

# **ZEPHYR ISD ATHLETIC POLICY**



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## **ATHLETIC STATEMENT**

The interscholastic athletic program is an important part of the educational process of the school district and is an extension of the classroom, serving as an arena for learning. We strive to have each student athlete enjoy a positive experience while we develop competitive teams. Students deciding to become a part of the athletic program must understand that they are accepting the privilege and benefits of participation and should fully appreciate that they have taken on certain specific obligations and responsibilities.

Interscholastic athletics are provided with the belief that the following goals may be accomplished through membership on an athletic team:

- Competitive Greatness
- Good health and physical fitness
- Good sportsmanship and fair competition
- School spirit and loyalty
- Moral development and training
- Social skills development
- Emotional maturity development

The success of the interscholastic athletic program is not based solely on the win-loss record of the teams. Instead, a goal of the program is to have each participant reach his/her maximum potential.

Students are encouraged to participate in athletics as an opportunity to develop physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Students will be supported and challenged to achieve the highest levels of knowledge, skills, and character, while realizing the benefits of commitment, self-discipline, self-confidence, hard work, effort, teamwork, preparation, responsibility, and respect for others and respect for authority that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

### **Student-Athlete Responsibilities**

The student-athlete will strive for excellence in all activities at all times. They will abide by all rules and policies of Zephyr ISD and the athletic department. They will abide by the coaches' instructions and decisions. Insubordination will not be tolerated. The athlete will personally notify the coach if they must miss practice but should make every effort to be there. They are responsible for equipment issued to them. They will respect their coaches, teammates, teachers, staff, parents, and officials. They must commit to the demands of the athletic program to achieve the rewards that will come. In addition, as a representative of the athletic department, the student athlete has a responsibility in their attendance at school. On the day of a game, a student needs to be in attendance at least 4 periods in order to participate that day unless prior arrangements have been made with the principal for extenuating circumstances. Furthermore, athletes are expected to be at school, and on time, the day after a

contest/event. "Being tired" is an unacceptable excuse. The only excuse would be with a note from a health care professional, or if prior arrangements had been made with the principal for extenuating circumstances.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

Parents should encourage their child to participate in the athletic program. They should encourage the athlete to be committed and to always be at practices and contests and to always do their best and behave properly. Parents should support the team and be positive in the stands. They should cheer for the team and the coaches and not belittle or yell at them. During the competition, parents do not need to talk to their kids or try to "coach" them. Players need to be focused on what is going on in the game and what their coach is saying. If there is a problem that they feel that they need to address with the coach, they need to schedule a conference. After the game **is not the right time or place**. Also, following the chain of command is important to a successful and healthy program and can fix problems before they get out of control. Chain of command is as follows: Head coach, athletic director, principal, then superintendent. Furthermore, as positive role models for their children, parents need to be in control of their emotions during and after a game regarding the officials. Parents also need to realize that athletics is an extracurricular activity and that the primary reason that their children are in school is to get an education.

Therefore, it is imperative that parents get their children to school so they can receive instruction in all their classes. Athletics can add to that educational process, but they **MUST** be in regular attendance in school. Excessive absences can lead to a student having to miss some school activities.

### **Parent/Coach Conferences**

Coaches would like to have an open line of communication with parents and encourage them to utilize our open-door policy to discuss any situations about which we may be unaware. We would however, ask that you do so in a professional manner. As parents of students involved in the Zephyr athletic program, you have every right to understand what expectations are in place for your children. This begins with a clear line of communication from each coach and every parent in the Zephyr athletic program.

Items appropriate for discussion:

- Concerns about your child's behavior or well-being.
- Understanding why your child has been disciplined and/or treated in a fair manner.
- Expectations from the coaching staff that each sport has for your child.

Items that will not be discussed with the coaching staff:

- Playing Time. (Other than the things they can do to earn more time)
- Team Strategy.

- Play Calling.
- Student athletes that are not your children.
- Negativity toward coaches

### **Coaches Commitment**

1. Treat each player with respect, while at the same time pushing them to be their best.
2. Give each player an opportunity to earn playing time.
3. Attempt to play each player in every game. In close games, the playing time may be less or none at all.
4. Be examples of good sportsmanship, morals, and character.
5. Teach your child the skills to become the best player and person he can be. This includes skills needed to succeed in life.
6. Listen to any complaints parents or players may have and respond fairly with respect.
7. Model the traits we hope to teach our players such as hard work, discipline, sportsmanship, etc.
8. Make sure the team is as prepared as possible for each opponent.
9. Decisions will be made fairly and will be consistent.

