



**Gorman**

**2017 – 2018**

**ATHLETIC**

**HANDBOOK**

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## Introduction:

The policies in this handbook are in compliance with school board policies and administrative procedures. This handbook supersedes all prior publications governing Gorman ISD. (GISD) athletic teams and shall be used by all principals, coaches and players in grades seven through twelve. The athletic program is an integral part of the total school experience for both boys and girls. It offers a variety of sports and activities to all students who have potential skill and desire to participate. The procedures and regulations set forth in the handbook are designed to provide for the efficient operation of such a program. You, the student athlete, will be held accountable and responsible for all policies contained within this handbook and for any additional ones that your respective coaches might add. This handbook is subject to revision due to unforeseen circumstances. We, as coaches and administrators, continually look to grow and better serve the athletes in our program and will make decisions on revisions as needed. Our number one interest is the kids and what is best for them.

## Participation:

It is the goal of this athletic program to offer the opportunity of participation to every student who has the ability and desire to do so. However, no student is obligated to take part in athletics, nor is participation in athletics required. It is to be stressed that participation in GISD's Athletic Program is a privilege, not a right. Since it is a privilege, the coaching staff, in accordance with Gorman ISD policy and due process procedures, has the authority to suspend or revoke the privilege when the rules and standards of this athletics program are not followed. This handbook does not limit or restrict the authority of the coach, athletic director, or school administrator from imposing other consequences in addition to the penalties set forth below, i.e., extra practice, and/or conditioning can be added to any consequence imposed.

At any time that an athlete is not giving 100% of effort to our program, then that athlete's schedule may be changed by the coaching staff. This will NOT be based on athletic ability but rather effort, grades, school attendance, practice attendance, disciplinary infractions at school and in athletics, consistently failing to follow athletic policies, and additional items deemed necessary by the coaching staff.

Common Procedures for Removal from Athletics:

1. Contact with parent and a written warning to athlete requiring parent signature
2. Parent can be contacted if issue is not resolved
3. Athlete's schedule changed

## Cut Policy:

Gorman ISD has a "No Cut" policy for all athletic teams. Regardless of ability level, all students that participate in athletics will be placed on a team with student athletes of similar skill levels. They will remain in the program provided they follow all rules that have been set forth for their sport. GISD is one of a very few schools that does not cut students who would like to participate. Gorman ISD makes every effort to schedule an equitable number of contests against other schools for all teams. Most schools within our area limit participation in athletics and cut student athletes, thus limiting the number of teams from other schools that we could play. GISD coaches and administrators make every effort to schedule as many competitions as are allowable by UIL rules for all teams. Due to the above constraints, some teams may not have practices before or after school from time to time, pending the number of competitions they have. Practice times before or after school are at the discretion of the coach/coordinator and are in

compliance with UIL rules. There is no set number of participants that are placed on any given team, due to each sport having its own substitution rules, and the number of athletes on the field/court at a time varies from sport to sport.

### **Available Sports:**

The GISD Athletic Department is responsible for the development and oversight of the following sports: football, volleyball, basketball, cross country, baseball, softball and track/field.

Athletes in an athletic period must participate and compete in a sport. Competing in a sport requires an athlete to attend all scheduled before or after school practices.

Workouts are at the discretion of the coaches and could include, but are not limited to:

- Weight training, agility drills, cardiovascular training, resistance training, and flexibility training
- Sport-specific skills

### **General Policies: Responsibilities of an Athlete**

All athletes have a responsibility to give their best, play to win, follow training guidelines, and exhibit good conduct and fair play at all times so as to be a credit to his/her school. Athletes, as well as coaches, are always on display. We are judged by the company we keep. Our actions in everyday life, both private and public, are a direct reflection on this athletic program and our school.

### **During competition, an athlete:**

1. Learns that both winning and losing are part of the game and must learn to accept both. Be modest in victory; be gracious in defeat.
2. Does not use illegal tactics in an attempt to defeat the opponent or to beat the rules of the game.
3. Has complete control of himself/herself at all times. Horse play, display of temper, use of profanity, and disrespect for coaches or officials will result in loss of respect for the athlete and in disciplinary action from the coach.
4. Will respect the decisions of the officials. The breaks of the game may go against you, but not due to the officiating. Officials are human beings who are doing their best to see that a contest is being run smoothly and honestly and being conducted in accordance with established rules.

### **In the classroom, an athlete:**

1. Must realize that he/she is a student first, an athlete second. The student-athlete must give time and energy to his/her studies to ensure good/acceptable grades that meet the UIL requirements for participation.
2. Must maintain a satisfactory citizenship and behavior record by giving respectful attention to classroom activities and by treating teachers, administrators and fellow students with respect. Tardiness, horse play, and unnecessary talking are unacceptable behavior habits that, if uncorrected by the student-athlete, may result in his/her suspension from the athletic program.
3. Is expected to act appropriately in and out of the classroom at special events such as, but not limited to, pep rallies, lunch, and assemblies.

