

South Tippah School District



Athletic Handbook 2023-2024

Introduction

South Tippah School District is committed to excellence in all of its programs, both curricular and extra-curricular. With this in mind, we have developed this athletic handbook to help coaches and student athletes understand the policies that govern participation throughout the district in extra-curricular activities. This handbook will be an evolving document as policies are revised and developed. We hope this handbook will be an asset to you.

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George Buchanan, Ripley High

Insurance

The School District **DOES NOT** furnish an accident policy covering the school day and extracurricular activities. Students must provide proof of insurance to be eligible to participate in MHSAA sanctioned activities.

Academic Rules for Students Participating in Activities

GRADES 9-12

South Tippah School District is committed to excellence in all of its programs, both curricular and extra-curricular. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the students who participate in extracurricular activities are maintaining the proper grade standards for eligibility to participate and that each student participant is proceeding satisfactorily towards graduation. As stated in the MHSAA, Inc. Handbook, to be eligible for athletics and activities, students must pass the number of courses required by their local district in order to stay on graduation track. The units will be averaged as a whole, either numerically or by GPA, and must be 2.0 or better each semester in order to maintain eligibility. A student athlete may become eligible for the second semester only once during his/her high school career if he/she fails the year end average the previous year, by passing the required number of units with a 2.0. This will be done in order to keep the student on track for graduation. Special education students will be academically eligible if they are making satisfactory progress according to the committee reviewing their Individual Education Plans (IEP).

MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible only for middle/junior high activities, a student must have passed any four courses (that meet the equivalent of 250 minutes per week and meet MDE requirements) with a 2.0 average for the preceding semester (computed numerically or by GPA). The year-end average for the spring semester will be used to compute averages for the fall semester. Students must be on track to be promoted to be eligible.

Beginning with 2013-2014 seventh graders, once a student enters the seventh grade, he or she has two years of middle school athletic eligibility.

To be eligible for high school activities, the middle/junior high school student must have a 2.0 overall average (computed numerically or by GPA) for the four core courses (English, math, science, and social studies) from the preceding semester. The year-end average for the spring semester will be used to compute averages for the fall semester. Students must be on track to be promoted to be eligible.

Summer school or extended school year grades will replace the grade for a failed course in the spring semester GPA.

Star Sportsmanship Requirement

During the 2008-2009 school year, every school that was a member of the Mississippi High School Activities Association was required to go through the Star Sportsmanship program. Below is the requirement that was passed by the MHSAA Executive Committee.

- Coaches, student-athletes, cheerleaders, and dance participants in middle school and high school sports will be required to complete the Star Sportsmanship online program which is endorsed by the Mississippi Department of Education, the Mississippi Association of Coaches, and the Mississippi High School Activities Association.
- It will be the responsibility of the head coach of each sport to insure that his or her team's student-athletes and assistant coaches complete the Star Sportsmanship program.
- * Junior high and middle school coaches and students must complete the Star Program before their sports season ends.
- * High school coaches and students must complete the Star Program before post-season play begins in their sport.
- Star Sportsmanship rosters of high school teams participating in the playoffs will be checked along with the required playoff eligibility rosters turned in by participating schools. STAR SPORTSMANSHIP schools will be notified prior to the first playoff contest of coaches and players who have not completed the program.
- * The high school head coach will not be allowed to participate in post-season play until all players and assistant coaches have completed the Star Sportsmanship program.
- * Middle schools will be randomly checked to insure completion of the Star program. A \$500 fine will be assessed middle school teams not completing the program.
- Any coach or player who is ejected must complete the Star Sportsmanship program (if it has not already been completed) plus the remedial module Take 2 before the coach or player can once again participate.

Who must complete the STAR Sportsmanship program during the 2009-2019 school year:

- Any coach or player who has not already gone through the training must complete it. (All new coaches must complete the training.)
- Any cheer or dance coach or participant who has not already gone through the training must complete it.
- Band, choral, and speech and debate participants must complete the training.
- Coaches are encouraged to use the parent module at their team meetings.

