

Texas Charter School Academic & Athletic League TCSAAL



2012-2013 Handbook

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Mission & Vision

- **Mission**

The Texas Charter School Academic & Athletic League works to aid the individual growth of Texas' charter school students, through academic and athletic competition, to promote teamwork, a healthy lifestyle, and the constant pursuit for academic excellence.

- **Vision**

TCSAAL will develop and maintain annual sports leagues and academic competitions as a venue to showcase charter school students in Texas.

TCSAAL Goals

- It is the goal of TCSAAL to facilitate safe, professional, and fun competitions.
- It is the goal of TCSAAL to promote and value sportsmanship above all other aspects in all TCSAAL Activities.
- It is the goal of TCSAAL to develop a competitive league that is available to all charter schools in the state of Texas.
- It is the goal of TCSAAL to promote a sense of community among Texas' charter schools and to help build a stronger sense of charter school unity.
- It is the goal of TCSAAL to promote the progression of Texas Charter Schools.
- It is the goal of TCSAAL to provide a program that is an incentive to help foster the development of a student's good behavior, good grades, and their overall character.
- It is the goal of TCSAAL to provide activities that promote a healthy lifestyle.
- It is the goal of TCSAAL to provide competitions that promote the lifelong lessons that are obtained through teamwork.

Competition Codes/Sportsmanship

Competition Codes are established in order to ensure that any participating school, athlete, coach, fan, participant, or any other individual associated with our member schools, conduct themselves in a manner that is in the same spirit as the TCSAAL Mission & Vision. Individuals, campuses, and other entities failing to meet the standards set forth by the following competition codes may be subject to penalty.

- All opponents are to be treated as guests, emphasizing the value of sportsmanship over the result of a competition.
- Winning participants and their supporters are to display good sportsmanship in their victory, while participants that do not win and their supporters are expected to display good sportsmanship in their loss. Boasts, insults, or displays of poor behavior as a result of a loss is counterproductive in the individual participant's growth and development, as well as contrary to TCSAAL's Mission & Vision.

- Coaches are expected to keep safety as the top priority while coaching, and as well, are expected to teach tactics in a manner that are both ethical and in the spirit of competitive integrity. In addition, coaches are expected to coach in a manner that is conducive to the educational value of the respective competition, and should not resort to skirting the rules or employing unethical tactics.
- Participants and their supporters are expected to accept rulings of competition officials in a mature and humble manner, and are further expected to treat all officials, spectators, and attendants at TCSAAL events with courtesy and affable character.
- Coaches are expected to remember that they set the example for students. Acting unprofessionally after feeling wronged does not contribute anything positive to the competitive environment, and certainly does not correct any wrongdoing that might have occurred.
- Removing teams from competition as a means of protest is counterproductive to the fundamental aspects of both competition and team sports, and such action is likely to stunt rather than encourage personal growth for those individuals participating.
- Coaches are also expected to set a good example for his/her team by demonstrating affable and professional rapport with officials, opposing team members, coaches, and spectators.
- During the most trying times of competition, coaches are expected to lead their team in maintaining a positive attitude and in appreciating the value of the lessons learned through competition, rather than focusing on the negative aspects of a result.
- Coaches are expected to encourage core school academics above and beyond any aspect of competition.
- Participants and all affiliated individuals are expected to respect the facilities being used and are to clean up after themselves prior to exiting.

School Eligibility

- Any open enrollment or district charter school in the state of Texas is eligible to participate in TCSAAL.
- Any charter school in a bordering state that is willing to participate in a nearby Texas division will be eligible to participate if that division has less than 5 participating schools in all activities. A Non-Texas School will be grandfathered to continually participate in that division after the division grows beyond 5 teams as long as they stay in good standing with the league. TCSAAL has decided to allow outside Texas schools in the event stated above in order to help more divisions in Texas make and serve our goal of reaching all charter schools across the state of Texas.

Registration Requirements

- All schools must complete and submit the registration forms
- All participating schools must have their approved liaison to the league sign and return the Handbook Understanding Agreement.
- All schools must pay their base fee upon submitting their registration forms
- All schools must pay for each activity fee at least 30 days before the start of the activity
- In the instance where an event deadline has passed, late entries will be permitted at the sole discretion of TCSAAL. Factors taken into consideration when adding a team after the deadline include, but are not limited to: The logistical implications for those campuses already participating, the potential number of participants should a new division be necessary, and the amount of time in between the deadline and the team's attempted entry. For all late entries, a late entry fee of \$50 will be charged in the event that the team is accepted.

