

TAFT

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026 - 2027





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WELCOME MESSAGE



PETER BECKER '95
Head of School

Welcome to Taft! Returning students, you are culture carriers—new students will look to you to understand Taft's norms much more than they will look to this handbook. All students and employees of the school, returning and new, are culture creators: in Taft's 136-year history, we have never been this school, composed of this group of incredible people. Together, we will create Taft today.

We can all look to the school's *Portrait of a Learner* to see the very high standard that we all commit to when we choose to attend or work at Taft. The Portrait states that we are "a community devoted to creating lifelong learners, thoughtful citizens, and caring people." For most new students, Taft is the most diverse community you've ever been part of, composed of students from 29 U.S. states and from 56 countries around the world. You will learn in every conceivable way here: in the classroom, in your dorm, at the dining hall, and through arts, athletics, service, and other activities.

Each student arrives with individual goals, both implicit and explicit. That's great! I encourage you to compare your goals to the Portrait of a Learner. In order that you contribute the most you can to creating an incredible school this year and in order that you get as much out of your time as a student here, and achieve the goals you have for yourself, take the risk to practice the elements of the Portrait. They are easier to read than they are to live—and the adults at the school, starting with me, have devoted their lives to helping you bridge that gap, even as we also continue to learn what lifelong learning, citizenship, and caring look like in action.

Please read this handbook closely. We update it regularly. If you practice the Portrait of a Learner, you will rarely need to refer back to this handbook other than for practical answers. But the care invested in this handbook, and the specificity of it, highlight areas of student life that may seem obvious. Experience has shown us, however, that students and families benefit from these rules and practices being spelled out clearly in advance. We will all live by these rules because the structure they provide creates the conditions for all of us to learn how to embody the qualities of a Taft graduate and, believe it or not, the structure also makes life together in the beautiful intensity of a boarding school more fun for students and faculty!

Mrs. Becker and I look forward to learning and living alongside you,



MESSAGE FROM CO-HEAD MONITORS

ANNA ROSSI ’27



MYLES PETITJEAN ’27

Welcome to Taft! We, the ’26-’27 Co-Head Monitors, are excited to meet you all and start the year strong! This year is going to be amazing, and thanks to you, one full of empathy, spirit, curiosity, and growth. Rooted in success, we hope everyone will strive to become the best version of themselves and discover more about their passions and identity through the many opportunities Taft has to offer. Being a part of this community means taking on the responsibility to make positive change on campus. Likewise, understand that active contribution and engagement - however that may look for you - are needed to help our school thrive. Join a club, try out for a team, audition for the play, follow your passions, and allow yourself to experience Taft. Taft is an excellent place to learn as a person and as a student. It is a place for open-mindedness, intellectual exploration, and self-improvement. As courses become challenging, step into adversity and continue with clear intent on a path for success. We believe this year has the utmost potential to be filled with kindness, be alive with laughter, and bloom with positivity, but that depends on the decisions you make as an individual to help our community as a whole. This handbook serves as an outline of the expectations you are expected to uphold throughout the coming year. We, as Head Monitors, along with the other School Monitors, will help you uphold these values and expectations. Remember: you belong here. You have a purpose and bring so much to our campus. We believe in you, and together, let's make this year one we are proud of!

- Anna Rossi ’27 and Myles Petitjean ’27



IMPORTANT CONTACTS AND PHONE NUMBERS

A complete school-wide directory of all faculty and staff is located on our Directory page.

- **Campus Safety:** 860-945-7789
- **Administrator on Duty:** 860-483-1338
- **College Counseling:** 860-945-7703
- **Counseling:** 860-945-5937
- **Dean of Academics:** 860-945-7845
- **Dean of Students & The Office of Student Life:** 860-945-7800
- **Head of School:** 860-945-7787
- **Hulbert Taft Jr. Library:** 860-945-7780
- **Information Technology:** 860-945-7990
- **Martin Health Center:** 860-945-7762
- **Moorhead Academic Center:** 860-945-7851
- **Phone Systems Administrator:** 860-945-7906
- **Switchboard:** 860-945-7777
- **Transportation:** 860-945-7721
- **Business Office:** 860-945-7770

TO THOSE ENTERING TAFT

We extend our best wishes for your success here. It is likely that you will encounter much that seems strange or different at first. You will probably find the first few days particularly confusing — this is a typical reaction. Taft is a welcoming community, and many people will do their best to help you feel at home. Before long, you will find yourself part of the school.

All new students are assigned student sponsors, referred to as “student mentors,” whose job it is to answer questions, explain our customs, and help you feel at home here. Do not hesitate to go to your sponsor for advice and information. Furthermore, as a new student, you will participate in activities that will help you understand more about the school.

Each student will have a faculty advisor.. Your advisor will be intimately concerned with all phases of your career at Taft, and we hope you will feel free to discuss any important issues in your life. Early in the year we will help all students understand a few obvious boundaries of this relationship and will suggest how you should go about choosing an advisor who is right for you. Go out of your way to get to know your faculty advisor well; you will find your advisor ready to help whenever you need assistance or guidance.

In addition, each student has a Class Dean. Class deans oversee your academic progress and overall program at Taft and will make an effort to get to know you well. During the opening days of school, you may find your Class Dean to be someone who is willing to answer questions about any aspect of the school. Class deans are listed on our Meet the Deans page.

TAFT'S HISTORY

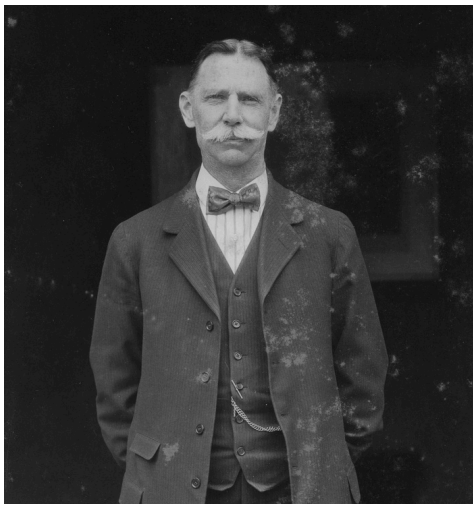
Established at Pelham Manor, New York, in 1890, the Taft School is the realization of the late Horace Dutton Taft's life purpose: to found a school in which students would receive the physical, mental, moral, and spiritual background necessary to be responsible leaders and disciplined, constructive citizens. Mr. Taft, the school's first Head of School and the brother of President William Howard Taft, believed that spiritual growth and development of character were equal in importance to the scholarship that he valued highly.

The school's 9,600 living alumni are engaged in virtually every phase of the world's work—business, industry, the professions, and public service. Taft has always taken its school motto—Non ut sibi ministretur sed ut ministret, or, Not to be served but to serve—very much to heart, and students and alumni alike devote themselves to their communities and to causes around the globe.

The school moved to its present location in Watertown, Connecticut, in 1893, and the campus today encompasses more than 220 acres with top-notch facilities for intellectual, artistic, and athletic pursuits. In 1936 Mr. Taft was succeeded as Head of School by Mr. Paul Cruikshank, who led the school for the next 27 years. Mr. John C. Esty served as Head of School from 1963 to 1972, as the school welcomed its first coeducational class. A young history teacher named Lance R. Odden arrived from Princeton in 1961 and quickly climbed the ranks, serving as Head of School for 29 years, until his retirement in 2001.

William R. MacMullen '78 became the first alumnus to head the school, the fifth Head of School in 118 years—a record of leadership unparalleled among peer schools. Mr. MacMullen served as Head of School for 22 years, until his retirement in 2023.

Peter Becker '95 began his tenure as Taft's sixth Head of School on July 1, 2023. As a Taft graduate, Becker knows, loves, and values Taft's mission and culture: its insistence on excellence, passion for community and belonging, commitment to improvement and to service, and pride in school spirit. His career has always been about students. As a teacher, coach, advisor, dorm head, department chair at Lawrenceville, and Head of School at The Frederick Gunn School, he has worked with empathy and caring to help students feel valued so they can grow and succeed.



Horace Dutton Taft

As a head, he has shown a tremendous ability to administer and lead, inspiring others with a strategic vision and working collaboratively to improve and transform the school. Becker received a B.A. with Distinction in Religious Studies from the University of Virginia and an M.A. in History from Yale University.

Taft was founded on the belief that rigorous academics, active participation in community life, and a strong moral foundation are equally important components of a meaningful education. This belief continues to shape the Taft experience. The school's motto, *Non ut sibi ministretur sed ut ministret*—"Not to be served but to serve"—remains the heart of our mission.

CORE VALUES

Not to be served but to serve: Taft's motto calls us to be intentional about who we are, how we conduct ourselves, and how we build our community at Taft, in our communities outside of Taft, and beyond. We honor our past and build our future grounded in the following values:

Learn Deeply

We strive to stay curious and challenge ourselves to explore a range of interests and disciplines, think rigorously and systematically, discern the patterns, connections, and relationships that deepen our understanding of ourselves and the world, and make decisions with care so our actions reflect our best intentions.

Build Purpose

We believe that our highest purpose lies beyond the self and we discover who we are in a resilient community where we each matter; where we find joy, hope, and meaning in our everyday work to serve others, explore our interests, navigate challenges, and celebrate accomplishments.

Serve Generously

We know that our capacity for service is built with authentic relationships, a commitment to care for ourselves and others, and the demonstration of empathy, compassion, healthy habits, and responsibility for our collective wellbeing.

Pursue Excellence

We discover the best in ourselves and others by striving for excellence in our individual and collective endeavors; by acting with integrity, creativity, humility, and responsibility, and by upholding the ideals of our founders as we learn, lead, and create to meet the needs of a changing world.

Lead with Courage

We know leadership and learning are linked and understand that the right choices are not always the easiest. We build confidence and resilience by taking risks, learning from setbacks, growing in self knowledge, considering the needs of others in relationship to our own, embracing feedback, and discovering our gifts as we lead and serve wherever we are.



PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER

We know leadership and learning are linked and understand that the right choices are not always the easiest. We build confidence and resilience by taking risks, learning from setbacks, growing in self knowledge, considering the needs of others in relationship to our own, embracing feedback, and discovering our gifts as we lead and serve wherever we are.

Strive for Wisdom

- Approach learning with curiosity and ask questions to solve problems.
- Analyze data using both quantitative and qualitative methods.
- Think critically, connect ideas, and use logic to form solutions.
- Understand how you learn and build effective strategies.

Find Joy in Purpose

- Explore interests to build self-knowledge and set meaningful goals.
- Prioritize active learning over passive observation or consumption.
- Develop skills to innovate, construct new knowledge and/or create something new.
- Practice hope and humor to stay engaged in growth.
- Draw inspiration from diverse cultures, philosophies, and religious traditions.

Nurture Relationships

- Communicate clearly and respectfully in all formats.
- Seek diverse perspectives to build authentic relationships.
- Show empathy and collaborate toward shared goals.

Build Resilience

- Take risks, embrace challenges, and learn from failure.
- Persist through setbacks, adapt, and stay focused.
- Reflect on failure to find value and meaning.
- Develop self-regulation and healthy habits.

Practice Humility

- Be self-aware in interactions and debates.
- Value service and contribution to healthy communities.
- Be open to learning and seek feedback.

Pursue Excellence

- Strive for high-quality work with a growth mindset.
- Maintain high standards and understand the difference between excellence and perfection.
- Pursue mastery through consistent improvement.

Live with Honor

- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, and responsibility.
- Acknowledge mistakes and make decisions aligned with personal values.
- Develop skills to innovate, construct new knowledge and/or create something new.

In order to live in accordance with our school values and make the Portrait of a Learner possible, we have a number of core beliefs, practices and expectations about how we interact with each other. The following section contains some of the most important tenants of what it means to be a part of the Taft community.

TAFT STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Taft is an intentionally diverse institution whose members work to acknowledge, respect, and empathize with people of all different identifiers, such as race, socioeconomic status, gender identity and expression, education, age, ability, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, language, nationality, and religion. We foster these habits and dispositions in accordance with Taft's mission to educate the whole student, thus preparing individuals morally and pragmatically for global citizenship. As such, community members commit to participate in and support ongoing equity and inclusion programming through curricular and co-curricular offerings, professional development, residential life, and local and global partnerships. Moreover, members of the Taft community strive to understand and combat the symptoms and causes of systematic oppression —ranging from implicit biases to microaggressions to discriminatory policies, practices and traditions—that benefit privileged groups and disadvantage marginalized groups. While at Taft and beyond, community members commit to affirm and honor the lived experiences of others, to willingly challenge inherited beliefs and ideologies, and consequently learn, grow, and serve.

STATEMENT ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The various forms of dialogue that we enter into as a part of our everyday existence while at Taft are key ways that we learn and grow. This dialogue takes place in the classrooms, hallways, dorms, co-curricular spaces, and any place that two or more Tafties congregate. This dialogue happens in the words we speak to each other, the music we listen to, and the decorations that adorn our persons and our individual and collective spaces. Because of the diversity of experience, background, and perspective inherent to the Taft community, we will not always agree with one another and indeed we shouldn't. It is in the moments where we are confronted with new and divergent thoughts that we expand our world view the most. And while these conversations should always be respectful and in the spirit of learning, they may be difficult and at times cause offense. We embrace these challenging moments as key to the edification of individuals and the broader community.

We also affirm the humanity of all members of the Taft community and dialogue that calls an individual's humanity into question violates our communal norms. All members of the Taft community must feel as though they can be their full selves on campus in order to live out our mission of educating the whole student, to adhere to our DEI statement, and to ensure that all students exhibit the principles embodied in the Portrait of a Learner. Language that demeans or degrades community members has no place on campus no matter where else it might be taking place. Vulgar Language is the use of offensive, crude, or socially inappropriate words - often related to anatomy, bodily functions, or sex - that violate standard rules of politeness. Hate Speech is any communication - spoken, written, or visual - that attacks, degrades, dehumanizes, or promotes violence against people based on who they are (their protected identity). This includes attacks based on race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin. Hate speech will not be tolerated on campus, online or otherwise.

These aims are not mutually exclusive; indeed, we balance freedom of expression with respect for members of our community on a regular basis. It is important that our community members have the freedom to learn, to contribute, and to participate in the life of the school. These reasonable expectations, grounded in our constitutional documents, lead us to identify a narrow range of situations in which the school might restrict expression. Expression will be limited when it:

- violates state or federal law;
- constitutes slander, threats, or harassment.
- unreasonably invades individual privacy or violates confidentiality interests; or,
- is directly incompatible with the functioning of the school.
- Included in this policy are all manners of expression including but not limited to, verbal, written, and electronic communication; decorations or adornments such as flags or posters; clothing items; etc.

We believe that the Taft community will continue to be a place where intellectual inquiry and discourse reflect our goals of being our best selves for the common good.

HEALTH, WELLNESS & STUDENT SUPPORT

The Martin Health Center

The Health Center is open 24 hours a day whenever school is in session. It is staffed by the director of health services, a visiting physician, and a professional nursing staff.

Students should make every effort to visit the Health Center during a free period, not during study hall, class time, Morning Meeting or Assembly. In an emergency a student may, of course, go to the Health Center at any time.

With a few exceptions, all prescribed medications must be kept in the Health Center. Even most over-the-counter medications must be approved by the Health Center. For controlled medicine, the Health Center will accept written prescriptions only, to be filled at the Health Complex pharmacy. Students may not bring controlled medications to and from school, and cannot under any circumstances be kept in a student's room. Discovery of such controlled medications in a students' room would be a violation of our Drug and Alcohol Policy.

- Students going to the Health Center after lights and before 6:00 a.m. must be escorted by an adult or dormitory monitor, and the faculty member on duty in their dormitory must be notified.
- Students must obtain permission from the nurse on duty before visiting a patient.
- If a student will leave campus for medical reasons, he/she may only return to campus from the leave of absence through the Health Center.
- All downloadable medical forms, as well as information about health services at Taft are available on the school website.

Community Health

The Taft School is committed to the health and safety of its community. To ensure the health of the Taft community and to prevent the spread of contagious diseases on campus, it is expected that all students are vaccinated in accordance with the School's vaccination requirements. The School reserves the right to exclude any student who has a communicable illness, has been exposed to an infected person, or is susceptible because of non-immunization in the event of a vaccine-preventable or other communicable disease on campus. The School expects students to abide by applicable CDC and other local and state guidance regarding COVID-19 and/or other illnesses or pandemics. Taft reserves the right to introduce measures in the future to address any such outbreaks of illnesses, pandemics, or other community health issues.

Important Information Regarding Concussions

Connecticut law requires us to provide you with important information regarding concussions, particularly sport participation and the risk of concussions. The law was enacted as a means to reduce the number of concussions in children. It requires us to provide parents with written information regarding concussions and the treatment of concussions at Taft. The law also requires all parents to sign an informed consent authorizing their child to participate in school athletics at Taft. Taft requires this form to be signed for all students . Without this document, a student cannot participate in any extracurricular activity. This law also requires signed permission from a parent/ guardian allowing a student to resume activity following a concussion.

Important Information Regarding Insurance

All students must have medical insurance valid in the state of Connecticut. A copy of both sides of the medical insurance card is imperative. If a student does not have insurance recognized by doctors in the Connecticut area and the Connecticut Insurance System; they must obtain coverage only from Clifford Allen Associates. This includes all students not from the United States. Please contact the Taft Health Center at 860-945-7762 to inquire about this insurance or telephone Clifford Allen directly at 1-888-342-2224. Information and enrollment forms are available on the Taft website.

Brief Medical Absences

A student who will be leaving Taft at the parent's request will also need to be seen in the Health Center for the appropriate brief medical absence form and a signed permission form to exchange medical information. Upon return to school from a brief medical absence, the student needs to be seen in the Health Center before returning to normal activities.

If a student needs extended time away from school in order to attend to mental or physical health needs, the director of counseling or director of health services will communicate with the Class Dean regarding a Leave of Absence. Please see the Taft Leave Policy on page 12 regarding any type of extended leave from campus.

Counseling Services

School counselors offer support and guidance to individual students, consult with deans and faculty members, and contribute to the emotional health and well-being of the school as a whole. Many students speak to one of the school counselors during their time at Taft. These services simply offer another layer of support for students. However, conversations with school counselors are unique, given their confidential nature and the counselors' professional expertise.

There are four school counselors: Rachel Jacobs, PhD (Director of Counseling), Jonas Katkavich, PsyD, Lauren Henry, PsyD, LCSW, and Gaby Dorval, LCSW. Counselors are available for appointments during the school day. Students who would like to meet with a counselor can send an email to an individual counselor or to *counseling@taftschool.org.*

Many students contact a counselor on their own, while others are referred to the office by advisors, deans, Health Center staff, school monitors, friends, or parents. Conversations with counselors are supportive and confidential. Of course, there are legal and ethical exceptions to confidentiality, such as when there is a question of potential harm to self or others. Although counselors do not share details of their conversations with students with others at the school, those relevant faculty who need to know may be aware that a student is meeting with a counselor. Students generally inform their parents when they are speaking with a counselor. However, some students may choose to keep this information private. Parents should contact the counseling director if they would like to be contacted prior to their child being seen.

Taft's counseling services are provided at no charge. The school does not have a psychiatrist on staff, however, students can speak to the director of health services or ask their school counselor to help facilitate psychiatric referrals. The same is true if a student or family prefers to work with a counselor outside of Taft. Information about the counseling program can be found at https://www.taftschool.org/campus-life/health-wellness/counseling-services.

Athletic Trainers

The school's certified athletic trainers, Mr. Sergio Guerrera, Mr. Sean Attanasio, and Mrs. Magdalena Wilson, are available in the athletic training room in the Cruikshank Athletic Center during all athletic periods. Athletic trainers are also available for morning appointments with students.

- *Taft Athletic Trainer Fall and Spring Hours:*
  *Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
  *Wednesday & Saturday: Noon–Start of games
- *Taft Athletic Trainer Winter Hours:*
  *Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 10:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m.
  *Wednesday & Saturday: Noon–Start of games

The Moorhead Academic Center

The mission of the Moorhead Academic Center is to improve student learning; to provide support to teachers, students and parents; and to make available to the community research on Mind, Brain, and Education Science (MBE).

The Academic Center is open each class day and for study hall hours Sunday through Friday evenings. Lower School students may use the MAC during study hall hours upon recommendation by the dean. All students are welcome to the resources available.

Appointments are made on an individual basis given the student's schedule. Some students schedule several appointments to improve in a given area; some schedule ongoing appointments throughout the year. Services provided are tailored to students' needs and are intended to empower students with the skills to become more proficient, independent, lifelong learners. Services include:

- providing strategies for learning/understanding such as retrieval practice, spaced review, and metacognition;
- providing instruction in strategic reading techniques;
- providing methods to study and learn math, science, and foreign languages;
- coaching in time management, organizational, and study skills and self-advocacy and self-determination techniques;
- assisting in the writing process involved in long-term research papers;
- screening and evaluation for students without previously identified learning differences to understand strengths and weaknesses of the individual's learning profile, as well as facilitating recommendations and accommodations for documented learning differences.
- Another ongoing service of the Moorhead Academic Center is the Peer Tutoring Program. Each year, department heads, in collaboration with their respective faculty, recommend outstanding students to work as peer tutors in their field of expertise. These peer tutors are paired with students who have been referred by their teachers for additional support work.

