

Nacogdoches ISD Athletic Department



Parent and Student-Athlete Handbook
2022-2023

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your son or daughter has expressed a desire to participate in the Athletic Program in Nacogdoches ISD. It is the belief of the Athletic Department and coaching staff that athletics can do more for your child than teach him/her to play the sport he/she has chosen.

We believe athletics builds strength of mind, body, and character. We also value the important role that athletics and other extra-curricular activities play in the total education and development of young men and women.

Nacogdoches Dragon Athletics believe that strength of character is the foundation upon which great TEAMS are built. The student-athletes who chose to represent NHS all except the responsibility the goes along with being a Dragon athlete. They are constantly being monitored by their peers, teachers, and the community. As a result, athletes must have strength of character and the role they have assumed, as they experience both success and adversity.

We have established the following set of guidelines to be followed by all athletes in Nacogdoches ISD.

ALL ATHLETES, REGARDLESS OF SPORT, MUST:

1. Abide by all University Interscholastic League (UIL) rule specifications and abide by local athletic policy.
2. Attend every practice session and athletic contest unless ill or emergency situations. (Parents or athlete must call in if the athlete is not attending a practice session.)
3. At all times, respond to every situation with dignity and class.
4. Abide by all NISD, Athletic Department, and Campus guidelines and policies.
5. Maintain high academic standards through efficient time management.

Violation of these policies will result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken against the student and could result in his/her removal from the athletic program in Nacogdoches ISD. Therefore, we ask your cooperation in motivating your son or daughter to observe these rules to ensure that he or she will receive the maximum benefit from the program.

Enclosed is an information handbook for Dragon Athletics, which includes guidelines and policies for the student-athletes. We have discussed these rules with your son or daughter. Please read and discuss them again with your son or daughter. GO Dragons!

Sincerely,



Darren Allman
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Mission of Nacogdoches ISD Athletic Department

To provide a caring and challenging environment that promotes excellence, fosters integrity, and encourages each student to reach his or her academic, extracurricular, and social potential.

Philosophy of Nacogdoches ISD Athletics

The Nacogdoches Independent School District believes that a dynamic athletic program is vital to the educational development of the student.

The Nacogdoches ISD Athletic Department will provide a variety of experiences to enhance the development of positive habits and attitudes that will prepare students for adulthood.

Nacogdoches Athletics will function as an integral part of the total curriculum. It will offer opportunities for growth in the development of positive relationships, self-confidence, and servant leadership.

The Nacogdoches ISD athletic program is based on the premise that athletes are students first, and that athletic participation is a privilege rather than a right. Students learn teamwork and accountability. They also learn to deal with success and to overcome adversity.

The athletic program in Nacogdoches ISD is structured very intentionally, with specific goals in mind for athletes at each level. All athletes are required to properly represent NISD on and off the field, or they will not be afforded the privilege of representing NISD in interscholastic competition.

At the middle school level our primary goal is to make the athletic experience for the students enjoyable. It is a time to focus on participation and repetition. Athletes should gain confidence through learning the fundamentals of the sport. All athletes who try out and make a middle school team, are in attendance daily at practice, and are eligible academically will participate in every single game. Winning is important, but it's not the only objective, especially at this level. Middle school students can change dramatically in a short time. Giving them opportunities to compete and grow, while making them ALL feel important is the focus during this time.

As the students move up through our program into **high school**, we begin preparing them to compete at the varsity level. Our freshmen and junior varsity teams are centered on player development. While the percentage of playing time may vary, we attempt to ensure each student has an opportunity to participate in all games. We never minimize the importance of winning; however, the final score is less important than facilitating player growth during this time.

At the **varsity level we play to win championships**. Playing time is at the varsity head coach's discretion-driven by the intent to win. However, Head Coaches are expected to develop a plan to get as many athletes into a contest as possible without risk of losing the contest. The Head Coach is expected to communicate this plan each week with the staff and the players involved.

U.I.L. Sports Offered by Nacogdoches ISD: HIGH SCHOOL (9-12)

Baseball
Basketball (Boys and Girls)
Cross Country (Boys and Girls)
Football
Golf (Boys and Girls)
Soccer (Boys and Girls)
Softball
Sports Medicine (Boys and Girls)
Swimming (Boys and Girls)
Tennis (Boys and Girls)
Track (Boys and Girls)
Volleyball
Water Polo (Boys and Girls)

U.I.L. Sports Offered by Nacogdoches ISD: MIDDLE SCHOOLS (7-8)

Basketball (Boys and Girls)
Cross Country (Boys and Girls)
Football
Track (Boys and Girls)
Volleyball

Please note: In the middle schools, all sports practice before or after school when in-season. Due to coaching staff and schedule constraints, some middle school sports only practice after school when in-season (track). The middle school athletic class period is designed to be general Athletic Development class when sports are not in-season, and all student-athletes are encouraged to participate in the class even if his/her sport is only practiced before or after school.