Refund & Payment Policies

Payment Policies

- All schools must pay their annual base fee at the time of registering.
- All schools must pay their activities fee 30 days before the start of the activity.

Refund Policies

- If a specific sport league in your region does not make (ex. 9th -12th flag football), your charter school will be refunded in full for the activity fee.
- If you have registered for an activity and choose to cancel your registration, the following refund policies will apply:
 - If you cancel 61 days or more before the start of the activity then you will receive a 90% refund (or only be charged 10% of the entire cost).
 - If you cancel between 60 and 31 days before the start of the league then your charter school will receive a 50% refund for activities canceled.
 - If you cancel 30 days or less prior to the start of the activity you will be charged the entire amount.

General Contest Rules

- No pass, no play. (Applies to all classes) Students can become eligible again based on progress reports as handled by the schools.
- A student must be under the age of 19 as of September 1, of the current school year to be eligible to participate in the high school age group.
- A student must be under the age of 15 as of September 1, of the current school year to be eligible to participate in the 6th – 8th Grade age group.

- A student must be under the age 13 as of September 1, of the current school year to be eligible to participate in the 4th – 6th Grade age group.
- Any student can play up in age, but they cannot play down. Any student can play up in grade but they cannot play down in grade.
- A student cannot play on multiple teams in the same activity. For example, a 6th – 8th grader is allowed to play on either the 6th – 8th grade team or the 9th-12th grade team but not both. Also, if your school, for example, has two 6th - 8th grade flag football teams, a student will not be allowed to play on both teams.
 - Students are permitted to change teams during the first half of the season (before their 5th game in all activities except 9th-12th grade basketball, in which case the deadline would be prior to the team's 6th game). For example: A participant can be moved from either the 6th-8th grade team to the 9th-12th grade team. If the participant was an 8th grader playing up into the 9th-12th grade team, the participant can be moved back down to the 6th-8th grade team. Schools with 2 teams in the same activity, gender and age grouping are allowed to have their students switch teams if the team they are leaving and the team they are going to has not started their second half of the season.
 - A player can only switch teams 1 time during a particular season. Whether they are switching teams at the same school or they are a transfer student to a new school. And all changes must be sent into TCSAAL for confirmation before the change happens. A player cannot play on the same team in a day even if this is their only switch.
- Final team rosters are due before the start of the second half of your season for all athletic teams. No changes to rosters will be allowed after the final rosters are due.
- Girls are eligible to participate in all boys sports.
- Boys cannot participate on girls' teams.
- Athletes must be a student at the team's school in order to play for that team.
- **Penalties for using an ineligible player:** Penalties for using an ineligible player can include, but are not limited to:
 - Suspension of a player
 - Suspension of coaches
 - Forfeiture of previous victories
 - Suspension of team
- For additional rules, please see the specific activities' rules.

Athletic Scheduling and Regular Season Format

Flag Football/Soccer

- Teams participate in an 8 game regular season. All regular season games will take place within that team's division. (In some cases the season may be a different length. If this occurs, TCSAAL will inform all teams in divisions affected by a different length season).
- Facilities and referees are included in schools fees and will be arranged and provided by TCSAAL.
- The top two teams from each division will advance to the playoffs.

Volleyball / 4th – 6th & 6th – 8th Grade Basketball

- Teams participate in an 8 game regular season. All regular season games will take place within that team's division. (In some cases the season may be a different length. If this occurs, TCSAAL will inform all teams in divisions affected by a different length season).
- Referees are included in event fees and will be arranged and provided by TCSAAL.
- Schools must provide their own facilities for home games. (If a school does not have the facilities then they are able to rent a facility)
- The top two teams from each division will advance to the playoffs.

High School Basketball

- Teams participate in a 10 game regular season. All regular season games will take place within that team's division. (In some cases the season may be a different length. If this occurs, TCSAAL will inform all teams in divisions affected by a different length season).
- Referees are included in event fees and will be arranged and provided by TCSAAL.
- Schools must provide their own facilities for home games. (If a school does not have the facilities then they are able to rent a facility)
- The top two teams from each division will advance to the playoffs.

