



***Athletic Policies  
& Handbook***

***2025-2026***



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# ***Introduction***

Canton Academy recognizes that athletics play a vital role in student growth and development. Our athletic program is designed to promote responsibility, cooperation, leadership, discipline, commitment and integrity. Participation in athletic activities also allows our student-athletes to experience the values of teamwork, respect and good sportsmanship along with being positive role models and developing healthy lifestyles.

All CA athletic programs are held to Canton Academy's high standard of excellence. The commitment to excel will always be a priority for our program, but our most important benchmark for success will be to develop student-athletes who will be prepared to face the challenges of life both now and in the future.

The goal for the Canton Academy athletic department is to provide each student-athlete with the opportunity to maximize his or her athletic skills and talents and have a very positive experience in the process. CA athletics play a very integral part in promoting a positive school climate by teaching lifetime values and developing leadership skills.

Obviously, this handbook cannot cover every instance that will occur during day-to-day activities of the athletic program, but it represents a good faith effort to inform all of those involved about the guidelines that will govern their participation. A student who chooses to participate in the Canton Academy athletic program is voluntarily making a choice through cooperation, self-discipline and commitment to put the program or team above their personal goals or ambitions. Participation in the athletic program is a privilege and not a right and it should be treated as such.

Please use this handbook as a resource for both student-athletes and parents to better understand the guidelines, policies and expectations of Canton Academy athletics. We believe that participation in athletics provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences that will prove to be beneficial to everyone involved both now and, in the years to come.

## **1. Goals & Objectives**

- To expect all student-athletes, coaches, administrators and parents to demonstrate a positive image for Canton Academy.
- To strive for excellence that will produce quality teams and develop good sportsmanship and personal growth for the student-athlete.
- To provide student-athletes with the opportunity to participate as a team member to achieve team goals and in the process learn the importance of cooperation and teamwork.
- To encourage academic and athletic achievement by emphasizing the importance of dedication, self-discipline, sacrifice and time management.
- To provide an environment that allows student-athletes to achieve realistic individual goals within the framework of the team.
- To maximize the opportunities for player development through proper instruction, practice and encouragement.
- To develop an appreciation for athletics that promotes lifelong participation and healthy lifestyles.
- To provide an atmosphere that allows student-athletes to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat.

## **2. Code of Good Sportsmanship**

- Total team effort.
- Promote the ideals of good sportsmanship, ethics and integrity.
- Cheer for the Panthers, not against the opposition (this includes signs).
- Respect officials and their decisions. Games wouldn't be played without them.
- Win with humility (without boasting); lose with grace (without excuses or finger pointing); do both with dignity.
- Demonstrate respect for opposing fans, coaches and team members.
- Realize that a ticket is a privilege to attend an athletic competition and support Canton Academy activities, not a license to verbally assault others or be generally obnoxious.
- Good sportsmanship should be contagious.
- Self-control is a virtue.
- Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting and encouraging Panther team members and their coaches. Have fun promoting our teams.
- Be a fan .... not a fanatic!
- Make good sportsmanship a conscious priority. It is simply the right thing to do.
- Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

## **Athletic Offerings**

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cheer
- Clay Shooting
- Cross Country
- Fast Pitch softball
- Football
- Golf
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track

### **3. *Expectations for Student-athletes, Coaches and Parents***

#### **Expectations for Student-athletes**

- Adhere to all school and athletic policies.
- Always represent the school with high character and good sportsmanship.
- Treat all coaches, sponsors and opponents with respect.
- Respect officials and accept their decisions without argument or gesture.
- Academic performance is your primary responsibility.
- Always exercise self-control and set a positive example for others to follow.
- Respect all team members, and do not participate in any activities that could be interpreted as hazing.
- Class attendance is expected both the day of and after the competition. Athletic participation is not an excuse for being tardy the day following competition.
- Student-athletes should hold themselves personally accountable for their behavior and accept the positive or negative consequences of those actions.
- Return all equipment issued by the athletic department.
- Report any injury to the coach or trainer.

#### **Expectations for Coaches**

- Provide for the safety of the student-athlete.
- Encourage academic achievement and periodically monitor student-athlete grades.
- Teach the skills necessary for player development.
- Set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.
- Teach and exhibit good sportsmanship and respect for officials.