ACCOMMODATION OF DISABILITIES

Taft School is committed to providing equal educational opportunities and full participation for students with disabilities in accordance with applicable law. The School does not discriminate against qualified applications or students on the basis of a disability. Students with documented disabilities may apply to receive reasonable and appropriate accommodations at the School. Documentation from a qualified, independent professional is required to establish the need for reasonable accommodations and substantiate the presence of a disability, defined by the American with Disabilities Act ("ADA") as "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities". A diagnosis of a disorder by itself does not automatically qualify an individual for accommodations. The documentation must be timely and include a formal diagnosis, description of the student's current functional limitations, and information on how the disabling condition currently impacts the student in order to assist the School in understanding how a disability may impact a student and help identify possible accommodations.

It is important to note that an accommodation is not considered reasonable if making the accommodation poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, fundamentally alters the School's programs and services, and/or poses an undue financial or administrative burden on the School. The granting of an accommodation is not a guarantee of success and by granting an accommodation the School does not bear responsibility for ensuring that students succeed in courses or programs.

Academic Accommodations

The Director of the Morehead Learning Center oversees all academic accommodations. Please contact Gina Ludlow, the Director of the Morehead Learning Center, for information about the process for obtaining academic accommodations.

Residential Life Accommodations

The Director of Residential Life oversees all residential life accommodations. Students with disabilities who need an accommodation to their residential life on campus are asked to make their need known and to file the appropriate documentation with the Director of Residential Life. Accommodation requests must be submitted no later than July 1st. Requests submitted after this date will be considered as space allows, but may delay or prevent the School from meeting the request. Accommodation requests will be reviewed by an advisory group consisting of members from residential life, the Health Center, counseling department, and others deemed necessary to evaluate the request. Please be advised that requests for particular housing assignments based on a student's preference, rather than need, will not be honored. For instance, a request for a single room to serve as a quiet, undisturbed place to study represents a preference, not a necessity. Single room accommodations are reserved for individuals whose documentation illustrates clear and substantial needs, and for whom a standard housing assignment with a roommate is not viable.

ABSENCE AND ACADEMICS - TAFT'S LEAVE POLICY

Taft is, first and foremost, a school. Our mission—the education of the whole student—means that students are asked to meet high standards of scholarship and conduct, in and out of the classroom. Each day, they must be prepared, focused, and ready to learn. In all their responsibilities on campus, from great to small, they know that others are relying on them; their presence and engagement are vital to our community.

Given these expectations, a student's absence is not taken lightly. When a member of our community is not present, we are diminished—and each class missed detracts from the student's learning and experience. Put simply, we believe that the full Taft experience requires consistent presence. Consequently, the decision to take a leave of absence of any length is a serious one with particular expectations. Most Taft students are consistently able to meet our expectations. Nonetheless, there are times when the complexity and challenge of everyday life makes this more difficult. When a student is unable to function, or when there are concerns about a student's health or safety, a student may take a Leave of Absence. This section of the handbook outlines our school policy and practice regarding such leaves.

Some student absences, particularly those which mean missing just a day or two of classes, are clear and straightforward: a family obligation, minor illness, participation in an off-campus program, etc. When these absences are anticipated, students should be in touch with the Dean of Students and their Class Dean for permission, prior to their absence. A petition leave follows a particular protocol (name section and provide link) as does a brief medical absence (name section and provide link).

Regardless of the reason for the absence, all absences—including petition leaves, illnesses, concussions, etc.—are cumulative, and counted. Of course, classes missed due to school-sponsored activities would not be considered absences. When a student's total absences exceed a full academic week, the Class Dean will communicate to the family, outlining our leave of absence policy.

However, other absences can be more complicated, especially when there are questions regarding a student's ability to safely and healthily function at Taft. Examples include, but are not limited to: prolonged struggles with one's mental or physical health, such as treatment for drug or alcohol use, recovery from serious injury or surgery, or behavior that negatively impacts others in the community. These concerns can come from any one of several sources: for instance, the Class Dean, Dean of Students, director of health services, school counselor, residential faculty, and others. In these circumstances, a family may request a leave of absence, or the school may mandate a leave of absence, in order that the student can fully focus on his or her health and well-being.

Regardless of how the leave is initiated, the Class Dean serves as the spokesperson for the school and point of contact for students and families. Ultimately, it is the school's decision of whether or not it is appropriate for the student to be at school, and if he or she is on a leave, whether or not he or she will be allowed to return.

It is the responsibility of the Class Dean to assemble the team of faculty members to help oversee the leave, communicate school expectations, and inform teachers in the classroom, dorm and extracurricular activities. The Class Dean will communicate the length of the leave, expectations during time away, and conditions for possible return. If and when a student feels he or she is prepared to return, the Class Dean, working closely with the team of supportive and informed faculty, will consider the health and well-being of the student, the student's impact on others in the community, and the school's ability to provide the level of care required. Given that the student has shown that he or she was not able to safely and healthily meet the expectations of the school when he or she went on the leave, in order to understand if it is appropriate for the student to return, the school always asks, "What has changed?" Answering this question generally requires consultation with the student's professional caregivers and deliberation by the Class Dean and the school team. Ultimately, a student's place at Taft is determined by the Head of School.

A lengthy absence means that students miss out on the irreplaceable learning that takes place in the classroom and makes it difficult to complete cumulative outstanding work. In order to provide clarity for families and the school, Taft has established guidelines regarding days missed. In order to receive academic grades, a student must be present for 75% of the class days.

If a student on leave is present for more than 50% of the semester, he or she may be eligible to earn academic credit (but not grades) based on completion of the assignments required by his or her classroom teachers and outlined by the academic dean. If a student's absence exceeds 50% of the semester, the Class Dean will discuss alternatives with the family. In all likelihood, the student will not be allowed to receive credit, and possibilities include the student withdrawing from Taft or the leave being extended with the possibility of repeating the year after re-enrolling. If a student takes a leave and returns to Taft and requires another leave, it is possible that the school will conclude that the student is not able to meet the expectations and will mandate withdrawal.

To summarize, Taft is a highly challenging academic school, and while there are many supportive faculty and robust resources to help students manage life on campus, we are not a therapeutic institution. We also believe that the Taft experience requires student presence and participation. When a student is unable to safely and healthily meet the daily expectations, he or she may take a leave of absence, asked for or mandated, which is coordinated by the Class Dean. Depending on the length of the leave, the student may be able to receive grades, academic credit, or no credit. Whether or not a student returns to Taft is a decision made by the school and always with the student's health and safety paramount.

Special Support Interventions

Occasionally the school has unusual concerns about a student's ability to function in this community. In such cases the appropriate Class Dean will inform the student and his/her parents of the school's concerns. After a consultation with the appropriate faculty members and the Head of School, a support plan will be determined and the student will be expected to meet all expectations of that plan. The plan will most likely include assessments and recommendations from outside professionals. Parents may be asked to attend the meeting at which this plan is formulated. The student's progress will be monitored closely; status at the school will be evaluated periodically and at the end of the school year. Evaluation may result in change or termination of the plan or temporary or permanent separation from the school.
The kind of support process described above could be deemed necessary in a variety of situations. Conditions might include, but are not limited to: depression; self-destructive behaviors such as self-mutilation; substance use or eating disorders; unusual difficulty meeting appointments; lack of relationships with adults in the community; and sudden or extreme changes in behavior, attitude or physical appearance.



SPIRITUAL LIFE

At Taft you will find a wide range of religions and philosophical views represented among the student population. Our goal is to help students from a variety of traditions find spiritual strength and community support in the religious and spiritual programs that are being offered.
We view education as both an intellectual and a spiritual endeavor. All expressions of faith are celebrated and respected as we look for common moral, ethical, and spiritual ground in the world's treasure house of great religions.

In the Taft community, we believe that a sound, broad-based liberal arts education has at its core the quest for meaning and purpose. Our understanding is that no one spiritual group or religious tradition is in sole possession of the Truth. With this in mind, we covenant with one another to pursue Truth through religion, science, art, music, athletics, and in every other human inquiry.
Today's world is replete with rich opportunities for all of us to evolve as global citizens so that we can live mindfully in this world with consideration and concern for others. We believe that educating the whole person encourages and challenges us to take seriously the values and moral codes that we have inherited through our many diverse cultural and religious traditions.

—Former Chaplain Robert Ganung

The school chaplain brings to the community an understanding and celebration of the world's various religious faiths. Rabbi Eric Polokoff, from B'Nai Israel in Southbury, assists the Jewish Student Organization at Taft. The chaplain also takes Muslim students to the United Muslim Mosque in Waterbury bi-monthly. During the fall and winter months interested students gather for meditation in the Taft Living Room before relaxing with a cup of tea or hot chocolate. This warm setting invites students from all religious and nonreligious backgrounds to come together in a mindful way to exchange spiritual ideas and values in a friendly and inclusive atmosphere.

The offerings of the Global Service and Scholarship Department promote spiritual, moral, and ethical discourse among students. On Tuesday and Thursday of each week, the entire school gathers for Morning Meeting in Bingham Auditorium—a time for reflection by students, faculty, the Head of School, chaplain, or outside speakers. The Paduano Lecture Series invites distinguished speakers to offer lectures in the field of philosophy and ethics. Grounded in Taft's mission to educate the whole person, the school provides many opportunities on campus—both formal and informal—to nurture spiritual life.

Opportunities Include:

- Monthly Candlelight Vespers
- Gospel Vespers (periodic)
- Morning Meeting
- Jewish Student Organization
- Shabbat Dinners
- Buddhist Meditation Group
- Weekly Sunday Worship Service
- Monthly Communion
- Yoga/Meditation
- Bible Study
- FOCUS (Fellowship of Christians in Universities and Schools)
- Coffee Houses

Many of the above opportunities are available at or within walking distance of the school. Transportation to churches and synagogues not within walking distance, as well as transportation to a Muslim mosque in Hartford, is also provided. Students are urged to consult with the chaplain concerning particular religious services.

COLLEGE COUNSELING

The mission of Taft's College Counseling Office is to:

- provide a student-centered process geared towards educating and supporting students and their families as they navigate the college search and selection process; and
- present the student's character and achievements to prospective colleges in an accurate, nuanced, and compelling light.
- Particular emphasis is placed on developing students' analytical skills to discover schools which match their interests well; self-advocacy skills so that they can present themselves effectively and authentically in the process; and understanding of the process so they can maximize those elements which are within their control. In order to best serve our students and the Taft community, the college counseling team is committed to educating themselves on the issues of our profession through attendance at conferences, visiting college campuses, constant review of media reports in the field, and careful cultivation of relationships with their colleagues in admissions.

More detailed information about the College Counseling program at Taft can be found at: https://www.taftschool.org/academics/college-counseling

ADVISORY

A faculty advisor plays an important role as mentor and guide for each Taft student. Lower Mids are assigned an advisor for their first year at Taft. All other new students will be assigned a temporary advisor who will guide them until they select a permanent advisor in October. Students can expect that faculty advisors will mentor and provide support in all aspects of Taft life. Mids, Upper Mids, Seniors, and Post-graduates may change advisors during the advisor selection period at the beginning of each school year. Families will receive a letter from their students' advisor at the end of the Fall Term and at the end of the year. Advisors and families are encouraged to communicate and collaborate in support of each student. An advisor/advisee relationship can be one of the most important in a Taft students' experience. Students should seek out an adult in the community with whom they feel comfortable speaking freely.

CLASS DEANS

Each grade has two Class Deans. The Class Dean is the main point of contact for families and manages the overall program of each student. They are in touch with the students' teachers, afternoon coaches and dorm parents to help course-correct if needed. The Class Dean is also the coordinator of any time a student is away from school, and can help organize accommodations such as make up assessments and coordinate more formal accommodations with the Moorhead Academic Center team.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

Campus Safety Office

The Campus Safety Office is located in the basement of the main building and can be reached 24/7 at:

- 860-945-7789 or 860-945-7790

Emergency Notifications

Taft uses the Omnilert system to notify students, families, faculty, and staff about any emergency or other important events on campus. All students are expected to download the Omnilert app.
The system allows users to:

- Set off alerts and panic buttons
- Access emergency plans with or without internet
- Exchange communications from the school's crisis team
- Submit incident reports or feedback

Instructions for downloading and using the app will be shared by the IT department.

In Case of Fire or Other Emergency

Students should:

- Immediately exit to their mustering point if in a dorm
- Exit any other building if the alarm sounds — do not re-enter to retrieve items
- Remain outside until instructed otherwise via public address or *Omnilert*

Procedures for weather events, intruders, or accidents are provided in campus guides and in the *Omnilert* app.

Students 18 and Older

Students who turn 18 during their time at Taft continue to be treated as minors for school purposes. The school will maintain communication with parents/guardians about academics, conduct, health, and other matters. By choosing to remain enrolled at Taft, students agree to this policy.

GENERAL POLICIES

Procedures, Regulations and Information When Leaving Campus

Weekend and day permissions sign-outs are based on the principle of the Honor System that "a student's word is their bond."

Students must always sign out when leaving campus, unless they are on a school-sponsored trip such as a class trip or an interscholastic athletic competition. Discussing your plans with the Office of Student Life or having your parents call in does not relieve you of the responsibility of signing out properly.

Downtown Privilege

Students are allowed to walk to downtown Watertown during their free time within the following time periods. Students who will be downtown must always be accompanied by another student and should sign-out in REACH before leaving campus and sign-in upon their return.

Downtown Privilege Times

Nights when there is sit-down dinner:	7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Nights when there is no sit-down dinner:	7:00 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Saturday	7:00 a.m. – 10:15 p.m.
Sunday	7:00 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Sign-out Procedures

Any time a student leaves campus (with the exception of class field trips or teams departing for athletic contests), a permission request must be submitted by coming into the Office of Student Life or signing out online via Reach.

Weekend requests must be submitted by 11:00 p.m. on Thursday. For Long Weekends and campus breaks, permission requests may be due earlier. Students should check their email and listen to announcements in Assembly for deadlines.

If a student misses the deadline to submit a leave request for a weekend, they may only sign out with a parent to leave campus overnight and a two-grade penalty will be assigned.

It is assumed that when students take a weekend or day permission they are going to a place approved on the REACH Request approved by their parents and the Office of Student Life. They may not take a weekend or day permission to any other place without parental permission.

Missing Class or Other Obligations

If a student must miss class for an event (wedding, family reunion, non-school related sports tournament, etc), they must complete a petitioned leave form to be signed by their teachers and Class Dean and turn it into the Office of Student Life at least 24 hours prior to their departure. This form is to be completed in addition to a REACH leave request. All students must complete the petitioned leave form, and boarding students must also complete a REACH leave request. This form is used to properly excuse the student from their classes and obligations. The one exception to this policy is Taft's co-curricular program: Taft Time. Taft Time is a singular community experience that cannot be modified or replicated. For this reason, missing this commitment for a volunteer petitioned leave will incur five conduct grades. Once their form is completed and turned in, their REACH leave will be approved, and they can properly SISO [Sign In Sign Out] - which can be done via the Reach App or website off campus. Failure to complete this form will result in a three-grade penalty. If a student must depart for a campus break early or arrive back at campus late due to travel obligations or restrictions, they must complete an early departure/late arrival form to be signed by their teachers and Class Dean and turn it into the Office of Student Life at least 24 hours prior to their departure. This form is to be completed in addition to a REACH leave request. This form is used to properly excuse the student from their classes and obligations. Once their form is completed and turned in, their REACH leave will be approved, and they can properly SISO off-campus. Failure to complete this form will result in a three-grade penalty.

When students sign out to their own homes, no invitation is necessary, provided the parents of the student have given permission to sign out home. When students go to their homes, the school expects that a parent or an adult approved by a parent will be present.

Students may not sign out to a hotel, home, or any other location unless their parent, the parent of another student, or an adult approved by their parent is present for the entire weekend.

Students must have an invitation from their host for the weekend whenever they leave school to visit any place other than their own homes. The host should be entered as such in Reach so that they too can approve the request. Approval from the host is required for the Leave Request to be approved by the Office of Student Life.

When attending a concert or other function before going to their home or to the home of their host family, students must be picked up from school by their own parent or their host parent.

Upon returning to school, students must sign back on to campus via Reach; in most cases students are required to return to campus and sign in by 7:30 p.m.

Finally, if you are detained in returning from your weekend for some reason, please call the Office of Student Life at 860-945-7800 before 7:30 p.m. to let the school duty officer know where you are. If the school duty officer is not present, you should leave a voicemail.

Day Permissions

All students in good standing are allowed unlimited day permissions during free time. Permissions are granted for travel near the school. Students wishing to leave Watertown must consult one of the deans of students regarding permissions and invitations required.

Saturday permissions start after a student's last Saturday class or athletic contest and end at 10:15 p.m. No students may be excused from class to get an early start. Sunday permissions run from 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Students leaving early Sunday morning are advised to have their travel approved on Saturday, as the school duty officers are usually not available until 10:00 a.m.

Day students may invite boarding students to their homes only if an adult is present. The boarder should fill out a Leave Request in Reach, including the Day Student Parent listed as the host. The boarding student should sign back onto campus when they return.

Boarding students who have permission to drive with a day student may ride downtown during the hours specified. Each student must sign out in Reach.

Students may not sign out for dinner on nights when sit-down meals are served.

All permissions to be away from the school for medical appointments must be cleared first through the Health Center.

Weekend Permissions

Weekends during the school year are designated as being either open or closed. On a closed weekend, boarding students are not permitted to be away from Taft overnight without receiving special permission from the Office of Student Life. The dates of the closed weekends are indicated in the School Calendar. Students are allowed to leave Taft on an open weekend, with certain exceptions explained below, as long as they do not miss any classes, athletic contests, or other extracurricular obligations.

On an open weekend, Saturday Weekends start after a student's last class or athletic commitment on Saturday and end at 7:30 p.m. Sunday. No students may be excused from class to get an early start. On open weekends when Saturday classes do not meet, students are permitted to leave after their last commitment.

All students are granted three Long Weekends, one during each term. All dorms will be open for students during these Long Weekends.

Students assigned to serve weekend detention may not leave campus unless the detention has been rescheduled by the Dean of Students.

On Parents' Weekend in the fall students may leave campus with their parents on Saturday night. Weekends or day permissions may not be taken after the Winter Formal or other events specified by the Office of Student Life.

College Visits

Students are allowed to miss a limited number of days during their Taft career for the purpose of visiting colleges. While these days are almost always taken during the senior year, there are rare cases in which students request to use one of their college days during the Upper Mid year. To be granted a college visit day, green college cards (available in the Office of Student Life) must be signed by the teachers whose classes will be missed, by one of the college counselors and by the Class Dean. Cards should then be brought to the Office of Student Life for final approval at least 48 hours before departure.

Students are encouraged to use school vacations and Free Day Weekends for college visits in order to allow them to use their college days for visits in late Spring after college acceptances have been received.

Seniors should understand that college days are to be used only for the purpose of meaningful college visits and should not be viewed as “free days” that they are entitled to take for any purpose. The college counseling staff will determine if the proposed visit is a meaningful part of the student’s college search process. If a student feels that it is unavoidable to miss more than three class days, he/she must seek approval from the college counselor and the Class Dean well in advance of the proposed departure. If permission is granted, the sign-out procedures described above should be followed.

Elective Absences

While students should miss as few classes as possible, students who participate in non-Taft commitments may petition to miss class days. However, should a student miss more than 25% of a semester’s class days for any reason, they will receive pass/fail credit (rather than a grade). Students who miss more than 50% of a semester will be ineligible for credit. We will ask whether a student who misses a significant percentage of classes in multiple semesters is well served by Taft.

The class meeting experience cannot be replicated. Absent students miss an opportunity to contribute to their own and others’ learning. Furthermore, teachers are not responsible for reteaching material students miss. Students are responsible for that material and for following the direction of the teacher to take missed assessments promptly.

When students miss afternoon obligations such as theater or athletic practice, they may face consequences. The afternoon program’s coach or advisor has full discretion to make adjustments they see fit - an acting role change, a reduction in athletic playing time, etc. - to support the learning and performance of the larger group.

Students should procure a Petitioned Leave form from the Office of Student Life. Students should also fill out a Reach Leave Request online. The student must fill out the form with an explanation of where they will be and for how long and get it signed by every teacher whose class they will miss, as well as their afternoon ex coach (if applicable) and their Class Dean. They will then turn the paper in to the OSL at which point their Reach request will be approved and they can sign out from campus.

Vacations

In addition to the Summer Vacation, the school provides Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Vacations. Before a student leaves for vacation, all major work in every course must be satisfactorily completed.