6-Man Tackle Football

- Teams participate in a 2-7 game regular season, depending on how many teams are in the division. If there are 4 or less teams in a division, then teams will play each other twice. If there are 5-8 teams in a division, then teams will play each other once. All regular season games will take place within that team's division.
- Facilities and referees are included in school's dues and will be arranged and provided by TCSAAL.

- The top team from each division will advance to the playoffs. (Top 2 if there is only 1 division in the state)

Track & Field

- Teams will participate in an open meet as well as a Regional Qualifier. Teams/individuals that advance out of the Regional Qualifier will participate in the State Track meet. (See playoff format)

Athletic Divisioning

TCSAAL divisions will be composed of anywhere from two to nine teams (with the exception of 9th-12th grade basketball, which can have up to 11 teams within a division) within the same gender and age grouping. Teams are placed into a division by TCSAAL. Factors for placement include, but are not limited to:

- Campuses entering multiple teams in the same activity and age grouping.
- Campuses needing to transport multiple teams among different gender and/or age groupings.
- Geography and proximity of teams among a division.
- Teams registering after the deadline.

Athletic Playoff Format

Flag Football / Volleyball / Basketball / Soccer

- In all activities where we have at least 2 divisions participating in that activity in the same age/gender grouping, we will have a Regional Round of the playoffs as well as a State Round. TCSAAL will divide all participating divisions into regions, North, South, East and Central/West Texas. Regions will be assigned before the start of each season. (If there are only 2 or 3 divisions in the state then there will only be 2 or 3 regions).
- The top two teams from each division will advance to the Regional Round of the playoffs in their respective region.
- If there is only 1 division in the state then the top two teams will advance straight to the state championship game.

Regional Rounds

- Regional rounds will be structured as a single-elimination tournament with the Regional Champion advancing to the State Playoffs (the final 4 round, final 3 if only 3 regions in the state).
- Regional seeding will be determined by a controlled random draw. In the first round, #1 seeds will play #2 seeds.

- Divisional opponents will be placed on the opposite side of the bracket, except in the event that it is unavoidable because the region is made up of only one division.

State Round

- This round will be a single elimination tournament with the Regional Champions advancing to the State Round. The winner will be crowned the State Champion. In most cases the State Round will take place in one day with teams playing an early game and a late game.
- First round match-ups at the state level will be decided by random draw.
- Teams will not play for third place. State teams will finish either: State Champion, State Runner-Up or State Qualifier.

Playoff Format when less than 4 divisions are participating

- In the event that we have an activity with only 3 Divisions (Regions) then the winner from each of the three regionals will advance to the state round. Based upon random draw the 3 teams will be seeded 1, 2 and 3. The 2 and 3 seed will play a game with the winner advancing to the championship game to play against the 1 seed. (This format has been designed for safety so teams do not play more than 2 games in the same day.
- In the event that we have an activity with only two Divisions, then there will not be a Regional Round to the playoffs. The top two teams from each division will advance straight to the State Round.
 - Seeding will be determined by a controlled random draw. In the first round #1 seeds will play #2 seeds. Divisional opponents will be placed on the opposite side of the bracket except in the event that it is unavoidable.
- In the event that we have an activity with only 1 division in the state then the top 2 teams from the division will play each other for the championship.

4th – 6th Grade Activities Playoff Structure:

- Our 4th – 6th Grade activities will not participate in a state round of the playoffs. The top 2 teams from each division will advance to a single elimination Regional Playoff where they will compete to become Regional Champion.

6-Man Tackle Football Playoff Procedures

- Because of the amount of rest time required between games, only the top team from each division will advance to the Regional Round of the playoffs (Tackle Regionals will be the champion of each regional participating against another regional champion. The winners of those games will pay for the state championship). If there are more than 4 divisions

participating in Tackle Football, the league will decide on playoff structure before the season begins. In the event that there are three participating divisions, the teams with the best winning percentage will be the #1 seed and earn a bye round in the playoffs. In the event that there is a tie among divisional winners the league will determine seeding by random draw. In the event that there is only one participating division then the top two teams from that division will play a winner-takes-all championship game.

