

Fruitvale ISD Athletic Policy Handbook



2026-2027

Mission Statement

The mission of the Fruitvale ISD Athletic Department is to develop and maintain an athletic program by providing an essential part of the education process to strive for excellence while promoting a competitive environment, equitable opportunities, competency, and sportsmanship.

Vision Statement

The vision of the Fruitvale ISD Athletic Department is to empower our athletic program by recognizing its excellence in competition, sportsmanship, and academic achievement. Our athletic program will achieve this by creating a culture of hard work, discipline, dedication, and perseverance amongst the student-athletes, coaches, staff, and community.

Introduction

The Fruitvale ISD Athletics Handbook is a reference guide for coaches, student-athletes, parents, and the community concerning the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Fruitvale ISD. Participation in athletics or any extracurricular activity provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences to benefit everyone involved. A student who chooses to participate in athletics chooses to develop self-discipline and put the program or team above their personal ambitions. Athletics is a privilege, not a right. We strive for excellence and do not want our student-athletes to compromise proper training methods or accept mediocrity.

Expectation:

For any successful athletic department to run smoothly, all students, coaches, teachers, and administrators must be aware of all Board approved rules and guidelines that apply to the athletic department. Therefore, this handbook has been prepared to outline the athletic policy of the Fruitvale ISD. This handbook adheres to the UIL rules and guidelines. Members of the community, student-athletes, and the parents/guardians of those student-athletes are encouraged to read and become familiar with the contents of this athletic policy.

While this handbook cannot cover every instance that will arise in the day-to-day activities of the athletic program, it represents a way to inform all those involved in the athletic program about the guidelines that will govern their participation. The coaches of the individual sports reserve the right to issue additional sport-specific requirements as needed. Please be advised that participation in this program depends on strict adherence to the policies in this handbook. Communication is the key to resolving most conflicts. Therefore, all policy questions need to be directed to the head coach of the sport in question. If the head coach fails to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, all questions must then be presented to the Athletic Director.

Participation: Student-athletes are encouraged to participate in as many sports and extracurricular activities as they desire, but it is not a requirement to participate in multiple sports.

Strength and Conditioning: All athletes are required to participate in strength and conditioning. All in season high school athletes will be required to lift two days a week before school, if you miss this workout you will make up the workout during the athletic period. All junior high athletes will participate in one day of afterschool workouts, but most will be done in the morning during the athletic period.

Joining/Quitting A Sport: Student-athletes are expected to complete the entire season of every sport they participate in. Students who choose not to join a sport on the day it begins will be given a 5-day grace period to decide whether they want to participate. After five days, it will be up to the Athletic Director to allow an athlete to join a sport.

Students who withdraw from a sport after the initial grace period of 10 school days must recognize and abide by the following:

- Students may not start any other Fruitvale ISD sports activity until the season of the sport the student quit or was dismissed from is finished. This policy applies to any freshman, JV or Varsity member. The season consists of regularly scheduled games and all playoff games at the Varsity level.
- Students must complete running 20 supervised miles before the start date of the next sport in which they intend to participate, or within 10 days.

Athletic Re-Entry: Student athletes who get out of the athletic period and want to get back in the next school year, must attend 75% of summer workouts, or run 20 supervised miles before the start of school, and have passed all classes the previous nine weeks.

Athletic Period: All athletes that wish to participate in athletics must be in the athletic period at the beginning of the school year if they wish to participate in sports that year. Students will not be allowed to join the athletic period in the second semester and be allowed to participate in a spring sport. Students who join in the second semester will not be eligible to participate until the next fall. The exception is for new students who transfer in and enroll later 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. The only time an athlete can get their schedule changed to get out of athletics is within the first 5 days of a semester.

- Students who wish to participate in football, volleyball, basketball, baseball, softball, powerlifting, or track must be in the athletic period. If an athlete participates in cross country, it will be the decision of the athletic director whether they allow a student to participate who is not in the athletic period due to their academic schedule.