The school cannot provide living accommodations or board for any student during the vacation periods (Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Vacations). Although the school may provide assistance to parents or guardians, parents or guardians are ultimately responsible for finding and ensuring appropriate accommodations for their child during such vacation periods. The dormitories will be open for two nights prior to the first class day following a vacation and for the night of the final class day before vacation. When leaving for these vacations or for the summer, students must check out with the dormitory faculty to assure that they have left their rooms in satisfactory condition. Students leaving their rooms in unsatisfactory condition may be assigned a weekend detention, asked to return to campus, and/or billed for cleaning.

Students will be instructed to fill out a Leave Request Form in REACH to indicate their travel plans for each of the major breaks.

Transportation arrangements should be made so as to permit students to attend all of their classes.

Only under extraordinary circumstances may a student petition to leave for vacation early. Special circumstances should be brought to the attention of the Dean of Students well in advance of departure so that the student can fill out the appropriate paperwork.

Dress and General Appearance

The dress code at Taft is not particularly formal, but students are expected to dress in a way that respects the standards and academic purpose of the School. We have worked hard in concert with faculty and students to develop a dress code that is non-gendered, objective, and enforceable for faculty. The dress code is broken down into three main categories: Informal Dress, Class Dress and Sit-Down Dinner or “formal” dress.

Informal Dress

This is dress with minimal guidelines—that is, what we wear after classes, in the dorms, during weekends, etc. The only restrictions are that clothing does not have inappropriate (i.e., obscene/offensive) language or features drug and/or alcohol imagery/advertising. Students should also consider that we live in a community with faculty and their families. Students should follow normal guidelines in terms of anything they might wear in a public place.

Class Dress

Class dress must be worn in all public areas of the school from breakfast until the end of the class day. This includes use of the dining hall in the morning starting at 7:00am.
During the hours when classes are in session, including breakfast and school meetings, the following dress code applies:

- Clothing with drug/alcohol imagery or language that is not in line with our mission is not permitted.
- All clothing must be neat, clean, and in good repair. Clothes should be free of any rips, tears or holes.
- Athletic and/or casual sportswear (i.e. gym clothes, sweatpants) are not permitted.
    - T-shirts, athletic or with messaging or writing should not be worn alone without an additional layer (i.e. a T-shirt is fine under a sweater, but should not be worn alone)
- Students may not wear any kind of clothing made of blue denim.
- Tops or items that expose midriffs or mid sections are not permitted.
- Skirts, dresses and shorts should be a length that allows the student to do any myriad of activities comfortably; for example sitting in class, walking upstairs, or raising their hand without needing constant adjustment.
- Footwear should be appropriate for indoor and outdoor activities. Slippers are not permitted.
- Hats may not be worn in academic buildings or in the Dining Hall at any time. This includes all baseball caps, beanies and bucket hats. Hooded sweatshirts are permitted but the hood should not be worn on the head. Religious headwear is permitted.
- Class dress is not required during final examination week in December or during exams.

Sit-Down Dinner Dress (Formal Dress)

Sit-Down Dinner Dress is required for sit-down dinners and other special events. Sit-Down Dinner Dress follows the same guidelines as above, with the following additional stipulations:

- Students must wear either a suit coat with a collared shirt and tie, dress trousers, socks and dress shoes, or slacks, skirts or dresses with dress shoes or dress sandals.
- Shorts are not permitted unless communication about dress code comes out prior to the dinner (ex. weather conditions)
- Apparel befitting a formal communal school event, rather than a dance or party, is required. Dressing “up” is a sign that the moment is different—perhaps more serious, or somber, or reflective—than the rest of the day.
- Dress that celebrates formal moments in our diverse cultures and families is welcomed.

Students who choose to violate the dress code can expect to have a conversation with a Faculty or Staff member. The consequences for being out of dress code could include but are not limited to a direct conversation with the responding adult, a later conversation with the student’s advisor, a request for the student to go change, or conduct grades.

Backpacks and Book Bags

When left loose in the halls, identical books, notebooks, and calculators can often be picked up by mistake after Assemblies, classes, or meals. Students are therefore required to carry their books and notebooks in some sort of backpack or bag during the class day. Keeping all of your belongings in one place helps to prevent loss. We recommend that you mark your bag clearly for ease of identification.

Communications

Students are responsible for keeping up with communications sent to them. All students are expected to check their mailboxes and their email—both personal and news folders—at least once a day.

Cell Phones

Students are permitted to have cell phones, but at Taft we value face-to-face interaction. As such, Students will leave their smartphones in their rooms and lockers from 7:30 am through 2:45 pm. This means that students should not have their smartphones with them in the dining hall, hallways, jig, or other public spaces. Students may not have airpods/earphones in while walking through the halls or outdoor paths. Our goal is to encourage interaction with other students and adults. Should a student be found with their smartphone out between 7:30 am and 2:45 pm, a faculty member will collect the smartphone and bring it to the Office of Student Life, where the student may collect it at 2:45 pm on the day of the first offense. For subsequent offenses, the consequences will increase.

Relatedly, adults are expected to keep them in offices and otherwise out of sight during these times, too. This includes but is not limited to classrooms, school hallways, the walkways and outdoor areas around campus, dormitory common rooms and the gym. Calls should be made in private spaces and dorm rooms.



COMMUNITY STANDARDS

The Taft Honor System

The Taft Honor System is the basis of student life and government at Taft. It places in the hands of each student the responsibility for honorable conduct as a way of life. A student who comes to Taft must be willing to accept this responsibility.

Preamble

This we believe: that Personal Honor in word and deed, Personal Integrity in thought and action, Honesty in every facet of life, and Respect for other people and their rights are the essence of a student of the Taft School.

Principles

The Honor Code is based on these principles, the basic characteristics of a Taft Student:

1. a student's word is their bond
2. a student respects the integrity of personal property
3. a student has respect for academic honesty
4. a student's conduct is always that of a person of character.

General Expectations

Taft is first and foremost a community of learners. Community begins with belonging and our individual actions impact how others experience the Taft community. While the intent of our actions is important, the **impact** of our behavior on others, particularly if our actions marginalize others, is most critical. Students, faculty, staff, and parents all share responsibility for fostering a positive environment.

Students shall always act honestly and with consideration for others. Conduct that violates the law or reflects badly upon the school, whether committed in school or elsewhere, and whether committed while school is in session or not, may be cause for discipline.

A student's standing at Taft is determined on the basis of scholarship, effort, and conduct. Failure to maintain a good standing in any one of these areas may result in dismissal and/ or the denial of a diploma. Students and parents should know that some conduct may also violate state and/or federal laws and, in some instances, Taft will report such conduct to legal authorities as required by law.

Certain rules, which the school considers particularly important for the well-being of the individual and the community, are grouped together as the Fundamental Rules of the school. Violation of any of them may be considered as grounds for dismissal.

Both parents and students should understand that while students are away on weekends, their conduct and welfare is the primary responsibility of their host, not of the school, but students who take weekends to nearby homes must not be in violation of Taft rules if they return to the school or to the Watertown area during the weekend.

Students who take weekends to homes in the immediate Watertown area must not be in violation of Taft rules when leaving the homes of their host.

When students leave Taft to participate in off-campus programs, whether it be short trips, college visits, or semester or yearlong programs, they do so with the school's recommendation and thus serve as representatives of Taft. These students are expected to act in a manner consistent with the guiding principles and expectations of the Taft community. If a student does not act accordingly, the school will respond appropriately to the situation.

All students and parents/guardians are expected to cooperate fully in any school investigation.

Except for school security cameras, no person may make a visual or audio recording of any Taft School community member without such community member's prior consent.

To maintain the health and safety of our community and/or for evidence of violation of school rules, the school reserves the right to search a student, their use areas, and belongings, including, but not limited to, dorm rooms, lockers, computers, phones, vehicles, or personal effects at any time. The School may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered during the search.

THE CONDUCT GRADE SYSTEM

Taft's Conduct Grade System is designed to promote the community standards that inform how we interact with one another and with our shared spaces. It is not meant to penalize students for every minor infraction of the school's regulations. We are concerned about students who, over the course of the term, cannot regularly meet their obligations. If a student accumulates a significant number of conduct grades in a given term, it is a signal that some part of the student's behavior at school is not acceptable. In this case the student's advisor and Class Dean are likely to become involved in discussions about how the student can meet the school's expectations more frequently.

Conduct grades are cumulative for each term. A daily total of each student's grades is available online on Veracross.

All conduct reports are issued by the Office of Student Life. An email indicating the offense and the number of assigned conduct grades will be sent to the student. If a student has any question about the report, the student should consult with the Associate Dean of Students, Dean of Students, or his or her Class Dean within 72 hours. Excuses for conduct reports will generally not be accepted after the date indicated in the email notification.

Students who miss class for illness must report to the Health Center before the class meets. Students taking medications may not miss classes, Assemblies, or Morning Meetings to pick up their prescriptions.

It is the responsibility of each student to meet required appointments. Alarm clock problems will never be accepted as an excuse for missing class or any other obligation. We recommend that students have an alarm clock with a battery backup so that power surges or outages do not cause alarms to fail.

Standardized Penalty Examples:

- 1 grade offense: Failure to SISO , Lateness (extreme lateness carries larger penalties), improper dress
- 2 grade offenses: Out of room during study hall, late weekend sign-out
- 3 grade offenses : Riding elevator, Cell phone violation, dinner cuts
- 4 grade offenses: Assembly cuts, exercise cuts
- 5 grade offenses: Class cuts, Morning Meeting cuts

Continued violation or abuse of a school rule or regulation may result in a more serious penalty than the one normally applied.

Taft conduct records are maintained on a three-term basis (basically in-line with the afternoon programming seasons).

Disciplinary Restriction

Students who have accumulated a total of 20 grades will be placed on Disciplinary Restriction. A student who reaches this threshold is restricted to campus to serve one Weekend Detention.

Disciplinary Report

Students who have accumulated a total of 30 grades will be placed on Disciplinary Report, and their cases will be referred to the Dean of Students or Associate Dean of Students for violation of a Fundamental Rule. A student who reaches this threshold for the first time will receive a Weekend Detention and additional sanctions as determined by the Office of Student Life.

Students who are placed on Disciplinary Report more than once may, at the discretion of the Dean of Students and/or Head of School, face more significant consequences, including the possibility of having to appear before the Discipline Committee. If a student reaches Disciplinary Report in three consecutive terms or in five terms over the course of their Taft career, the student will be required to appear before the Discipline Committee.

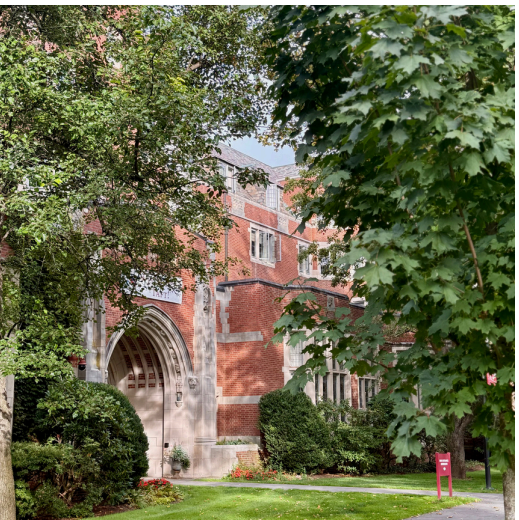
Weekend Detention

Taft uses Weekend Detention as the primary consequence for disciplinary infractions that do not constitute violations of Fundamental School Rules.

Students will be expected to serve Weekend Detention on the Saturday immediately following their infraction. If a student has a scheduled commitment that makes serving an assigned Weekend Detention impossible, the student must submit a request to reschedule the detention to one of the Deans of Students by Friday at 3:00 p.m.

A student who earns a Weekend Detention is restricted to campus after classes and extracurricular commitments on Saturday through Sunday evening check-in. This student is required to attend study hall on Saturday night from 9:00 to 11:00 p.m. Day students who earn Weekend Detention will be required to come to campus to serve the detention. Students assigned Weekend Detention must arrive to study hall on time and with appropriate work for the entirety of the study hall period.

A student who misses Weekend Detention will be assigned an additional Weekend Detention. Weekend Detention may be converted to work detail at the discretion of the Office of Student Life.







FUNDAMENTAL RULES

General Conduct

Students are expected to meet their daily commitments at the school and are also expected to uphold the standards of the community. Students who repeatedly reach Disciplinary Report or whose general conduct is deemed unsatisfactory will not be allowed to remain at Taft.

The Taft School does not condone violations of state or federal laws by students, no matter when and where they occur. Such violations may be grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal should they occur or be discovered during a student's period of enrollment at Taft.
All Taft students, at all times, must avoid using language that is violent, hurtful, or intentionally marginalizing any member of the community. Ethnic, homophobic and racial slurs are prohibited at all times.

We do not tolerate physical violence of any kind between members of the Taft community.

Alcohol and Drugs

No student may use, possess, or attempt to purchase or sell dangerous or illegal drugs, hallucinogens, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol at school. Vaporizers, including all vape devices, e-cigarette systems and any evolving derivatives, constitute drug paraphernalia.

Boarding students, and day students in the company of boarding students, may not violate any aspect of the Alcohol/Drug Rule in the general neighborhood of school, including Watertown and nearby towns. In addition, day students' use of alcohol and drugs is subject to the general prohibition against violation of the law and conduct reflecting badly upon the school while away from Taft.

The Dean of Students or a designee may test students for drug and alcohol use. It is a condition of a student's enrollment at Taft that parents/guardians and students authorize such drug or alcohol testing. Any student who refuses to be tested in such a situation will be subject to discipline as determined at the discretion of the Head of School.

The costs associated with drug and alcohol tests will be billed to the student's parents or guardians.

Arrival at school with evidence of use of such drugs or alcohol is a violation of this rule, whether by boarding students following a leave, weekend or vacation, or by day students at any time.

Use of alcohol or non-medically prescribed marijuana on day permissions, even in the company of parents, is a violation of this rule.

Use of alcohol, non-medically prescribed marijuana, or illegal drugs while on a college visit is a violation of this rule.

Prescription drugs must be kept in the Health Center. Students found possessing prescription drugs without specific permission from a nurse at the Health Center are in violation of the Alcohol/Drug Rule.

Students are not permitted to drink nonalcoholic beer at school.
Students who violate the Alcohol/Drug Rule will be required to undergo a formal assessment by the school counselors and agree to participate in ongoing work with those counselors if recommended. Monitors, dormitory monitors, or class committee members who violate the Alcohol/Drug Rule will, in almost all circumstances, be asked to resign from their positions of leadership.

All CBD products must be brought to the Health Center for approval by the director of health services.

Association Policy

Any students that are aware that a Major School Rule is being broken in their presence and who do not make an immediate attempt to leave the vicinity are in violation of the rule by association. Questions as to whether a student was so aware will be resolved by a committee composed of the Head of School, the Dean of Students, and the student's Class Dean and faculty advisor. This could pertain not only to the Drug/Alcohol Rule but also in cases of crowds/parties/gatherings where other school rules are being violated.

Sanctuary Policy

Taft recognizes that a student or students in violation of the drug and alcohol policy may be hesitant to report the behavior due to fear of potential consequences for violating a School rule. In cases where information about the incident would not otherwise be available to adults, the impacted student or third party reporting student may expect amnesty from potential discipline for breaking the School rule. Instead of disciplinary action, the School will focus on support and safety. As a result, the student may be asked to seek counseling and/or a health evaluation. The students' parents or guardians will also be notified. In order to ask for Sanctuary, a student simply needs to call or approach an adult and mention that they are seeking Sanctuary for themself or another.

Note: The Office of Student Life or the Head of School reserves the right to determine whether a student is seeking help or attempting to manipulate the discipline system. The School also reserves the right to implement a level of disciplinary response based on the information gained.

Tobacco and Other Tobacco Prodcuts

Students are prohibited from using or possessing tobacco products.

In response to a first offense, a student will be required to meet with the Dean of Students, call their parents and meet with the director of health services. A letter will be sent home to document the incident and response.

In response to a second offense, a student will be required to meet again with the Dean of Students, and the student will be required to meet with a school counselor to discuss the need for ongoing treatment. The Health Center does offer Cessation Support, if requested by the student and/or their family.

If a student is found in violation of the tobacco rule more than two times, the Dean of Students will hold a conference with the student, the parents, the Class Dean, the advisor and a school counselor to determine the appropriate course of action.

Students found smoking within any of the school buildings will also be referred to the Dean of Students as a violation of the school's Fundamental Rule with regard to creating a fire hazard.

Theft

Taft takes theft as a major violation of community standards that undermines the trust necessary to live and work in a residential community. Taking something that belongs to another member of the community or to the School without prior permission is strictly prohibited and could carry serious consequences up to and including dismissal from Taft.

Motor Vehicles

Boarding students are forbidden to have automobiles or other motor vehicles in Watertown or the vicinity. Students may ride in or drive motor vehicles only when operated by or under the direction of a person or service approved by their parent or guardian on the Automobile Permission Form, which can be found on the Parent Portal in Veracross. This rule applies to all travel to and from destinations on weekends and permissions, and arrival and departure for vacations. Hitchhiking is not permitted. Students who wish to ride with anyone under 21 years of age, other than members of their family specifically approved as above, must consult the Office of Student Life well in advance regarding requirements before the school can grant such permission. Written permission from the parents of the student and the parents of the driver, and proof of the driver's liability coverage, must be submitted to the Office of Student Life.

Day students who have legitimate driver's licenses may drive to school. They may drive other students if the following conditions are met: (1) written permission from both the driver's and the rider's parents are on file in Veracross; (2) written proof of the driver's liability insurance is on file in the Office of Student Life; (3) the driver has had a valid license for at least one full year and meets and complies with the driving requirements of his/her state of license. It is the responsibility of the day student to meet these requirements and day students who have not met the above requirements are not permitted to ride in a motor vehicle to and from school or to and from school functions held either at Taft or some other school unless accompanied by a parent, a faculty member, or an adult approved by name.

Uber and other similar ride sharing services operate in the Watertown area. Please note that Lyft and certain other ride sharing services prohibit persons under age 18 from using their services. Uber recently changed its policies to permit teenagers from ages 13 to 17 years old to use their ride sharing services. The accounts must be set-up and monitored by parents. More information about Uber's and Lyft's teenager policies and protocols can be found at:

Uber Teen Accounts

Lyft Teen Policy

The School will not use or be responsible for arranging ride sharing services for students. Parents may, in their sole discretion, elect to use a ride sharing service for their child. Students may not use a ride sharing service without their parents' permission. Parents and students are solely responsible for selecting and evaluating such ride sharing services and for ensuring they meet the terms and conditions of the ride sharing services.

Boarding students on a weekend leave may not drive cars to Watertown, Waterbury, other nearby towns, or the general neighborhood of the school at any time during the weekend or at the conclusion of the weekend unless special permission is obtained from the Office of Student Life well in advance.

Permissions

Students are not allowed to leave school property after the times specified in "Downtown Privileges" without permission and are not allowed outside the school buildings after check-in until after 6:00 a.m. the next day. Although the Charles Phelps Taft (CPT) and Horace Dutton Taft (HDT), Vogelstein and ISP dormitories are all in the main building, they are treated as separate dormitories. Thus, when a student from HDT is found in CPT after check-in—or vice versa— that student will be considered in violation of the Permissions Rule. Day students must be off the campus by evening check-in and may not return until 7:00 a.m.

Whenever a student leaves campus, she/he is required to sign out through Reach.

Boarding students may not go out of Watertown (approximately a 3-mile radius around campus) without permission granted in advance. Filling out a weekend permission with the intent to deceive or going to an unapproved destination is a violation of the Permissions Rule.

Every time a student signs out, whether from the Office of Student Life or from the dormitory—during study hall, for example—she/he is expected to indicate the destination accurately and honestly.

Unauthorized use of a physical space at the school is a violation of the Permissions Rule.

Fire Hazards

Creating a fire hazard is a violation of a Fundamental School Rule. Examples of such actions include, but are not limited to, irresponsible or unauthorized use of fire extinguishers, matches, lighters, candles, cooking appliances, incense or other combustibles in or around a school building, use or possession of fireworks and tampering with alarms or fire equipment. Phoning in a false alarm is also a violation of this rule.

Smoking in any of the school buildings is a violation of the Fire Hazard Rule.

Fireamars and Weapons

This rule prohibits the possession or use of firearms and other weapons. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, BB guns, pellet guns of any kind, paint guns, martial arts weapons, crossbows, knives with blades longer than 3 inches, and any other object that is designed, or intended to be used, primarily as a weapon.

Keys and Fobs

Students found using or in possession of school keys or fobs that were not legally issued to them, as well as students found in unauthorized areas of the school, are in violation of this rule.

Reckless Endangerment

Students may not engage in reckless acts that expose others or themselves to an obvious risk of serious injury. For instance, going out on the roofs of the school buildings is a violation of this rule.

Harassment, Hazing or Bullying

All members of the community have the basic right not to be harassed, hazed, or bullied. The Taft School prohibits any form of bullying, hazing or harassing behavior, whether in the classroom, on the campus, or at Taft events. Such behavior occurring outside of a school setting that has a negative and direct impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school is also prohibited and may be subject to school discipline. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, the treatment of others with civility and respect, and the refusal to tolerate harassment, hazing, or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, volunteers and students and their parents/guardians.