Developmental programs have recently been implemented at the middle school level for baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, boys and girls tennis, and boys and girls swimming. A developmental program for Boys and girls golf is planned to be added in 2023. These programs are not currently funded by NISD, so participants may be required to purchase uniforms and other needed equipment.

WHAT WE VALUE

- We value ACADEMICS and athletics as compliments to each other.
- We value championships-but value DEVELOPING CHAMPIONS much more.
- We value RELATIONSHIPS.
- We value TEAM over the individual.
- We value CHARACTER.
- We value THE PROCESS.

Winning Is Important

Winning is important and trying to win is essential. Without the passionate pursuit of victory, much of the enjoyment, as well as the educational and spiritual value of sports, will be lost.

Honor Is More Important

We will not trivialize winning or the desire to win. To dismiss victory by saying, "It's only a game" can be disrespectful to athletes and coaches who devote their time to being the best they can be in the pursuit of championships. However, we will also not minimize a sport's ability to enhance an education, build lifelong relationships, teach valuable lessons, and uplift a school and a community.

Ethics Are Essential to True Victory

We will value winning but will emphasize that adherence to ethical standards and sportsmanship in the honorable pursuit of victory is essential to winning in its true form. It is one thing to be declared the winner, it is another to really win. Our goal is to leave an impression on opponents that causes them to fear and respect the Nacogdoches Dragons.

There Is No True Victory Without Honor

Cheating and bad sportsmanship are not options and will not be accepted. These acts rob victory of meaning and replace the high ideals of sport and TEAM with the petty values of selfishness.

Ethics and Sportsmanship Are Ground Rules

Nacogdoches Dragons will be committed to principles of ethics and sportsmanship. The responsibility to demonstrate and develop good character will never be overcome by the desire to win.

Benefits of Sports Come from the Competition and Outcome

The vital lessons and great value of sports are a result of the process and determination involved in trying to become the best you are capable of becoming. Outcomes of contests are a big part of this journey, as invaluable lessons are learned from both wins and losses. The discipline involved in improving after a win is equally as valuable as learning to respond with resolve to improve following a loss.

Athletic Department Objectives

- Promote improvement through self-evaluation and honest-respectful communication.
- Attract, hire, and retain exemplary coaches.
- Develop consistency and unity throughout the athletic department.
- Increase parent and community trust and support of the Athletic Department.
- Increase faculty/staff awareness and involvement with the Athletic Department.
- Maintain a high level of expectation for success while consistently finding ways to improve.
- Utilize the athletics platform to promote academic and social success for each student-athlete.
- Increase scholarship and/or admission opportunities for student-athletes.
- Promote athletic programs and their successes-both in and out of competition.
- Win championships with class and character.
- Win the UIL Lone Star Cup.
- Consistently communicate gratitude and affirmation to all who support and contribute.
- Represent Nacogdoches ISD and the Nacogdoches community with humble dignity and class.
- NEVER get out-coached or out hustled.

The Parents' Role

Being the parent of a Nacogdoches Dragon athlete can be a great experience. Nacogdoches ISD offers many different sports. Parents' participation with their son or daughter can be (and should be) an enjoyable experience. Parent support is very important to the athletes and the program.