Attendance: Attendance in academic classes is of the utmost importance. Students who owe time for excessive absences to the district may not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity until the time has been made up for the owed time. The campus attendance committee may waive time if there are extenuating circumstances such as medical absences. For students to participate in practice or a game, they must be present during ADA time and the athletic period or have an excused absence on the day of the event.

Attendance on Game Day: 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 may result in removal from the team and/or the athletic program. Athletics is a class; 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.

Makeup: The amount of make-up work will be determined by the head coach for that sport. The head coach will determine if an absence is excused or unexcused. Depending on the circumstances, habitual absences may result in removal from the sport and possibly the athletic program. Grade ineligibility and game suspensions are not an excuse for missing team practice or meetings.

Eligibility/Grades: Students will follow the FISD grading policy and must meet the UIL eligibility guidelines to participate in any sport or extracurricular activity. Coaches will do their best to monitor grades weekly. Any athlete who fails two consecutive nine weeks may be removed from the athletic period.

- Grades of 100 will not be given automatically. Each student-athlete will begin every nine weeks with a 100 and maintain that grade by dressing out and participating every day. If a student-athlete dresses out but refuses to participate satisfactorily in all workouts and drills assigned for that day, it could result in a grade penalty.
- Athletes who are failing a class or classes may not be allowed to miss all or part of the school day to attend a contest or tournament without permission from the principal.

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- practice, games etc. Student-athletes must remove piercings to participate in athletic events. All school dress code rules apply; athletes must meet the additional standards above to represent the school district.

Behavior: 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.

- 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. The coaching staff or Athletic Director will determine consequences on an individual incident basis.
- **Respect:** Student-athletes are always expected to show respect toward coaches, teachers, administrators, all school personnel, and sports officials. Proper manners should always be displayed, and confrontations always avoided. Appropriate

disciplinary action will be determined by the coaching staff or Athletic Director for incidents of disrespect. Disrespect will not be tolerated, and continual problems in respect may result in removal from the athletic program, no matter who you are or how good of an athlete you are.

Prohibited Conduct: Alcohol, Drugs, Paraphernalia and other prohibited items

****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
5. Video or picture evidence reviewed by administration
6. Failure of school drug test

Participation by a student/athlete in 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/Drugs: 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:** For a student to regain eligibility for extracurricular activities:

1. Parents and students are required to meet with the Athletic Director and 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 45 days if the student provides proof of at least 4 sessions within 30 days of drug counseling from a certified drug counselor approved by Fruitvale ISD.
3. The student must test at every school-provided opportunity for one 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. Parents and students are required to meet with the Athletic Director and campus principal.
2. The student must serve a suspension from all extracurricular activities (tryouts included) for 180 days. The suspension will be reduced to 120 days if the student provides proof of a passed drug test from a certified drug counselor approved by Fruitvale ISD. The student must pass a hair follicle

that the student will be required to pay for. The student must test at every school-provided opportunity for the remainder of his 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/Vape: If a student-athlete is caught with or proven to have used tobacco on school premises or at school-sponsored activities. Vapes will fall under the tobacco consequences unless additional substances are found in the vape. The student-athlete will face the following consequences:

- **First Offense:** The athlete will face an automatic 1-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 the athletic period and normal practice time.
- **Second Offense:** The athlete will face an automatic 3-game suspension and must complete 15 miles of running before participating in another game/contest. the student-athlete must schedule a time with the Athletic Director to complete the running outside of the athletic period and normal practice time.
- **Third Offense and beyond:** The athlete will face an automatic 5-game suspension and must complete 25 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 the athletic period and normal practice time.

Other prohibited items: These items include but are not limited to: All forms of caffeine boosted drinks, caffeine enhanced energy pouches, and any other type of energy drinks.

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 states that bodybuilding, muscle enhancement, or increased muscle bulk or strength through steroid use by a person 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 anabolic steroids in their bodies 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.uil texas.org. The steroid testing results will be confidential to the extent required by law. Failure to provide accurate and truthful information could subject students to penalties as determined by UIL.