Harassment, hazing and bullying entail behavior that is inappropriate and that should not take place through ignorance or thoughtlessness. The school recognizes and respects individual differences in background in regard to culture, race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. Inappropriate behavior, verbal, written electronically, or physical, that demeans or offends others is unacceptable. This includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome physical advances, unwarranted verbal remarks, derogatory statements or discriminatory comments, and can occur between two individuals or groups of individuals. Forms of harassment include, but are not limited to, written and oral remarks, remarks posted online or to the campus computer network and messages left on voicemail systems. Telephones, email and other forms of electronic communication or media may not be used to harass, haze, or bully others such as anonymous calls or postings, repeated unwanted calls or messages, or obscene calls or postings.

"Bullying" means (A) the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyber bullying, directed at or referring to another student or (B) a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student that: (i) Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property, (ii) places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property, (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for such student, (iv) infringes on the rights of such student at school, or (v) substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Cyberbullying is defined as acts of bullying carried out through mobile electronic devices or electronic communications, the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, or cell phones, and is prohibited.

Hazing is any action which recklessly or intentionally endangers the health or safety of a person for the purpose of initiation, admission into or affiliation with, or as a continued membership in a student organization.

Procedures For Addressing Harrassment, Hazing and Bullying

Individuals might unintentionally act in a manner that others experience as harassing or humiliating. Attempts to justify such behavior as a “prank” or “joke” do not change its harassing or bullying nature if the object of the joke is not a willing participant. Whenever possible, explaining the unwelcome and inappropriate nature of the behavior to the offender should precede more formal action.

Any student who feels victimized by harassment, hazing, or bullying, or who is concerned about such behavior is encouraged to consult with any trusted adult, such as a classroom teacher, an advisor, a school counselor, a Class Dean, the Dean of Students, or the Head of School. Reports of harassment, hazing, or bullying also can be made on EthicsPoint at: EthicsPoint

Investigations

Complaints of harassment or related misconduct will be investigated at the School’s discretion. Any investigation will likely include interviews of those individuals directly involved in the incident and any potential witnesses, as well as collecting documents and any other evidence bearing on the incident, including law enforcement reports, texts, and emails. All members of the School community are expected to cooperate fully and honestly with any investigation under this policy. The School will recognize and comply with requests by a law enforcement agency for information and cooperation. Such requests may require the School to suspend any investigation or to delay notifying parties (and their parents) of the allegations.

Maintaining Privacy

To the extent possible, the School will respect and maintain the privacy of all participants upon receiving a report of harassment, hazing, or bullying. Any student or adult member of the Taft community who reports harassment, hazing or bullying must understand that for a comprehensive resolution to be reached and community safety, certain information about the complaint must be shared with individuals who are involved in and necessary to the investigation and/or keeping the community safe. Such individuals will be informed of the need to maintain privacy of the information and the penalty for improper disclosure of private information, up to and including dismissal for students and termination of employment for adults.

Discipline Response

Given the wide range of behavior that constitutes harassment, hazing, and bullying, cases will be considered on an individual basis by the Head of School, Dean of Students, Dean of Faculty or other appropriate authority. The Head of School may, in his discretion, refer the case to the Harassment Panel or the Honor Committee for Student Life. The school may also notify law enforcement when they suspect an act of bullying, harassment, or hazing may constitute a crime. Disciplinary responses, when called for, will be determined at the discretion of the Head of School, or his designee. Suspension or dismissal may be warranted particularly when behaviors demonstrate a serious disregard for the welfare of other individuals or the community as a whole.

Retaliation

It is critically important that the school supports and protects any individual who raises a complaint. Retaliation against someone making a complaint about harassment, hazing, or bullying is unacceptable and will be subject to a disciplinary response if found to be a valid claim of retaliation by the Head of School or his designees. Any disciplinary response will be determined at the discretion of the Head of School and may include possible dismissal for a student or the termination of employment for an adult.

False Reports

The School strongly encourages individuals to report any concerns under this policy, but also recognizes that allegations of harassment, bullying, and hazing are serious and can be damaging to the accused person's reputation. Therefore, if the School determines that a person knowingly made a false accusation, or accused another of harassment, bullying, or hazing maliciously or recklessly, that individual may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to, and including dismissal for a student or the termination of employment for an adult.

A "false accusation" is defined as the act of making a deliberately, recklessly, or maliciously false accusation of harassment, bullying, or hazing, as opposed to an allegation that, even if erroneous, is made in good faith. For purposes of this policy, "recklessly" means raising a false claim of harassment, bullying, or hazing against another individual carelessly and with indifference to how the false claim may affect the accused person's reputation and welfare. For purposes of this policy, "maliciously" means raising a false claim of harassment, bullying, or hazing against another individual with the intent to harm the accused person's reputation and welfare and/or the intent to injure the accused with legal consequences or punishment by the School or outside authorities.

Sexual Misconduct Policy

Policy and Purpose

The Taft School is committed to the safety and well-being of the students in our care. All students and adults in the Taft community must be treated with dignity, respect, sensitivity, and fairness. Sexual misconduct and abuse will not be tolerated within our community.

The Taft School prohibits sexual misconduct, by or towards students, employees, or visitors whether on school property, on school-related trips/events off school property, or at school-sponsored functions. The School also does not tolerate such sexual misconduct by vendors, contractors, or other third parties having agreements or contracts with the School, supporters of the School (donors, volunteers, alumni/ae, parents), or visitors to the School. The prohibition of sexual misconduct extends to all forms of communications, including, but not limited to, direct personal interactions, electronic or voice communications, postings on blogs, social networking sites, web forums, and other media.

The School's Sexual Misconduct Policy addresses sexual misconduct involving students in any form to maintain a safe campus environment for all. It provides a single, easily accessible document for members of the community that defines key terms and behaviors related to sexual misconduct and outlines key procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving cases of sexual misconduct involving students.

The Policy educates community members about sexual misconduct, reporting mechanisms, and key contact numbers; establishes protocols for investigating and adjudicating reports of sexual misconduct; defines the consequences of sexual misconduct; and articulates how the School shares information about sexual misconduct. Student Sexual Misconduct violations overlap with the disciplinary system, which address behaviors that impact the well-being of those in the School community, and the Honor Code, which addresses issues of integrity. If a conflict should arise between this policy and other school procedures, rules, or regulations, the provisions of this policy will govern and supersede in cases of alleged sexual misconduct involving students. The School reserves the right to deviate from this policy as may be needed in the interest of student safety or in the interest of protecting an individual's rights.

The School reserves the right to make changes in the policies, procedures, and standards outlined in the Sexual Misconduct Policy, as it deems necessary and proper, and will make reasonable efforts to provide notification to the community when a substantive change has been made. **This policy is not intended to create, and does not create, a contract.**

Students and Sexual Intimacy

The School does not condone students' sexual activity while on campus. Adolescence is a time of personal growth that includes a developing sense of individual sexuality. Taft students are responsible for their behavior as they navigate the rights and responsibilities of emerging sexual identity. Students need clear boundaries and an understanding of potential consequences to aid in their decision making. The School expects students in same sex relationships to observe the same expectations as everyone else. Any student found being sexually intimate with another person must speak with a faculty member of their choosing including advisor, Class Dean, coach, dorm parent, director of the health services, school counselor, Dean of Students, or any other faculty member. The faculty member and student will also contact the student's parents to inform them of the incident.

If a student(s) violate a school rule while being sexually intimate, the student(s) may be subject to disciplinary action. Some sexually intimate behaviors may also violate state laws despite the consent of both parties. Sexual contact with anyone three (3) years or older when the other person is 13, 14, or 15 years of age is against Connecticut law and the School will be required to report such acts to the Department of Children and Families and/or law enforcement. (See Statutory Rape)

Definitions of Key Terms

Reporting Party (also known as the reporting student, complainant, alleged victim, victim):

The reporting party is the individual who shares information about being subjected to sexual misconduct. If someone other than the alleged victim makes the initial report, that individual will be referred to as a third party reporter.

Responding Party (also known as the respondent, accused student or party, accused):
The responding party is the individual alleged to have committed sexual misconduct.

Consent:

Consent constitutes words or actions that show a knowing and voluntary agreement to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Effective consent cannot be gained by force, by ignoring or acting in spite of the objections of another (unless those objections have been knowingly and voluntarily withdrawn), or by taking advantage of the incapacitation of another if the accused knows, or a sober, reasonable person in the position of the accused should have known of such incapacitation. Effective consent is also absent when the activity in question exceeds the scope of effective consent previously given or when effective consent previously given for the activity in question has been withdrawn. It is important to note that there are some situations where sex or sexual contact is illegal, even though both individuals agree to it. Sixteen is the age of consent in Connecticut and anyone under that age cannot consent to sexual relations. (see following section on Statutory Rape)

For the sake of clarity:

- consent is knowing, mutual, and conscious;
- consent cannot be provided by an individual who is asleep or otherwise mentally or physically incapacitated;
- consent cannot be inferred by the absence of “no”;
- consent must be on-going and can be revoked at any time by any person involved;
- consent cannot be obtained through unreasonable pressure or intimidation;
- consent to some acts does not indicate consent for all acts; and
- consent may be irrelevant. There are situations where sex or sexual contact is illegal, even though both individuals agree to it (see following section on Statutory Rape). Someone under the age of 16 cannot consent to sexual relations under Connecticut law.

It is important that all students understand consent. Students with questions about consent or about what constitutes consent should speak with the Dean of Students or the assistant Dean of Students at Taft.

Retaliation:

Any form of intimidation, reprisal, bullying, or harassment directed against a student, employee, or a third party who reports sexual misconduct, provides information during an investigation of sexual misconduct, witnesses, has reliable information about an incident of sexual misconduct, or otherwise assists in the enforcement of this Policy.

Sexual Contact:

Sexual contact is any intentional touching of the intimate parts of a person (the breasts, buttock, groin, or genitals), even if there is no penetration. This means any contact with the intimate parts of either the accused or the victim for the purpose of sexual gratification of the accused or for the purpose of degrading or humiliating the victim.

Sexual Intercourse:

Sexual Intercourse means vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, fellatio or cunnilingus between persons regardless of sex. Penetration, however slight, is sufficient to complete vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse or fellatio and does not require emission of semen. Penetration may be committed by an object manipulated by the actor into the genital, oral, or anal opening of the victim’s body.

Sexual Misconduct:

Sexual misconduct is a broad term encompassing conduct of a sexual nature that is without consent or has the purpose or effect of threatening, intimidating, or coercing the person against whom such conduct is directed. Sexual misconduct includes but is not limited to sexual assault, sexual contests, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, relationship abuse, and stalking. Retaliation against any persons reporting alleged sexual misconduct violations is also against School policy and will result in disciplinary action.

Sexual Assault:

Sexual assault consists of sexual contact or intercourse that occurs without explicit consent of the victim. It is a violation of the School's policies and may constitute a criminal violation.

Sexual Contests:

Sexual contest describes circumstances when individuals compete with one another to achieve sexual goals or milestones. Examples of sexual contests include, but are not limited to, keeping lists of sexual exploits, winning a prize for accomplishing a sexual goal, or being expected to accept a consequence for failure to achieve a sexual goal.

Sexual Exploitation (including technological exploitation):

Sexual exploitation is taking non-consensual, unjust, or abusive advantage of another in a sexual or intimate context. Sexual exploitation includes, but is not limited to; prostituting another person, knowingly inflicting another person with a sexually transmitted disease, causing or attempting to cause the incapacitation of another person to gain a sexual advantage over such other person, engaging in, permitting, reproducing, or facilitating non-consensual viewing, videotaping, photographing, or audio taping of sexual or intimate activity (such as dressing, showering, toileting, or similar activity).

Making and/or sending photographs, video, or other visual, auditory, and/or digital recordings of sexual activity or of a sexual nature of one's self or others (sometimes referred to as "sexting"), with or without consent, constitute sexual misconduct and may also constitute a criminal violation. Similarly, sharing, viewing, or receiving such recordings or other sexually harassing electronic communications, with or without consent, is a form of sexual misconduct.

Sexual Harassment:

In a school setting, sexual harassment is conduct that 1) is sexual in nature; 2) is unwelcome; and 3) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment creates a hostile environment if the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it interferes with or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's program.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, or electronic conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

Adult to Student:

- submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of the participation or evaluation of the student in any academic, co-curricular, or extracurricular activity; or
- the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's academic, co-curricular, or extracurricular activities, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Sexual or intimate relationships or deep emotional attachments between students and School faculty, staff, or volunteers are not permissible and are grounds for immediate termination of the faculty or staff member's employment or the volunteer's relationship with Taft. Sexual or intimate relationships or deep emotional attachments between students and former School faculty or staff members, or between students and employees of a Taft School vendor working on campus or at School functions, also are strictly prohibited.

Student to Student:

- the conduct substantially interferes with a student's academic performance or participation in co-curricular or extracurricular activities; or
- the conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning or social environment.

Examples of Sexual Harassment:

- Verbal: sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, threats, pressuring for sexual activity.
- Non-verbal: sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or messages, graphic commentaries, suggestive or insulting sounds, leering, whistling, obscene gestures.
- Quid Pro Quo: occurs when someone in a position of power offers a benefit in exchange for sexual attention or threatens your position if you refuse sexual attention.

Stalking

Stalking is defined as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety, for the safety of a third person, or to feel extreme emotional distress due to repetitive contact or the perception of such conduct. Stalking behaviors include, for example, repeated non-consensual communication by any means; use of surveillance in person or via electronic means; collecting information about a person's routine, friends, family, or coworkers; repeated, uninvited visits to a residence, workplace, classroom, house of worship, or other locations where an individual is commonly found.

Relationship Abuse:

Relationship abuse is a pattern of behaviors one person uses to gain and maintain power and control over their partner. Relationship abuse includes use of physical violence, threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, manipulation, and isolation.

Statutory Rape:

In Connecticut, the law says that there are some situations where engaging in sexual intercourse or sexual contact is illegal, even though both people agree to it. Statutory rape in Connecticut is defined as sexual contact between a child who is:

- under age 13 and the other person is more than 2 years older
- age 13, 14 or 15 years old and the other person is more than 3 years older
- under age 18 and the other person has a position of power or influence over the child, such as a teacher, counselor, guardian, or coach. A sexual relationship between a student (regardless of the student's age) and a school employee is never appropriate and considered a felony under Connecticut law.

Amnesty

Taft recognizes that a student or students in violation of a School rule (i.e. drugs, alcohol, permissions, intimacy, sexting, visitation), at or near the time of any inappropriate sexual misconduct may be hesitant to report the behavior due to fear of potential consequences for violating a School rule. In cases where information about the incident would not otherwise be available to adults, the reporting student or third party reporting party may expect amnesty from potential discipline for breaking the School rule. Out of concern for student welfare, certain violations such as violations of the drug and alcohol rules will be referred for educational and counseling evaluation and/or services and parents will be notified.

Note: The Dean of Students office or the Head of School reserves the right to determine whether a student is seeking help or attempting to manipulate the discipline system. The School also reserves the right to implement a level of disciplinary response based on the information gained.

Procedures for Reporting Sexual Misconduct to the School

The School will treat all reports of sexual misconduct seriously, with the well-being and safety of its students as the main priority. In most cases, the School will work with the reporting party on notifying parents or legal guardians of any sexual misconduct allegations involving their child.

The School will comply with any laws requiring them to report the alleged sexual misconduct to law enforcement and/or the Department of Children and Families.

Students who believe they have been a victim of sexual misconduct, have witnessed sexual misconduct, or who are concerned about such behavior by or toward others should seek help immediately from the Dean of Students or the assistant Dean of Students. Students should call 911 if they, or another, need immediate police and/or medical attention.

Reports of sexual misconduct may be made orally or in writing (via email or otherwise) to:

- Dean of Students 860-945-7841 tdeary@taftschool.org;
- Associate Dean of Students 860-945-7838 sbernier@taftschool.org; and/or
- EthicsPoint at : https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/74505/index.html

Although the School will investigate a report made anonymously, in most cases the School will be unable to take any disciplinary action against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report because the information will not be sufficient.

Students with generalized concerns about peers who may be involved in an unhealthy relationship may speak to the Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of Students.

Complaints involving individuals who are not students or School employees (e.g., vendors, contractors, donors, volunteers, alumni/ae, parents, and visitors) should be brought forward through the same complaint process outlined above. The Head of School, CFO, or other school officials deemed necessary will make appropriate contacts with any outside individuals or organizations as needed to investigate the allegations and resolve the issues.

Procedures for Reporting Sexual Misconduct to the School

Any alumni/ae as well as former faculty or staff member who wishes to report historic instances of sexual misconduct should contact the Head of School at (860) 945-7877 pbecker@taftschool.org or the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Reports of historic instances of sexual misconduct also can be reported through EthicsPoint at : https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/74505/index.html

Reports from alumni/ae or former faculty and staff likely will be investigated either internally or externally depending on the circumstances and facts. If the report involves current employee(s) or student(s), the School reserves the right to require the individual accused of the inappropriate behavior to leave campus. Findings from the investigation will be shared with the Head of School, the CFO, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, and/or others deemed necessary by the Head of School and the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Reporting a Crime to the Police

Members of The Taft School community, including students, may also report sexual misconduct directly to the Watertown Police Department ("WPD") at (860) 945-5200, or, in the case of an emergency, a call should be made to 911.

Students can receive assistance in notifying law enforcement from the Dean of Students or the assistant Dean of Students at the School. If an independently filed report first goes to the police, the reporting individual should notify Susan Henebry, the school counsel, if possible.

The WPD has officers trained to work with reporters/victims/survivors of sexual misconduct and can explain the individual's rights and options. It is important to note that reporting sexual misconduct to the WPD or any other law enforcement agency does not typically require filing criminal charges. The School will honor a reporter/victim/survivor's decision to pursue a law enforcement remedy or decision not to do so.

The School will notify the police of any instance of suspected sexual assault that involves a student and/or occurs on the School's campus.

Mandated Reporting and the Department of Children and Families

In addition to notifying the police, the School will contact the Connecticut Department of Children & Families ("DCF") when it learns of an instance of sexual misconduct involving a student as required under its responsibility as a mandated reporter. The Taft School considers all faculty and staff to be "mandated reporters" under Connecticut law. A mandated reporter is required to report, or cause a report to be made, when he or she has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of 18 (or 21 if a DCF client) has been abused, neglected, or placed in imminent risk of serious harm.

DCF defines child abuse as a non-accidental injury to a child, or a condition resulting in maltreatment, such as sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment, or cruel punishment. DCF defines sexual abuse as employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct; or rape, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other forms of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.

Such incidents may also involve criminal proceedings by law enforcement. The mandated reporting laws require the School to report all cases of sexual activity between a school employee and a student (regardless of the student's age), all cases of non-consensual relations among students, and certain cases of sexual relations among minors. **In most instances, such a report will be made before a parent is notified.**

School faculty or staff members, contractors, or volunteers with reasonable cause to suspect or believe that sexual misconduct has occurred with a student, or with reason to believe that a student has been abused, neglected, or is placed in imminent risk of serious harm, must immediately report it to DCF. ***The phone number to make a report directly to DCF of suspected child abuse or neglect is (800) 842-2288.***

Any school employee who does not immediately report any such reasonable suspicion or belief to DCF will be subject to discipline up to, and including, termination of employment. Under no circumstances can a school employee keep an allegation of sexual misconduct secret.

An individual may report sexual misconduct to DCF orally or in writing. When reporting an incident, it is helpful to provide as much information as possible, including the following if known:

1. A description of the event;
2. The number of occurrences, with dates and places;
3. The names of any witnesses; and
4. Any documents (e.g., texts, screenshots, emails) or other materials related to the event.

Maintaining Privacy

To the extent possible, the School will respect and maintain the privacy of all participants upon receiving a report of sexual misconduct. Any student or adult member of the Taft community who reports an incident of sexual misconduct must understand that for a comprehensive resolution to be reached and community safety, certain information about the complaint must be shared with individuals (i.e. school investigators, identified witnesses, the Head of School, etc.), whether school employees, students, or others, who are involved in and necessary to the investigation and/or keeping the community safe. Such individuals will be informed of the need to maintain privacy of the information and the penalty for improper disclosure of private information, up to and including dismissal for students and termination of employment for adults. The Dean of Students, the Head of School, or their designee may share the name of the responding student, a description of the incident and the discipline implemented with the Taft community if an investigation and adjudication result in major discipline of the student. Minimally necessary details will be included and the School will do its best to not reveal the name of the reporting student and other students involved in the investigation. Public disclosure of pertinent information, through a timely warning notification, may be made if the Head of School, the Dean of Students, or their designee determines that disclosure is necessary to protect the safety of the Taft community. If feasible, such a disclosure will not reveal the identity of the reporting student or third party reporting party.