Steps to becoming a Championship Parent

1. **Be positive** - Being on a school team is quite an accomplishment. Do not let playing time dictate the athlete's happiness. Celebrate the fact he/she was good enough to make a team. When things are not going well for your son/daughter or for the team is when parents need to be most positive and supportive.
2. **Be supportive of coaching staff in front of your son/daughter.** Nothing can injure teamwork faster than athletes doubting the capabilities of their coaches. The coaches are trying to do their best at every moment. If you have concerns, follow the NISD Athletic Department communication process. Our staff will listen, appreciate your confidentiality, and give you a timely response.
3. **Be part of a parent network** - Whether you are part of a booster club or not, very special relationships can be fostered over the careers of athletes by socializing with other parents. This socialization can take place at games, after games, at team dinners, etc. Parents need support too! Be positive with each other and do not hesitate to remind each other about always remaining positive. If you hear a "rumor" that concerns you about any athletic issue, call a NISD coach to verify or clarify what you've heard. Don't perpetuate a rumor by passing it on or by remaining silent about an issue that could affect a program.
4. **Booster parents** - We appreciate the fact that you are an active booster parent and supportive of our total program. Don't feel you are obligated to donate funds or equipment to our athletic program for it to be successful. While we have financial needs from time to time, our school historically has made a strong commitment to athletics. Your attendance at our sporting events and encouraging other fans to come and watch our athletic teams perform would be of tremendous support. Booster parents are also encouraged to be involved in ongoing booster meetings and projects for all sports. The Nacogdoches Athletic Booster Club is for all NISD sports in grades 7-12. Your membership and participation in NABC are very much appreciated.
5. **Winning and losing** - It shall be our staff's goal to pursue excellence in the school's athletic program, through motivating students to achieve to the best of their ability, while honoring themselves with their talents. Winning, under a positive goal-oriented environment, can be a natural and enjoyable outgrowth of this attitude. Everyone enjoys a well-played victory, but a "Winning is Everything" philosophy cannot become the controlling force. Too much is sacrificed when that philosophy is dominant. The philosophy should be to be honorable in our attitudes and skills and whether we win the physical victory or not, we have still won the game of life.
6. **College Scholarships** - Having lofty expectations for our children is a normal and healthy goal. In striving for these expectations, we must also be realistic. Not everyone can receive a college scholarship, nor should your child's athletic success be measured by the number of offers he or she receives. We have received our share of scholarships based on all the hard work you, the athletes and the coaches have put in. Our coaches will help individuals and parents in whatever way they can to find an opportunity for those who wish to pursue collegiate careers. Coaches will not, however, recommend a school at which the athlete cannot potentially be successful.
7. **Important:** The success of our athletic program is not dictated by the athlete alone. Our school's teams, students and adult supporters should work together. If the contributions of either are less than total, everyone stands to lose. We have a tremendous amount of support for our athletes by the coaches, administration, and the school board. We thank you for your support and participation.

CORE PRINCIPLES

- **Coach, Athlete, Parent Are In Partnership**
- **Partnerships are Built on Honest, Open Communication**
- **Communication is Two-Way and Based Upon Mutual Respect**
- **Disputes Are Resolved According to Specific Written Procedures**

Each section reflects what each constituent – Coach, Athlete, Parent – expects from the other.

Parent's Expectations of Coach:

1. Treat my athlete fairly.
2. Let me know if my athlete is experiencing any problems (physical, social, emotional).
3. Clearly communicate your expectations of me and my athlete.
4. Keep in mind that as parents we identify with our athlete's achievements.
5. Be a good role model.
6. Protect my athlete from bullying or social ostracism by cliques.

Coach's Expectations of Parents:

1. Recognize my commitment and that I am not doing it for the money.
2. Offer praise for accomplishments and support for my efforts.
3. Keep me informed of any home issues that might affect your athlete.
4. Follow established grievance guidelines when there is a problem.
5. Be an enthusiastic and respectful fan at games.
6. Support your athlete's efforts and commitment to the program.
7. Monitor your athlete's schedule to help avoid over involvement in diverse activities.
8. Screen your athlete from conflicting input from outside coaches and experts.
9. Do not gossip or complain about me at home, in the community and in social media.
10. Do not substitute your agenda for your athlete.

Coach's Expectations of Athlete:

1. Set realistic personal goals for yourself and follow them.
2. Be honest about your ability level.
3. Let me know if you have an injury or are ill.
4. Understand that my feedback on your performance is constructive.
5. Take pride in your team.
6. Support your fellow athletes.
7. Let me know if you are having academic problems or issues with peers.
8. Let me know if something is issues or concerns exist in your home or personal life that might affect your participation.
9. Discuss with me if you are receiving conflicting advice about your performance from other coaches or your parents.
10. Show respect for my position as a coach and the need to make decisions that are in the best interest of the team.
11. Refrain from any use of illegal substances including alcohol.
12. Always display good sportsmanship to opponents and referees/judges.
13. Let me know if you are having conflicts with the scheduling demands of a job or other school related activities.

Athlete's Expectations of Coach:

1. Treat me fairly.
2. Do not play favorites.
3. Do not embarrass me in front of my teammates.
4. Understand that the sport/team might not be as important to me as to you.
5. Understand the pressure I am under from my parents.
6. Understand the conflicts with school work and other activities.
7. Understand that my outside job is necessary for me and my family.
8. Praise me when I am doing something good.
9. Make sure that I am not bullied or harassed by cliques on the team.
10. Help me set realistic goals for myself.
11. Be there for me if I need advice about something personal in my life.

