

WEST SABINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



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ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

At West Sabine ISD, we believe athletics is a very important part of the total education process. We believe athletics provides our students' purpose. In participating in athletics our student- athletes will gain knowledge and learn lessons that will benefit them well after they graduate. It is critical to get our student- athletes to reach their full potential through hard work and dedication. A comprehensive program of athletic activities will express our commitment to developing our student- athlete's physical fitness and personal health; through the acquisition of competent performance and the achievement of excellence in the student- athletes chosen sport/s. We intend on developing responsibility, discipline, and mental toughness that will make our student- athletes better students, citizens, sons/ daughters, and one day husbands/ wives and mothers/ fathers.

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.



ATHLETIC BELIEFS

1. **WE BELIEVE IN PLAYING BY THE RULES.** We will use every opportunity that presents itself to be successful in competition and in life. We want to win at all costs, but we will never resort to cheating or foul play. We do not want to do anything to jeopardize the integrity of our school, community or athletic program.
2. **WE BELIEVE IN SUPERIOR PHYSICAL CONDITION.** Every athlete is expected to participate in the athletic program for the entire year. We believe that our success starts in the weight room and every athlete should participate in the “strength and conditioning” program if they are not in- season. We believe that in- season athletes should also remain lifting weights and conditioning in order to maintain their physical strength and stamina. If we are going to make a “good” program “great” we believe every athlete must commit themselves to becoming stronger and faster.
3. **WE BELIEVE IN DISCIPLINE.** It is very important to be disciplined in athletics and in life. Being disciplined is being able to follow the rules and doing what is right. Every athlete must believe it is important to strive to conduct themselves in a manner that is conducive to the athletic program and his/ her teammates. Discipline will be given if an athlete can not handle themselves properly. We support the guidelines of the student code of conduct and handbook.
4. **WE WILL PLAY WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM.** We will not forget the reason we started athletics is because contests are FUN. We want to be the most enthused group to be out there. There is no greater feeling than Winning. Winning however, is not the measure of success. It is the process that it takes to get to be a champion that will make you a winner, the hardwork and dedication that you show.
5. **WE BELIEVE IN FAMILY.** There is nothing more important than family. There is no relationship more important than that of family. Within the athletic program we are a family. Our success “good” or “great” will be a direct reflection of our commitment to our athletic family. 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.



ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

It is our goal at West Sabine ISD to offer the opportunity for every student to participate in the athletic program. If a student wants to participate in a sport that student must be enrolled in the proper athletic period. It is very important to go through the proper strength and conditioning program to prepare our student-athletes for competition.

Reasons a student would not have to be enrolled in the proper athletic period:

- Schedule conflict due to credits or early graduation

If you are enrolled in the athletic period you must compete in at least one sport. We encourage our student-athletes to participate in multiple sports due to our enrollment size. For small schools to succeed our kids have to participate in multiple sports.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To develop and maintain the highest level of sportsmanship.
2. To develop the proper attitude to handle winning as well as losing. **BE HUMBLE**
3. To develop respect for fellow athletes, whether teammates or opponents.
4. To develop the character it takes to be successful in everything you do in athletics and in life.

*****According to the University Interscholastic League (UIL) rules, athletic participation is a privilege, not a right. Athletes will be accountable and held to a higher standard than those students who elect not to participate in athletics.*****



ELIGIBILITY

ACADEMICS

A student in grades 7-12 may participate in extracurricular activities on or off campus at the beginning of the school year only if the student has earned the cumulative number of credits in state approved courses indicated.

- a. At the beginning of the 7th grade year, the student must have been promoted from the 6th to the 7th grade.
- b. At the beginning of the 8th grade year, the student must have been promoted from the 7th to the 8th grade.
- c. At the beginning of the 9th grade year, the student must have been promoted from the 8th to the 9th grade.
- d. At the beginning of the 10th grade year, the student must have at least five credits towards graduation, or earned five credits during the previous 12 months.
- e. At the beginning of the 11th grade year, the student must have at least ten credits toward graduation or have earned five credits during the previous 12 months.
- f. At the beginning of the 12th grade year, the student must have at least 15 credits towards graduation or have earned five credits during the previous 12 months.