Photos/Videos: No photos/videos are to be taken in the locker rooms.

- **1st offense:** one-game suspension for that sport at the time of the offense. Also, the student will not be allowed to take their phone into the locker room and will turn their phone into a coach before entering the locker room.
- **2nd offense:** two-game suspension for that sport at the time of the offense. The student will not be allowed to take their phone into the locker room and will turn their phone in to a coach before entering the locker room.
- **3rd offense:** The athlete will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season and run 10 miles before participating in the next sport. The athlete will not be able to have their phone in any locker room for the remainder of the year.

The following constitutes picture/video taking in the locker room:

1. An admission by the student of taking a photo or video in the locker room.
2. Their parent/guardian reports them taking a picture in the locker room.
3. They post the picture/video on their social media site-the district needs to confirm that it was done by the student and not a peer who picked up the phone.
4. Any other evidence that proves the student was responsible for the picture being taken, such as holding the phone in the picture of a selfie or being in the photo and it is posted to social media.

ISS: Students who are assigned ISS will not be allowed on the school campus after hours to practice, participate or attend any contest on the day they are in ISS. Any missed practices will count as an unexcused absence, which requires all makeup work.

Running: Running for consequences must be completed non-stop. Once a student stops, the session is done for the day. Students are required to run at least 1 mile per session, and all running must be completed. All running must be completed before resuming play.

Parents/Guardians: 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 the meeting becomes hostile at any time for either party, the meeting will end. e) The athletic director 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. Parents/Guardians are not allowed to approach a coach, officials, or Athletic Director before, during, or after a practice or game.

Chain of Command: The Chain of Command should be followed by coaches, participants, and parents/guardians.

1. Head Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Superintendent

Injuries: Injuries or illnesses that could hamper an athlete's participation 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 the athletic period if the athlete is in the off-season. Due to UIL Rules and liability purposes, Parents/Guardians and fans are not allowed onto the field or court in the event of an injury unless given permission by the coach, Administrator on Duty, or Athletic Director.

Communication: Student-athletes are expected to contact the head coach of their particular sport before any and all absences, excused or unexcused, or may face disciplinary action.

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. It is up to the Head Coach if the Parents/Guardian can sign the athlete out after games/tournaments to ride home with them. Parents/Guardians must give the head coach at least 24 hours of notice in writing if someone else is to sign their child out after a game or tournament.

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 athlete's responsibility, and they will be held financially responsible for any lost equipment based on 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 daily at the school. If an athlete is caught taking equipment without permission, the athlete will be subject to running 2 miles for each item they take home.

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 only one major award from the school during their high school career, commonly a letter jacket. To the letter, you must be on a varsity team and satisfy the requirements below. After receiving one major award, the respective coach shall give the athlete certificates or similar awards each time the athlete letters in a sport. The coach of that sport must recommend the athlete. In making recommendations for varsity awards, the coach must consider 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 Director.
4. Academics: finish the season academically eligible and in good standing.
5. Other: the head coach may establish other criteria.

The letter award will be given every year for every varsity sport where 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 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.

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 Campus Principal. The athlete and/or their parent/guardian will be allowed to state his/her case in the hearing. Athletics is a privilege and not a right for students at FISH. ***Any athlete removed from the athletic program will be eligible to apply for reinstatement into the program the following year. Each case will be reviewed by the Athletic Director, Campus Principal, and Superintendent.***

Because circumstances vary, the athletic director with approval from the superintendent may need to have some ability to amend the policy in the best interest of all students in the program.

FISD Student-Athlete Graduation Stole Requirements

These requirements ensure that student-athletes who have dedicated significant time and effort to their sport, especially during their senior year, are recognized and celebrated for their achievements alongside their academic accomplishments during graduation ceremonies.