4. Will receive disciplinary sanctions from the coaches as well as the administration. The number of reprimands will determine the extent of the sanctions.

Classroom disciplinary issues will be handled in the office according to the school handbook. Administration will then notify the coaches as deemed necessary.

***Athletic Disciplinary Actions:***

1. Sanctions by coaches
2. Sanctions by coaches and contact with parents
3. Sanctions by coaches, contact parents, and one suspension of competition
4. Sanctions by coaches and parent conference on possible dismissal from athletics

Sanctions may include but are not limited to: verbal reprimand, extra physical activity, bench time, loss of playing or performance opportunities, suspension from program, or removal from program. The coach/director has the authority to impose reasonable sanctions for students who breach program conduct expectations.

**On campus, an athlete:**

1. Must maintain proper dress and appearance, good grooming and personal cleanliness. You are a leader and you have only one chance to make a good first impression.
  - A. All dress, hair, makeup and clothing shall be clean, neat and well-groomed. It shall not be excessive, exceptional, designed to draw undue attention to the individual, or be distracting.
  - B. Grooming will be in accordance with the Gorman ISD policy.
2. Will refrain from fighting, scuffling, horse play and juvenile behavior in and around the school building.
3. Suspended from school, will not be permitted to work out with, travel with, or participate with the team. Eligibility for subsequent contests will be left to the discretion of the coach and/or administration.

**During the Athletic period and practices before and after school, an athlete:**

1. Is required to attend all after school workouts to be able to play in that week's activity. Participation in another extracurricular activity sponsored by the school is an excused absence. If an athlete misses a scheduled practice for any other reason, then a make-up workout may be required before being able to compete in a game.
2. Will notify the coach if he/she needs to miss a game or practice session that is scheduled after school hours. Any absence should be made up before an athlete participates in the first quarter of a contest.
3. Will be prompt for roll call. Tardiness to our class period is inexcusable, as it is to any other class.
4. Must remove all jewelry for practice and games as a safety precaution and a UIL regulation for competitions. A medical I.D. necklace is the only exception.
5. Will maintain neat and clean locker space. Be proud of your dressing area and keep it neat.
6. Will dress in school dress code as he/she leaves the dressing room. You will not be allowed to wear workout clothes to class.

7. Must be in attendance at school the day of the contest or the Friday prior to a Saturday contest in order to be eligible to compete. Any exception to this rule will be decided on by the Principal and/or Athletic Coordinator.
8. Has made a commitment to the GISD athletic program. If an athlete chooses to participate in a non-school extracurricular activity rather than attending a scheduled practice/competition, then that athlete will be suspended from the next scheduled game or tournament games. The number of games suspended will depend on the number of games/practices missed. School activities should have precedence over all other activities. The only reason an athlete should miss a scheduled practice or game is due to illness, funeral or other extracurricular school activity. Any exception to this rule will be decided on by the Principal and/or Athletic Coordinator.

### **If traveling with a team, an athlete:**

1. Will travel to all out-of-town contests with the team, unless involved in another school extracurricular event.
2. Will be allowed to ride home from out of town games only with a parent or guardian and approval from coach.
3. Will have parents/guardians sign them out before leaving the out-of-town school. Not signing out will result in consequences from the coaches. This is a safety precaution.
4. Will provide emergency travel release forms to the coaches before leaving the school on a scheduled trip. Release forms will not be accepted after departure from the school. Forms are available on-line, from the coaches, or in the school office. Parent notes or phone calls will not be accepted for alternate transportation.
5. Will be informed of departure and return times for each trip by their individual team coach. It is the athlete's responsibility to be on time for all departures. Athletes should contact their parents twenty (20) minutes from arrival at the school so parents have adequate time to pick up their athlete.
6. Will not be allowed to bring parents, family members, or friends on the bus trips. Only coaches, team personnel, and athletes are permitted to ride on the school bus.
7. Will dress for all contests within the limits of the school and team dress policies. Your appearance before and after games is a direct reflection of our team.

### **Student Eligibility:**

In order to be eligible to participate in an extracurricular activity event for a six week period following the initial six week period of a school year, a student must not have a recorded grade average lower than a 70 on a scale of 0-100 in any course for that preceding six week period.

A student whose recorded six week grade average in any course is lower than 70 at the end of the six week period shall be suspended from participation in any extracurricular activity events during the succeeding three week period. This will continue until the end of a six week period during which such student achieves a course grade average of at least 70 in each course.

If an athlete fails a course in a six week period, he/she will still continue to practice but will not be allowed to compete or travel with a team. Athletes may be switched to a different team to allow someone else the opportunity to compete.