It is vital that any individual who feels victimized by sexual misconduct fully understand that the School and its representatives have a legal and ethical obligation to report incidents of sexual misconduct, investigate them, and resolve them. For this reason, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. When a student reports an incident of sexual misconduct to an adult member of the community, the adult must not promise absolute confidentiality and should let the student know about their responsibility as an agent of the School and as a mandated reporter. (See Mandated Reporting and the Department of Children and Families.)

If a student reports being a victim of sexual misconduct, the Dean of Students, the student's dean, advisor, and others on campus deemed appropriate will be notified. The Head of School and assistant Head of School also will be informed. The Head of School will inform the Chair of the Board of Trustees and Chair of the Audit and Financial Risk Committee if the sexual misconduct involves a student and a School employee, volunteer, or contractor. The Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Chair of the Audit and Financial Risk Committee also may be notified of student-to-student misconduct if deemed appropriate by the Head of School.

The School will work with law enforcement, if applicable, to notify anyone accused of sexual misconduct once a complaint or report is made. The School will notify the parent or guardian of the reporting student and/or the responding student of any sexual misconduct allegations involving their child, unless otherwise prevented by law enforcement.

Disclosure of Information by the Health Center and Counseling Department

Confidentiality is critical to the medical and counseling relationship with a student at the School as it builds trust and is the core basis of a medical or counseling relationship. Students can share most information with counselors with the understanding that it will not be shared with parents of members of the School community; however, in situations of sexual misconduct, the counselors, the director of health services, and nurses are mandated reporters as well as school employees and must report such disclosures to DCF and School administrators.

Retaliation

The School will support and protect any student, employee, or a third party who reports sexual misconduct, provides information during an investigation of sexual misconduct, witnesses, has reliable information about an incident of sexual misconduct, or otherwise assists in the enforcement of this Policy. Retaliation against a person is unacceptable and will be subject to a disciplinary response if found to be a valid claim of retaliation by the Head of School or his designee. Any disciplinary response will be determined at the discretion of the Head of School and may include possible dismissal for a student or the termination of employment for an adult.

False Reports

The School strongly encourages individuals to report any concerns under this policy, but also recognizes that the question of whether a particular course of conduct constitutes improper sexual misconduct often requires a factual determination and that false accusations can have a serious effect on innocent persons. Therefore, if an investigation results in a finding that a person knowingly made a false accusation, or accused another of sexual misconduct maliciously or recklessly, that individual may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to, and including dismissal for a student or the termination of employment for an adult.

A “false accusation” is defined as the act of making a deliberately, recklessly, or maliciously false accusation of sexual misconduct, as opposed to an allegation that, even if erroneous, is made in good faith. For purposes of this policy, “recklessly” means raising a false claim of sexual misconduct against another individual carelessly and with indifference to how the false claim may affect the accused person’s reputation and welfare. For purposes of this policy, “maliciously” means raising a false claim of sexual misconduct against another individual with the intent to harm the accused person’s reputation and welfare and/or the intent to injure the accused with legal consequences or punishment by the School or outside authorities.

Post-Report Response

Immediate Response

The School will treat all reports of sexual misconduct seriously, with the well-being and safety of its students as the main priority. In accordance with mandated reporting obligations, if appropriate, a report will be made to DCF, the Watertown police and/or any other legal authorities deemed necessary. The safety of the reporting student, as well as the campus community, will be assessed and steps will be taken to keep the student and/or community safe.

The complainant and the responding student will each select a trusted adult on campus to serve as their support person. Immediate emotional and physical support is available in the health center and the counseling center. Referrals to outside victim support agencies also are available. Students requiring medical attention will be taken to a local hospital. A School representative or a representative from an outside victim support resource agency will accompany the student and will remain with the student until a parent or guardian arrives or until the student has been examined and discharged to the care of the parent/guardian or to the care of the School.

Interim Measures

Depending on the nature of the incident and its impact on the students involved, the School may consider a number of interim measures, including, but not limited to:

- Academic: rescheduling assessments, providing extensions for papers, tests and presentations, forgiving assignments, changing the class schedule.
- Housing: providing alternative housing arrangements if available.
- Non-contact Agreement: working out a plan for the students to avoid communication and/or direct or indirect contact to the fullest extent possible.
- Counseling and Medical Services: working with the health center and/or counseling center to provide or coordinate appropriate professional counseling and medical services as needed.
- Required Leave: requiring the responding student to leave campus during the investigation process if the responding student poses a significant risk of harm to the reporting student and/or campus community.
- Leave of Absence: allowing the students to take a voluntary leave.

The Head of School has complete discretion to excuse violation(s) of other School rules that occurred during the alleged misconduct. (See Amnesty)

Students concerned about their personal safety also may pursue formal protective orders by contacting law enforcement.

Support Team and Resources for the Reporting Student

Students who experience sexual misconduct, whether occurring on or off campus, during the time when they are enrolled at The Taft School will be supported and assisted in obtaining medical treatment, counseling, and other resources to help them. Students can receive medical and counseling support by visiting the Health Center and Counseling Center. The director of health services or a counselor will assist the complainant with obtaining the necessary treatment, counseling and other services.

Off-campus resources include:

CT Alliance to End Sexual Violence
Susan B. Anthony Project
179 Water Street, Torrington, CT 06790
Statewide 24-Hour Toll Free Hotline
English 1-888-999-5545
Española 1-888-568-8332
Torrington Office: 860-489-3798
https://endsexualviolencect.org/

Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury
29 Central Avenue
P.O. Box 1503
Waterbury, CT 06721
Hotline: 203-753-3613
Office: 203-575-0388
https://safehavengw.org/

The Center for Empowerment and Education
2 West Street, Danbury, CT 06810
Hotline: 203-731-5204
Office: 203-731-5200
https://thecenterct.org/

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network
https://www.rainn.org/
Website provides extensive resources, including a 24/7 live chat option
24/7 help line: 800-656-4673

Support Team and Resources for the Responding Student

A trusted adult chosen by the responding student will provide support to the student throughout the processes provided in this policy

Investigation Process

The School may conduct an investigation regarding alleged sexual misconduct to ensure the safety and security of the entire Taft community and to determine whether disciplinary action is warranted. The investigation will be conducted while school is in session and may be delayed in the Head of School's discretion during school breaks. The School's investigation will be independent of any investigation being conducted by law enforcement and/or DCF, but the School will attempt to coordinate with law enforcement and DCF in an effort not to interfere with their investigation(s). (See Working with Law Enforcement) It is important to note that Taft's standard of behaviors may be stricter than that provided by law.

Once contacted about a concern, the School may pursue an informal or formal investigatory process depending on the nature of the complaint.

Informal Resolution

In some circumstances, the complainant may request or the Head of School or designee may suggest that the reported matter be resolved through an alternative informal resolution process. The informal resolution process is a restorative approach and does not involve a full investigation and adjudication of the sexual misconduct claim. In these instances, the Head of School or designee will determine whether that approach is appropriate and whether the School needs to take additional actions. Informal resolutions are never appropriate or allowed for allegations of sexual assault or when a student alleges sexual misconduct by an adult. Informal resolution will be used only with the voluntary, written consent of both parties (and their parents/legal guardians) and following a determination by School that the matter at hand is appropriate for a restorative approach. Either party may withdraw from the informal resolution and resume the formal investigation process prior to agreeing to a final resolution of the complaint.

If the matter is appropriate to be resolved through an informal resolution process, the Head of School or designee will facilitate a voluntary, structured interaction between or among affected parties that is designed to eliminate the conduct at issue, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects in a manner that meets the expressed preference of the complainant and the safety and welfare of the campus community. In some forms of informal resolution, the remedies imposed will focus on supporting the complainant with no participation or involvement by the respondent. In other forms of informal resolution, the respondent may agree to participate. Depending on the type of remedy used, it may be possible for a complainant to maintain anonymity. Informal resolution may also include practices such as restorative justice and mediation. Practices based in restorative principles are designed to allow a respondent to accept responsibility and/or acknowledge harm to the complainant or to the School community.

Formal Investigation

In the event that an informal process is unsuccessful or inappropriate, the Dean of Students, in consultation with others she deems necessary, will decide whether to initiate a formal investigation of the complaint. Decisions to initiate a formal investigation depend on various factors, including, but not limited to, the reporting party's desire to pursue a formal investigation, the assessed risk of not proceeding further, the extent to which the accounts of the incident differ, and the nature and seriousness of the allegation. If a reporting party chooses not to participate in the School's investigation, the School may be limited in its ability to investigate and take disciplinary action. Nevertheless, the School may still proceed with an investigation even in the absence of the reporting party's participation if there are other reasonably available means of obtaining evidence and/or the alleged conduct poses a risk to the campus community. In such cases, the School will inform the reporting party of the need to investigate despite the reporting party's decision not to participate and will keep the reporting party generally apprised of the status of the matter.

If a decision is made to conduct a formal investigation, the investigation will be handled either directly by the dean of student's office, or at the discretion of the School, by an external investigator, or any other individuals deemed appropriate by the Head of School. The School reserves the right in its discretion to conduct investigations internally or use an independent third party to conduct such investigations. All investigators assigned by the School will have received training in investigating sexual misconduct, including trauma-informed interviewing.

A formal investigation most likely will include, but is not limited to, interviews of those individuals directly involved in the incident and any potential witnesses, as well as collecting documents and any other evidence bearing on the incident, including law enforcement reports, texts, emails, etc. As part of the investigation, Taft will provide an opportunity for all parties to present written statements, identify witnesses, and submit other evidence.

All members of the School community are expected to cooperate fully and honestly with any investigation under this policy. The reporting and responding students are permitted to have an advisor present with them for support during any interview and/or disciplinary hearing. The advisor may only be a trusted adult on campus or parent and must be able to adhere to the School's investigation schedule. The advisors serve in a supportive role and are not permitted to ask questions, answer for the party, and/or otherwise participate or contribute during the interview or hearing. Advisors may request breaks to speak with the student. No student or advisor may video, audio, or otherwise record an interview or hearing. School officials and their designees will have the right to interview witnesses and parties to the investigation. No other party to the investigation will have the right to interview witnesses and other parties involved in the investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigators will prepare a report (the "Investigative Report") summarizing and analyzing the relevant facts determined through the investigation, with reference to any supporting documentation or statements. Before the Investigative Report is finalized, the complainant(s) and respondent(s) will be given the opportunity to review their own statements, any witness statements, and any other information collected during the investigation, regardless of whether they were interviewed by the investigators. Witnesses will simultaneously be given the opportunity to review their own statements. The Investigative Report and all information shared with the parties and witnesses is confidential and will be shared in a manner that restricts the parties and witnesses (and their parents/guardians) from retaining, copying, photographing, or distributing such information provided to them.

The complainant(s) and respondent(s) must submit any comments about the evidence and any investigation summary to the investigators within five (5) calendar days after the statement and summary were provided. Witnesses will also have five (5) calendar days to review their statements and submit comments.

Following the receipt of any comments submitted, or after the five-day comment period has lapsed without comment, the Investigators will address any identified factual inaccuracies or misunderstandings, as appropriate. The final Investigative Report will be a factual summary, summaries of any interviews, assessments of the credibility of the evidence, and references to the Student Handbook as appropriate. To the extent practicable, all student names will be redacted from the final Investigative Report to preserve the privacy of the students involved. The complainant(s) and respondent(s) will be provided with an opportunity to review the final Investigative Report.

The School reserves the right to conduct and complete a formal investigation and adjudication regardless of the participation of the reporting party or the responding party. In the event that the responding student withdraws from School prior to the completion of an investigation, the investigation and adjudication process may be continued and completed to the extent possible and deemed in the best interest of the School community as determined in the sole discretion of the Head of School.

Working with Law Enforcement

The filing of a criminal complaint or conducting of a criminal investigation does not affect the School's intention to investigate allegations of sexual misconduct.

The School will recognize and comply with requests by a law enforcement agency for information and cooperation. Such requests may require the School to suspend its investigation temporarily while the law enforcement agency gathers information and/or to delay notifying parties (and their parents) of the allegations. During the temporary suspension, interim measures to protect the parties involved may be implemented or continued as applicable. It is likely that the School will be limited in what information it can share with parents during the criminal investigation.

The School will promptly resume its full investigation upon receipt of notification by the law enforcement agency that it is permissible to do so and will inform the parties that the investigation has resumed. A law enforcement investigation or criminal report is not determinative of whether the incident of sexual misconduct violates the School's policy (i.e. it is possible for an incident of sexual misconduct to violate school policy when law enforcement does not complete an investigation or finds the individual not guilty).

Adjudication Process

The Dean of Students or investigator will provide the Investigative Report to the Harassment Panel.

The Harassment Panel will have the opportunity to question the Dean of Students or investigator about the investigation and findings. The Harassment Panel may also ask the Dean of Students or investigator to conduct additional investigations before the hearing, or may ask clarifying questions based on the information shared in the written materials and statements made by the students. The responding student must appear before the Harassment Panel and may make a statement. The alleged victim may appear, but is not required to appear before the Harassment Panel. The purpose of the students appearing before the Harassment Panel is to provide any additional information they want the Panel to consider prior to considering the report and determining sanctions, including impact or mitigating factors.

The Harassment Panel will deliberate and may determine, among other things, that based upon the preponderance of the evidence: (i) there is insufficient evidence to conclude the accused violated the School's sexual misconduct policy, such status might be deemed "unsubstantiated", "inconclusive", or "no finding"; (ii) the evidence supports a finding of "responsibility"; or (iii) the evidence supports a violation of the School's Honor Code and/or other Fundamental Rule and would be better referred to the Disciplinary Committee or Honor Court. The Harassment Panel will report its finding(s) and make disciplinary determinations in consultation with the Head of School. The decision of the Harassment Panel and the Head of School is final and may not be appealed. The Harassment Panel deliberations are strictly confidential and will not be shared with the parties or the School community.

Possible Sanctions

In cases where the accused student is determined to be "responsible," possible sanctions depend on the nature and severity of the violation. Disciplinary responses will be determined at the sole discretion of the Harassment Panel, in consultation with the Head of School. Disciplinary findings are wholly independent of any law enforcement or DCF finding, and are final. Disciplinary sanctions imposed by the Harassment Panel and Head of School may include, but are not limited to, the following: dismissal, suspension, probation, disciplinary warning, and/or mandatory counseling or educational programming.

Sanctions may also include more permanent and/or revised no-contact orders and modifications of the responsible student's academic schedule or housing.

Sharing Information About Sexual Misconduct

The School's investigation may occur concurrently with any investigation by law enforcement and results from the School's investigation may be shared with law enforcement and any state agency and/or registry as required by law. The School also may share its findings of sexual misconduct with prospective future employers and others as required by law.
All students are expected to answer truthfully when reporting disciplinary violations to colleges, schools, and potential employers. A student's withdrawal, or dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript and a Release of Information Form should be completed for the School to provide information about such suspension, withdrawal, or dismissal to others. The Head of School, in consultation with those he deems necessary, reserves the right to notify colleges, secondary schools, school placement services, and potential employers when a student is found responsible for sexual misconduct and is dismissed or withdraws even if no Release of Information Form is completed for the student.

Reports of Sexual Misconduct by Adults

It is always inappropriate for an adult employee (and/or their spouse), contractor, or volunteer of The Taft School to engage in sexual activity with a student, regardless of the student's age. Taft School employees, volunteers and/or contractors who violate this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination and being banned from campus. If an allegation of sexual misconduct is made against an employee (and/or their spouse or person residing with them on campus), contractor or volunteer, that individual may be immediately put on leave and asked to leave campus. Any allegation of sexual misconduct by an adult (including, but not limited to, donors, spouses and family members of employees, parents, and alumni/ae) will, as required by law, be reported to legal authorities and/or DCF.

Response to Fundamental School Rule Violations

When a student violates a Fundamental Rule of the school, the case is referred to the Deans of Students, who will either refer the case to the Honor Committee for Student Life or will set a penalty in accordance with guidelines established by the Honor Committee for Student Life or past precedent. Fundamental rule violations involving harassment, hazing, and bullying will be considered on an individual basis by the Head of School, Dean of Students, Assistant Heads of School, or other appropriate authorities in consultation with all involved parties. The Head of School or the Assistant Heads of School may, in their discretion, refer the case to the Harassment Panel or Honor Committee for Student Life.

While this discretion is rarely exercised, the Head of School and the Office of Student Life acting together reserve the right to dismiss a student or withhold a diploma for failure to maintain good standing in scholarship, effort or conduct, without resorting to the disciplinary procedures.

The Head of School reserves the right in his sole discretion to forego all, or parts, of the disciplinary procedures herein and change a student's status at school through probation, mandatory leave, or dismissal or withhold a diploma for any reason, including, but not limited to, if a student's conduct involves harm to others or an official investigation by law enforcement or other government agency. The outcome of any such law enforcement or other governmental investigation may be considered as a factor in the school's disciplinary process, but such outcome will not be determinative on the school's disciplinary process.

Honor Committee for Student Life

The Honor Committee for Student Life is usually composed of four students and four faculty with a nonvoting faculty chair. In unusual circumstances when students are not available or appropriate to serve, the Honor Committee for Student Life will be composed of four faculty with a nonvoting faculty chair. Students who appear before the Honor Committee for Student Life will have an opportunity to make a statement regarding the circumstances of the infraction but will not otherwise have a right to interview or cross-examine witnesses and others involved in the case. The student's faculty Advisor, Class Dean, and a student representative will also be invited to the meeting to speak in support of the student, but no other representatives may participate in the disciplinary process.

The Honor Committee for Student Life may recommend Warning periods, probation periods, detentions, suspensions (in-school or off-campus), dismissal, or other responses they deem appropriate.

A student may, in some cases, be placed on Warning in regard to the rule that was violated for a period of time recommended by the Honor Committee for Student Life. Warning indicates that a student will most probably be dismissed if he or she violates that rule again during the period of Warning.

A student who violates more than one Fundamental School Rule or whose conduct warrants such a response would, at the recommendation of the Honor Committee for Student Life or the Dean of Students, and with the approval of the Head of School, be dismissed if they were to violate a Fundamental School Rule during the Warning period following their violation.

Of course, the Honor Committee for Student Life may recommend the dismissal of a student for a first violation of a Fundamental Rule if it feels the circumstances warrant such action. Students found selling drugs or alcohol or procuring drugs or alcohol for other students in all likelihood will be dismissed for a first offense. In addition, students who consume alcohol and who then drive or ride in an automobile will most likely be dismissed for a first offense.

In considering violations of the Alcohol/Drug Rule, the Head of School, the Deans of Students, the faculty Advisor and the Class Dean shall meet to discuss whether further penalties in addition to those imposed by the Honor Committee for Student Life are appropriate in the case of a particular student in light of his/her overall record at the school.

Harassment Panel

The Harassment Panel is an ad hoc committee of six faculty members selected by the Assistant Heads of School under the counsel of the Head of School. Faculty participation on the committee is voluntary. To the extent possible, current teachers, dorm parents, coaches/activity directors, as well as faculty with known close ties to either party will not be selected to avoid potential conflicts of interest. The Harassment Panel is convened by the Assistant Heads of School. The members of the Harassment Panel are not shared with the School community.

The Harassment Panel will have the opportunity to question the Dean of Students or investigator about the investigation and findings. The Harassment Panel may also ask the Dean of Students or investigator to conduct additional investigations before the hearing, or may ask clarifying questions based on the information shared in the written materials and statements made by the students. The accused student must appear before the Harassment Panel and may make a statement. The alleged victim may appear, but is not required to appear before the Harassment Panel. The purpose of the students appearing before the Harassment Panel is to provide any additional information they want the Panel to consider prior to considering the report and determining sanctions, including impact or mitigating factors.

The Harassment Panel will deliberate and may determine, among other things, that based upon the preponderance of the evidence: (i) there is insufficient evidence to conclude the accused violated fundamental rule, such status might be deemed “unsubstantiated”, “inconclusive”, or “no finding”; (ii) the evidence supports a finding of “responsibility”; or (iii) the evidence supports a violation of the School’s Honor Code and/or other Fundamental Rule and would be better referred to the Disciplinary Committee or Honor Court. The Harassment Panel will report its finding(s) and make disciplinary determinations in consultation with the Head of School. The decision of the Harassment Panel and the Head of School is final and may not be appealed. The Harassment Panel deliberations are strictly confidential and will not be shared with the parties or the School community.

Notification and Reporting of Disciplinary Outcomes

Students and parents/guardians will normally hear from a representative from the Office of Student Life regarding any disciplinary matter.

Taft expects students to complete their college applications, applications to next schools or other programs with integrity and to answer all questions honestly and fully. This includes reporting any disciplinary history they may have had during their years at Taft. The student must report disciplinary action at Taft that takes place before, during, or after the time of application. If students are suspended from Taft, these suspensions will be reported to the colleges that ask about discipline related suspensions. In the case of seniors who are in the midst of the college process, these suspensions will be reported promptly following their return from the suspension. There may be instances where the school determines it will report discipline to colleges, schools, or programs. All students and their parents/guardians must understand that the school reserves the right to make such reports.

In unusual situations when the well-being of the community is affected, disciplinary matters may be discussed with the general school body for educational purposes.

