

Fruitvale I.S.D. Athletic Policy Handbook

The athletic program at Fruitvale is an integral part of the total educational program. Athletics are a vital part of the physical, mental, social, and moral growth of our students. Athletics are not designed to transcend the academic program, but to supplement it.

Athletics can provide valuable lessons for life's practical situations. Student-athletes face experiences daily that teach them to overcome adversity, to develop leadership skills and winning attitudes, to be hard workers, and to be part of a team concept that requires self-sacrifice and service to others.

Student-athletes should be aware that being a part of the athletic program is not a right but a privilege, and that privilege may be revoked by the athletic director and coaching staff at any time for conduct that they determine to be detrimental to the program, school district, or community. Students engaging in athletics represent not only themselves, but the entire school district and community whether or not they are actively performing, competing, or participating in a contest and whether or not they are wearing uniforms or other clothing that identifies them to the community or public in any setting as FISD students. For this reason, their behavior must be **exemplary** and reflect the finest attributes of the total FISD student body at all times and places.

The following expectations must be met by all student-athletes:

Behavior: Student-athletes are expected to abide by all rules and regulations of the athletic program, school district, and community. Failure to abide by those rules **will** result in disciplinary action and **may** result in removal from the athletic program. Consequences will be determined by the coaching staff on an individual incident basis.

Respect: Student-athletes are expected to show respect at all times toward coaches, teachers, administrators, all school personnel, and sports officials. Proper manners should always be displayed, and confrontations always avoided. Sir and Ma'am should always be used by the student-athlete when speaking to any adult, or person of authority. Appropriate disciplinary action will be determined by the coaching staff for incidents of disrespect. Disrespect **will not** be tolerated and continual problems in the area of respect **will** result in removal from the athletic program no matter who you are or how good of an athlete you are.

Participation: Student-athletes are encouraged to participate in as many sports and extracurricular activities as they desire. Every possible effort will be made to accommodate conflicting schedules. Student-athletes are expected to attend all practices, meetings, and games of the sport that they are participating in. They are also expected to report on time, and remain for the duration of the event. Student-athletes must make up missed strength and conditioning work for an **excused absence** (this is make-up work, not punishment). The amount of make-up work will be determined by the head coach of that particular sport. The amount of make-up work for an **unexcused absence** will be double that of an excused absence (this is make-up work and punishment). The head coach will determine if an absence is excused or unexcused. **All make-up strength and conditioning work that is due to an unexcused absence must be completed prior to**

participating in the next game. If an athlete misses two games in a season as a result of incomplete make-up work, he/she **will** be removed from the sport. Habitual absences, depending on the circumstances, may result in removal from the sport and possibly the athletic program. All student-athletes **must** participate in the off-season/in-season strength and conditioning program and must dress out daily. **Grade ineligibility and game suspensions are not an excuse to miss team practice or meetings.**

Commitment: Student-athletes are expected to complete the entire season of every sport that they choose to participate in. There will be a two-week window from the time an athlete begins participation in each sport for student-athletes to determine if they want to participate for the season. After this two-week period, the consequences for dropping the sport will be determined by the Athletic Coordinators. There are many factors that can contribute to an athlete's decision to drop a sport and each factor will be given full consideration before consequences are determined. All athletes and parents should be aware that there **WILL BE** a set of consequences enforced in every situation when an athlete quits a sport after the two-week grace period.

Injuries: Injuries or illnesses that could possibly hamper an athlete's ability to participate must be reported to the head coach immediately. Specific instructions regarding treatment and participation will be determined by the coach, and any care orders written by a doctor. Unless an injury or illness physically impedes an athlete's ability to change clothes, the athlete will be required to dress out and observe during practice or during the athletic period if the athlete is in off-season.

Communication: Student-athletes are expected to contact the head coach of their particular sport prior to any and all absences, excused or unexcused, or face disciplinary action. Misunderstandings are almost always the result of a lack of communication.

Transportation: ALL athletes are expected to ride on the school provided transportation to and from all out-of-town athletic events in which they will participate. Parents/Guardians must give the head coach at least 24 hours of notice in writing if they plan to sign their child out after a game. Cell phone communication on the bus is not allowed unless the head coach determines that it is necessary and grants permission.