Track & Field Playoff Procedures

- At the Regional Qualifiers the top two relay teams and the top 6 individuals in all running activities except for the two mile, one mile, and 800 meter (only the top three individuals advance) will advance to the State Track Meet.
- At the Regional Qualifiers the 3 individuals in all field events will advance to the State Track Meet.
- In the event that bad weather prohibits us from having the regional qualifier meets, we will use the results from the regional open to determine advancement to state. We will not be able to make up any track meets due to bad weather.

Playoff Details

- TCSAAL will arrange all playoff facilities for all activities in both the regional and state level of competitions. TCSAAL will also arrange for all referees for the many rounds of the playoffs.
- TCSAAL will charge a door fee for all playoff rounds. The prices will be made public ahead of time via the website and the Weekly Sports Page. Usually the Regional Rounds will cost \$5-\$7 a day and State will cost \$10 a day. All players, coaches, and trainers on rosters will be allowed entrance for free. Cheerleading teams that have made arrangements with TCSAAL to perform will also receive entrance for free. Also, all guests 8 and under will be charged a \$1 entry fee and infants will be allowed free entry. No others will be admitted for free.

Playoff Awards

For awards given out to teams that advance to the playoffs, please see the individual activity's rules.

Athletic Tie-Breaker Scenarios

1. Divisional rankings are determined using the overall winning percentage among division games.
2. For all instances where multiple teams are tied in winning percentage rankings for an advancing playoff spot, the lowest ranking team in the following order of criteria will be ranked beneath the remaining team or teams:
 - a. If tied teams have played each other an equal amount of times, teams will initially be ranked by their winning percentage among tied teams.
 - b. Point Differential among tied teams. (Exception, in volleyball we seed based on number of games won, not by specific scores.) Point differential is the aggregate point difference (+ or -) among teams that have competed against each other.
 - c. If the #1 seed has been determined, and tied teams have played an equal number of games versus the #1 seed, teams will be ranked by their winning percentage versus the #1 seed.
 - d. If the #1 seed has been determined, point differential versus #1 seed will be utilized.
3. Upon ranking one team in a lower position, if there are remaining teams tied, the procedure restarts.
 - a. For all instances where multiple teams are at any point tied for the lowest ranking according to the above tiebreaker criteria and the number of tied teams is equal to or lesser than the number of remaining, non-advancing rankings, the said teams will all be ranked beneath the playoff advancing position.
 - b. For all instances where multiple teams are at any point tied for the lowest ranking according to the above tiebreaker criteria and the number of tied teams is greater than the number of remaining, non-advancing rankings, the said teams will be grouped together and will repeat the tiebreaker procedure among them.
4. For all instances where two teams are still tied for a playoff position, a tiebreaker game will be played.
5. For all instances where two teams are still tied for seeding purposes, a coin will be flipped to determine ranking.

Academic Competitions Structure

Math Olympiad/Chess/Spelling Bee

- Teams/Individuals will participate in a Regional Qualifier and those that qualify will advance to the State Competition. See event rules for qualifying criteria.

All Other Academic & Artistic Competitions

- Currently, teams will participate directly in the State Round. Please note that as an activity grows we will add Regional Qualifiers as necessary.

How many teams advance to State (For activities with Regional Qualifier)

- See the individual activities rules.

Protests/Appeals Process

- Schools that wish to make an appeal or protest must submit the appropriate form from our website which can be found under the “important documents” link.
- Schools will have 5 business days to submit their appeal/protest. Any appeals or protests for games scheduled within 2 weeks of the end of the season must be made within the following business day.
- Schools must pay a \$50 fee to submit their appeals/protest (If teams win their appeal then they will be refunded the money). Please note that no appeal/protest will be reviewed without funding in hand within 5 business days of the appeal. (This fee can be given to a TCSAAL Site Manager)
- Protests should be directed to either the Academic or Athletic Director.
- Appeals should be directed to the State Director.
- Schools may protest a student’s eligibility.
- Schools may protest possible cheating.
- Schools should bring to the attention of TCSAAL all acts of un-sportsmanlike behavior.
- Schools **may not** protest a referee’s judgment or ruling. TCSAAL will not overturn a referee’s ruling or judgment.
- TCSAAL will not change results or scores except in the event of un-sportsmanlike behavior, an ineligible student, or cheating. (Please note that penalties will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of TCSAAL)
- The TCSAAL State Director reserves the right to act on all protests and appeals and serves as the final authority on all disputes.

