

DSISD ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

I. Philosophy

At Dripping Springs, we believe that the athletic program contributes significantly to preparing our students for becoming productive, contributing citizens of our community and society. A comprehensive program of athletic activities expresses our commitment to ensure the development of physical fitness and personal health, the acquisition of competent performances, and the achievement of excellence in the student's chosen sports. In addition, our aim is to develop a student with an improved self-image, the ability to learn a new skill, and an intrinsic motivation for growth and development. We want to see a student who will demonstrate a willingness to accept responsibility for his/her actions, measure him/herself against standards of quality, express ideas and solutions to problems, and value fair play, honesty, and cooperation.

II. Beliefs of Dripping Springs Tigers

1. **We believe in playing by the rules.** We will exhaust every possible opportunity that might give us an advantage in competition and /or in life. However, we will never resort to cheating or foul play. We will not jeopardize the integrity of this program, this school system, or this community.
2. **We believe in superior physical condition.** Every athlete will be expected to participate in the athletic program for the entire year. We believe that all athletes should participate in active "strength and conditioning" periods if they are not "in season". We also believe that, while "in season", athletes should continue to lift weights and run in order to maintain their physical strength and stamina. If we are going to make a "good" program "great", we think it is imperative that every athlete make a commitment to becoming stronger and faster.
3. **We believe in discipline.** We realize the importance of both discipline and self-discipline in this program and in life. Although every situation is dealt with on an individual basis, every athlete must believe that it is important to continuously strive to conduct themselves in a manner that is conducive to the program and his/her teammates. We support the guidelines set forth by the academic student handbook. We accept the decisions of officials without complaint, and we will be good sports at all times.
4. **We will play the game with great enthusiasm.** We will not forget that contests are meant to be FUN. That is why we all began participating in athletics to begin with. There is no greater feeling than winning. Winning, however, is not the measure of success. Working hard, playing for the "love" of the sport, and never giving up are criteria that we will gauge our success by.
5. **We believe in family.** There is nothing more important than our relationships with our families. This is true for our immediate family and our brothers and sisters in our "athletic family". The communication and commitment to our families will prove to be the difference between being "good" or "great". It is our goal that athletes, parents, coaches, faculty, and the community all believe in the same set of goals and values. With this, we hope that all parties will encourage and support decisions to produce great athletic programs and harvest individual athletes that will be successful in athletics and in life.

III. Expectations of Parents

1. Be positive with your son/daughter. Let them know that they are accomplishing something by being part of the team.
2. Do not offer excuses to them if they are not playing. Encourage them to work hard and do their best.
3. Encourage athletes to follow the rules. Whether they are a first stringer or seventh stringer, players must follow rules.
3. As a fan, you are entitled to cheer your head off; but, don't become belligerent. Coaches work with athletes and know their talents. Respect that.
4. Insist that the athletes respect team rules, school rules, game officials, and sportsmanship. Self-respect begins with self-control.
5. Encourage the athletes to improve their self-image by believing in themselves.
6. Encourage your athlete to play for the love of the game.
7. Remember that the coach is involved as a coach because he/she is sincerely fond of children and is an experienced professional. Coaches have different ways of dealing with people and situations. Athletes' lives are enriched by interaction with different types of leaders.

8. Remember: At a competition, you, the parent, represent your town, your school and your son/daughter. Please be a positive role model.
9. Always show respect for the officials and the decisions that are made by the officials.

IV. Athlete/Parent/Coach Communication Process

As your son/daughter becomes involved in the sports program at Dripping Springs, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there will be times when things do not go the way your child wishes. This is the opportunity for your child to talk with their coach and discuss the situation. When your child handles the problem it becomes part of the learning and maturation process. There will also be situations requiring a parent/coach conference (meeting, email, or phone). These are encouraged. It is important that both parties have a clear understanding of the other's position. Please follow these procedures to help promote a resolution:

- A. Athlete meets with the coach.
- B. Parent/guardian and athlete meet with the coach.
- C. Parents and athlete meet with the Athletic Director and/or Asst AD.

Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolutions.

V. Expectations for the Student Athlete

Athletics at Dripping Springs ISD is a privilege; furthermore, a student is not required to participate in athletics to graduate from high school. Participation in athletics is a choice; therefore, student athletes are required to conduct themselves with pride and dignity. **Because participation in athletics is a choice and not a privilege, a student athlete who violates general policies or procedures will be subject to discipline/consequences.**

The philosophy of the Dripping Springs ISD Athletic Department is to create a successful program based on high standards. The coaching staff will work with each individual student athlete to ensure appropriate sportsmanlike behavior. The coaching staff will address any violation of policies (sportsmanship, training rules, missing practice, poor attitude, etc.) with the desire to help the student athlete. If the violations are repeated, the student will receive/could receive disciplinary action up to and not excluding removal from athletics.

The welfare of the Dripping Springs Athletic Department and the student teams will take priority. Coaches and parents should remember the following points when dealing with athletic discipline:

1. A coach has the right to discipline an athlete on his/her team keeping in mind the welfare of the TEAM as well as the welfare of the INDIVIDUAL.
2. Every violation/confrontation should first be addressed by a conference with the athlete to discuss the violation and reaffirm the expectations of the coach and the athletic department.
3. A coach should exercise sound judgment in evaluating situations and penalties being as consistent as possible. Make the punishment fit the violation.
4. A coach will NOT dismiss a student from the athletic program without first discussing the situation with the Parent, Athletic Director and/or Asst AD.

VI. Substance Abuse Policy

This policy applies to any behavior on or off campus, **at any time during the calendar year.** All consequences will carry over from competitive season to competitive season, year to year. **Offenses are cumulative throughout the athlete's career.**

In order for an athlete to be considered in violation, one or more of the following must occur:

- A. Athlete admits to the violation
- B. Parent of the athlete admits to the violation
- C. A DSISD staff member witnesses the athlete in violation
- D. A local agency report or violation is filed.
- E. A local agency of the law makes a verbal report of a violation.
- F. Evidence such as a photograph or video is presented from a credible source.

Level One Offenses

Any possession or use of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.

Level One Consequences

First Offense: One-week suspension from all extracurricular activities.

Second Offense: Three-week suspension from all extracurricular activities.

Third Offense: Six-week suspension from all extracurricular activities.

Fourth Offense: Escalated discipline at Coach and Athletic Director's discretion.

Level Two Offenses

The sale, gift, delivery, possession, use, or being under the influence of marijuana, any controlled substance, any dangerous drug or alcohol.

Committing a serious act or offense, as defined in the Dripping Springs ISD Student Code of Conduct, while under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, a controlled substance or any dangerous drug. Conduct that constitutes an offense relating to abusable glue, aerosol paint, or volatile chemicals. Illegally possessing or using drug paraphernalia.

Robbery or theft.

Level Two Consequences

First Offense: Three-week suspension from all extracurricular activities.

Second Offense: Six-week suspension from all extracurricular activities.

Third Offense: Removal from all extracurricular activities for one calendar year.

Level Three Offenses

Charged with a serious act punishable as a felony at any time during the calendar year.

Level Three Consequences

First Offense: Suspension from all competition until cleared or convicted of felony.

If Convicted: Removal from program.