ATHLETICS

1. **Pre-participation Physical Examination** – *ALL* athletes must have an annual/current physical on file with the Athletic Department.
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. **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.*



CONFLICT BETWEEN SPORTS

Student- athletes will be encouraged to participate in as many sports as they wish. Those who chose to participate in two or more school sponsored activities at the same time can expect conflicts from time to time. Every effort will be made so that the student- athlete can participate in both. The student- athlete should notify the coach as soon as they become aware of a possible scheduling conflict. The Athletic Department will use the following policy to settle those conflicts. The order as follows:

1. State Finals
2. State Semi- Finals
3. State Quarter-Finals
4. Regional Finals
5. Area Finals
6. Bi- District Finals
7. District Competitions
8. Non- District Competitions
9. Performance and/ or competition will take precedence over practice.

GENERAL POLICY

CLASSROOM

An athlete must realize that he/she is a student first, an athlete second. The student-athlete must give time and energy to classroom studies to ensure their grades meet the UIL requirements for participation.

Athletes must maintain a satisfactory citizenship and behavior record by giving attention to classroom activities and by treating teachers, administrators, and fellow students with respect. Tardiness, horseplay, and unnecessary talking are unacceptable behavior habits that, if not corrected by the student-athlete, may result in suspension from the athletic program. Athletes Will be held to a higher standard than the general student population. He/She may be disciplined in addition to the school imposed penalties.

During the athletic period and during, before, or after school practice, an athlete will notify a coach if he/she will be absent from school. Notify the coach if he/she needs to miss a game or practice session that is scheduled after school hours. Absence from the athletic period and after school practice should be handled accordingly.



Dress Code and Appearance

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.

Travel

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(s) or guardian(s). Every student athlete should be “signed out” with their respective coach.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Discipline of Athletes/Code of Conduct

Occasionally, it becomes necessary to take some form of disciplinary action against an athlete as a result of unacceptable misconduct or refusal on his/her part to comply with school or athletic policy. While the student handbook identifies and spells out the specific disciplinary actions that will be taken for certain offenses, in athletics we have adopted our own code of conduct. The code of conduct which is signed by the athlete, parent/guardian and the Coach, explains the procedure that will be followed in disciplining an athlete for serious violations of school policy, athletic training rules or misconduct. Before the season starts Coaches are expected to thoroughly explain the code of conduct to the athletes in his/her charge and to obtain the signature of each athlete and his/her parent/guardian to the document. It is essential that athletes understand that disciplinary action will be taken for violating the athletic code of conduct. Suspension from athletics can be accomplished by the principal and/or the

Athletic Director and does not require a due process hearing.

Suspension:

Each coach will have the authority, with concurrence of the athletic director, to suspend or place on probation for an extended period of time for major infractions. Athletes WILL be administered Corporal Punishment or conditioning for minor infractions.

Any student suspended from athletics must be given:

1. The reason(s) for the suspension,
2. The time and provision of the suspension,
3. The procedures for re-entering the program,
4. Parent notification.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Level One Offenses and Consequences

- Any possession or use of tobacco or E-cigs product – Refer to student code of conduct

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 West Sabine ISD Student Code of Conduct, while under the influence of alcohol, marijuana, a controlled substance or any serious drug.
- Conduct that constitutes an offense relating to abusable glue, aerosol paint, or volatile chemicals.
- Illegally possessing or using drug paraphernalia.
- Willfully attend or remain at an activity where the student knows drugs or alcohol are being illegally consumed

The following rules apply to all West Sabine ISD athletics:

1. NO SMOKING/VAPING OR USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS.
2. NO DRINKING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.
3. NO USE OR POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS.

The respective coach, in cooperation with the athletic director and the principal, will handle violations of the above rules. The athlete who violates the above-stated rules shall be subject to any or all of the following: (1) specified school policy, (2) suspension from practice sessions and games, (3) discipline as designated and decided upon by the coach and athletic director.

