early dismissals and an interruption in the academic day. Student athletes are generally dismissed around 2:35 p.m. On occasion, they may need to be dismissed earlier if they are traveling a farther distance. Students traveling as members of interscholastic teams should use behavior consistent with all activities conducted by the school. School policy, as defined in the Student Handbook, is in effect throughout any off-

campus activity sponsored by the school. Any deviation from normal behavior outlined in the handbook should be acknowledged immediately by the coach and reported to the Athletic Director.

In addition, an emergency information card and a medical consent form must be completed on each student and signed by a parent or guardian. This card will be kept in the medical kit for each sport along with the transportation permission form. This card can be used in the absence of a parent or guardian to receive emergency treatment. No student shall participate in athletics without this form.

### **Facilities**

Athletes should be sure that ALL equipment and personal items are removed from all facilities at the end of each practice or contest.

The Tome School provides excellent athletic facilities for its students. Athletes should use appropriate footwear on the gym floor. Students should be conscious of the floor's condition at all times and wipe up any spills immediately. Food and drink may be consumed on the stage area or the carpeted area only. At the end of each use, students should throw away any trash and recycle plastic water bottles. The gym is to be kept neat for the next group.

The Tim Waud Memorial Soccer Field is used for both Girls' Soccer and Boys' Soccer. Field hockey is played on the upper school field. Tome has six hard surface tennis courts.

Tome has baseball fields and softball fields located in the front of the school beyond the wooden bridge. Athletes are reminded to take all of their team and personal equipment with them after each practice and game.

Tome has a beautiful cross country course that winds around the campus. The entire course is 5 km/3.2 miles long. Cross Country athletes should use extreme caution when crossing the driveway while running the course.

Occasionally, a team may have to travel off campus for home or away events or practices. Students should care for these facilities as if they were their own

### **Awards and Recognitions**

The Tome Athletic Department recognizes the athletes who participate on JV and varsity teams at two ceremonies during the school year. These events are limited to JV and Varsity athletes and their families. Only the students who participate on Tome School sponsored teams are awarded participation certificates and varsity letters.

Some coaches may recognize athletes for special achievements (MVP, Coach's Award, etc.). Not every athlete will receive a special award.

Middle School athletes are generally recognized at the end of each season at an assembly held during school hours.

## **PARENT EXPECTATIONS**

### **Transportation**

Parents are expected to provide transportation for their child from practices. Parents must make every attempt to be prompt, as coaches are asked to remain with the athletes until a parent arrives. Students may **NOT** remain alone after practice without adult supervision!

### **Parent/Coach Communication**

Parents and coaches are important role models for students. They both provide necessary guidance to young adults in their development and their understanding of the world in which they will live and work as adults. When parents and coaches understand and respect each other, they can work together to benefit children. Parents and students have a right to understand the commitment, expectations and responsibilities that accompany participation in the Tome School Athletic program. Clear communication between parents and coaches facilitates this understanding. Listed below are a number of steps to enhance parent/coach communication. It is important also to remember that the first link in the communication network is the one established between coach and student. Students shall be encouraged to exercise the opportunity to speak directly with their coach about any topic.

Parents should notify the coach of any schedule conflicts well in advance and ask specific questions regarding a coach's philosophy and expectations

Students who participate in the The Tome School athletic program will experience some very rewarding moments. It is also important to remember there are times when adversity and disappointment will inevitably occur. At these times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate issues that parents may want to discuss with coaches may include the mental and physical treatment of an athlete, ways to help an athlete improve and any concerns about an athlete's behavior.

It is very difficult for parents to accept that their son or daughter may not play as much as they had hoped. Coaches are professionals. They are charged to make judgment decisions based on what they believe is equitable and best for all students involved. Certain items are open for discussion with a coach. Other decision making must be left in the hands of the coach assigned the responsibility of coaching the team.

Issues NOT appropriate to discuss with coaches include playing time, team strategy, play calling and other student-athletes.

Procedures parents should follow when they discuss a concern with a coach

- a) A call to the Coach should be made to set an appointment.
- b) Parents are asked to NOT confront a coach before or after a contest or practice without setting up an appointment. These can be emotional moments. Meetings of this nature are not productive.

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next steps can be determined.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to join the Tome Boosters whose sole purpose is to support the Tome athletic program. Parents can earn volunteer hours by participating in some Booster sponsored events.

Parents are also our students' biggest fans. As fans, they must remember that positive encouragement of all athletes provides the best sporting environment. Parent fans are expected to respect the calls made by officials, and the play of opposing teams. Good sportsmanship extends to the entire Tome community.

### **Equipment Policies**

Whenever possible, the Athletic Department will provide school owned uniforms and equipment to reduce additional costs to families. School ownership permits a higher level of assurance that equipment, especially protective equipment, meets national safety standards.

If families own protective equipment, it is their responsibility to maintain it at this standard. If an athlete fails to return his or her uniform by the date the coach expects, a fee to replace the uniform/equipment will be charged. In some instances, families will be billed for uniforms or uniform parts.