### **Participation Policy**

Students are encouraged to participate but are not required to participate. They should understand that athletic participation is a PRIVILEGE, not a right, and can be taken away. The coaching staff has the authority to suspend students from athletics when the rules or standards of the athletic program are not followed.

While students are participating, they must realize that they are representing Zephyr ISD and need to do so with pride and not do anything that would embarrass or harm the reputation or perception of our school.

Most of our sports, especially team sports, require the student to be enrolled in the athletic period. Those sports are: Volleyball, cross country, football, basketball, and track. Students do not have to be in the athletic period (but can be) to participate in: tennis and golf. Students enrolled in an athletic period are expected to be there and participate every day, just like they would for any other class. Athletes should understand that there is a COMMITMENT involved with being on a team. They should be at practice every day and quitting is not an option that they should take lightly.

Athletes will be placed on the team (varsity or JV) that the coach believes will benefit the individual athlete and the team the most. This will be based on, but not limited to: attitude, skill, knowledge, and experience. Student-athletes do not have any guarantee of playing time. The team must come before the individual.

## **Required Documentation**

Prior to participation, student-athletes must have the following UIL forms on file with the school, signed by the student and the parents:

- Pre-participation Physical Evaluation
- Acknowledgement of Rules
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Form
- Concussion Acknowledgement Form
- Illegal Steroid Use and Random Steroid Testing Form

\*Each Head coach may require additional paperwork.

## **Practice Policy**

Athletes are expected to be at practice every day to receive instruction in fundamentals, skills, and assignments, as well as receiving the conditioning needed to participate safely. If a student misses practice they are missing out on instruction that cannot be recovered. Missed practices will affect playing time depending on circumstances. Missing practice also means that the athlete has missed out on important conditioning. This conditioning WILL be made up, no exceptions. Understand this is not punishment, but a requirement for the benefit and safety of the athlete. If an athlete must miss practice, they should make every effort to let the coach know ahead of time and the reason they are missing. Unexcused absences will have more severe consequences than excused absences. If an athlete is not able to participate because of an injury, they are still expected to be at practice to observe the instruction taking place and take care of any treatment prescribed. Since football, volleyball, and cross country have practices that start before school begins, there are additional guidelines. For every week of practice that is missed, there are that many weeks of competition that must also be missed, in addition to the make-up conditioning which will be completed before they compete. (Scrimmages do count as competitions) This rule does not apply to students that move in during the school year.

## **Quitting Policy**

Athletes should do everything in their power to honor their commitment and not quit. In Zephyr athletics, we promote an attitude of not quitting when things don't go our way. If an athlete decides that they want to quit, there are some things that need to happen. They should NOT just stop showing up to practice, send a text, or send word through a friend. Instead, they need to ask for a meeting with the coach involved and discuss the situation. After meeting, if the athlete decides to follow through they must turn in any equipment that was issued. The athlete then must go through the following protocol. First, the athlete may not start the next sport until the sport they quit is over. Second, they will be required to run 25 timed miles in a 2 week period. This running must be completed before they can start the next sport. If athlete decides to quit without contacting the coach in person then the required running will increase

to 35 timed miles in a 2 week period. Quitting a second time is starting a problematic pattern that is not acceptable, as well as, being a behavior that we do not want to promote in our athletic program. Therefore, if an athlete chooses to quit a second time during a school year, then they will be removed from athletics for one calendar year and will have to complete the running (25 timed miles) to be allowed back in the athletic program. There will be a one-time 24 hr. grace period in which the student may return without consequence.

### **Travel Policy**

All athletes will travel to and from away contests on school transportation. If an athlete needs to ride home with a parent/guardian, the parent should talk directly to the Head coach of the current sport and a parent's signature on a note will be required before the team leaves for the contest. If a circumstance arises where the athlete needs to travel to the game in some other manner or leave after the game with someone other than the parent/guardian, this must be pre-arranged and pre-approved by the coach and principal. Under no circumstances, will an athlete be released to go with anyone other than the parents or a pre-approved person. Athletes will dress appropriate for his/her event, following all school policies. Alternative dress code will be up to the head coach of each sport.

### **Off-season Policy**

Dressing out every day in school issued clothing and or equipment will be required. Athletes in season will follow the workout determined by the Head Coach of that sport. All athletes not in season will follow an off-season workout determined by the coaches. All athletes are required to go through off-season in the fall and the spring in order to participate in athletics. This means that you must go through off-season the semester preceding the sport in which you will participate.