Athlete's Expectations of Parents:

1. Allow me to follow my dreams and goals in athletics.
2. Don't live your unfilled dreams through me.
3. Find a way to support me without undue pressure.
4. Show the coach respect.
5. Have positive communication with my coach and if issues arise, follow the adopted process.
6. Understand the conflicts I have with schoolwork and other activities.
7. Be a good listener, especially when you don't agree with everything I say.

NISD Athletics Complaints/Concerns Process and Guidelines

Our goals are to facilitate communication between player and coach, then coach and parent/student and to address concerns in a collaborative, effective manner. If you are a student or parent who has a concern or complaint about a sport, coach, or coaching style, please follow the prescribed CORE PRINCIPLES PACT process and follow the recommended UIL guidelines.

Coaches cannot address a problem unless they know that a problem exists. Most of the time, problems stem between coaches and parents from a miscommunication or misinterpretation of an issue. Therefore, we ask that your child talk first with the coach and address the problem directly. If the outcome of that meeting is not satisfactory, we ask that the parent and student meet with the coach.

The NISD Athletic Department is here to work alongside parents to encourage an enjoyable experience for the student-athlete in NISD Athletics. We will do whatever it takes in working with parents to achieve that goal. When an issue or conflict arises, please give due diligence, and follow the department communication protocol.

Remember the "24 hour" rule: Please wait 24 hours before approaching a coach either in person, by phone or through email. This allows all involved a "cooling down" period and provides for a time for reflection.

Again, we are committed to effective communication and problem solving and look forward to meeting with students and parents to build and maintain top caliber athletic programs in NISD. We ask and encourage you to follow the procedures outlined below.

~PARENT / COACH COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES ~
PORTIONS REPRINTED FROM THE U.I.L. PARENT INFORMATION MANUAL

Both parenting and coaching are very difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding between coaches and parents, both are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a more positive experience for everyone. Parents, you have the right to know, and understand the expectations placed on them and their children. Coaches have the right to know that if parents have a concern; they will discuss it with the coach at the appropriate time and place.

Communication, you as a parent should expect from his/her child's coach:

1. Coach's philosophy
2. Expectations the coach has for your son or daughter, as well as other players on the team
3. Locations and times of practices and contests
4. Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment needed, school & team rules, off-season expectations
5. Procedures that will be followed if your child becomes injured during participation

Communication coaches can expect from you as parents:

1. Concerns regarding your son or daughter expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place.
2. Specific concerns regarding the coach's philosophy and/or expectations
3. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance

As your child becomes involved in interscholastic athletics, he/she will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. As we all experience in life, there are times when outcomes are not as we had hoped. This will happen in athletic competitions and create lifelong learning opportunities for your child and the coach. Discussion and honest communication are needed at these times.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with a coach:

1. The mental and physical treatment of your child
2. What your child needs to do to improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your child is not playing as much as you may hope. Coach's make decisions based on what they believe and know is in the best interests of all students participating. Based on careful review of the items above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other items, such as those listed next, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues that are not appropriate for discussion with your child's coach:

1. How much playing time each athlete is getting.
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling.
4. Any situation that deals with other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. These are not discouraged, as it is important for each party to have a clear understanding of the others' position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure is suggested to help promote resolution to the issue.

COMPLAINT/CONCERN COMMUNICATION PROCESS

If you have a concern to discuss with the coach, the following procedure should be followed:

Informal

Telephone the coach or send him/her an email about your concerns and allow the coach two (2) school days to discuss the matter with you and offer a solution. Please do not approach a coach during a game or practice. If both parties agree that it is necessary, a face to face meeting will be held.

Step 1

If the informal interaction does not resolve the issue, put your concerns in writing (email or letter) to the coach with an explanation of why the informal process did not solve the problem. You will receive a written reply from the coach offering a solution within three (3) school days.

Step 2

1. If the Step 1 response does not resolve the issue, within three (3) school days of receipt of the response from the coach put your reasons for disagreement with the offered solution in detail and in writing to the Nacogdoches ISD Athletic Director.
2. Attach the Step 1 response from the coach.
3. The Nacogdoches ISD Athletic Director will conduct an independent investigation of the complaint and contact you to schedule a meeting, if needed, to seek resolution of the issue.
4. Within three (3) school days from receipt of your request the Nacogdoches ISD Athletic Director will send a written reply to the complaint/concern.