## **Tobacco/Alcohol and Illegal Drugs:**

The following rules apply to all GISD athletes for their entire high school career. Use of tobacco products, drinking of alcoholic beverages, or the use of illegal drugs will not be tolerated.

Gorman ISD has mandatory drug testing for anyone participating in extra-curricular activities and all athletes are subject to the same penalties that are applied to any student who tests positive. Any penalty that will be assessed will be enforced by Gorman ISD administration and not the athletic department. For a list of penalties please see current GISD Board policy.

**\*NO DRINKING OR POSSESSION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

**\*NO USE OR POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS OR TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

Any athlete who violates the alcohol or tobacco use portion of this handbook could be subject to any of the following, in addition to campus assigned consequences as per district policy:

### Disciplinary Procedures

1. Parent notification by the Coach/Athletic Coordinator.
2. The student may be suspended from extracurricular competitions for a minimum of 15 school days. At the end of this period, a decision regarding further competition will be made by the Athletic Coordinator.
3. The student may be required to complete a minimum of fifteen (15) hours of community service that must be documented from a pre-approved provider. Hours will be completed before being eligible to return to competition.
4. The student may be assigned extra conditioning or practice by the coach/coordinator.
5. The student may be removed from the athletic class.

## **Stealing/Destruction of Property:**

The following rules apply to all GISD athletes for their entire high school career. Theft or intentional destruction of any school or individual's equipment or property will not be tolerated.

The athlete who violates the above-stated rules could be subject to any of the following, in addition to campus assigned consequences as per district policy:

### Disciplinary Procedures

1. Parent notification by the Coach/Athletic Coordinator.
2. The student may be suspended from extracurricular competitions for a minimum of 15 school days. At the end of this period, a decision regarding further competition will be made by the Athletic Coordinator.
3. The student may be required to complete a minimum of fifteen (15) hours of community service per \$100.00 value of item stolen or destroyed. If value is less than \$100.00, fifteen

- (15) hours will be completed. These hours must be documented from a pre-approved provider. Hours will be completed before being eligible to return to competition.
4. The student may be assigned extra conditioning or practice by the coach/coordinator.
  5. The student may be removed from the athletic class.

### **Suspension/Probation from Program:**

Each coach will have the authority, with the concurrence of the Athletic Director or administrator, to suspend or place any athlete on probation for an extended period of time for major or minor infractions of rules.

Any student suspended from athletics must be given:

1. The reason (s) for the suspension
2. The time and provisions of the suspension/probation
3. The procedures for reentering the program
4. Information on class schedule changes or options, and
5. The opportunity to appeal.

#### **Appeal:**

The student and/or parent shall have the right to appeal any decision to suspend a student, expel a student, or place a student on probation from the athletic program.

#### **Appeal Process:**

1. Personal visit with the Coach
2. Personal visit with Athletic Coordinator
3. Personal visit with Principal
4. Personal visit with Athletic Director
5. Personal visit with Assistant Superintendent
6. Personal visit with Superintendent

An appeal by the student and/or parent regarding suspension, expulsion, or probation from athletics shall be considered by the appropriate school personnel, not on the basis of personal opinion, but on the basis of:

Printed policy, administrative procedures, regulations, or rules and standards for membership and participation in athletics

1. Documentation of student's conduct/behavior
2. Notice to the student/parent of the facts being alleged about the conduct/behavior, and/or
3. Student's response to the charges

A parent or student may file a formal complaint following the process outlined in the Board Policy FNG (local).

## **Dropping a sport:**

There will be times when some athletes find it necessary to quit playing a sport during the season. Reasons for such a decision may vary widely. But despite the reason, the following steps should be taken in order to drop or quit a sport:

1. The athlete should think the whole situation through before reaching a final decision.
2. The athlete should talk to the coach to see if a solution can be reached without having to quit. A conference between the parents, athlete, and coach, or any combination thereof may be required, and is highly recommended, before an athlete will be permitted to quit.
3. If the athlete decides to quit one sport and join another, the athlete must receive permission from the coach of the sport he/she is leaving in order to join the other sport. If the coach does not give permission, the athlete must wait until the first sport has completed its season before joining the new sport/off-season. He/she will participate in conditioning with the current sport if not permitted by the coach to begin the new sport.
4. If an athlete quits a sport during the season, then requests to return to the same sport that season, the athlete may be required to run during the class period until a total of ten (10) miles have been completed in order to become eligible to compete. It is at the discretion of the coach if the athlete may begin practices prior to the completion of the ten (10) miles.

## **Medical and Insurance Requirements for Athletes:**

Gorman ISD does not provide an accidental insurance policy for GISD athletic injuries. However, Gorman ISD encourages parents to purchase accident insurance coverage for their child or children in addition to their own health insurance. Texas Kids First is one insurance company where accident coverage may be purchased for 24-hour or school-time only coverage. The website for the insurance is [www.texaskidsfirst.com](http://www.texaskidsfirst.com). It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of the individual student athlete to provide adequate accident insurance to cover any medical expenses which may occur as a result of athletic participation in GISD sponsored activities.