VII. Eligibility

1. **Pre-participation Physical Examination** – ALL athletes must have an annual/current physical on file with the Athletic Department EVERY YEAR.
2. **Electronic Forms Completed:**
 - a. Medical History Form
 - b. UIL Acknowledgment of Rules
 - c. Cardiac Awareness Form
 - d. UIL Steroid Form
 - e. UIL Concussion Form
3. **Athletic Policy** – Annual form signed by student and the student's parent or guardian stating that they have read and agree to abide by the rules set forth in the Athletic Handbook.
4. **Academic Eligibility** – If a student is rendered ineligible, they are not able to compete in a competition (but are still required to attend and participate in practices) beginning exactly one week after the ending date of the grading period. An athlete who is ineligible will be monitored in three week intervals. If the athlete is passing all courses at the end of one of the three week intervals, the athlete may regain eligibility. In this instance, the athlete will not be able to compete in a contest until one week after the end date for the review period.
5. **Enrollment in Athletic Period** – All athletes are required to be enrolled in the athletic period for the entire year. We believe that the strength and conditioning gained during an athlete's "off season" is valuable. A new student checking into Dripping Springs ISD WILL be allowed to participate once all UIL guidelines have been met.

6. **Failure to Complete a Sport** – Any athlete who quits a sport will not be allowed to participate in another sport until the current season is complete. Each athlete is expected to fulfill his/her commitment (in some capacity) to the team. Exception: Athletes who choose to quit a sport during the two-week “tryout window” will not be subject to this consequence. The tryout window is defined as the 14 calendar day period of time beginning with the first official practice of the particular sport’s season.
7. **Placement in Alternative Education** – Any athlete placed in the Alternative Education Program (DAEP) will be ineligible for participation in the athletic program for the duration of their placement. At the discretion of the Athletic Director and the head coach for that sport, athletes may be allowed back into the athletic period upon the conclusion of their DAEP placement. (If the athlete is exonerated he/she will be allowed to return to their athletic program in good standing)

VIII. Organization of Teams

Although we are a 5A program, this school district and community are growing rapidly. It is the philosophy of the athletic program and the desire of the coaching staff to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program.

It is also a goal of our program to persuade athletes to participate in as many sports as possible. Coaches of every sport are encouraged to select as many students as they can to a team without compromising the integrity of their sport.

Obviously, time, space, facilities, equipment, athletic ability and other factors place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. However, when developing procedure in this regard, coaches shall strive to maximize the opportunities for student athletes without diluting the quality of the programs.

1. **Middle School Teams** – At this level, students become accustomed to interscholastic practice and play. For many, it is their first introduction to competitive sports, different from recreation in its demands and philosophy. Gaining experience through training and play should be of utmost importance, not the win/loss record. At this level of play, the focus is on learning athletic skills, game rules, fundamentals of team play, social-emotional growth, and healthy competition.
2. **Freshman/Junior Varsity Teams** – This level of competition has an increased emphasis upon team play, physical conditioning, and refinement of basic skills. Although being successful on these levels is important, winning is not the sole objective. This is the level at which the athlete displays his/her readiness for the execution of skills at game speed. Athletic abilities, commitments, and positive attitudes will be rewarded and tested in competitive game situations. An attempt will be made to allow as many participants as possible to participate, but not all will participate equally. At these levels, participation will be based on the degree of effort, skill improvement, ability to compete and execution of skills at game speed demonstrated by the student athlete in practice and during contests.
3. **Varsity Teams** – Varsity competition is the culmination of each sport program. Squad size at the varsity level is limited. The number of participants on any given team is a function of the number needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to participate in the contest. It is vital that each team member has a role and is informed of its importance. The number of roster positions is relative to the student’s acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of the team’s goal. While contest participation over the course of a season is desirable, a specified amount of participation at the varsity level is never guaranteed.

IX. Academics

Student athletes should manage their time in such a way as not to have to miss practices, competitions, or school in order to participate in athletics. With great time management, students are capable of success in the classroom and on the field without sacrificing either component.

X. Attendance

Student athletes are expected to make school attendance a priority. This includes attendance both the day of and the day after athletic contests. Students are expected to be in attendance at school on time the day following any and all evening activities. All efforts are made to avoid late activities on school nights, but sometimes they are necessary.