Hosting Teams Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Host Team:

- The Host Team must take measures to ensure there is always a safe environment for the competition.
- We encourage each Host Team to have a non-coach representative present at all home games.
 - The representative may be any coach (other than the game coach), teacher, administrator, or staff member associated with the school.
 - The representative works to ensure a safe environment.
 - The representative assists the officials in any manner necessary to discourage improper conduct by players, coaches, or fans.

- Host Team is responsible for reserving their own facility for all home games in which facilities are needed.
- Host Team must take measures to ensure that prohibited activities do not occur during game play; warm-up or wrap up of the game.
 - Prohibited activities shall be defined as any activities that are against the rules and regulations of the home team’s school or facility.
 - Additionally, prohibited activities include any activities that are against TCSAAL rules and regulations. Or any activity prohibited by law.
- Host Team shall be responsible for ensuring that the visiting team can be directed to locker rooms or facilities for teams to change.
- Host Team must ensure that the home team as well as the visiting team is adhering to all TCSAAL rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, sportsmanship, competition codes, as well as the rules and guidelines for each individual activity.
 - See individual activity’s Rules and Guidelines for more detail.

All-Regional/All-State Teams & Stat-Tracking Requirements

As a service to our schools, TCSAAL awards All-Regional and All-State teams in our high school athletics.

Coaches must fill out and submit nomination forms which can be found on our website. All coaches are encouraged to submit stat tracking forms for all high school games, also found on our website, to help make the case for their athletes.

Coaches will then vote on all nominees.

TCSAAL will give out awards to our honored high school athletes in the following categories:

- All-Regional
- All-State

Health & Wellness

- It is the policy of TCSAAL to not initiate or continue outdoor events when the Heat index is at 105 or higher. The heat index is determined when factoring temperature and humidity together.
 - TCSAAL uses the following heat index chart to determine the current heat index: http://www.srh.weather.gov/jetstream/downloads/heatindex_rh_f_20x12.pdf.
 - TCSAAL uses weather web pages such as www.weather.com to determine the temperature and humidity of an area.
- Please remember to provide sunscreen and shading for your teams at all outdoor activities.
- Please always bring plenty of water and food for your team. Please never assume that water and food will be provided.

Concussions Training and Guidelines

- To learn how keep student athletes safe and how to comply with HB No. 2038, please visit our new Concussion Prevention page on our website.

Rules and Guidelines for TCSAAL Competitions

Please see all rule and guidelines for competition on our website.

Updates and Changes to the Handbook

TCSAAL reserves the rights to add or modify general rules and guidelines at any time. Notification will be done via the website. Once a rule is posted on website it will immediately take effect. TCSAAL will try to notify schools of the changes but it is the responsibility of all participants to check regularly with the website in order to stay up-to-date. TCSAAL will not excuse failure to comply with rules because an individual claims to be unaware of the rules and regulations.

2012-2013 Handbook Understanding Agreement

The handbook understanding agreement must be signed by either the administrator or the person appointed by the administrator as the primary contact to work with TCSAAL on the school’s behalf.

I acknowledge by signing the following that I am signing on behalf of my school and all of my coaches and that I fully understand every aspect of the handbook, as well as all matters referenced in the handbook, including, but not limited to, full knowledge of all competition rules of activities that my school is participating in. I agree to ensure that all coaches, participants, parents, students and all those attending or participating in TCSAAL events are aware of the rules and guidelines in the Handbook and understand that they will be expected to abide by those rules and guidelines.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Title: _____

On Behalf Of (Insert your school’ name.): _____

Please fill out and return to us via fax. Our fax number is 512-291-6558

Or email to: texascharter@gmail.com

Please note that this handbook is subject to change at any time via the webpage. Schools are required to routinely check the webpage for updates to the handbook.

All schools participating in TCSAAL activities are bound by the rules of this Handbook weather they fill out the Handbook Understanding Agreement or not.

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