## **Procedures When Ill or Injured:**

Your health is the concern of every member of your team. In the event you feel ill and your condition does not improve within two days, see a doctor as soon as possible and inform your coach.

An injury that could possibly hamper your ability to participate must be reported to your coach as soon as possible. If you go to the doctor, bring back WRITTEN instructions from the doctor as to your care. We will follow the instructions on the doctor's note. If the note restricts an athlete from participation, the athlete will not be allowed to participate again prior to the release date on the note, unless another note is brought stating otherwise.

If an athlete is too ill or injured to practice, then he/she must bring a written note from the doctor specifying the illness/injury and the number of days the athlete is to miss. In the case of injury, he/she must have a doctor's note.

Whenever you are injured or have an illness of a minor nature, you will be required to dress out (but not

participate) and stay with your group during the workout. You learn from each practice session, whether you are actually working out or simply observing.

### Physicals:

All student athletes must have a current physical on file with the Athletic coordinator. This is done on a every other year basis. This must be done every year. Athletes are required to have a physical exam prior to their 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade academic year. 8<sup>th</sup> grade athletes are required to have a physical exam only if they sustained a major injury during their 7<sup>th</sup> grade year or during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade summer. All forms must be signed in pen. All paperwork must be on file prior to the first practice that a student participates in. **There will be no exceptions.** Also, documentation of shots/immunizations must be on file with the school nurse prior to the first day of school.

### Concussions:

**Gorman** ISD is very serious about concussion management. The Texas Education Code, Chapter 38, mandates that each individual school district have a concussion oversight team, a standardized protocol to diagnose and treat, and a return to practice policy for students suffering concussions. Each student athlete who is diagnosed with a concussion must follow the GISD concussion protocol. Included in that protocol are items which include clearance from a physician. Once a student athlete is released by a physician, he/she will have to complete the five day “Return to Play” protocol.

### Social Media:

Social media is growing rapidly in popularity and athletes need to understand that they are responsible for their actions. Anything an athlete posts online is public and can't be taken back. When in doubt, do not post. Negative posts can tarnish the image of teammates and/or coaches. Have fun, be smart, use common sense and don't use social media as a place to post complaints or issues that could lead to other problems. If there is a complaint or problem, talk with the coach or other appropriate school personnel. Know that the Internet is permanent. Once information is published online, it is essentially part of a global permanent record, even if you delete it. The Internet “remembers” everything. Individual bloggers can be held personally liable for any posts deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous. In essence, you blog or post on the blogs of others at your own risk.

### Bullying:

The definition of bullying is “aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.” It involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Forms of bullying include:

1. Derogatory comments or bad names
2. Social exclusion or isolation
3. Hitting, kicking, shoving and spitting
4. Lying or spreading false rumors
5. Taking or damaging others' money or property

6. Threatening or forcing someone to do things against their will
7. Racial comments or epithets
8. Sexually explicit comments or actions
9. Cyber bullying (using electronic resources such as cell phones, computers, or text messaging to intimidate)

The District prohibits bullying, and punishment will follow GISD policies and consequences.

## Parent Communications:

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult. By establishing good communication and understanding of each other, we are better able to accept the actions of one another. This will provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in the program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach. Any issues concerning your student athlete should go directly to the head coach involved. If the issue is not resolved, then the chain of command should be: Athletic Coordinator, Campus Principal, GISD Athletic Director and Superintendent.

Communication that you should expect from the coach:

- A. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the team
- B. Locations and times of all practices and contests
- C. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation, or concerns that lead to possible disciplinary issues
- D. Team requirements, i.e. practices, special equipment, out of season conditioning, etc.

It is important to understand that there may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged. During these discussions, we will only speak with parents regarding these topics:

- A. The treatment of your child and only your child
- B. Ways to help your child improve
- C. Concerns about your child

It is sometimes difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you hoped, or that your child is not on the team on which he/she hoped to play. Coaches are professionals and make decisions based on what they believe to be in the best interest of all student athletes. Issues that are not appropriate to discuss with coaches include: playing time and other student athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures must be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue or concern. This meeting will be a one on one meeting with individual parents, not a group. The campus principal may be asked to sit in on the meeting. When problems/issues arise:

- A. Encourage your child to speak directly to the coach. Many times this can take care of the problem.
- B. Call or email the coach to set up an appointment during his/her conference period.
- C. Please do not attempt to confront the coach before, during, or after a contest. Meetings during this time do not promote resolution because emotions are often high.
- D. If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, then follow the chain of command listed above.