Middle school students have gone through the middle school version do NOT need to go through the high school version if they are moving to the high school. Their STAR Sportsmanship certification is still effective.

Athletic Commitment Requirements

Any student participating in a school sponsored sport will give up the privilege of participating in a non school sponsored sport while in an athletic season. Any student doing so (7-12 grades) will not be allowed to participate in the school sponsored sport from that point on. This would only cover while the sport is in season.

MHSAA, INC REQUIREMENTS

The Mississippi High School Activity Association is the organization in the state of Mississippi that is responsible for setting policies concerning high school athletics. MHSAA publishes a handbook each year stating the requirements that students must meet for participation in extracurricular activities. This handbook can be found in the school office and at the website of MHSAA, www.misshsaa.com.

HOMECOMING PARTICIPATION POLICY

Any girl chosen as a Homecoming maid will be able to participate in Homecoming festivities without any repercussions for missing another activity.

JGE (SEPTEMBER 2018)

ATHLETIC PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Each student desiring to participate in a sport will be required to undergo a screening physical. The student athlete must be cleared by a licensed physician to participate in the sport for which the physical is given. If the screening physical is provided by a licensed physician as an accommodation to the School District without expectation of payment, the parent and/or student must execute a written waiver or consent and provide a medical history in the form as may be prescribed by the South Tippah School District.

It is the policy of the South Tippah School District Board of Trustees to use local physicians to administer the athletic physicals when possible. All efforts to obtain free physicals with no insurance being filed should be exhausted before using physicals that will charge and/or file on the athlete's insurance. All physicals will be conducted at a centralized location.

WAIVER AND CONSENT

WHEREAS, _____, a student of the South Tippah School District (Student Athlete”) desires to participate in the sport of _____, provided by _____ School of the South Tippah School District; and,

WHEREAS, the undersigned is the parent of the student athlete and consents to his/her participation in such sport.

NOW THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the privilege of such student athlete to participate in such sport, the undersigned parent and student athlete acknowledge, understand and agree to the following:

- (1) A screening physical examination will be given to the student athlete by a licensed physician who without expectation of payment sometimes performs screening physicals of student athletes for the South Tippah School District.
- (2) The physical examination is a screening tool rather than a diagnostic tool and not all potentially serious conditions will be uncovered.
- (3) The undersigned parent gives permission for said physician to perform such physical examination.
- (4) A medical history shall be provided on the form attached hereto and is true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.
- (5) The undersigned understand that such examination could require further diagnostic work up before the student athlete could participate in such sporting event.
- (6) The undersigned understand that such physical examination is performed by said physician without expectation of payment and agrees that said physician shall be immune from any civil liability arising out of such physical examination.
- (7) The undersigned also understand that they may have a screening and/or diagnostic physical conducted by a physician of their choice at their own expense.

WITNESS OUR SIGNATURES, on this the _____ day of _____.

Student Athlete

Parent

SOUTH TIPPAH SCHOOL DISTRICT RANDOM DRUG TESTING POLICY

In an effort to protect the health and safety of students involved in extracurricular activities from illegal and/or performance-enhancing drug use and abuse and to curtail the use of such drugs, the Board of Education (the "Board") of the South Tippah School District (the "District") adopts the following policy for random drug testing of all students Grades seven (7) through twelve (12) who participate in extracurricular activities.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND INTENT

Although the Board of Education, administration, faculty, and staff desire that no student use or possess illegal or performance enhancing drugs, we realize that our power to restrict the possession or use of such drugs is limited. Therefore, this policy governs only the use and possession of performance-enhancing and illegal drugs by students participating in extracurricular activities. This policy supplements and complements all other policies, rules, and regulations of the District regarding possession or use of illegal drugs, including, but not limited to, all policies and rules concerning reasonable suspicion of the use or possession of such illegal drugs. The policy also supplements and complements all laws and policies with respect to special education students.

Participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities in the District is a privilege. Students respect those students who participate in these activities and see them as examples. Participating students represent the District and their community. Accordingly, students in these activities carry a responsibility to themselves, their fellow students, their school, their families, and their community to set the highest possible examples of conduct, sportsmanship, and training, which includes avoiding the use or possession of illegal and performance-enhancing drugs.

The purposes of this policy are six-fold:

1. To educate students about the serious physical, mental, and emotional harm caused by illegal drug use.
2. To alert students with possible substance abuse problems to the potential harms that drug use poses for their physical, mental, and emotional well being.
3. To offer students the privilege of competition and participation in extracurricular activities as an incentive to stop using such substances.
4. To ensure that students adhere to a training program or health regimen that prohibits illegal and performance-enhancing drugs.
5. To prevent injury, illness, and harm to students that may arise as a result of illegal and performance enhancing drug use.
6. To offer students school activities free of the effects of illegal and performance-enhancing drug use.

Illegal and performance-enhancing drug use of any kind is incompatible with the physical, mental, and emotional demands placed upon participants in extracurricular activities and with the positive image these students project to other students and to the community on behalf of the District. To protect the safety, health and well being of all students involved in extra-curricular activities, the District adopts this policy for all participants in specified extracurricular activities in grades 7 through 12.

The administration shall adopt regulations to implement this policy.

I. Definitions

"Activity Student" means a member of any middle school or high school sponsored extracurricular organization. This definition includes any student who represents District schools in any extra-curricular activity involving competition of any kind, such as academic team, band, vocal, choral, cheerleader, and athletics. (See the attached list of activities.)

"Drug test" means a scientifically substantiated method to test for the presence of illegal or performance-enhancing drugs, or the metabolites thereof, performed by an independent testing company.

"Random selection basis" means a mechanism for selecting Activity Students for drug testing that:

- A. results in an equal probability that any Activity Student from a group of Activity Students subject to the selection mechanism will be selected,
- B. does not give the District discretion to waive the selection of any Activity Student selected under the mechanism, and
- C. is administered by a professional testing company employed by the District.

"Illegal drugs" means any substance that an individual may not sell, possess, use, distribute, or purchase under either federal or Mississippi law. "Illegal drugs" includes, but is not limited to, all scheduled drugs as defined by Miss. Code Ann. Sections, 41-29-113, 41-29-115, 41-29-117, 41-29-119, and 41-29-121, all prescription drugs obtained without authorization, and all prescribed and over-the-counter drugs being used for an abusive purpose.

"Performance-enhancing drugs" include anabolic steroids and any other natural or synthetic substance used to increase muscle mass, strength, endurance, speed, or other athletic ability. The term does not include dietary or nutritional supplements such as vitamins, minerals, and proteins that can be lawfully purchased over-the-counter.

"Positive" when referring to a drug test administered under this policy means a toxicological test result that is considered to demonstrate the presence of an illegal or a performance-enhancing drug, or the metabolites thereof, using the standards customarily established by the testing company administering the drug test.

II. Medical Review

A Medical Review Officer of the testing company shall be responsible for the reviewing and verification of all positive test results.

III. Notification

Each Activity Student shall be given a copy of this policy and of the Student Drug Testing Consent. Both the student and the student's parent or custodial guardian must read, sign, and date the Student Drug Testing Consent. No student shall be allowed to practice or participate in any extra-curricular activity to which the policy applies unless the student has returned the fully executed Student Drug Testing Consent form. The District reserves the right to supplement and modify the extra-curricular activities to which the policy applies.

Each semester, principals and/or a representative of the independent testing company will present an informational session to students to educate them about the sample collection process, privacy arrangements, drug testing procedures, the consequences of positive drug tests, and related procedures and practices. The purpose of the session is to reassure the Activity Student, to avoid embarrassment or uncomfortable feelings about the drug testing process, and to give notice of the consequences of drug use.