Students are expected to be in attendance at all practices. Illness, injury, and ineligibility are not excuses to miss practice. If an athlete is physically not able to work out, he/she should be suited out in practice gear and becoming a better athlete mentally. A missed day of workout is something that cannot be made up. Any athlete who has an unexcused absence from a scheduled practice or athletic contest will be subject to discipline from their coach. If the behavior continues, it could result in suspension from a contest or eventual suspension from the team.

A student athlete must attend school the day of a competition. Any absence during the day such as a documented health care appointment, participation in school sponsored activities, travel related to religious holy days, a death in the family, or an event cleared by the coach prior to the competition, may be excused.

XI. Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities

Dripping Springs Athletics recognizes that every student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities. Students are also urged to use caution in attempting to “specialize” too much, thereby denying themselves a well-rounded high school career. Students, however, should also be cautious about participation in too many activities. Interscholastic sports at the high school level require a substantial time commitment. A commitment to a high school athletic team indicates that all non-school conflicts will be resolved in favor of the high school team. This includes non-school league play in all sports, but would NOT include such things as religious holidays or family emergencies.

XII. Equipment Issue and Return

Dripping Springs Athletics provides each team member with the best and safest equipment available. All equipment issued to an athlete is expected to be returned in the same condition as when issued (except normal wear and tear) or the athlete is expected to compensate the athletic program for the lost or damaged equipment. A student will not be allowed to participate in any other athletic program until all issued uniforms and equipment are returned in good condition or paid for.

XIII. Dress Code and Appearance

Dripping Springs’ athletes act as representatives of the school and community and therefore are required to exhibit a well-groomed and appropriate appearance. This appearance will be exhibited the ENTIRE school year (not just when the athlete is “in season”). All athletes will abide by the guidelines for dress, grooming, and appearance outlined in the student handbook. Likewise, athletes are expected to comply with the following rules in order to participate in athletics at DSISD:

1. On game day, all athletes are expected to try to dress as a team. The head coach of the team will make this decision. This is part of having team unity and school pride.
2. Male athletes will not wear an earring while representing DSISD in any contest or practice.
3. Visible tattoos will not be allowed by any athlete. Exceptions for new enrollees will be addressed by the coaches and the Athletic Director.

XIV. Travel

Dripping Springs’ athletes are required to travel to and from athletic contests and special events in school-approved vehicles under adult supervision. A coach of the team must ride in the provided transportation with his/her athletes. Team members are strictly forbidden to drive an automobile, transporting members of an athletic team or to be driven by another student to an athletic contest.

Athletes are expected to ride to and from all athletic competitions together as a team. We realize that there are times that it is advantageous for a student athlete to ride home with their parent or guardian. In the instance that an athlete must leave the competition with a parent or guardian, he/she must be “signed out” with their respective coach.

XV. Locker Room Behavior

Athletes are expected to behave in locker rooms (both home and away) like they would be expected to act at home. General dressing room behavior is as follows:

1. No running, horseplay, hazing, or throwing objects
2. Keep all equipment in your locker (not on the floor) and locked at all times
3. Cleats should not be worn in locker room

XVI. Athletic Injury

Athletic Trainers are healthcare professionals who collaborate with physicians, coaches, athletes and their families. The services provided by our Athletic Trainers comprise of prevention, emergency care, clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions. Athletic Trainers are licensed to provide proper care of athletes, information regard the athlete's injury and can make recommendations for physician referrals or other healthcare providers as needed.

All athletes that have been injured should report to the training room for evaluation and/or treatments by the Athletic Trainer. Evaluation and treatment periods are before school or as designated by the Athletic Trainer. Athletic periods will not be used for treatments of injuries or for the evaluation of injuries except under special circumstances. All athletes receiving treatment should continue to report to the Athletic Training Room until fully released by the Athletic Trainer.

If the Athletic Trainer sends the athlete to a physician or the athlete feels they need to see their physician about an injury or illness, the athlete must bring the Athletic Trainer a note from their physician with a diagnosis, recommendation for activity and any other written instructions regarding athletic participation.