ACADEMICS

The Academic Honor System

Honor is a fundamental value at Taft, and matters of academic integrity are treated with the utmost seriousness. The Honor Committee for Academics will hear potential violations of the Taft's Honor Code. Responses to such violations almost always include a period of Warning with regard to all aspects of the Honor Code and could include detentions, suspensions (in-school or otherwise), or dismissal from Taft.

Constitution

Article 1

Violations of the Honor System shall consist of:

1. the theft of other persons' [intellectual] property
2. any attempt to give or receive assistance in any way or form in connection with scholastic work for credit.
3. lying in regard to academic matters.



Article 2

1. The phrase "I pledge my honor" written at the end of any scholastic work done for credit is an abbreviation of the statement "I pledge my honor that I have neither given nor received aid on this paper."
2. On all department examinations, this statement must be written out in full. Any student not signing the pledge to their paper will be notified by the teacher correcting the paper, and then, if unable to sign the pledge, they shall be reported to the Honor Committee for investigation.

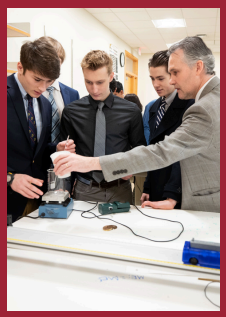


Article 3

1. There shall be an Honor Committee for Academics, which shall investigate and deal with all cases involving the Honor System, as the System is defined in Article 1.
2. This committee shall have the power to summon any accused person or persons, to summon any other persons who might have information about the alleged offense, and to recommend penalties to the Head of School.
3. The committee shall submit to the Head of School a record of all cases considered in its sessions. The instruction of the succeeding committee shall be the responsibility of the outgoing committee.

Article 4

The Preamble and the Constitution shall be announced and explained to all new students at the beginning of each year.



Article 5

The effectiveness of the Honor System lies in the cooperation of the student body.

It is left up to the discretion of the individual as to whether or not he or she shall report an offender to the Honor Committee.

Article 6

The committee, without altering in any way the provisions of the Constitution, may take whatever measures it deems necessary to perpetuate the Honor System. This Constitution, the Preamble, or any parts or articles may be amended or repealed by a three-quarter vote of the combined Senior and Upper Middle classes.

—Classes of '43, '61 and '82

Scholarship

All Taft students are scholars; they seek knowledge, understanding, and mastery in an academic setting. They find joy in collaborating with others, exploring new ideas, and becoming lifelong learners. As the Taft Portrait of a Learner states, students “apply the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind of all disciplines to framing questions and solving problems in the pursuit of understanding. Moreover, they see even the most formidable challenges as opportunities for growth.” From a place of honesty and integrity, Taft scholars inquire, interrogate, discover, and synthesize viewpoints in individual and collaborative settings, while acknowledging the intrinsic value of ideas by honoring others’ intellectual contributions.

In schools and universities, acceptable collaboration and scholarly attribution are contextual;

In other words, they differ by academic discipline and department, and, in some cases, by instructor and even assignment. This is true at Taft as well, and we also acknowledge that:

Students Must:

- be honest with respect to all academic matters;
- generate and submit work that is exclusively their own, unless collaboration is permitted and appropriately acknowledged;
- when collaborating with others, abide by the teacher-prescribed guidelines;
- appropriately cite works or individuals (other students, faculty, tutors, etc.) consulted;
- sit for assessments, including exams, without assistance from others or from unapproved devices;
- not copy or cheat from other students’ work.

In accordance with the Honor Code, when a student pledges their honor at the end of an assignment, they affirm they have acted according to the guidelines above.

Responses to Honor Code Violations

As noted in the Portrait of a Learner, a Taft student should “act with honor and integrity, and value both the Taft Honor Code and the school's fundamental conviction that honesty and personal responsibility are the cornerstones of character and of community.” When a student violates the Honor Code by plagiarizing, cheating, or lying about an academic matter, the case is referred to the office of the Academic Dean, who may move the case to the Honor Court.

The Honor Committee for Academics is typically a committee of 3 students and 3 teachers with a nonvoting faculty chair. Students who appear before the Honor Committee for Academics have an opportunity to make a statement regarding the circumstances of the infraction. The student's faculty advisor, the Class Dean, and a student representative are present at the meeting to speak in support of the student, but no other representatives may participate in the disciplinary process. After hearing a case, the Honor Committee for Academics makes a recommendation to the Head of School. The Honor Committee for Academics may recommend suspension (in school or off campus), dismissal, or other responses they deem appropriate, including Warning with regard to the Honor Code. Warning indicates that a student will most probably be dismissed if they violate that rule again.

If the case is not referred to the Honor Committee for Academics, the Academic Dean will set a response, the outcomes of which can range but which may include the student being placed on Warning in regard to the Academic Honor Code.

If a student violates the Honor Code and receives a disciplinary response from the school, they should work with college counseling to determine a course of action in terms of reporting this violation to colleges or other institutions.

While this discretion is rarely exercised, the Head of School and the Academic Dean acting together reserve the right to dismiss a student or withhold a diploma for failure to maintain good standing in scholarship, effort, or conduct, without resorting to the foregoing disciplinary procedures.

Grading System, Academic Credit, Placement, Promotion

Taft's academic grading system includes a 40 to 100 achievement scale and a letter grade-based assessment of students' academic habits. Below is the achievement scale.

Achievement Scale

- 93-100 High Honors
- 90-92 Honors
- 87-89 Above Expectations
- 80-86 Meets Expectations
- 70-79 Approaching Expectations
- 60-69 In Danger of Failure
- 40-59 Failure

The honor roll is comprised of students who earn an academic average of 90 or above for a semester. The high honor roll is comprised of students who earn an average of 93 or above for a semester. Students' academic habits are broadly categorized under "Planning and Persistence" and "Engagement and Self-Regulation." Below is what is represented by the letter grades students earn in these categories.

Academic Habits Letter Grades

- E Exceeds Expectations
- M Meets Expectations
- A Approaches Expectations
- N Needs Attention
- D Demands Attention

Each report card will also include the average achievement grade for all students enrolled in a particular course. This information is often helpful to those seeking to understand a student’s progress and relative success, but any questions should be directed to the appropriate Class Dean.

For all courses, academic credit is granted on a semester-by-semester basis. Also, the academic departments determine student promotion and placement.



Examinations, Assessments, Extended Time

Examinations or culminating assessments are given at the end of the semester. Students may not reschedule exams for any reason, whether to facilitate an early departure for vacation, to take a standardized test, or to participate in an athletic contest or family event.

Exams at the end of the fall semester are a key component of the way Taft culminates our academic semester. The expectation is that students take their exams as scheduled. From time to time, a student might need to petition the school to postpone their exams. These petitions are rarely granted and must be submitted in writing to the Academic Dean and Class Dean at least four weeks before the exam period begins.

Taft does not send exams home, and students who miss exams need to take their assessments in January when they return from the winter break.

Students who find during the term that they have three major assessments—tests, papers, projects, labs—due on the same day may request to have the last assigned exercise due at a later date. Such requests should be made at least 24 hours in advance.

The following policies were written by the department heads to clarify examination procedures:

Achievement Scale

Students are responsible for meeting their academic obligations during the regular school year and also at prescribed times during examination periods each semester. Failure to do so will result in a response as described below.

During the Semester

Taft students strive to complete their work in a timely fashion. It is our expectation that students submit or sit for assessments at the appointed time. Teachers must make clear to their students how best to communicate with them on rare occasions when students cannot meet an assessment deadline, and students should request assessment extensions or postponements in advance. When teachers receive such requests, the process will be:

1. The teacher makes the student's Class Dean and advisor aware of the request;
2. The teacher and student discuss the reason(s) for the request, perhaps in coordination with the student's Class Dean and advisor;
3. The two establish when the assessment will be submitted or taken (these opportunities may include Saturday night or Sunday morning study hall and/or a supervised weeknight study hall);
4. If the student does not submit or sit for the late work by the new, agreed-upon time, the teacher will impose a 5-points-per-day, late achievement grade penalty.

Also, if the absence or lateness is unexcused, the teacher will impose a 5-points-per-day penalty from the original assessment date.

Assessments of passing quality submitted ten days after the agreed upon due date will receive a 50, while those not of passing quality will receive a 40. Students must complete all major assessments to be completed in a course.

Students with extended-time accommodations should speak with their teachers in advance of timed assessments to determine how their teachers prefer to handle the sometimes-complex logistics of extended time. In many cases, teacher and student may determine beforehand that the student will take the assessment in its entirety at a time other than the regular class meeting. Additionally, teachers may ask students to come early to class, particularly, before first period, so the assessment can be taken in one sitting. But in those cases when students with extended-time accommodations begin and do not have enough time to complete in-class assessments, the below procedures apply:

- Teacher and student will discuss and determine when and where the student will complete the assessment; this completion must take priority over other uses of available times during the class day such as a mid-morning slot, part of a lunch block or an afternoon Meetings block.
- The student's completion of the assessment will typically take priority over his/her extracurricular commitments except competitions and performances.
- Ideally, the student will complete the assessment under the oversight of his/her classroom teacher.
- To be consistent with the Honor Code, a student whose completion of an assessment is delayed due to his/her extended-time accommodation may not consult materials related to the assessment and must avoid situations in which he/she might unintentionally glean assessment-related information.

During Examination Periods

A student who misses a semester examination as a result of an unexcused absence will receive a penalty of 10 points. Students who arrive late for an exam will receive a penalty of 5 points. In each case, the student will be given the full time for the exam.

Students may not wear hats during examinations.

Semester Examinations and Academic Credits

Taft does not offer re-examinations for credit. If an underclassmen or fall semester senior fails an examination, a re-examination will not be given even if the student has failed the semester and received no credit for the course. If the student has failed a semester course that is part of a sequence of semesters, after a reasonable period of time for preparation, the student must take a placement exam in order to proceed to the next level. For instance, a student who fails the spring semester of Latin I must pass a placement exam in order to proceed to Latin II in the fall.

Electronic Devices

Student use of devices such as laptop computers, smart phones, or tablets is determined by departments and teachers. In accordance with our cell phone policy, students should not have cell phones in the classroom for any reason.; the penalty for not doing so could include confiscation of the phone, a score of 40 on the assessment and/or a disciplinary response consistent with Honor Code violations.

During exams, students may not be in possession of cell phones, smart watches, or unapproved electronic devices of any kind, or of any written materials which may assist them on the exam. If a proctor discovers a student in possession of one of these item(s), it will be confiscated. The student's penalty could include immediate expulsion from the exam room, a score of 40 on the exam and/or a disciplinary response consistent with Honor Code violations.

Artificial Intelligence Tools

Appropriate uses of AI tools will differ by course and by department. In some departments, the use of AI and other technologies is encouraged to further one’s understanding in order to bring new ideas to class. In other courses, these uses of technology and AI tools are not appropriate. If you are considering using an AI tool but are not sure if it is acceptable for that teacher and class, you should ask your teacher before you use the tool.



ACCEPTABLE, APPROPIATE USE OF THE TAFT NETWORK

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for The Taft School

It is the general policy of the Taft School that computers and network services, including, but not limited to, Taft email, voicemail, electronic equipment and the Internet (collectively, the "Network"), are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the school. Users acknowledge their understanding of this policy and guidelines as a condition of using the Network. The use of Taft School I.T. resources, the Network is a privilege and is granted to users primarily for the enhancement of curricular-related learning or job functions. All users are responsible for adhering to these policies and procedures for use of the Network . This includes students, faculty, staff, and any other authorized users. Taft does not attempt to articulate all possible violations of this Acceptable Use Policy. Any communication or action that would be considered inappropriate in any other setting is equally inappropriate on the computer and the Network. Illegal activities are strictly prohibited. Online activity relating to or in support of illegal activities, or language stating or suggesting violent intent may be monitored by, or reported to, governmental agencies and could result in arrest and prosecution.

Students are expected to manage their computer time in a responsible manner and refrain from excessive use for purposes of social communication and/or entertainment.

Acceptable Use of the Network

Acceptable use of the Network includes activities that support learning, teaching, and communication. Students and faculty are encouraged to explore and develop new ways of using technology to support Taft's teaching and learning objectives.

Unacceptable Use of the Network

Unacceptable use of the Network includes, but is not limited to:

- Using network credentials that belong to someone else.
- Violating the rights to privacy of students, employees of the Taft School, or others outside of Taft.
- Using the Network to harass or bully another individual or individuals.
- Using profane or obscene language that may be offensive to another user.
- Plagiarism and/or copying materials in violation of copyright law.
- Using the Network for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity.
- Acting in a manner that degrades or disrupts system performance or unauthorized entry to and/or destruction of computer systems and files.
- Excessive bandwidth usage that impacts the network or Internet performance of others.
- Re-posting personal communications without the author's prior consent.
- Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are illegal or obscene.
- Using BitTorrent or other peer-2-peer methods as a means to unlawfully download copyrighted material such as movies, music, games, programs, etc.
- The use of any technology or device to disable, bypass, or otherwise attempt to circumvent Taft's access policies, firewall systems, or other access points.

- Copying and using software without a license is forbidden. The use and transfer of stolen software is a federal offense. Pirating software may result in the loss of the user's account. Commercial software may not be stored or transferred on the network or Taft-owned or licensed storage systems. Loading any software without the approval of the IT administrator(s) on any school-owned computer is prohibited.
- The unauthorized reproduction, modification, or distribution of copyrighted material may constitute copyright infringement under 17 U.S.C. § 107 of the United States Code if such use is not for the nonprofit purposes of teaching, research, or scholarship.
- Using Generative Artificial Intelligence for improper or dishonest purposes is strictly forbidden. This includes any attempt to generate or manipulate content with the intention to deceive, plagiarize, or engage in any form of academic dishonesty. The use of Generative AI must align with ethical standards, academic integrity, and the guidelines set forth by The Taft School. Any misuse or unauthorized use of Generative AI tools may result in disciplinary action, loss of network access, and other appropriate consequences as determined by the school administration.

Privileges

Use of the Network is a privilege, not a right. Failure to act in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy may result in a loss of network access, disciplinary action, and/or criminal penalties under applicable state and federal law. The IT department, at its discretion, may revoke this privilege temporarily or permanently.

Authority of System Administrators

The Taft network is a privately owned and managed data system. IT administrators may read, intercept, filter, or audit any electronic communication, file, or data stream passing through the network or Taft-licensed systems and verify the contents of a user's directory. Email, application traffic, or files may be read by administrators who may revoke accounts and modify a user's access at their discretion.

Security & Privacy

Network users may not share passwords and must properly log off school computers after each use. Users should have no expectation of privacy as the school has the right, and occasionally, the responsibility, to monitor usage and activity. Passwords must be kept secret. Only the person to whom it is assigned may use that username and password.

Viruses and Malware

All personally owned devices, except for iOS devices must run virus protection software. The school can provide this software at no charge to the student.

Disclaimer

The Taft School makes no express or implied warranty for the Internet access it provides or the resources available through the use of our network. We cannot completely eliminate access to information that is offensive or illegal and residing on networks outside of the Taft School campus. Taft does not guarantee the availability of access to the Internet and will not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable due to technical and/or other difficulties.

Social Media Policy

All Taft social media accounts (including accounts used to promote Taft athletic teams, clubs, etc.) must be associated with a Taft email address. All Taft social media account holders are required to send their usernames and passwords to the director of communications.

To provide clear, concise communications, all media inquiries should go to the director of communications. The director of communications and the Head of School are the authorized spokespersons for the school.

All representatives of the news media must be accompanied while on campus. The media is not allowed to photograph or videotape any student at Taft, regardless of the student’s age, without prior written approval from the director of communications.

Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) AKA Drone Campus Policy

Any use of a UAS from or over the campus, or inside a campus building, is prohibited.



RESIDENTIAL LIFE REGULATIONS AND INFORMATION

Living in community is one of the most powerful aspects of the Taft experience. Students learn to work together, navigate conflicts, and support one another in achieving personal and communal goals. For many, living in a Taft dorm is an important opportunity to take on responsibility for both self and others, very much living in the school motto of Non Ut Sibi.

Dorm life at Taft is built on kindness, accountability, and shared responsibility. Each resident plays an essential role in creating a community where everyone feels included, respected, and safe. This means taking care of shared spaces, participating in dorm life, and supporting one another through the ups and downs of school.

The Taft residential community works best when we think first of others as others will be thinking of us first. That helps each member of the community be and feel valued and able to contribute to the communal good. We look forward to the important learning challenges that exist in the residential experience and remind students of the many supports – dorm parents, Class Deans, advisors, teachers, student monitors – who exist to support students and help the community successfully function.

Living with others requires consistent communication, empathy, and respect. Students are expected to maintain personal and shared spaces in ways that support communal comfort, ask before borrowing or using another's belongings, and communicate directly and respectfully when concerns arise. Understanding that their individual actions have broader implications for other people is essential. For example, a student needs to see utilizing shared facilities as just that. Each student and groups of students need to leave a space clean and functional for whomever will next use it. The habits developed in the dorms prepare students to build caring communities wherever they go next.

Residential Life Mission Statement

The goal of the Residential Life Program is to create a safe, happy, healthy living environment where Taft students can grow emotionally, physically, and intellectually.

Principles Of The Residential Life Program

To act with honor and integrity
To serve others unselfishly
To be morally thoughtful
To be a good citizen
To live a healthy and balanced life
To work cooperatively and collaboratively for the good of Taft

General Rules for Residential Life

- Students must be inside the buildings at 8:00 p.m. (Please consult the Fundamental Rules for regulations regarding being off campus.) Naturally, students may leave buildings to move about the main campus area, but under no circumstances should they be out on the athletic fields, the golf course, the cemetery, etc., after 8:00 p.m. On nights when students are allowed downtown after 8:00 p.m., they are expected to use the main roadways to go downtown.
- Downtown privileges do not extend to the adjacent fields and the golf course.
- Students are not to be out of dormitory after 10:15 p.m.
- Sufficient quiet must be maintained in the dormitories at all times to allow those who wish to study or sleep to do so.
- Students may use radios, speakers, and other music-making devices. However, at no time may this equipment be played loudly enough to disturb anyone. A further restriction is placed on the volume level of speakers from the beginning of evening study hall until the end of classes the next day. During these time periods, Lowermids and Mids may play music only through headphones, and Uppermids and Seniors may play music at a level that cannot be heard outside the room.
- Students are not allowed to gamble (for fun or money).
- Students are not allowed to use the school elevators without permission from Health Center personnel or the Office of Student Life.
- The porches of HDT and CPT are off limits for students.
- The use of rollerblades, skateboards, scooters, hoverboards, or bicycles is not permitted inside school buildings.
- Consistent with the school's role in loco parentis, the dormitory faculty and school staff reserve the right to enter student rooms at any time for school business. This includes, but is not limited to, daily room inspections, maintenance tasks, cleaning purposes, and other school business.
- Students may only room with students in their own grade.
- The dorm will be alarmed from 10:15 PM - 6:00 AM. Students are not to leave their dorm without a faculty member between these times for any reason. If the alarm is set off, faculty have to do a bed check, and security will be notified.

Directions for Care of Rooms

Rooms should be kept clean for reasons of fire insurance and health standards (and because it is the right thing to do). All rooms can be inspected at any point throughout the week by dormitory faculty to ensure that standards (beds made, trash emptied, open food removed from the room, closet straightened, and floor cleared) are being met. Each dormitory establishes its own schedule for room inspections, and students should expect daily room inspections.

- School provided furniture may not be moved from room to room and should not be modified in any way. The only exceptions are the chairs and desk toppers.
- The use of tacks and nails is limited to the molding. Paste, glue, and tape should not be used because these substances can pull the paint off of the walls. "Fun-tak" and other similar adhesive materials may be used in USGD and CPT dormitories; in other dormitories, students must use tacks for all wall hangings.
- Room decorations should be selected while keeping in mind that although a student's room is his/her own, it is also part of the dormitory and the community. Good taste and respect for others are expected. Students may not hang posters or other decorations that display symbols of hate, images of alcohol, drugs, scantily clad models, or other inappropriate images. Room decorations must consider the community and uphold respect and dignity for all.
- Faculty reserve the right to ask a student to remove inappropriate room decorations.
- Perishable food is not to be stored in rooms.
- Beds are not to be lofted unless with the approval of the Director of Residential Life. Rooms that are singles are not able to request a lofted bed.
- Upper School students (Uppermids and Seniors) may have external video game systems in dorm rooms if they choose: lower school students may not. Of course, students are expected to abide by study hall and "lights out" guidelines such that they can meet academic goals and be rested and well. Note that students who inappropriately use or play video games, or students who struggle to meet expectations will earn consequences and lose the privilege.