- Be role models for honesty, loyalty and integrity.
- Be organized, efficient and prompt.
- Be supportive of sharing athletes and support all athletic programs.
- Implement any needed discipline for infractions within the athletic program.
- Take proper care of facilities and equipment.
- Communicate with students and parents regarding expectations, responsibilities, schedules, etc.

## **Expectations for Parents**

- Enthusiastically support and encourage your child, their team and their coaches.
- Maintain a positive attitude regardless of whether your team is winning or losing.
- Always exhibit good sportsmanship.
- Respect officials and respect their decisions.
- Refrain from coaching or instructing your child at contests or at team practices.
- Respect the judgement and strategy of the coach, and do not criticize players or coaches after a loss.
- Follow the Student Handbook policies for addressing any issues with coaches.

## **4. Conflict Resolution: Protocol**

Our goal at Canton Academy is to provide a positive experience for every athlete and family. Unfortunately, there will be times when an athlete or parent may have concerns during the season. If the need arises, then please use the following protocol:

- The student-athlete should take his/her concern to the coach in a scheduled meeting environment.
- If the meeting does not result in a satisfactory resolution, then the parents and the athlete should request a meeting with the coach. This meeting should be held at a mutually agreed upon time and place with the Athletic Director present in the meeting.
- If the concern remains after this meeting, then the parents may request a meeting with the Athletic Director, coach and Head of School.
- Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with the Coach include: the mental and physical treatment of your child; what your child needs to do to improve; concerns about your child's attitude or behavior.

## **5. Playing Time**

The athletic philosophy at Canton Academy is to play as many players as possible in each contest. The individual's ability level, attitude, work ethic and the team's specific needs or game situation will determine playing time. Playing time is a decision reserved for the head coach in each sport and will not be discussed with parents.

## **6. Practices and Games**

All athletes at Canton Academy are expected to attend all practices and games throughout the season. A season extends from the first day of the activity until the last game is completed. It is vital and expected that the athlete, and the parent, if necessary, communicate any vacation plans or other situations that may require the athlete to miss practices to the coach well ahead of time. When parents and student-athletes choose to take family vacations or trips during a sports season, then it must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete may affect team performance and team chemistry. Those student athletes who miss practices or competitions can and likely will have their playing time adjusted.

School sport participation must take precedence over other non-school related activities in which the student-athlete may be involved. If the student-athlete misses a practice, game or just is not able to perform up to their potential due to their participation in non-school sponsored activities, then the coach and the Athletic Director should decide appropriate actions.

## **7. Physicals and Injuries**

### **Physicals**

All student-athletes must have a current physical on file in the athletic office before any athletic participation is allowed. Physicals are valid for one (1) calendar year. Under no circumstances is any student-athlete allowed to practice or participate without a completed physical.

### **Injuries**

As with all physical activity, there is always a risk of injury when participating in athletics. Any athlete who becomes injured in practice and/or a game should immediately report the injury to the coach for further evaluation. The coach will then contact a trainer or school nurse if necessary for further evaluation and/or treatment.

## **8. Uniforms and Equipment**

Uniforms and equipment purchased by the athletic department are considered property of Canton Academy. Uniforms in all sports are purchased on a rotation basis according to need, and it is important that the players take proper care of the uniforms that have been issued for that season. Damage to uniforms due to normal wear and tear will be the responsibility of the athletic department. However, for any uniform that is lost or damaged in a manner that is not a result of competition, then the student-athlete will be responsible for the cost of replacement. All uniforms and equipment purchased by Canton Academy must be returned to the athletic department at the conclusion of the season. Failure to return uniforms or equipment will result in the student-athlete being assessed a fee to cover the replacement cost.

It is necessary that some apparel and/or equipment be purchased by the athlete for a particular sport. Every effort is made to keep those costs to a minimum. Some items for purchase are optional and some are mandatory depending on the sport. Anything purchased by the student-athlete is his/her personal property.