Appearance: Student-athletes are expected to dress for school, and travel, on game days in a "like manner" to be determined by the head coach of that team. All visible tattoos must be covered at the student-athlete's expense during travel to and from, and participation in, any athletic event. **Male student-athletes** must keep their hair "**cut**" no lower than the earlobe and off of the collar in order to remain in the athletic program; it has nothing to do with whether he is participating in a sport at that time. **Male student-athletes** must keep sideburns trimmed and no lower than the earlobe, and must keep their face clean shaven. **Male student-athletes** must remove all body piercing jewelry when at school or any school sponsored event. Hats and caps are never appropriate indoors. Hats and caps are also inappropriate on the bus unless they are part of a school team uniform (i.e. baseball or softball teams). Unless a shirt tail is designed to be worn outwardly, such as a football jersey, it must be tucked in and a belt must be worn. Pants must be worn on the waistline, "sagging" is not allowed at school or school sponsored events. **Female**

student-athletes must remove all body piercing jewelry, other than earrings, when at school or any school sponsored event. **The coaching staff reserves the right to determine arbitrarily whether any student-athlete is dressed or groomed inappropriately.**

Prohibited Conduct: Behavior, Alcohol, Drugs, and Paraphernalia

Because participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right, FISD is authorized to set higher standards for participants of athletics than for those who choose not to participate. Therefore, the Athletic Policy extends beyond the FISD Student Code of Conduct not only on types of behavior prohibited but also in corresponding consequences and jurisdiction for imposing discipline.

***This code applies at all times, on or off campus, while participating in an activity or not, during the school year as well as holidays, weekends, and summer.**

****Violations of the Prohibited Conduct Policy may be established by:**

- 1. Student Admission**
- 2. Admission by parent/guardian of student**
- 3. Violation witnessed by FISD staff member**
- 4. Issuance of a local agency report or citation**

Participation by a student/athlete as a social gathering where alcohol or drugs are illegally served will not be tolerated. Participation at these gatherings could lead to consequences for the athlete and possible removal from the program. **Note: Attendance at social events (i.e. wedding reception or professional sporting event) where alcohol is legally served to adults is not a violation of this code because alcohol is not being served illegally.

Alcohol and drugs are illegal for student-athletes and detrimental to long term health and athletic success. If it is **proven** that an athlete is using any of these (*on campus or off*) they will face the following disciplinary action in accordance with the Fruitvale Independent School District Student Policy:

First Offense: In order for a student to regain eligibility for extracurricular activities:

1. Parents and student are required to meet with the campus principal.
2. The student must serve a suspension from all extracurricular activities (tryouts included) for 60 calendar days. The suspension will be reduced to 30 days if the student provides proof of drug counseling from a certified drug counselor approved by Fruitvale ISD.
3. The student must test at every school-provided opportunity for 1 calendar year. If the student does not test positive for that year, he/she will return to random test status.

Second Offense: In order for a student to regain eligibility for extracurricular activities:

1. Parent and student are required to meet with the campus principal.

2. The student must serve a suspension from all extracurricular activities (tryouts included) for 180 calendar days. The suspension will be reduced to 120 days if the student provides proof of drug counseling from a certified drug counselor approved by Fruitvale ISD and pass a hair follicle drug test. The test will be at the student's expense.
4. The student must test at every school-provided opportunity for the remainder of his/her education career at Fruitvale ISD.

Third Offense: The student will be suspended from extracurricular activities for the remainder of his/her educational career at Fruitvale ISD.

Cost: The District shall not be responsible for any cost incurred during drug counseling or testing other than that done according to District policy.

Tobacco: If a student athlete is caught with or proven to have engaged in the use of tobacco on school premises or at school sponsored activities the student athlete will face the following consequences:

First Offense: The athlete will face an automatic one game suspension and must complete 10 miles of running before they can participate in another game/contest. The student athlete must schedule a time with the Athletic Director to complete the running outside of athletic period and normal practice time.

Second Offense: The athlete will face an automatic three game suspension and must complete 15 miles of running before they can participate in another game/contest. the student athlete must schedule a time with the Athletic Director to complete the running outside of athletic period and normal practice time.

Third Offense and beyond: The athlete will face an automatic ten game suspension and must complete 20 miles of running before they can participate in another game/contest. The student athlete must schedule a time with the Athletic Director to complete the running outside of athletic period and normal practice time.

Anabolic Steroid Use and Random Steroid Testing: Texas state law prohibits possessing, dispensing, delivering or administering a steroid in a manner not allowed by state law. Texas state law also provides that body building, muscle enhancement or the increase in muscle bulk or strength through the use of a steroid by a person who is in good health is not a valid medical purpose. Texas state law requires that only a licensed practitioner with prescriptive authority may prescribe a steroid for a person. Any violation of state law concerning steroids is a criminal offense punishable by confinement in jail or imprisonment in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Students who participate in UIL athletic activities may be asked to submit to testing for the presence of anabolic steroids in their body by a certified laboratory. The results of the steroid testing may be provided to certain individuals as specified in the UIL Anabolic Steroid Testing Program Protocol which is available on the UIL website at www.uiltexas.org. The results of steroid

testing will be held confidential to the extent required by law. Failure to provide accurate and truthful information could subject students to penalties as determined by UIL.