Notes:

- *Contact information for the coach and athletic director can be found on the NISD website.*
- *Complaint/Concern Defined: A complaint (or concern) is an oral or written communication questioning the conduct or failure to act by a coach or other athletic department staff in which the athlete's parent (legal guardian) feels aggrieved or dissatisfied.*
- *If the complaint/concern is in regard to a potential criminal act or immoral behavior by the coach, initiate your complaint in writing at Step 2.*
- *NISD Athletics Core Principles does not replace the district's formal grievance process. For more information about the formal grievance process, please consult with the athletic director.*

~ UIL and Nacogdoches ISD BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OF SPECTATORS ~

1. Remember that you are at the contest to support and yell for your team, and to enjoy the skill and competition-not to intimidate or ridicule the other team or its fans.
2. Remember that school athletics are a learning experience for students and that mistakes are sometimes made.
3. Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes, and as people, just as you would praise a student working in the classroom.
4. A ticket is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others or be generally obnoxious.
5. Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
6. Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups.
7. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student-athlete and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
8. Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
9. Refrain from the use of any controlled substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before, during, and after the game on or near the site of the event (i.e., tailgating).
10. Use only cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
11. Be a positive role model at events through your own actions and by censuring those around you whose behavior is unbecoming.
12. Parents and spectators should be aware that the school can (and should) remove them from the premises and can prohibit them from attending future contests due to undesirable behaviors.
13. Game officials can ask that school administrators have unruly fans removed from a contest facility.
14. There is no such thing as a “right” to attend interscholastic athletics. Interscholastic athletics are considered a “privilege” and the spectator who avails themselves of it is expected to conduct himself or herself accordingly.
15. Keep in mind that you are a guest of the school, and that while winning is certainly an admirable goal, it is hollow if it comes at the expense of morals, ethics, and just plain common sense.

The school is responsible for the behavior of their spectators. The school district can be and will be punished for actions of patrons in violation of UIL standards and rules.

Nacogdoches ISD Athletics

Student-Athlete Code of Conduct

Extra-curricular Activities, Clubs, and Organizations

All student-athletes are expected to adhere to the Nacogdoches ISD Code of Conduct as it applies to school-related or school-sponsored activities. Students involved in extracurricular and co-curricular activities are expected to exhibit the highest standards of ethics and conduct. Nacogdoches ISD students, staff, and parents view participation in these extracurricular or co-curricular activities as a privilege and not a right. Therefore, the teachers, sponsors, coaches, and directors of these activities may develop and enforce codes of conduct that will take into consideration both school-related misconduct and conduct that occurs outside of the school's usual jurisdiction, regardless of time or location. This would include any misconduct that would reflect negatively upon Nacogdoches ISD. Additionally, the Athletic Department has imposed the following uniform consequences for misconduct by students involved in extracurricular or co-curricular activities.

In-School Suspension from School and Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular Consequences

Students who are in-school suspension will be suspended from participation in all extracurricular and co-curricular games and/or contests and team transportation during that suspension. They are allowed to participate in after school practice.

Out-of-School Suspension from School and Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular Consequences

Students who are suspended from school will be suspended from participation in all extracurricular and co-curricular games and/or contests and team transportation during that suspension. They **are not allowed to practice** until re-instated into school.

DAEP Placement for Offenses and Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular Consequences

Students who are placed in DAEP will be suspended from participation in all extracurricular and co-curricular activities, including, but not limited to practices, team meetings, games and/or contests, and team transportation while in DAEP. Upon completion of the DAEP placement, the head coach and athletic director will determine if additional suspension from athletic participation will be given. They **are not allowed to practice** until re-instated into school.

- **Head Coaches have the authority to remove, suspend, or correct any student-athlete whose conduct or actions are detrimental or distracting to the team and integrity of NISD Athletics. Any actions by the student-athlete in which the Head Coach deems necessary to inform the District's Athletic Director are cause for removal from the program. This decision will be at the discretion of the Head Coach with approval from the Athletic Director.**

Expulsion for Offenses

Students who are expelled are suspended from participating in all extra-curricular and co-curricular activities for the time frame they are expelled, including practice.

Non-School Related Offenses

Students who commit offenses outside of the school's jurisdiction may be suspended from participation by the campus administrator or athletic director. Before an extra-curricular or co-curricular activity sanction will be imposed pursuant to the *Student –Athlete Code of Conduct*, the campus administrator shall reasonably substantiate a preponderance of facts including information from a law enforcement agency. When such evidence of a non-school-related infraction is presented to the campus administrator, the student and parent(s) or guardians(s) will be notified of the offense. The student and/or parent(s) or guardian(s) will be afforded the opportunity for a meeting with the campus administrator and/or athletic director to discuss the offense and the penalties which have been rendered.