IV. Procedures

Activity Students will be chosen on a random selection basis from a list of all Activity Students, no matter if the activities are off-season or in-season. The District will determine the number of names to be drawn at random for drug testing. An independent testing company will select the names of the Activity Students at random and will administer the drug testing.

The testing company must use scientifically validated toxicological testing methods, have detailed, written specifications to assure chain of custody of the specimens, and use proper company control and scientific testing. The drug testing company will send all positive results to the medical review officer. The responsibility for verification of final results belongs to the testing company.

The testing company shall conduct all aspects of the drug-testing program, including the taking of urine specimens, so as to safeguard the student's personal and privacy rights to the maximum degree practicable. The test specimen shall be obtained in a manner designed to minimize intrusiveness to the student. If at any time during the sampling procedure the testing company employee has reason to believe or suspect that a student is tampering with the specimen, the testing company employee may stop the procedure to determine if a new sample should be obtained.

The medical review officer will notify the student, parents and/or guardian of a positive test and will verify information supplied him/her of prescription medications, if necessary, which might contribute to the positive test results. If the student, parents and/or guardian do not respond to the medical review officer's notification within seventy-two (72) hours of the first attempted contact the medical review officer shall have no further duty to attempt to contact the students, parents and/or guardian.

V. Confidentiality

The testing company will notify the principal of the school that the Activity Student attends; and, will also notify the Superintendent or his designee of any positive test results. To keep positive test results confidential, the principal will notify only the student, the student's parent or guardian, and the coach/sponsor of the activity or activities in which the student participates of the test results. Test results will be kept in files separate from the student's other educational records, these records shall be disclosed only to school personnel who have a need to know.

VI. Consequences

FIRST VIOLATION

Upon the first violation, the student shall be suspended from participation in the event/s, activity or activities in which he/she is currently participating for a minimum of 28 days, beginning no earlier than the opening game or event for that sport or activity. If a student is not participating in an in-season sport or activity, he/she will have a 28 day suspension no earlier than the opening event of the next season in which he/she participates.

If the violation relates to the consumption or use of a prohibited substance, to the extent the substance is capable of being detected by a drug test, the student cannot be reinstated to the team, squad or activity until he/she tests negative for that prohibited substance as a result of an approved drug test. In the discretion of the drug testing coordinator the student may be requested to undergo counseling. The activity student must attend a drug counseling or educational program at the activity student's expense. The counselor, activity student, and his or her parents/guardians will determine the length and manner of counseling. Proof of counseling through an approved or certified program must be provided to the Athletic Director.

SECOND VIOLATION

Upon the second violation, the student will be suspended from participating in any event or activity for the remainder of the school year in which the second violation occurs. However, the duration of the suspension shall be for a minimum of twelve weeks and shall carry over to the ensuing school year if necessary, and thereby preclude such student from participating in any other event or activity during the twelve-week minimum suspension period.

Before he/she can be reinstated to the team or squad, or otherwise be eligible to participate in any other sport or activity, he/she must test negative for that prohibited substance as a result of an approved drug test if the violation relates to the consumption or use of a prohibited substance

and the substance is capable of being detected by a drug test. The activity student must attend a drug counseling or education program at the activity student's expense. The counselor, activity student, and his or her parents/guardians will determine the length and manner of counseling. Proof of counseling through an approved or certified program must be provided to the Athletic Director.

THIRD VIOLATION

Upon the third violation, the student will be suspended from participating in any event or activity for a period extending for a full calendar year, for seniors, event includes not participating in graduation exercises.

Before he/she can be reinstated to the team or squad, or otherwise be eligible to participate in any other activity, he/she must test negative for that prohibited substance as a result of an approved drug test if the violation relates to the consumption or use of a prohibited substance and the substance is capable of being detected by a drug test. The activity student must attend a drug counseling or education program at the activity student's expense. The counselor, activity student, and his or her parents/guardians will determine the length and manner of counseling. Proof of counseling through an approved or certified program must be provided to the Athletic Director.