Grades: Grades of 100 will not be given automatically. Each student-athlete will begin each six weeks with a 100 and will maintain that grade by dressing out and participating every day. A total of 5 points will be deducted from the six weeks grade for every day that a student-athlete does not dress out and participate unless excused with medical documentation or the Athletic Director's approval. If a student-athlete dresses out but refuses to participate satisfactorily in all workouts and drills assigned for that day, 5 points will be deducted from the six weeks grade.

Attendance: Attendance in the athlete's academic classes is of the utmost importance. An unexcused absence on the day of the game will result in the athlete being unable to participate in the game that night. Athletes who have an unexcused absence the day after a game will be suspended for the next game. Repeated absences on game days or days after games will result in removal from the team and/or the athletic program. A note from a parent or guardian will not be accepted as an excused absence for athletic purposes. Athletics is a class and attendance will be taken daily at the beginning of the period and reported to the office. Excessive absences can result in denial of credit for the class.

Athletic Period/Offseason Workouts: All athletes are expected to be in attendance and participate/complete all off-season workouts. Unexcused absences from the athletic period/off-season workouts will result in athlete not being allowed to participate in team practice on day of missed workout. Multiple unexcused absences could lead to dismissal from athletic program.

Athletic Period: All athletes that wish to participate in athletics must be in athletic period at the beginning of the school year. Students will not be allowed to join the athletic period at second semester and be allowed to participate in a spring sport. The exception is for new students who enroll at a later time in the school year. Any student who transfers out of the athletic period must wait until the following school year to get back into athletics

Appeal of Dismissal: If an athlete is dismissed from the Athletic program he/she has the right to appeal. Written notice of the athlete's desire to appeal the decision must be given to the Athletic Director. The appeal will be heard and decided on by a panel consisting of the Athletic Director, Superintendent, and High School principal to assure complete objectivity. The athlete, and/or their parent/guardian, will be allowed to state his/her case in the hearing.

Lettering: The awarding of a school letter to a student is the second highest honor of which a school is capable; the highest being a diploma. Athletes can receive from the school only one major award during their high school career, commonly a letter jacket. In order to letter, you must be on a varsity team and satisfy the requirements stated below. After receiving one major award, letter certificates or similar awards shall be given by the respective coach each time the athlete letters in a sport. The athlete must be recommended by the coach of that sport. In making recommendations for Varsity awards, the coach must take into consideration the following:

1. **Conduct:** as explained in this handbook.
2. **Attendance:** an athlete must attend scheduled practices and contests.
3. **Participation:** fulfillment of specific criteria for each sport as determined by the coaches of each sport in cooperation with the Athletic Coordinators.
4. **Academics:** finish the season academically eligible and in good standing.
5. **Other:** there may be other criteria established by the head coach.

The letter award will be given every year for every varsity sport that an athlete fulfills the requirements for lettering. The actual letter jacket will not be awarded until a second varsity letter is earned in any sport, or a combination of sports, and in the athlete's second year of participation in Fruitvale High School Athletics. The only exception to the second year rule will be for athletes that transfer to Fruitvale High School in their senior year and meet all Varsity letter requirements.

Parents: Coaches will be more than willing to meet with parents and discuss their child's situation under the following guidelines: **a)** schedule a meeting with the coach during his/her conference hour: meetings before or after practices or games are counter-productive because emotions tend to run high at these times. **b)** the coach will discuss with the parent anything that pertains to their child and what they need to do to get better or improve their situation **c)** at no time in the meeting will the coach discuss playing time, strategy, or any student-athlete that is not the child of the parent involved in the meeting. **d)** If at any time the meeting becomes hostile by either party, the meeting will come to an end. **e)** The athletic coordinators will not meet with any parents about a coach until the parents have met with, or tried to meet with that coach, unless there are legal privacy issues at stake. **f)** The athletic coordinators will not meet with any parents about a coach without allowing that coach the opportunity to be present at the meeting, unless there are legal privacy issues at stake.

Community/School Service: Athletes/teams may be required to participate in community/school related service activities at various times throughout the school year.

School Issued Equipment: Athletes will be issued equipment for practice and games. Keeping up with the equipment and taking proper care of it is the responsibility of the athlete and they will be held financially responsible for any lost equipment based upon the head coach's price list for that sport. Failure to properly compensate for any lost equipment may result in a suspension from participation in any athletic contests until restitution has been made. **At NO time are athletes to take any equipment home for any reason (this includes practice jerseys and shorts, etc) Laundry will be done on a daily basis at the school. *If athlete is caught taking equipment without permission, the athlete will be subject to running 2 miles for each item they take home.***

Any athlete removed from athletic program will be eligible to apply for reinstatement into program the following year. Each case will be reviewed by A.D., Principal, and Superintendent.