Non-School Related Level Offenses

A student who commits a non-school related offense will also be suspended from participation in all extracurricular and co-curricular games and/or contests and team transportation. The length of suspension will be left to the discretion of campus administration, the Head Coach, and the Athletic Director.

Completion of Suspension

All extra-curricular and co-curricular suspensions regardless of whether they are school-related or non-school-related are for "school days" and may continue into the next school year.

Additionally, while under suspension from activities, students may participate in any tryout, election, or process that would allow them to participate in an activity that begins after their suspension is lifted. (This does not apply to students serving out-of-school suspension, DAEP placement, or expulsion.) Students elected or selected for an organization or team while suspended from extracurricular activities may participate in games and/or contests and team transportation only after their days of suspension from extracurricular and co-curricular activities have been completed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, students will not be allowed to participate in any tryout, election, or other process that takes place while they are serving out-of-school suspension, DAEP placement, or expulsion.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY-NO PASS NO PLAY

A student shall be suspended from participation in after school athletics after a grade evaluation period (six weeks) in which the student received a grade lower than the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100 in any academic class. A suspension continues for at least three school weeks and is not removed during the school year until the conditions of reinstatement, described below, are met.

Until the suspension is removed or the school year ends, the District shall review the grades of a student suspended under these provisions at the end of each three-week period following the date on which the suspension began. At the time of a review, the suspension is removed if the student's grade in each class, other than an identified honors or advanced class, is equal to or greater than the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100. The principal and each of the student's teachers shall make the determination concerning the student's grades.

ATHLETIC PERIOD

The athletic period is considered a class period and will be treated as such. All students must attend their respective athletic period each day. Please make every effort to schedule appointments after school so that the student-athlete will not miss any class periods.

AWARDS/LETTERING POLICY

Each varsity sport has specific criteria for earning a varsity letter award. The head coach of each sport will provide each varsity team member with the lettering criteria. Earned letter awards (letter jackets, letter blankets) may be denied or taken up in the event a student-athlete violates the code of conduct or acts in a manner that embarrasses the Nacogdoches ISD Athletic Program.

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY DURING FIRST 6 WEEKS

The standards below determine academic eligibility for the first six weeks of the school year. Students in non-compliance may request a hardship appeal of their academic eligibility through the UIL.

- a. GRADES NINE AND BELOW. Students must have been promoted from the previous grade.
- b. SECOND YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL. Five accumulated credits that count toward state graduation requirements.
- c. THIRD YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL. Ten accumulated credits that count toward state graduation requirements or student must have earned at least five credits within the last twelve months that count toward state graduation requirements.
- d. FOURTH YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL. Fifteen accumulated credits that count toward state graduation requirements or student must have earned at least five credits within the last twelve months that count toward state graduation requirements.

DRESS CODE FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The principal, in cooperation with the sponsor, coach, or other person in charge of an extracurricular activity, may regulate the dress and grooming of students who participate in the activity. Students who violate dress and grooming standards established for such an activity may be removed or excluded from the activity for a period determined by the coach or athletic director and may be subject to other disciplinary action, as specified in the Student-Athlete Code of Conduct.

DUAL PARTICIPATION/NON-SCHOOL SANCTIONED PARTICIPATION/CLUB SPORTS

All athletes participating in Nacogdoches ISD Athletics make a commitment to the team, their teammates, and their school. Each program demands the dedication of time and energy of the athlete. Part of this commitment is to be a student first and strive for academic excellence.

Another integral part of that commitment is to place the Nacogdoches ISD Athletic team above participation in any non-school sanctioned activity and attend all practices and games scheduled by Nacogdoches ISD Coaches. If an athlete chooses to miss a Nacogdoches ISD Athletic practice or game because of participation in an activity not under the auspices of Nacogdoches ISD, the student-athlete will face consequences. Each varsity head coach will determine and communicate to the parents and student-athletes prior to the season the consequences for missing a Nacogdoches ISD athletic game or practice. Repeated absences may result in the student-athlete's removal from the team. Non-athletic Nacogdoches ISD school sanctioned activities do not fall under this policy. The Athletic Director may make an exception to this policy if the student-athlete is participating on a national or international level and representing the United States, i.e., US Olympic Team.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS- See UIL Constitution and Contest Rules/TEA-UIL Side by Side

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

Each athlete will be issued the proper equipment, workout uniform, and game uniform. In the event the equipment or uniform(s) is not returned at the end of the season, the athlete will have to reimburse the athletic department for the replacement cost. Per UIL rules (C&CR Section 441), no equipment or uniforms may be given to athletes to keep on a permanent basis.