- Computer monitors may not exceed 32”.
- Wireless speaker devices that require internet connection (i.e. Alexa, Google, Soundbars, etc.) are not permitted in the dorms.
- Projectors are not allowed.
- Posters or other wall decorations may be hung using sticky tack, command hooks or masking tape. Adhesive items (i.e. packing tape, nails, staples, etc.) that would cause damage to the walls are not permitted to be used. Removable adhesive wallpaper is not permitted in the dorms. Students will be charged for any damages.
- Dart boards are not permitted.
- Students may not keep pets at school under any circumstances. Emotional support animals are not permitted. Fish are permitted; small, toothless fish.
- Liquor bottles, beer cans or bottles, or any drug paraphernalia may not be used as room decorations or kept in student rooms. Posters or other decorations that show alcohol or drug products are prohibited. Posters that depict nudity or that are otherwise, at the discretion of faculty, inappropriate, are not permitted.
- Mini Refrigerators may not exceed 4 liters in size. Exceptions will only be made for medical reasons and must be determined and approved by Kira Lent, Director of Health Services.
- No motorized or electric scooters, bicycles or hoverboards are permitted on campus.

Fire and Safety Regulations

In the interest of safety and in order to comply with the fire marshal's regulations and safety codes, students must strictly adhere to the following rules:

- Nothing may hang from or near the ceiling light fixtures or across the ceiling itself. Only one wall may be covered by a wall hanging, which must be fire-resistant and must be free and clear of any electrical outlet or fixture.
- Rooms may not be subdivided by furniture, sheets, blankets, flags, or hangings so as to prevent clear access or view to and from the door. Beds may not be placed in the middle of the room—they must be arranged with one long side against a wall. Bed legs must be on the floor, except when elevated by bed risers. Beds may not be suspended on bricks or cement blocks. Bureaus must have their backs against a wall, and desks are to have one side against the wall. Waterbeds are not permitted.
- Cloth coverings may not be used on any tables, chairs, or pieces of furniture. The fire marshal also prohibits bean bag chairs in the dormitories unless documentation can be provided that it is made of flame retardant material.
- Halls must be kept clear at all times. Bicycles may not be stored in dormitory rooms. Athletic equipment should be stored in locker rooms provided in the athletic center.
- Trunks and large luggage must be stored in the storage rooms.
- Students may have additional furniture in their rooms, unless this furniture prevents an easy exit from the room, in which case it will have to be removed. A maximum of one love seat and one extra easy chair are permitted in any student room. Any furniture must be in good condition and repair. This furniture is subject to inspection to ensure the unit is safe and fit for use and clear of offensive markings or language.
- Each student may have one desk lamp and one other lamp, which must use compact fluorescent light bulbs or LED light bulbs. No light may be attached to a wall near a blanket. Due to state fire regulations, halogen lamps are not permitted.
- The use of electrical appliances such as toasters, popcorn machines, grills, hot plates, hot pots, percolators, refrigerators of any size, heating coils, space heaters, irons, and heat lamps is prohibited. Such items found in student rooms will be confiscated until June and conduct grades will be assigned. Students found using heat-producing appliances will be considered to be in violation of the Fire Hazard Rule.
- Extension cords must be UL approved. They must not be laid under rugs or walking areas. Splicing of cords is not allowed. Use only insulated staples to attach cords to moldings. Dorm rooms have duplex outlets, each of which is limited to three appliances unless a junction box with a circuit breaker is used.
- No lighting fixtures or electrical appliances may be wired into the closets of dormitory rooms.

- Tampering with lighting fixtures, outlets, switches, and panels is forbidden.
- Open flames of any kind are prohibited.
- Students may not tamper with fire hoses and extinguishers.
- Fire doors should be kept closed at all times. No door should be propped open at any time.
- Students may not hang anything out of windows at any time.

Room Damages

The school's maintenance staff inspects all rooms three times each year (winter vacation, spring break, end-of-school year). Any damages over and above normal wear and tear will be charged equally to the room occupants.

- Furniture, furnishings, and closet doors may not be removed from rooms; if they have been removed there will be charges for their restoration.
- Room doors should be kept free of stickers and markings.

Evening Hours

Evening hours at Taft begin at 7:00 p.m. (except in the fall and spring on nights of formal sit-down dinner) and will end at “lights out” for each of the respective classes. During this time, dormitory faculty will be present in the dormitory, ensuring an environment that is conducive to productive study hall conditions. Supervised evening room study is held from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. every evening that is followed by a class day. On the evenings that students return after an extended vacation, there will be quiet hours in lieu of a study hall. Attendance will be taken at 7:50 p.m. for the Lower School and 8:00 p.m. for the Upper School, and students are expected to maintain an environment that is conducive to studying until 9:30 p.m. During study hours, all students must be in their rooms or at one of the allowed locations. Study hours are a sacred time; therefore, it is important that quiet be maintained throughout campus.

Students are not to gather in the halls or public areas of the school, but rather are expected to go to their destinations quickly and quietly. Leaving the dormitory without permission, going to an unapproved location, or intent to deceive on a dormitory sign-out violates our Permission Rules and may result in loss of sign-out privileges. Because Taft places high value on individual responsibility, we believe in instilling more responsibility in our students as they progress through their Taft educational experience.

Lower School (Lower Mids and Mids) Evening Routine

- 7:50: Lower School Check-In and Phone Drop Off
- 8:00–9:30 PM: Study Hall & Room Inspections
    - Doors must remain open during study hall with a door stop.
    - Room inspection can be held Sunday through Friday:
        - Beds made
        - Floors cleared and cleaned
        - Trash emptied
        - Open food removed from room
        - Closets and dressers straightened
    - Students may not use computers, cell phones, iPads, or other electronics for non-academic purposes except with permission from the faculty member on duty.
    - Students may ask the permission of the faculty on duty to sign out to extra help, computer labs, language lab, academic tables, or counseling offices. Permission will be granted to lower schoolers only if the faculty member on duty has been given advance notice by a faculty member. Students wishing to go to the Writing Center or any academic table may do so at their discretion, and they do not need prior faculty permission, although they must follow the proper sign-out procedure. Students wishing special permission to go anywhere except the above destinations must receive permission from their Class Dean.
    - The Lowermid deans may require some Lowermids to study in a supervised room during study hall.
    - Students who sign out during study hall must sign back in by 9:45 p.m.
- 10:00–10:15 PM: Check In with Faculty Member on Duty, Collect Phone, and Request Late Lights if needed
- 10:30 PM: Lights Out / Internet Access Turned Off

- Lowermids may request late lights for studying purposes one night a week, but they must be in bed by 11:00 p.m. unless they have special permission from the faculty member on duty. Mids that might need a third late light per week must get permission from his/her Class Dean and dormitory head. Overhead lights must be off during this time and students using late lights must be sitting at their desk using a desk lamp. The roommate of the student taking late lights must be in his/ her bed unless he/she has also signed up for late nights.

Special Study Requirements

- Mids and Lowermids who must attend evening practices or play rehearsals—a situation that sometimes occurs during the winter term—are required to attend an afternoon study hall.

Upper Middler Evening Routine

- 8:00 p.m. : Upper School Check-In
- 7:00–10:00 PM: Uppermid Sign-Out
  - Students must sign out in person, with the faculty member on duty, to sign out to any academic venues or extra help.
  - Students may also sign out for cultural events when appropriate.
- 8:00–9:30 PM: Study Hall
  - During study hours students must be in their rooms or at one of the locations specified above.
  - Room inspections can be held Sunday through Friday:
  - Beds made
  - Floors cleared and cleaned
  - Trash emptied
  - Open food removed from room
  - Closet straightened
  - For purposes of maintaining quiet during this important time of the day, students are not to gather in the halls or public areas of the school, but rather are expected to go to their destinations quickly and quietly.
  - 10:15 PM: Check In with Faculty Member on Duty
  - 11:00 PM: Lights out
  - Students must remain in their own room at this time.
  - 11:30 PM: Internet Access Turned Off

Special Study Requirements

- Uppermids who must attend evening practices or play rehearsals—a situation that sometimes occurs during the fall or winter term—are required to attend an afternoon study hall.

Senior Evening Routine

- 7:00–10:00 PM: Senior Sign-Out
  - Senior sign-out is a privilege.
  - Seniors must sign out with the faculty member on duty if they are going to be somewhere other than the dorm.
  - Seniors must sign back in on the same sheet when they return to the dormitory.
- 8:00–9:45 PM: Study Hours
  - Seniors are expected to be in their room during this time unless they have signed out to a destination listed above.
  - Room inspections will be held Sunday through Friday:
  - Beds made
  - Floors cleared and cleaned
  - Trash emptied
  - Open food removed from room
  - Closet straightened
- 10:15 PM: Check In with Faculty Member on Duty
- 11:00 PM: Room Check
- 11:30 PM: Internet Access Turned Off

Interdorm Visitation

At Taft, students begin to think of their rooms as home and we understand that they might want to share their space with friends from time to time. The purpose of Dorm Visitation is twofold. One, we want to allow students to visit friends who live in different dorms in a comfortable setting, analogous to visiting in the living room of a family home. Two, we want to encourage members of a tremendously diverse school to broaden their relationships and friendships, and we recognize the need for them to gather in healthy, fun, and safe ways in places other than the Jig, library, or dining hall. Our policies on intimacy still hold true for any and all dorm interactions (co-ed or same sex) just as they would anywhere on campus.

The Dorm Visitation privilege is extended only to Taft students. Alumni and students not enrolled at the school are not permitted in the dormitories without permission of one of the deans of students.

The following expectations for Visitation are for all students anytime Visitation is used:

- A faculty member must be present in the dormitory if Visitation is to take place.
- Hosts and their guest(s) must sign in, in person, with a faculty member on duty in the dormitory being visited and must sign out with the faculty member when departing.
- Guests may sign in only to the room of their host, though a student can host more than one guest in their room.
- The door to the student's room must be kept ajar by a standard Taft-issue trash bin.
- Students should expect faculty or other students to drop by at any time.
- Hosts and their guests must sign out, in person, with the faculty member on duty in the dormitory being visited.
- There are no visitation privileges on any nights of long weekends.

Any Of The Following Will Be Considered A Violation Of Procedures With Regard To Visitation.

- Allowing someone without proper permission to be in a room during Visitation.
- Visiting a room other than your host's room.
- Closing a door while visiting.
- Failure to sign in or sign out properly and in a timely fashion, in person, with the faculty member on duty.
- Failure to follow the expectations for Visitation listed below.

Overnight Visitation for Boarding Students

Boarding students may request to stay overnight in another student’s room, based on the following guidelines.

- Overnight visits are only allowed with the prior approval of all involved students, dorm faculty, and the Office of Student Life. Students must complete an overnight permission card, signed by both students and dorm parents, specifying the dorm assignments of both students.
- Overnight visits are limited to students of the same gender and same grade-level.
- The visiting student must sign out of their dorm for the night and sign in to the visiting dorm.
- All visits must respect dorm rules and expectations. Visits that conflict with these standards may be denied.

Dorm Visitation for Seniors:

- Begins the first full week of classes in September for students who complete the proper paperwork.
- Seniors may visit any senior room from 7:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Sunday through Friday nights and on Saturday nights from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m.
- Seniors may visit in Uppermid rooms from 7:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Sunday through Friday nights and on Saturday nights from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m.
- Seniors are never permitted to visit in rooms of Middlers or Lowermids.

Dorm Visitation for Upper Middlers:

- Begins the third week of September for students who complete the proper paperwork.
- Uppermids may visit Uppermid or Senior rooms from 7:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Sunday through Friday nights and on Saturday nights from 7:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m.
- Uppermids may visit in Middler rooms on Sunday through Friday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 7:50 p.m. only.
- Uppermids are never permitted to visit in rooms of Lowermids.

Dorm Visitation for Middlers:

- Begins the first week of October for students who complete the proper paperwork.
- Middlers may visit in Uppermid, Mid, or Lowermid rooms Sunday through Friday evenings.
- Lower Middlers and Middlers may also visit on Saturday nights between 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

Dorm Visitation for Lower Middlers:

- Begins the first week of November for students who complete the proper paperwork.
- Lower Middlers may visit in Mid or Lowermid rooms Sunday through Friday evenings.
- Lower Middlers and Middlers may also visit on Saturday nights between 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

Room Changes

Room assignments are made at the beginning of the school year. Living closely with others can sometimes lead to conflict. When disagreements occur, students should first talk with one another and make a genuine effort to resolve the issue. If this does not work, dorm monitors, dorm heads, or advisors can help mediate. Because Taft expects its boarding students to adapt to dormitory life and sharing space with a roommate, room changes will only be considered after students have made sincere efforts to address concerns collaboratively. The goal is not only to solve problems but to help students learn communication and conflict-resolution skills that will serve them well beyond Taft.

Shared Spaces and Common Rooms

The school provides common rooms in the dormitories. Taking care of shared spaces shows respect for others and helps maintain a welcoming and safe environment.

- Common rooms, equipped with refrigerators and televisions, are for recreational and social use during free time.
- Movies shown in common rooms or anywhere else in the school should always be in good taste. Students found watching movies that are not in keeping with the standards of the community will be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.
- As the name suggests, common rooms are meant to be shared public spaces. It is essential that students assume responsibility for both behaving appropriately and maintaining a level of cleanliness in these spaces. Unseemly conduct or unreported damage to the furnishings will be considered grounds for closing the rooms.
- Common rooms throughout the school will be open to all students from 7:00 p.m. to 7:50 p.m. Sunday through Friday and on Saturday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
- On certain evenings when special events are in progress, these privileges may be canceled by the Office of Student Life. Students going to common rooms to visit may not stop off in student rooms or linger in other spaces on their way to common areas.
- All residents share responsibility for the cleanliness and upkeep of common spaces—including hallways, bathrooms, kitchens, and lounges.
- Personal items, dishes, and laundry should not be left in shared spaces. Dorm monitors and faculty may assign cleanup responsibilities or temporarily restrict use of shared areas if expectations are not met.

Dorm Faculty and Monitors

Dorm faculty and dorm monitors work together to create a positive and inclusive dorm culture. Dorm Faculty help students navigate daily life, balance freedom with responsibility, and foster a sense of belonging in the dorm. Dorm Monitors are student leaders who are selected by the faculty to set a positive example and to assist them in making the dorms run smoothly. Their role is to help maintain community standards, plan dorm activities, and assist with communication between residents and faculty. Monitors are not disciplinary figures; rather, they help address small issues early and build a sense of shared ownership within the dorm.

Dormitory Monitors Are Expected To:

- Carry themselves in a way that embodies the balance of community membership and self-discipline expected in our dormitories.
- Be excellent role models, following all the rules of the school.
- Have a fundamental role in building a strong sense of community in each dormitory.
- Be present and visible in the dormitories and around campus.
- Plan and facilitate events in their dormitories.
- Encourage and demonstrate students appropriately.
- Work closely with Dormitory Heads to establish expectations specific to the running of their particular dorm.
- Reach out to other students to help ease their transition to a new school or a new dormitory.
- Work together to make certain that every member of a dormitory community is known well.
- Immediately communicate with dormitory faculty about major problems that arise in the dorm.
- Support the other members of the dormitory team and serve as a spokesperson for student concerns.
- Communicate as soon as possible to a faculty member or the Health Center via the sanctuary policy if they have reason to believe that a fellow student's health, safety, or place at Taft may be at risk. In an emergency, always call 911.

Summer Storage

Taft does not provide storage for students over the summer. Taft works with an outside storage company called Boomerang Storage who will store or ship students' belongings. All students and families wishing to store items over the summer will sign up directly with Boomerang Storage at https://www.boomerangstorage.com/schools/taft-school. They will pick items up at the end of the school year and deliver them back to campus before the beginning of the next school year and/or ship items to the final destination as requested by the student during sign up.

End-Of-Year Expectations

Students are expected to leave their rooms in the same state they found them on move-in day. All students must sign out, in person, with a faculty member before leaving campus. Students that do not sign out with a dormitory faculty member, or leave their room in a way that does not meet our expectations, may be asked to return to campus to clean their room and/or may be charged a cleaning fee of $150 an hour. They will also be required to turn in their key fob and mailbox key that was received at the beginning of the school year. Failure to return will result in a $25.00 fee per item.

- The only furniture in the room should be a bed, desk, desk chair, bureau, and trash can for each student.
- School-provided pillows and curtains should be in each room, whether or not they were used.
- Desk and bureau drawers are empty.
- Closets are empty.
- Lights are off.
- Windows are closed.
- The floor must be swept or vacuumed, but any objects too large for a vacuum are to be thrown away.
- Trash must be emptied.
- Students are responsible for the removal and summer storage of all furniture items brought to campus. Furniture left in dorm rooms will be disposed of at the student’s expense.
- All extra furniture must be removed from the room and either brought home or stored with Boomerang Storage; any furniture a student wishes to store is subject to inspection to ensure the unit is safe and fit for storage and reuse. There should be no writing on furniture, and it should be in good repair. All furniture stored by Boomerang Storage must be approved by the Director of Residential Life.
- We encourage students to donate anything and everything that they no longer want or need. We have an amazing group of faculty and students that collect, organize, and distribute items ranging from non-perishable foods, toiletries, and used books to sheets, towels, and clothes. Specific instructions will be given to all students at the end of the year.



DAY STUDENT INFORMATION

Day students are an integral part of the Taft community. As a school we seek to give day students every opportunity to immerse themselves in all aspects of student life, including the residential life experience. Therefore, all day students will select a dormitory where they are invited, and sometimes required, to attend events and meetings.

Drop-off

Day students should not arrive at school earlier than 7:00 a.m. but are expected to arrive to campus at least ten minutes before their first commitment each day. The area of the Main Circle in the front of the school closest to the building is reserved for day student parents who are picking up or dropping off their children.

Parking

Day students must park their cars only in the parking lot across the street from the main entrance to the school. Day students should never drive their cars on the campus side of Route 6. Day students parking at the Cruikshank Athletic Center should use the main lot and not the small lot by the rink. Students found in violation of these rules may be subject to disciplinary action.

Inclement Weather

Most of the faculty and students live on campus, and we hold classes regardless of the weather. In the case of weather that could interfere with transportation to or from school, day students are welcome to stay overnight in the dorms. If your child elects to stay over, he or she should submit a permission card, signed by the dorm head, to the Office of Student Life by 8 pm. If a student does not stay over during a period of inclement weather, please use your discretion in deciding whether it is possible to get to school. If your child will not be present, please call the Office of Student Life.. Also, if a potentially dangerous storm starts during the day, feel free to pick up your child whenever you think it is wise to do so. Day students who leave early should stop by the Office of Student Life to let us know that they will be missing class.

Reporting Absences

A parent should call the Health Center at 860-945-7762 or the Office of Student Life at 860-945-7800 by 8:30 a.m. on days when illness prevents a student from attending school. Permission for absence from school for any reason other than illness must be requested in advance through the Office of Student Life.

Illness During The Class Day

Day students who become ill during the class day should report to the Health Center. The Health Center staff will decide if the student should remain at school or be sent home.

Meals

Day students are expected to eat lunch at school, and they are invited to eat dinner here. Day students who remain at school for dinner on nights when the school has sit-down dinners must be properly dressed. A few times a year, day students are required to stay for an all-school or class dinner. These dates will be posted on the school calendar well in advance.

Off-Campus Sign-out

Day students are not required to sign in when they arrive to campus in the morning or sign out when they leave for the day. However, if a day student leaves campus for a portion of the day (to walk downtown, for example), they should notify the Office of Student Life or any adults or faculty members that might be taking attendance for them.

Evening Hours

Lower school day students are generally not allowed to remain on campus after 8:00 p.m. on school nights unless they have obtained permission from a faculty member to stay later. Upper school day students are generally not allowed to remain at school after 10:15 p.m. on school nights. During evening study hall, Uppermid and Senior day students may be in the library, classrooms or faculty apartments, but they should not be in non-academic places. Senior day students may be in the Student Union. Senior day students who visit the dormitories during study hall must sign in with the faculty member on duty. On weekend nights, day students are permitted and encouraged to stay on campus until check-in.

Overnights

With the approval of the Office of Student Life and the appropriate dormitory head or faculty member on duty, day students may spend the night at Taft on an occasional basis in order to participate in a special activity at the school during the evening hours. This privilege is only allowed on a Saturday night. In all such cases, day students must obtain the permission of all occupants of the room in which they have been invited to stay, and they should also ask the permission of the faculty member on duty in the dormitory. All appropriate permissions must be secured in advance, and a completed overnight visitor card must be submitted to the Office of Student Life by dinner on Saturday. Stays longer than one night are not allowed except under extremely unusual circumstances. Requests for stays of longer than one night should be directed to one of the deans of students.

Lockers

Day students will be assigned a locker by the Office of Student Life.. We strongly encourage students to secure their locker with a combination lock. Any student who abuses the locker area or who in any way tampers with other students' or the school's property will be subject to disciplinary action.
Day students are required to remove all belongings from their lockers at the end of the school year. The school is not responsible for belongings left in lockers after the last day of exams.

AFTERNOON PROGRAMMING INFORMATION & POLICIES

Afternoon Program Philosophy

The afternoon program at Taft encompasses a wide variety of activities that seek to enrich the student experience outside of the classroom. Central to the core values of the School, afternoon activities play an essential role in the health, well-being, and engagement of students. Taft's afternoon program places a special emphasis on the following: activities whose focus is giving back to Taft and the greater Waterbury Community; physical activity and/or team play; student growth through experiential learning; and the important role collaboration plays in fostering and promoting a strong sense of community.