DRUG TESTING PROCEDURE

All students shall be tested prior to participation and on a random basis throughout the school year. If the student has been or is presently on medication, he or she shall present a physician's notice of the prescribed medication prior to drug testing.

The first time a student's test result is positive, the District shall:

1. Notify the parent or guardian of the positive test result and the consequences of a first offense in addition to the student code of conduct.

2. Suspend the student from participation in extracurricular contests and performances until:

a. Thirty days have elapsed; and

- b. The parent or guardian comes to the school for a conference with the principal or activity director and the student.**
- 3. Permit the student to participate in practice, but not to travel to, participate in, or attend contests during the suspension.**
- 4. Permit the student to return to full participation status following the 30-day suspension only if the student, at his or her own expense, is retested with a negative result. A positive result shall be considered a second offense. See below.**
- 5. Establish the length of time, as determined by the principal, that the student shall attend mandatory counseling and/ or alternative educational placement.**

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social media has changed the way we do everything, including sports. It is a platform that can be used positively or negatively, below are the program guidelines and consequences for social media use in regards to our team. These can be adapted at coach and administration discretion.

- 1. Only post information concerning our coaches, players, and any other member of our team in a positive fashion. Any comments that are deemed degrading or inappropriate toward any member of our team will be dealt with according to individual cases.**
- 2. Posting of pictures will be allowed only in accordance with the following guidelines. Any posting of pictures in an inappropriate fashion will be dealt with in most serious fashion. Players will sign waivers prior to the season that states we are allowed to post pictures of games, practices, etc... only to promote our team and school. We will not post any pictures of a player who does not consent and we will not post any pictures that are not of games/contests/fundraiser related.**
- 3. Videos posted will be ONLY of games, practices, or other competition settings!**
- 4. Players may not post to social media during any game, competition, or practice setting.**
- 5. Absolutely no photos or videos in locker room settings! Do not have your phone out while in the locker room!**

6. Anything that is posted depicting or implying bullying, violence, sexual harassment, hazing, under-age drinking, and possession/use/sale of illegal substances will be dealt with severely.
7. Remember that what you put out there is out there and can't be taken back. Use discretion when putting your thoughts, photos, and videos out there for the world to see. It can impact your future!

Consequences

Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the severity of actions. Potential consequences may include:

- Suspension from games or practices
- Extra conditioning/Corporal punishment
- Removal from the team
- Legal action

DROPPING/DISMISSAL FROM A SPORT

Before starting a sport, the athlete shall make a commitment to the program or team that he/she will finish to the end. Staying committed to the team shows a lot of character. An athlete, however, sometimes finds it necessary to quit playing a sport before or during the season. 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 14th calendar day period of time beginning with the first official practice of the particular sport's season. If an athlete is coming from a sport that carries over into another season the athlete gets the 14 day grace period. However, if an athlete starts a sport late due to uncertainty of playing the 14 day grace period will be from the first day of official practice. Whatever the reason, an athlete must follow the steps listed below:

1. The athlete should think the whole situation through before reaching a final decision.
2. If an athlete decides to quit, he/she must sign a form signifying they have quit and understand the consequences that must be carried out in order to participate in another sport.
3. If an athlete wants to return to the sport, he/she should consult the appropriate coach. The decision as to whether the athlete will be allowed to return to that sport shall be the decision of the individual coach and the athletic director. There will be consequences in returning to that sport. That will be the head coach's discretion.

4. If an athlete quits a sport, he/she may start practice in the next sport. However, the athlete may not compete, travel or participate with the team. In order to participate in the next sport you must run thirty miles in a seven day work period. Some of the miles may be substituted by doing some manual labor on the school grounds and supervised by a staff member. This will only apply to those athletes that have some type of hardship and it must be approved by the athletic director and the head coach of that particular sport.
5. Any lost or damaged equipment will have to be compensated by the athlete that had quit that sport.