1. **Minimum Two Years of Participation:**

- All student-athletes seeking eligibility for a student-athlete graduation stole must have actively participated in their sport for a minimum of two academic years.

2. **Senior Year Participation:**

- At least one of the required two years of participation must occur during the student-athlete's senior year.

3. **Verification of Participation:**

- Participation in the sport will be verified through official team rosters, athletic program records, or other documented proof of involvement.

4. **Good Academic Standing:**

- Student-athletes must be in good academic standing by the end of their senior year.

6. **Presentation of Stole:**

- Upon approval, eligible student-athletes will be presented with the student-athlete graduation stole during the HS Athletic Banquet and to be worn at the graduation ceremony.

In order to receive a graduation stole you must finish your senior year in the athletic period and program having met your two sport requirements for that year. If you graduate early you must have finished your year in the athletic program while completing the two sport requirement.

CHEER APPENDIX

PARTICIPATION

Cheerleading will follow under the athletic handbook guidelines and expectations. Therefore, all policies in the athletic handbook apply to cheerleaders, mascots, and Cheer Sponsor.

PURPOSE

- To promote school spirit throughout the year.
- To encourage good sportsmanship among the fans.
- To uphold positive relationships between schools during all athletic events.
- To establish the high personal ideals and character expected of a High School Cheerleader in the Fruitvale Independent School District.

TRYOUT QUALIFICATIONS

- **Grade Eligibility:** Any student going into the 7th grade through senior year may be permitted to try out for cheerleader. A candidate must meet UIL requirements for passing, or UIL required improvement to passing at 3 weeks in order to try out.
- **Attendance:** Students must meet the 90% attendance rule for all classes, they will not be able to participate until all time is made up to meet this rule. Waivers may apply for school activity absences or medical absences waived by the principal.
- **Parent/Guardian Permission:** A permission slip explaining estimated expenses and other constitutional requirements must be signed by the parents or legal guardians and returned to the school prior to tryouts.
- **Tryouts:** Demonstrate competency of tryout material at the discretion of the coach and judged by outside judges. Teacher evaluations will be turned in at the time the coach sets.

TRYOUT PROCEDURES AND JUDGING

- **Junior High:** The number of cheerleaders on a squad will be a maximum of 10 members plus 1 mascot. Minimum number of five to have a squad at tryouts, but once established the squad will remain together.
- **High School:** The number of cheerleaders on a squad will be a maximum of 14 members plus 1 mascot. Minimum number of five to have a squad at tryouts, but once established the squad will remain together.
- Tryouts will be held in the spring. Those trying out will perform as a squad and as an individual in front of the judges. Numbers will be drawn so that all participants will have an equal opportunity

before the judges. Tryout material and specific format will be at the discretion of the coach.

SUMMER CAMP

- Summer camp is required for all cheerleaders, cheerleaders must attend all of the summer camp.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Prior to try-outs, parents must attend a general meeting which will outline cheerleading duties and responsibilities. The parents must sign a form accepting financial responsibility for cheerleading expenses.
- Financial Responsibilities: All items not provided by the school district including but not limited to:
 - Camp Clothes
 - Shoes
 - Practice fees
 - Supplies for pep rallies, etc.

MAKEUP AND CONSEQUENCES

- Make up for missing practices, pep rallies, games and consequences for missed practices, uniform, behavior will follow the athletic handbook and be pre-determined by the Cheer sponsor.

CHEERLEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

- ☐ Cheer is responsible for send-off for all playoff individuals and teams.
- ☐ Required to cheer at all home football, and district basketball games. Required to cheer at all sport playoff games and may attend as many away games as sponsor allows but a minimum of two away games.

UIL link: <https://www.uiltexas.org/policy/constitution/athletics>

Athlete UIL Code of Conduct: <https://www.uiltexas.org/files/athletics/manuals/sportsmanship-manual.pdf>

Parent Information & Code of Conduct:
https://www.uiltexas.org/files/athletics/manuals/Parent_Info_Handbook_22-23.pdf