FOURTH VIOLATION

Upon the fourth violation, the student will be indefinitely suspended or permanently barred from participating in any event or activity in the South Tippah School District, for seniors, event includes not participating in graduation exercises.

SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH VIOLATIONS COULD RESULT IN A ONE CALENDAR YEAR PLACEMENT AT ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL UPON RECOMMENDATION OF PRINCIPAL TO SUPERINTENDENT OR SOUTH TIPPAH SCHOOL DISTRICT DISCIPLINARY HEARING COMMITTEE.

VII. Refusal to Submit to Drug Use Test

If an Activity Student refuses to submit to a drug test, the Activity Student shall be considered in violation of his/her consent agreement and shall be barred from the specified extracurricular activities for one calendar year.

VIII. Appeal

The District will rely solely on the opinion of the independent testing company to determine whether the positive test result was produced by something other than consumption of an illegal or performance-enhancing drug. There shall be no appeal of the test results of the professional testing company to a principal, the Superintendent, or the Board of Education.

If disciplinary action is administered the Activity Student will be afforded due process in accordance with the South Tippah School District Policies

The South Tippah School District is committed to cooperating with parents/guardians in an effort to help students avoid illegal drug use. The South Tippah School District believes accountability is a powerful tool to help students avoid using drugs and that early detection and intervention can save lives.

**SOUTH TIPPAH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Student Drug Testing Consent Form**

Statement of Purpose and Intent

Participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities in the schools of the South Tippah School District is a privilege. Activity Students have a responsibility to themselves, their fellow students, their schools, their families, and their community to set the highest possible examples of conduct by avoiding the use or possession of illegal or performance-enhancing drugs.

Drug use of any kind is incompatible with participation in extracurricular activities in the South Tippah School District. For the safety, health, and well being of all students, the South Tippah School District has adopted a policy of using an independent testing company to conduct random drug testing of all students at schools in the District who participate in extracurricular activities. The testing of Activity Students may occur at any time during the school year ("in-season" and/or "off season").

Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities

Each Activity Student shall be given a copy of the Activity Student Random Drug Testing Policy and Student Drug Testing Consent. Both the student and the student's parent or legal guardian must read, sign, and date the Student Drug Testing Consent before the student shall be eligible to practice or participate in the listed extracurricular activity. To be eligible to participate in or practice with certain extracurricular activities, the consent shall be (a) to give a urine sample; (b) if chosen on a random selection basis; or (c) at any time requested based on reasonable suspicion of the use or possession of illegal or performance-enhancing drugs. No student shall be allowed to practice or participate in any activity governed by this policy unless the student has returned the properly signed Student Drug Testing Consent.

Student's Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
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I have read the "Student Activity Drug Testing Policy" and "Student Drug Testing Consent," and I understand that, out of care for my safety and health and the health and safety of others, the South Tippah School District enforces the rules applying to the use or possession of illegal and performance-enhancing drugs. As a member of my school's extracurricular activity, I realize that the personal decision that I make daily about the use or possession of illegal or performance-enhancing drugs may adversely affect my health and well being, possibly endanger those around me, and reflects poorly upon any organization with which I am associated. If I choose to violate this policy regarding the use or possession of illegal or performance-enhancing drugs at any time, whether during in-season or off-season, I understand upon determination of that violation I will be subject to the restrictions on my participation and practice as outlined in the Policy.

Signature of Student	Date
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We have read and understand the South Tippah School District "Activity Student Random Drug Testing Policy" and "Student Drug Testing Consent." We desire that the student named above participate in the extracurricular activities of the South Tippah School District, and we hereby voluntarily agree that we as parents and our child or ward are subject to terms of the Activity Student Random Drug Testing Policy. We accept the method of obtaining urine samples, testing and analysis of such specimens, and all other aspects of the policy. We further agree and consent to the disclosure of the sampling, testing and results as provided in the policy and any regulation adopted by the administration of the District.

Signature of Parent or Custodial Guardian	Date
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* Please read the accompanying policy carefully.