### **Fees**

The Tome School imposes a \$25 per sport fee to each athlete. In addition, each athlete will be charged for transportation and any uniform costs necessary to outfit a team. An invoice is issued at the end of each season payable to Tome. Fees generally range from \$40-\$95 per sport.

### **Schedules**

All sports' schedules are listed on the digital sports website: [www.digitalsports.com](http://www.digitalsports.com). A link to this site is available through The Tome School homepage. It is the student's responsibility to know the game schedule. Parents and students are encouraged to sign up for the notification service from digital sports for changes or cancellations. They should check the website prior to calling the school office.

## INFORMATION FOR COACHES

Like athletes, coaches also adhere to a Tome School Code of Conduct which encourages fair play and good sportsmanship.

Foremost among a coach's responsibility is the safety of the athletes. Coaches are to be knowledgeable in basic first aid and injury prevention and care. Each team is expected to keep a first aid kit on hand at practices and contests. A coach should travel with a set of emergency cards for the team. Coaches should oversee the administering of any medication, such as inhalers.

Like everyone in the Tome community, coaches should show respect for the athletic facilities at Tome. Before dismissing a team at the end of practice, a coach may want to be sure that all equipment is returned to the proper place and nothing is left behind. Lights in the gym should be turned off after each use. If a coach is the last to leave the gym, he or she should turn on the alarm.

Coaches should communicate the following:

- a) Philosophy of the coach
- b) Location and times of all practices
- c) Team requirements (special equipment, fees, off-season conditioning/recommendations)
- d) Procedures if the athlete is injured during participation
- e) Explanation of excused and unexcused absences from practices/contests
- f) Discipline that results in denying an athlete in a participation opportunity

### When Practice Ends

Coaches are to stay at the school or field until **all** students have departed. If a coach must leave, he or she should transfer this responsibility to the Athletic Director or another staff member.

While traveling with students, coaches should expect behavior consistent with all activities conducted by the school. School policy, as defined in the Student Handbook, is in effect throughout any off-campus activity sponsored by the school. Any deviation from normal behavior outlined in the handbook should be acknowledged immediately by the coach and reported to the Athletic Director.

## Athlete's Code of Conduct The Tome School 2009-2010

1. I understand that it is a privilege, not a right, to participate in athletics at the Tome School.
2. I understand that I represent myself, my family, my teammates, and Tome, and I will conduct myself in a positive and respectful manner at all times.
3. I understand that I must adhere to all school, athletic, and team rules at all times, including before and after practices/games and when traveling as a team.
4. I understand that, as a student athlete, I must meet Tome's academic requirements set for all athletes in order to participate.
5. I understand that receiving two school suspensions will result in my removal from any team for the rest of the season.
6. I understand that repeat infractions of the rules could bar me from future attendance, practices, and games.
7. I understand that receiving a school suspension, in school or out, three times during the school year will result in my removal from all athletic teams for the remainder of the year.
8. I understand that possession of alcohol, or illegal use of a drug substance, including performance enhancing steroids, is strictly forbidden and will result in my immediate removal from the team.
9. I understand that my responsibility is to be a respectful, responsible, and honest student-athlete in accordance with the Tome School Honor Code.
10. I understand that the Head of School can remove me from a team and/or from all athletic programs at any time if a situation warrants it.
11. I will use respectful and appropriate language with my teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents.

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEB ADDRESSES

Tome School            [www.tomeschool.org](http://www.tomeschool.org)  
 410/287-2050  
 Bob Olewine, AD     [ad@tomeschool.org](mailto:ad@tomeschool.org)  
 410/287-2050 ext. 112  
 Schedule:  
[www.digitalsport.com/school/id/27571/page/calendar.aspx](http://www.digitalsport.com/school/id/27571/page/calendar.aspx)

### MIL Schools & Other Facilities

West Nottingham Academy     410/658-5556  
 Greater Grace School 410/458-0700  
 Delaware School for the Deaf-Sterck 302/454-2301  
 New Castle Christian 302/328-7026  
 Tall Oaks Classical School 302/738-3337  
 Lighthouse Christian 410/398-6444  
 Elkton Christian Academy 410-398-6444  
 Greenwood Mennonite 302/349-4131  
 Harford Christian School 410/457-510

Academic Issues .....	4
Athlete's Code of Conduct .....	12
Attendance at Practice.....	4
Attendance at school.....	4
early dismissals .....	6
Equipment Policies .....	9
Facilities .....	6
Fees.....	10
Illegal substance abuse .....	5
<b>IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND WEB ADDRESSES .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>INFORMATION FOR COACHES.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Making the team .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Mid-Atlantic Independent League (MIL).....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PARENT EXPECTATIONS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Parent Involvement.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Parent/Coach Communication .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Playing time as a member of a team.....</b>	<b>3</b>
schedule conflicts.....	8
<b>STUDENT EXPECTAIONS.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Transportation and travel.....</b>	<b>5</b>