### **Injury and/or Illness Policy**

All injuries need to be reported to the Head coach of the sport as soon as possible. Any student-athlete that is injured during the course of the season or has an illness of a minor nature and is unable to participate due to this injury or illness must continue to follow all expectations, rules, and regulations, if the student-athlete wishes to remain a part of the team. The student-athlete will not participate but will be required to attend all practice sessions and sit with the team during competitions. Failure to attend practices and competitions can result in dismissal from the team. Athletes learn from each practice session, whether they are working out or simply observing. If an athlete misses workout due to an injury or illness, a note from a parent or doctor is required. Missing practice for any reason could result in missing competition. Missing more than three practices for medical reasons will require an official doctor's note. If a student has restrictions for one sport due to an injury, they may not compete in another sport until cleared by physician. All student/athletes that have experienced an injury may not return until written documentation from the physician has been given to the coach.

## **Conduct/ISS/DAEP/ Code of Conduct**

A student/athlete that is sent to the office for discipline issues will also have consequences in athletics. The coaches will work closely with administration to help reduce discipline issues. Continual discipline issues may result in suspension and/or removal from athletic program. A student will not participate while in ISS or DAEP.

(Refer to the Student Handbook)

## **Awards & Honors: (Lettering)**

According to the U.I.L. (University Interscholastic League) regulations, a student can receive only one letter jacket during his or her four-year tenure in high school. A student may earn a letter jacket by achieving points.

1) Successfully completing a sport does not mean that an athlete will letter on the varsity level. All athletes must earn points toward a letter jacket. Points will carry on throughout his or her tenure at Zephyr ISD.

- Football Varsity Letter: (1 point)

1. You are a varsity player all season long or work your way up to a varsity player
2. Half a point for being a varsity water boy/water girl/manager/
3. All other participants will receive certificates of participation

A student athlete who is injured and/or ill, but projected as lettering by his or her coach will receive a point

- Basketball Varsity Letter: (1 point)

1. You are a varsity player all season long or work your way up to a varsity player
2. Half a point for being a varsity water boy/water girl/manager
3. All other participants will receive certificates of participation

A student athlete who is injured and/or ill, but projected as lettering by his or her coach will receive a point

- Track Varsity Letter: (1 point)

1. Score at least one point at the district or area level meet
- All other participants will receive certificates of participation.

- Tennis: (1 point)

1. Participate in all scheduled meets, or
2. Score at least one point at the district level.

All others receive certificates of participation

- Golf Varsity Letter: (1 point)

1. Participate in all scheduled meets, or
2. Score at least one point at the district level

All others receive certificates of participation

- Cross Country Varsity Letter: (1 point)

1. Must qualify for the regional meet

All others receive certificates of participation

- Cheerleader Varsity Letter: (1 point)

1. Must be a varsity cheerleader and attend all scheduled events



- One Act Play: (1 point)
  1. Must advance past first level of competition
- UIL/Robotics/ Judging events: (1 point)
  1. Must advance past first level of competition

Zephyr athletic point system

1. Freshman will need to have earned 6 points to receive a letter jacket
2. Sophomore's will need to have earned 5 points to receive a letter jacket
3. Juniors will need to have earned 4 points to receive a letter jacket
4. Seniors will need to have earned 2 points to receive a letter jacket

## **Substance Abuse Policy**

Violations are cumulative for an athlete's entire high school career

Circumstances which will initiate this policy:

- ticketed for MIP/MIC by law enforcement
- self-admission
- reported by credible/unbiased school employee (hearsay will not be used)

During the suspension, the athlete WILL continue to practice, and extra running will be added after practice. If the offense occurs during offseason or summer, the suspension from competition will begin with the first week of the next sport that the athlete is participating in.

## **Alcohol policy**

Offense	Suspension
1	1 week of competition (1 Game)
2	3 weeks of competition (3 Games)
3	1 calendar year
4	Permanent removal from the athletic program

## **Tobacco policy**

Offense	Suspension
1	15 timed miles
2	1 week of competition (1 Game)
3	3 weeks of competition (3 Games)
4	1 calendar year

## **Drug Policy**

Failed drug test or Possession

1<sup>ST</sup> Offense – 30 day suspension, 30 timed miles completed in 3 weeks.

2<sup>ND</sup> Offense – 90 day suspension, 30 timed miles completed in 3 weeks, meeting between coaching staff and parents/guardians.

3<sup>RD</sup> Offense – Removal from athletics for calendar year.

4<sup>th</sup> Offense - Permanent removal from athletics.

**PLEASE READ THE ATHLETIC POLICY CAREFULLY AND COMPLETELY.**

There may be issues that are not covered in this manual that arise during the year, and in that instance the consequences will be at the discretion of the coaches and administrators of Zephyr ISD.

I have read the entire ATHLETIC POLICY MANUAL set forth by the Zephyr athletic department. I understand and agree to comply with the above rules and regulations.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_