HAZING

A person commits an offense if the person:

1. Engages in hazing.
2. Solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing.
3. Has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student in an educational institution, or firsthand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report that knowledge in writing to the principal, Superintendent, or designee.

"Hazing" means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off the campus of an educational institution directed against a student, by one person alone or acting with others, that endangers the mental or physical health or the safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization whose members are or include other students. The term includes:

1. Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity.
2. Any type of physical activity, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, and confinement in a small space, calisthenics, or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
3. Any activity involving consumption of a food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor,

drug, or other substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.

4. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation, or that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from entering or remaining registered in an educational institution, or that may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization or the institution rather than submit to acts described above.
5. Any activity that induces, causes, or requires the student to perform a duty or task that involves a violation of the Penal Code.

INJURIES

NISD employs two fully licensed Athletic Trainers. Athletic training is practiced by athletic trainers. They are health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to optimize activity and participation of patients and clients. Athletic training encompasses the prevention, diagnosis, and intervention of emergency, acute, and chronic medical conditions involving impairment, functional limitations, and disabilities. In Texas, athletic trainers practice under state statutes recognizing them as qualified health care professionals similar to physical therapists, occupational therapists, and other health care professionals.

Injuries must be reported to a Nacogdoches ISD athletic trainer(s) as soon as possible. Unless the injury is an extreme emergency, please contact the athletic trainer prior to visiting a doctor. Anytime a doctor is consulted for an injury, the student-athlete must present a written clearance for participation in athletics from the doctor before he/she is allowed to participate in NISD Athletics.

In many cases, the athletic trainer can save the student-athlete a trip to a doctor's office or a physical Therapist's office thus saving on co-pays, etc. Please consult with the athletic trainers on all injuries and/or prescribed rehabilitation of injury programs.

In some extreme cases, the district's extracurricular insurance plan may supplement the athlete's primary insurance if the injury occurred in athletics. However, certain steps and procedures must be followed to make a claim and it is imperative that the athletic trainer(s) is aware of the injury.

**Please review the UIL Safety and Health information and NISD Sports Medicine information page at the back of this manual.

MULTI-SPORT PARTICIPATION

Participation in multiple sports is encouraged. However, an athlete must complete the season in a sport before they move on to the next sport's season unless mutually agreed upon by the varsity head coaches and athletic director. Nacogdoches ISD coaches will make every effort to insure that a student may participate in as many activities as they wish.

PARTICIPATION

Each varsity head coach sets the criteria for participation on a team. The chance to participate on a school team may require a try-out period. Expectations for making a team or staying on a team will be communicated prior to the season and/or try-out period.

PHYSICAL EXAMS

Prior to participating in athletics, a current physical examination form and medical history form must be on file with the athletic trainer. This includes tryouts, participation in off season strength and conditioning programs, and competition. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Nacogdoches ISD requires the athletic physical exam to be completed on a bi-annual basis. The medical athletic history form, UIL acknowledgement, UIL steroid notification agreement, CISD data page, and emergency release form must be completed annually. All paperwork must be cleared by a Nacogdoches ISD Athletic Trainer prior to participating in athletics.

PLAYING TIME

Student-athletes in the Nacogdoches Independent School District Athletic Program earn playing time for game and scrimmage situations by, first, being a member in good standing of the school community. Second, a student-athlete must attend practice and work to the best of his/her ability. Third, a student-athlete must be a team player and execute the specific role assigned to him/her by the coach. Fourth, a student-athlete must always demonstrate a commitment to fair-play and sportsmanship. Finally, a student-athlete must support the team by contributing in a positive way to the team's learning environment. In other words, the student-athlete must focus on learning tasks and assignments and not disrupt other players.

At the middle school level every player will play in every game unless a player fails to maintain expectations regarding behavior, academics, or practice attendance. It is not required that each player play the same amount of time.

At the high school level, playing time is 100% at the coach's discretion and is never negotiable. More information regarding this subject can be found on our "Athletic Philosophy" page.

QUITTING A SPORT

Any athlete who quits a team or is dropped from the team will not be permitted to work out with another team until the previous sport season has been completed. If both varsity head coaches agree, the student athlete may move to the next sport before the end of the season. If an athlete quits, he/she will forfeit his/her award for the sport.