*****In the event that a student is dismissed from a sport during the season, the same rules will apply as that of dropping a sport.*****

AWARDS AND LETTERING

Varsity teams:

Awards for the varsity teams will consist of letter jackets, plaques and certificates. These major awards will be furnished by the school to each athlete who meets the qualifications for lettering or participation in the following sports: cross country, football, basketball, baseball, softball, and track, powerlifting, and cheerleading.

1. The University Interscholastic League rules will be followed in regard to the cost of the jacket or plaque.
2. The jacket will have no markings or patches on it except the letter. All other patches will be the responsibility of the athlete.

General requirements for receiving jacket awards

1. Must have lettered in one varsity sport during their freshman or sophomore school year or participated in the same varsity sport for two years. Also, an athlete will not be able to receive a jacket until the end of their sophomore year. In other words, a freshman athlete will not be able to receive a jacket.
2. All requirements may be waived by judgment of a committee composed of the head coach, athletic director and principal concerning injuries, marginal cases, etc.
3. Lettering in a sport will be determined by the head coach of that sport.



MEDICAL INSURANCE FOR ATHLETES

W.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 Director for claim forms or additional information. Additional accident insurance is available for purchase (see the head coach of the sport, or the athletic director.)

PROCEDURES WHEN ILL OR INJURED

Your health is of concern to every member of your team. When you are ill you need to notify your coach. Whenever you are injured or have an illness of a minor nature, you may be required to dress out and stay with your group during workout. You learn from each practice session, whether you are actually working out or simply observing. Conditioning will be made up for any missed practices. If an athlete has asthma, he/she must have an inhaler before practicing or playing in a contest on hand. If a student has a condition requiring emergent medications (i.e. epi-pen, inhaler, etc) the following must be in place before the student is allowed to practice, participate or travel to events/contests: *medication must be present and available for immediate use.

*properly labeled with doctor orders/pharmacy labeling.



PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

As your son/daughter becomes involved in the sports program, 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). It is important that both parties have a clear understanding of the other's position. Please follow these procedures to help promote a resolution:

1. Parent/guardian speaks directly to the coach to discuss concern.
2. If the concern is not resolved, call the Athletic Director to arrange a conference. A meeting will be arranged with the coach and parent.
3. 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.
4. Remember, if you speak negatively about your child's coach or a decision the coach made, it is likely your child will have a similar belief and this will cause conflict between your child and the coach.

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.
4. 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.
5. Insist that the athletes respect team rules, school rules, game officials, and sportsmanship. Self- respect begins with self-control.
6. Encourage the athletes to improve their self-image by believing in themselves.
7. Encourage your athlete to play for the love of the game.
8. 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.
9. Remember: At a competition, you, the parent, represent your town, your school and your son/daughter. Please be a positive role model.
10. Always show respect for the officials and the decisions that are made by the officials.



EXPECTATIONS FROM COACHES

- 1. At West Sabine, each student-athlete should be treated as an individual whose welfare shall be primary at all times.**
- 2. The coach shall be aware that he/she serves as a model in the education of the student-athlete and, therefore, shall never place the value of winning above the value of character building.**
- 3. The coach shall constantly uphold the honor and dignity of the teaching profession and strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.**
- 4. The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct his/her program in harmony with the total school program.**
- 5. The coach shall be thoroughly acquainted with contest, state, and local rules, and is responsible for their interpretation to team members. The coach shall abide by the letter and spirit of these rules at all times.**
- 6. Coaches shall actively use their influence to promote sportsmanship by working closely with parents, athletes, and administration.**
- 7. Contest officials shall have the respect and support of the coach. Public criticism of officials, players, or other coaches is unethical.**
- 8. Before and after contests, rival coaches should meet and exchange friendly greetings to set the correct tone for the event.**



**WEST SABINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK
2021-2022**

I have received and reviewed the contents of the 2021-2022 Athletic Handbook and agree to be governed by its regulations as well as those in the WSISD Student Code of Conduct.

Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Parent or Guardian
Signature: _____

List of Sports in which Student-Athlete Participates:

Date: _____