Following an injury, the athlete should immediately report it to the Athletic Trainer. Even minor injuries can become serious; therefore, all injuries should be reported so that the athlete may be checked and evaluated. Whenever an athlete is injured or ill of a minor nature, he or she may be required to dress out (but not participate) and stay with the group during workout. Athletes learn from each practice session, whether they are actually working out or simply observing.

XVII. Insurance

Additional accident insurance is available for purchase (see the athletic trainer.) D.S.I.S.D. has a supplemental insurance policy that covers our athletes. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE POLICY IS A SUPPLEMENTAL POLICY. Athletes/parents must file on their personal insurance before any claims will be paid by the supplemental policy provided by the district. THE SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE DOES NOT GUARANTEE THE ELIMINATION OF "OUT OF POCKET" EXPENSE. If an accident occurs, see the Athletic Trainer for claim forms or additional information.

XVIII. Multiple Sport Participation

The Dripping Springs Athletic Department supports the concept of participating in more than one sport. DSISD coaches will communicate with each other to make any/all necessary arrangements with practice schedules and game schedules to provide an opportunity for those athletes that desire to participate in multiple sports at DSISD to be successful.

XIX. Social Media

Student athletes are high-profile representatives of Dripping Springs Independent School District, and their behavior is subject to scrutiny by their peers, the campus, community, and the media. The actions of a single student-athlete can reflect positively or negatively not only on the individual student-athlete, but also on his or her team and coaches, the Athletic Department and the entire school campus. Therefore, student-athletes are expected to represent themselves and DSISD with honor, dignity and integrity at all times – including interaction on social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, Twitter, Vine, YouTube, etc.) has grown tremendously during the last few years. These websites can serve as valuable communication tools when used appropriately. The use of social media, however, has the potential to cause problems for both the student-athlete and the school environment. Almost anything a

student-athlete posts on a social networking site may be viewed by others, and both the media and the general public are more likely to view the profiles of student-athletes than the profiles of other students.

Rules Regarding Social Networking Sites

As a condition of being a student-athlete in DSISD, student-athletes must abide by the following rules related to the use of the internet and social networking sites:

- A. Any postings or communications via social networking websites which disrupt either the educational or athletic environments or which advocates the violation of any school or team policy would be unacceptable. Student-athletes may not post online any pictures, information or other content that might-cause embarrassment to themselves, fellow student-athletes, teams, coaches, the Athletic Department or the campus
- B. Student-athletes may not post any content online that is unsportsmanlike, derogatory, demeaning or threatening toward any other individual, teammate, coach, faculty member, or entity (e.g. derogatory comments regarding another school; taunting comments aimed at a student-athlete, coach or team at another school). No posts should depict or encourage unacceptable or illegal activities (e.g. hazing, sexual harassment/assault, gambling, discrimination, fighting, vandalism, academic dishonesty, underage drinking, and illegal drug use.)
- C. Student-athletes may not post any content online that would constitute a violation of the DSISD Student Code of Conduct or Extracurricular Code of Conduct.
- D. Student-athletes may not post any information that is sensitive or personal in nature or is proprietary to the Athletic Department or the school which is not public information (e.g. tentative or future team schedules, student-athlete injuries and eligibility status, travel plans/itineraries or information).
- E. Student-athletes are required to abide by all laws related to the use of the internet (including state and federal privacy laws such as FERPA and HIPPA), and student-athletes are personally liable for any violations of those laws.

Student-athletes in DSISD are required to abide by rules set forth in these guidelines. The failure to do so will be considered a violation of the student-athlete code of conduct and/or the DSISD student code of conduct. The violation may result in disciplinary action by the athletic department and the campus.

First Offense: Warning and parent meeting with the head coach. Consequences will be determined based on the severity of the infraction and may include suspension or removal from the team or athletic activities.

Second Offense: Parent meeting with the head coach and the Assistant Athletic Director and/or Athletic Director. Consequences will be determined based on the severity of the infraction and may include suspension or removal from the team or athletic activities.