Afternoon Program Student Participation Requirement

Activity Selection and Changes

All students are required to participate in an afternoon activity each of the three seasons: fall, winter, and spring. At the end of each school year students will select their activities for all three seasons for the following school year. This procedure allows students to plan ahead, as well as afford the school the opportunity to provide guidance. At the start of each season, fall, winter, and spring, there will be a specified ten-day time period during which changes to activity selections may occur. After that period, any changes need to be approved by the athletic directors.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled meetings and/or matches for their afternoon activities. If a scheduled absence is anticipated, prior communication with the coach or activity director, as well as the Office of Student Life, is required in order to secure the necessary permissions.

Student Requirements

Lower Middle and New Middler

- Three seasons of participation with at least two Community Activities required.
- Option of participating in one Individual Activity OR applying for one Exemption during winter OR spring seasons.
- Lower middlers and new middlers are required to participate in a Community Activity during the fall season of their first year at Taft.
- Example Program: fall season—interscholastic soccer (Community Activity); winter season— Sports Performance (Individual Activity); spring season—community service (Community Activity).

Middler

- Three seasons of participation with at least two Community Activities required. Option of participating in one Individual Activity OR applying for one Exemption.

New Upper Middler

- Three seasons of participation with one Community Activity required. Option of applying for one Exemption.

Upper Middler

- Three seasons of participation with one Community Activity required. Option of applying for one Exemption.

Senior/PG

- Three seasons of participation with one Community Activity required. A senior may apply for an exemption to engage in an activity of their choice as long as they remain engaged in the afternoon and their activity gives back to the Taft community in some way.

Outside Club Teams

Students who are on Taft interscholastic teams should not participate on non-Taft teams while their Taft team is in season. Outside athletic commitments may not interfere with a student's activities or responsibilities at Taft. Students who seek an exemption to this school policy must seek approval from their Class Dean and athletic director(s). An exception is only made if playing on the outside team will not have an impact on their obligations as a Taft student.

Activity Categories

Community Activities

Community Activities are school-offered programs that emphasize teamwork and collaboration to achieve a common group goal, while representing Taft both on and off campus.

- Community service
- Dance
- Interscholastic sports
- Robotics/Science Olympiad
- Theater/theater tech

Individual Activities

Individual Activities are school-offered programs, often recreational in nature, that emphasize individual development and have an expectation of regular participation under the direction of a Taft faculty member. Students may participate in a specific Individual Activity only once per year. If they would like to participate in that particular Individual Activity for a second season they will need to apply for an Exemption. Students may only do one season of Fitness/Strength and Conditioning.

- Aerobics/HIIT
- Sports Performance
- Intramural sports
- Rock climbing
- Yoga
- Recreational Sports

Exemptions

Exemptions are opportunities for students to pursue independent initiatives, not offered in the afternoon program. Exemptions are granted by written proposal, with the exception of on-campus injury rehabilitation, and are subject to approval by the Afternoon Program Exemption Group.

- Independent Studies Program (ISP)
- Injury rehabilitation
- Second season of specific Individual Activity
- Senior Exemption
- Team manager
- Activities by special proposal, not academic in nature
- Sports not offered by Taft (Horseback Riding, Mixed Martial Arts, etc)
- Afternoon Tour Guide

Interscholastic Athletics

Founders League Guidelines For Spectators

Taft competes in the Founders League in most sports. Spectators—whether students, parents, faculty, alumni, or friends—bear important responsibilities to the School for the atmosphere and conduct of games, whether home or away. Honoring visiting teams and spectators as guests is of the utmost importance.

The School Heads of Founders League schools have agreed on the following expectations regarding the behavior of spectators at athletic contests:

- Spectators should watch games from those areas defined by each school as spectator areas.
- Spectators should not run up and down the sidelines; call to opposing players, coaches, or referees in an unsportsmanlike or distracting manner; enter the field of play or stand behind the opposing team's bench; deface property; heckle or give cheers that are profane or mock competitors. Spectators should accept absolutely and without quarrel the decision of any official. Spectators who abuse these guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action.

NEPSAC Code Of Ethics, Conduct & Good Sportsmanship

Taft is a member of NEPSAC (New England Preparatory School Athletic Council). The Council provides the following guidelines for ethics, conduct, and good sportsmanship:

As a basic principle, the NEPSAC believes that the lessons learned from fairly played athletics, whether interscholastic or not, and including games and practices, are of benefit to our students and our school. The purpose of this Code of Ethics and Conduct is to define what "fairly played" means and to provide guidelines for NEPSAC athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators alike to follow.

At the heart of this matter lies several terms that are often hard to define, yet no more important a task confronts teachers and coaches than to set standards that are fair and honorable. Throughout this code, when such terms as "proper conduct" and "good sportsmanship" are mentioned, they refer to such standards as these:

- treat other persons as you know they should be treated;
- regard the rules of your games as agreements, the spirit of the letter which you should not evade or break;
- treat officials and opponents with respect;
- accept absolutely and without quarrel the final decision of any official;
- honor visiting teams and spectators as your own guests and treat them as such; likewise, behave yourself as an honored guest when you visit another school;
- be gracious in victory and defeat; learn especially to take defeat well;
- be as cooperative as you are competitive;
- remember that your actions on or off the field reflect on you and your school.

Athletic Training Rules

- Any interscholastic team member found in violation of the school's Fundamental Rule with regard to the use of alcohol and/or drugs is considered to have violated the athletic training rules. Coaches, in consultation with the athletic director(s), have the discretion to respond to a player on their own team as they see fit. For example, a coach can decide that a student coming off of a suspension has to earn back a starting position; or, a captain who violates the athletic training rules could be asked to step down from their position of leadership. Athletic training rules are in effect starting on the day that practice for a team begins and remain in effect until the end of the season.

Awarding of Letters

A Taft athlete earns a varsity letter if they have been committed to the team throughout the season, have been an important part of practice on a daily basis, and have represented the school in an appropriate manner.

With sports such as crew, track, cross country, and golf (where there is either movement between varsity and junior varsity or where multiple levels of teams practice together) the head coach of the program identifies, in consultation with the Directors of Athletics, the individual criteria for earning a letter specific to their program. For example, a golfer needs to compete in one third of its team's matches; a rower needs to have been part of one of the top two boats for half of the season; and a track athlete must receive a certain number of varsity points in competition.

Additionally, a senior who has been committed to a program for multiple years and has shown a certain level of ability may earn a varsity letter at the coach's discretion; this is also applicable for an injured athlete who has shown commitment to the team throughout the season.

Team managers may earn numerals for their service to varsity programs. Numerals do not equate to a varsity letter, however a coach may petition the Athletic Committee to award a letter when a team manager has made a significant commitment to the team and participates in all practices and games.









STUDENT LIFE – RESOURCES

Daily Schedule

Tafties begin their day with a cafeteria-style breakfast, served from 7:00 am to 8:15 am, when classes begin.

The academic day rotates through seven class blocks, each 70 minutes in length. The blocks A, B, C, D, and E occur in cascading order, while F and G are fixed in our schedule during times at which students and faculty would typically eat lunch. Students may enroll in a maximum of six courses, and a seventh class block (either F or G) is reserved for lunch.

The entire school community gathers for Assembly on Wednesdays and Saturdays in Bingham Auditorium, where announcements are made and other school business is conducted. On occasional Wednesdays and Saturdays, the school schedules “Taft Time,” which provides an opportunity for students to pursue learning and growth beyond the traditional classroom. It is a flexible time when students and faculty members can collaborate and delve deeper into important current events, respond to a recent speaker, develop habits outlined in the Portrait of a Learner, and create connections throughout the community. We believe these required experiences are as important as class time or other obligations.

On Tuesdays and some Thursdays, Taft often welcomes renowned guest speakers and presenters to the Bingham Auditorium for our Morning Meeting Program and Special Speaker Series. Members of the school community may also be featured Morning Meeting speakers.
Students may use free time during the academic day for things like library research, studying, music, practice, art, or relaxing with friends. Teachers and students meet, on occasion, for extra help during free periods or over lunch.

After classes end, Tafties head off to their “ex”—a required afternoon program activity—followed by dinner, most nights from 5 to 7, then mandatory study hall. Sit down dinners and winter sports may change the dinner schedule, and upper mids and seniors enjoy a slightly shorter study period. Check in and lights out bring the Taft day to a close, 10:30 pm for lower schoolers, 11:30 pm for upper schoolers.

Taft School Daily Academic Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Alt. Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Alt. Saturday
				Faculty PLC (8:00-8:50)			
ABCDE in Rotation (8:15-9:25)	ABCDE in Rotation (8:15-9:25)	ABCDE in Rotation (8:15-9:25)	ABCDE in Rotation (8:15-9:25)		ABCDE in Rotation (8:15-9:25)	ABCDE in Rotation (9:00-10:10)	Taft Time (9:00-11:30)
Advisory (9:30-10:00)	School Meeting (9:30-10:00)	Taft Time (9:30-12:00)	Assembly (9:30-9:50)	ABCDE in Rotation (9:05-10:15)	Grade Mtgs. (9:30-10:00)	Assembly (10:15-10:35)	
ABCDE in Rotation (10:05-11:15)	ABCDE in Rotation (10:05-11:15)		ABCDE in Rotation (9:55-11:05)	ABCDE in Rotation (10:25-11:35)	ABCDE in Rotation (10:05-11:15)	ABCDE in Rotation (10:40-11:50)	
F or Lunch (11:20-12:30)	G or Lunch (11:20-12:30)		ABCDE in Rotation (11:15-12:25)	Comm. Lunch (11:40-12:10)	F or Lunch (11:20-12:30)		
G or Lunch (12:35-1:45)	F or Lunch (12:35-1:45)			Community Flex (12:15-12:55) Faculty Flex (1:05-1:45)	G or Lunch (12:35-1:45)		
ABCDE in Rotation (1:50-3:00)	ABCDE in Rotation (1:50-3:00)			ABCDE in Rotation (1:50-3:00)	ABCDE in Rotation (1:50-3:00)		

CAMPUS RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

The Library

The Hulbert Taft Jr. Library plays a central role in the educational and cultural life of the school. More than just the repository for Taft's collection; the library is a space for collaboration, research, exploration, and entertainment. It is home to a dedicated staff of librarians and para-professionals who facilitate student learning and foster creativity. The library has at least one librarian on duty to provide reference and/or instructional assistance during all open hours.

The Collection

The librarians curate an informative, inclusive, and engaging collection of more than 46,000 circulating items including books, DVDs, and CDs for all members of the Taft community.

The Library provides access to more than 100 online databases, which include online monographs and reference books, streaming video, audiobooks, journal and newspaper articles, as well as map and image collections. All electronic resources can be accessed both on and off campus via the library website. Books may be borrowed for four weeks and may be renewed if not requested by someone else. Borrowers may renew their materials online or by contacting the circulation desk at extension 7780. Audiovisual materials have a shorter loan period; reference books and new periodicals do not circulate.

Interlibrary Loan

Student inquiry and/or interest occasionally requires students to go beyond the resources of our library. Requests may be placed through the Interlibrary Loan link on the library homepage or by communicating with any member of the library staff. The length of the loan period, as well as renewal privileges, are dependent on the policies of the lending library. Students requesting ILL material should be aware that it may take up to two weeks for their requested items to arrive.

Reserve Materials

Materials on reserve may be designated as “closed” or “overnight.” Closed reserve materials may be used only in the library, and for a specified length of time, depending on the material. Overnight reserves may be used in the library during the day and borrowed overnight when checked out within one hour of closing. Overnight reserve materials must be returned to the library within one hour of opening on the next day.

Lost Library Materials

Lost materials are charged at the current replacement cost for the item. Replacement charges will also include a processing fee of $5 per lost item.

Archive

The Leslie Manning Archives are the home to a collection of documents, images, publications and items relating to Taft and its history. The archives are open posted hours and by appointment.

*Library Hours**

- Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.
- Saturday 8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
- Sunday Noon–10:00 p.m.

**Hours will be increased during exam periods and reduced during holiday and vacation periods. These changes will be posted in advance. Please check student email and the school online calendar for any changes.*









PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

Dining Hall Procedures

We hope that eating in the dining room will be pleasant for everyone and have designed the following procedures to minimize traffic and confusion. More importantly, we anticipate that everyone will follow, at both sit-down and buffet meals, the commonly established principles of decorum that make dining a civilized affair.

Sit-Down Meals

Taft has had a commitment to formal "sit-down" dinners for over a century, and this tradition is critical in creating the sense of community that marks the school. Attendance at sit-down dinners is required for all boarding students. Day students are not required to attend sit-down dinners, but they are welcome and encouraged to attend. Typically, during the Fall Term and during the Spring Term until Long Weekend, sit-down dinners are on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Students are required to sit at the tables to which they have been assigned. Students who do not sit at their assigned tables will receive dinner cuts. If a table is not set, students whose tables are "closed" are not excused from dinner.

Students will be excused from dinner together at the end of the meal. Students should not leave before this announcement.

Buffet Meals

At buffet meals, students are asked to clean up after themselves and are requested to deposit their trash in the proper receptacles. Dishes, glasses, cups, and silver should be returned to the bussing area. No glasses, utensils, plates, or other items are to be taken from the dining rooms. Sponges and mops are available to clean up spills.

Dining Hall Schedule For Meals

Changes in times will be posted on the school calendar at https://www.taftschool.org/calendar

Breakfast

- Monday through Saturday 7:00 a.m.–8:15 a.m.

Sunday Brunch

- Continental Breakfast 10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
- Full Brunch 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Lunch

- Monday through Saturday 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Dinner

- Sit-Down Dinners (assigned tables) 6:30 p.m.
- All Buffet Dinners (free seating) 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.
- During Winter Sports
- Dinner Buffet 4:45 p.m.–7:15 p.m.

Transportation

Students may travel to and from school with their families or other approved adults. Students may not travel with other students or day students without explicit permission. Please call the Office of Student Life at 860-945-7800 to check.

If there is sufficient need, the school runs chartered buses at the student's expense directly from Taft to Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports, Bradley Airport, Pennsylvania Station and Grand Central Station at the beginning of Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Vacations and at the close of school in June. Return transportation is also provided from these points to Taft (except from Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports) at the end of Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring Vacations, but not at the opening of school in September. The buses will depart from Taft approximately 30 minutes after the end of the last class. Students scheduling flights should allow sufficient time for airport check-in and travel. Depending on traffic, Bradley is one hour from Taft; JFK/LaGuardia are two hours away. Taft will not provide transportation to students who schedule flights that require them to leave school before the end of the class day or return after the 7:30 p.m. sign-in time at the end of vacations.

In addition, Taft cannot provide transportation for students traveling as unaccompanied minors. Students who fall into that category must arrange their own transportation to and from the airport. Questions about transportation can be directed to the czar of transport, Mr. Mike Blomberg, at 860-945-7721.

Medical Transportation

If students need transportation to medical appointments, the Health Center will do its best to assist with the details and provide drivers. The family is responsible for covering the cost of this transportation and medical appointments.

Reach Boarding Management

Taft uses Reach Boarding Management systems for all approvals and permissions for students leaving campus. If your student fills out a “Leave Request Form” you will receive an email from “**TaftREACHPermissions@taftschool.org**” with instructions for approval (or rejection). Please check your Spam folder if you find you are not receiving the emails or call 860-945-7800 to check your information has been entered properly. If you are hosting another student, you will receive an additional email to approve that student’s leave request as well.

Keys and Fobs

Fobs, post office boxes, and room keys are distributed in the Office of Student Life. Replacement keys may be requested directly through the Post Office and replacement fobs may be requested through the Office of Student Life. Students will be billed $25 for each lost key or fob.

Laundry and Linen

Students have access to internal card-operated laundry equipment or may send their personal clothing and linen to an outside commercial laundry service. Card-operated washers and dryers are located in most dormitories. The cost is $1.25 per wash and $1.25 per drying cycle.

Students who wish to arrange for laundry service may do so in the Business Office at the opening of school in September. Nametags must be sewn securely in all articles sent to the laundry. Within reason, the commercial laundry will not limit the number of items washed each week. However, the student will be expected to contract for this service for the duration of the school year. Cancellation of the contract for valid reasons may be arranged, but credit for a week in which laundry is not sent will not be possible. Also, it is assumed that items to be laundered are the personal property of the student who has signed the contract.

Personal laundry, with a checklist filled out, is to be delivered to the distribution room on Monday morning. It will be returned on Friday morning of the same week. The laundry distribution room is located in the basement corridor near the dining hall.

The rental of linens and towels is not available. Students supply their own blankets, sheets, bedspreads, pillowcases and towels.

Dry cleaning may be sent to the laundry and will be charged separately by the unit. Charges for laundry and dry cleaning will be posted to the parents' charge account.

Lost and Found

Books and other items left in the halls will be taken to the lost and found, which is located in the Office of Student Life. Lost valuables such as watches, glasses and wallets should be turned in to the Campus Safety Office or the Office of Student Life.

The Post Office

The post office, located in the basement of the Main Building, is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturday.
Mail arrives and is picked up daily except Sundays and legal holidays. Outgoing mail pickup is at 3:00 p.m. daily. Stamps are available in the School Store.

Student Debit Card, School Bank, and School Store

Most student purchases on campus require a student debit card, and students are responsible for maintaining a sufficient balance on the card at all times. Students may deposit or withdraw money on their debit card accounts during Student Bank hours. The school imposes a $15 charge for the replacement of a lost debit card and a $30 fine for student checks returned for insufficient funds.

School supplies, toilet articles, and athletic equipment are available in the School Store in the basement of CPT.

Returning students are not issued a new debit card each year. They should return to school with their most recently issued student debit card.

Store and Banking Hours

- Monday 8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
- Tuesday 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Wednesday 8:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
- Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Friday 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Saturday 8:00 a.m. –1 2:15 p.m.
- Sunday Closed



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Taft School Definition Of Leadership

Leadership is choosing to act with empathy, integrity, and courage to help one's group achieve its goals.

Taft School Expectations For Student Leaders

- I will be principled in my actions, ambitious in my goals, energetic in my duties, open-minded in my interactions with others, and respectful in my communications with everyone.
- I understand that the role of class committee member/school monitor/dormitory monitor is constantly changing and that circumstances may require difficult decisions and different tasks than have been required in the past.
- I will invest myself in the process of learning good leadership.
- I will work with faculty and my fellow committee members/monitors to construct an identity for my group that encompasses a diversity of viewpoints and serves the larger Taft community.

In order to act with moral authority, I will conduct myself in accordance with the Honor Code, the rules of the community, and with the highest personal integrity.

Student Government

The school monitors and the class committees of the younger classes serve as the leaders of student government. However, it is part of the mission of the school to develop in every student a sense of responsibility to and for the community. It should be one of your aims to be a cooperative and constructive citizen in your new environment.

The central agency of self-government at Taft is the monitorial staff, a group of 12 to 16 seniors elected by their class. The school monitors implement the Honor System, assist in the supervision of the dormitories, and accept a large share of the responsibility for the day-to-day conduct of the school's affairs.

Class committees for the lower three classes are elected twice each year, first in January and again at the end of the school year. Committees are elected by the members of each class, and the committee chairs, one boy and one girl, are elected from among those elected to the committee.

Monitors are elected in May before their senior year by the rising senior class. The entire student body elects the head monitors, one boy and one girl. Monitors serve for their entire senior year. In January a few additional monitors will be elected.

Leadership, of course, carries responsibilities, and students who are on probation will not be eligible for election. If sitting committee members or monitors are placed on probation during their term of office, they will forfeit their position of leadership. Students whose probation period has ended will again be eligible to stand for election. The Head of School, Dean of Students, and Class Deans will decide questions about eligibility.

All classes are given valuable experience in self-government through participation in an elected class committee. As students progress through the school, they are awarded a greater share of the privileges and responsibilities of democratic living. Thus, through a natural and gradual process, students develop a sense of personal and group responsibility that is recognized in the senior year by a substantial measure of self-government.

Extracurricular Activities and Organizations

At Taft, we are very fortunate to have a large number of clubs across different interest platforms to bring our community together. Many of our clubs have been at Taft for decades and we have new clubs that form each year. We encourage students to join established clubs and or start a new club. . A representative list of clubs is below:

- Admissions Council
- The Annual, yearbook
- Community Service Board
- Dance Club
- Economics Club
- Every Mind Matters
- FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America)
- Female Entrepreneurship Fellowship
- Fleeting Thoughts
- FOCUS, Christian Fellowship
- GSA – Gender and Sexuality Alliance
- GirlUp
- Global Journal
- Hydrox, A Cappella Group
- Jewish Student Organization
- Masque and Dagger
- Math Team
- Mireodos, A Cappella Group
- Model U.N.
- Oriocos, A Cappella Group
- Public Health Club
- Red Rhino Fund
- Red, Inc., Literary Magazine
- Robotics and Engineering Club
- Sports Psychology Club
- Step Team
- Student Activities Committee
- Taft Papyrus, newspaper
- United Cultures at Taft (UCT)
- Affinity & Alliance Groups