## **9. Athletic Transportation**

The athletic department will make all travel arrangements for the team and team personnel. Student-athletes who participate in athletic events off campus shall be required to travel in transportation provided by the school to and from the event. Exceptions may be made if the athlete's parent requests that the student-athlete be allowed to ride home with the parent after a contest. This should be done in the form of a written request and should be approved by the head coach in advance. Some athletic contests scheduled in the metro area may allow student-athletes to use private vehicles for transportation to and from the event with approval from the coach. Canton Academy will not be held liable for any injuries, accidents or harm that may occur when personal vehicles are used for transportation to and from athletic events.

## **10. Inclement Weather**

The safety of the student-athlete will always be the priority in the event of inclement weather. School cancellation does not necessarily mean that athletic events scheduled for that day or evening will be cancelled as well. The athletic department will distribute the appropriate information once a decision is made.

## **11. Athletic Facility Use**

The proper care of athletic facilities at Canton Academy is the responsibility of each coach and athlete. Damage done to any equipment or facility should be reported to the athletic director. No student is allowed access to any of the athletic facilities without proper approval and/or adult supervision.

## **12. Quitting**

Once a student-athlete makes a commitment to a team, then quitting a sport is highly discouraged. If a student-athlete does choose to quit after the season has started, then he/she will not be allowed to participate in another sport until the season of the first sport has ended.

## **13. Athletic Dismissals**

Early dismissals for athletic competition will be necessary from time to time. According to MAIS rules and regulations, student-athletes are only allowed one early dismissal per week per sport.

## **14. Absences Due to Extracurricular Practice and Competition**

Students will not be allowed to take part in any school-sponsored extracurricular competition, event, or practice if absent from classes the entire day of such activity. Absences or tardies for the day following the extracurricular event can be excused by the Head of School. In addition, students who are habitually unable to attend school or who are tardy to school the day following an extracurricular event, will, for the sake of their health and academic achievement, be dropped from participating in such activities. Students leaving campus, including for school-sponsored activities, will take all scheduled tests that day before leaving campus. When extracurricular activities remove a student from the school day, then the previously assigned work in all classes is due before the student leaves campus. Assignments assigned during classes the student missed should be completed and turned in on time.

## **15. Eligibility**

Canton Academy offers a wide range of athletic activities. All students are encouraged to participate regardless of ability, and every reasonable effort is made to allow students to participate in multiple activities.

Athletes must meet academic eligibility requirements set by the MAIS and Canton Academy. In addition, athletes are expected to exemplify positive leadership in the area of behavior throughout the school year. Student Athletes must maintain their academic responsibilities throughout the academic calendar to maintain their eligibility to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities.

## ***Canton Academy Athletic Eligibility (Student Handbook)***

Students participating in extracurricular activities at Canton Academy are expected to maintain good grades. Grades will be checked at three-week intervals and at the end of each 9-week grading period.

- Students with a grade of 70 or below in **one** or more academic class(es) will be required to attend tutoring at 7:30 am in the respective course(s); if the student does not meet the required tutoring they will be subjected to work detail, detention, or punishment from prospective coaches.
- At the end of the 3-week period if the student has **two** or more classes with a grade of 70 or below the student athlete will be on probation until the next grading check. Students will be eligible to practice and participate in extracurricular events during any probationary period.
- If a student still has two or more failing grades in academic classes for two consecutive grading checks a student will be considered ineligible. If a student is deemed academically ineligible, then he/she should be allowed to participate in practice and allowed to dress for the athletic events with the team but not participate in any athletic contest. Students will be allowed to do so with the following stipulation that he/she must arrive at school at 7:30 am for tutoring every school day until that student becomes academically eligible.
- A student will regain eligibility with less than two failing grades after the next grade check for which they were ineligible as long as the remaining failing grade is capable of obtaining a passing grade at the end of the semester.
- If a student fails two or more academic courses at the end of the first semester, the student will be ineligible for the third nine weeks. A student may regain eligibility with less than two failing grades at the end of the third nine weeks if the remaining failing grade is capable of obtaining a passing grade at the end of the third nine weeks.
- At any future checks if a student who has previously been ineligible has below a 70 in two classes or more, they will immediately become ineligible.

### ***16. Suspension and Detention***

Any player serving suspension or detention will also be suspended from practice and scheduled games during that period. There may also be additional penalties administered by the coaches in conjunction with the Athletic Director.