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

All athletes will participate in strength and conditioning activities. The strength and conditioning program is the period of time when athletes from any sport are not competing against other schools in a UIL sanctioned event in their chosen sport. An athlete who participates in only one sport will be required to participate in that sport's conditioning program. For example, an athlete may not quit the football team after football season in December and expect to get back on the team the next season in August. Athletes who participate in two or more sports will participate in their non-spring sport conditioning program. For example, a basketball player will go through a conditioning program before he/she participates in his/her spring sport (i.e., track). When a multi-sport athlete reaches the varsity level of competition the conditioning requirement will be waived according to the discretion of the Athletic Director and the head coaches of the sports involved.

SCHOOL HOLIDAY PARTICIPATION

While we realize the importance of school holidays, avoiding competition or practice on every school holiday sometimes is not feasible especially at the varsity level. Thus, the head coach of each sport may require participation on school holidays if the sport is in season with the following stipulations.

1. The student-athletes and parents are given notice prior to the start of the season.
2. The student-athletes and parents are given notice of the consequences if a practice is missed prior to the start of the season.
3. Competition and practices must be scheduled in accordance with UIL rules.

Please check with your coach prior to planning vacations or appointments.

TRANSPORTATION

Per NISD Athletic policy, athletes will be required to ride to and from an athletic event in transportation provided by the district. Only in extenuating circumstances will a student be allowed to ride to or from in a private vehicle. Parents/guardian may request a release in extenuating circumstances by notifying the Head Coach in writing at least one day prior to the trip. A release form may be obtained from the Athletic Office. If approved, the Athletic Office will notify the coach in charge of the trip.

TRY-OUTS/TEAM SELECTION

Coaches may conduct try-outs for participation on a team. Students must have a completed physical examination form on file with the athletic trainer prior to try-outs.

There are many factors that enter into the selection of members for all of our Dragon athletic teams. This process is probably one of, if not the toughest part of coaching. As coaches we try very hard to be fair in our judgments, as we fully realize the athlete's desire to be a member of our teams and the disappointments associated with not making a team or making the team the player had hoped to make.

It is impossible to make a purely objective evaluation, based entirely on the mastery of sport skills, or any other criteria. Too many other things must be considered in order to maintain a successful program. Consequently, subjective evaluations are basically opinions and are open to many arguments both for and against these evaluations. Please keep in mind that the coaches have been hired as professionals to make these types of decisions. Also realize that the coaches want to make the teams and the program the best they can possibly be and will not exclude players they believe will accomplish this in the end.

Coaches will make selections based on the following general guidelines:

1. Players that will make our teams better.
2. Players we believe have a realistic chance to play on a varsity team at some point in their career.
3. Players that fit the available positions for the greatest benefit of the team.

Players that understand two areas of evaluation for team placement and playing time: **effort and execution.**

Team Selection Process

Team selections are based on selection criteria (sometimes referred to as rubrics or assessments), which address the sport-specific skills and abilities needed to play the sport and, in some cases, performance benchmarks (i.e., the level of performance in the skills and abilities) required to make a given team. In keeping with the modified approach, however, it is the CISD Athletic Program's goal to maximize student participation in athletics. At present, many teams can accommodate the

large number of students who try out. However, this does not guarantee that every student who tries out for a team will be placed on a team. Past athletic success does not guarantee success in the future. Student-athletes must demonstrate a strong commitment to both team and player development every year before being placed on a team. Furthermore, once a player is selected for a team, it is his/her responsibility to maintain that commitment for continued team and individual improvement.

By no means is this an all-inclusive list we use to evaluate players, but it does cover many of the things we look for in the selection of our teams. We strive to use our best possible professional judgment, and if we error, we try to do so by keeping more players on squads, rather than less. As always, we appreciate and value each student as an individual, but will base all decisions on what is best for the **TEAM**.

WARNING ABOUT THE INHERENT DANGERS OF ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Student-athletes and parents should be aware that any athletic participation will always have inherent dangers. Although rare, death or catastrophic injury can result from participation in sports, and care should be taken by all concerned to minimize such dangers through the use of appropriate equipment, proper training methods and common sense.

PARENT AND STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK INFORMATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read the entire NISD Student-Athlete and Parent Handbook and fully understand the guidelines and procedures as set forth by the Nacogdoches ISD School District and Athletic Department. I have also read and understand all UIL rules and guidelines that pertain to me and my participation as a student-athlete and as the parent/guardian of a student-athlete.

STUDENT-ATHLETE:

PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE AND DATE

PARENT OF STUDENT-ATHLETE:

PRINT NAME

SIGNATURE AND DATE