### ***17. Physical Strength and Conditioning***

The philosophy of the strength and conditioning department is that each athlete is given the proper training to prevent injury. Athletes will challenge their power, speed, strength, and flexibility. Each athlete will use the safest and most effective programs to reach set goals.

## **18. Practice**

Specific guidelines concerning practice times and schedules are outlined with each sport. General practice information includes the following:

- Days and times of practice are communicated through individual coaches.
- With prior notice, a coach may call a special practice session.
- Inclement weather does not automatically cancel practice. There are many inside areas where teams can meet.
- There are no scheduled Sunday practices without the permission from the Athletic Director and Head of School.
- Holiday practices are scheduled by the coach and approved through the Athletic Director and should be communicated to the players and the parents in advance.
- The coaches distribute summer practice and weight training information before summer vacations.
- Summer practices for sports that have fall seasons are imperative. Vacations during summer months are expected by the coaches, but missing most of the team's preseason practices leading up to the season can be hard for an athlete to overcome.
- Summer practices follow MAIS guidelines.
- Please note that parents should pick up students within 15 minutes after practice. Students who have not been picked up after that time are to report to the after-school study.

## **19. Game-Day Dress**

Athletic teams may wear special "team attire" in lieu of the school uniform but only on days they are participating in an athletic event. All team members must wear the same, identical, approved "team attire" or the entire team may forfeit its privilege.

Acceptable "game day" attire consists of the normal school uniform bottoms (khaki shorts or pants for boys and skirts, skorts, or pants for girls, with uniform-compliant shoes) and a "team" top. The team top may be a collared shirt, sweatshirt, or other outerwear. If the "team" top is worn as outerwear, a uniform or team shirt must be worn underneath. All decisions about the selection and wearing of game day attire will be made by the coaches with approval from the Athletic Director.

When students report to games, they should be appropriately attired. Coaches will determine appropriate attire.

## **20. Sharing of Athletes**

It is the philosophy of the Canton Academy athletic department to not only allow but to encourage student-athletes to participate in multiple athletic offerings during the school year.

National research has shown that student-athletes who participate in multiple sports score higher academically and have better behavior during their playing seasons. Also, most individuals who go on to play at the collegiate level were multi-sport athletes in high school.

If conflicts arise, then it is the responsibility of the coaches to work cooperatively to develop a plan that has the best interest of the student-athlete in mind. At no time should the student-athlete be put in a position to make a decision due to conflicts.

## ***21. Athletes Participating in Two Seasonal/Overlapping Sports***

In some situations, it is impossible to play two sports in the same season due to conflicting schedules of practices and events. Athletes playing two sports must fulfill the obligations of each team as set by the coaches in order to participate in both.

If an athlete is participating in a sport and another sport in which he/she plans to participate begins prior to the conclusion of the first sport, the athlete's primary responsibility is with the first or seasonal sport. If an athlete is participating in more than one sport, the coaches will work together when practice and/or game schedules conflict for the benefit of the entire athletic program so as not to put the athlete in the middle of the decision.

If conflicts in schedules occur, the coaches, with approval from the Athletic Director, will determine in which activity the athlete will participate.

## ***22. Athletic Department Discipline***

The Canton Academy Athletic Department believes being a member of an athletic team is a privilege. Student-athletes should remain drug, alcohol, nicotine, and tobacco free and always exhibit exemplary behavior. To assist in the administration of this policy, the Athletic Department reserves the right to discipline student athletes that cross these lines of exemplary behavior.

If any athlete is ejected from a game:

- **First Offense:** consequences will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director and Coach

- **Second Offense:** suspended for one game and, if needed, additional consequences at the discretion of the Athletic Director and Coach
- **Third Offense:** suspended for the remainder of the current sports season

*\*This is for the Athletic Calendar beginning in July through May; the number of offenses follow a player throughout the athletic calendar\**

### **23. Concession Stand**

All parents/guardians of students participating in any athletic program will be required to work your assigned concession stand shift(s) throughout the course of the year. Date and times will be assigned by the Booster Club prior to each in-season sport. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to find a replacement for their slot if they are not available to work at their designated time.

