

WEST ISD RANDOM STUDENT DRUG TESTING

Current law allows school districts to implement a drug testing program if students voluntarily agree to participate in a random drug testing program as a condition for their participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities or to qualify for parking privileges.

On June 6, 2018, the West ISD Board of Trustees approved a new Board policy to conduct random drug tests on students in Grades 7-12 who participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities (both UIL and non-UIL sanctioned). The new policy also includes students who park a vehicle on West ISD property. West ISD and the Board of Trustees believe the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities is a privilege offered to eligible students on an equal-opportunity basis. The use of drugs or alcohol by any student presents a hazard to their health, safety, and welfare. By using random drug testing, the District is able to detect and prevent illegal drug and alcohol use among students.

To be eligible to participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activities or park on West ISD property, a secondary student (Grades 7-12) must agree to participate in a drug-testing program that includes random testing throughout the school year. A signed consent form must be on file for each student before they are able to participate in extracurricular activities or park on West ISD property. The consent form does require signatures from both the participating student and their parent/guardian.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a “school-sponsored extracurricular activity”?

School-sponsored extracurricular activities for which testing is required include without limitation, all interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, drill team, academic clubs, special interest clubs, musical performance, dramatic productions, student government and any other activity or group that participates in contests, competitions, or community service projects on behalf of or as a representative of West ISD.

What is the purpose of the drug-testing program?

The purposes of the drug-testing program are to prevent injury, illness, and harm resulting from the use of illegal and performance-enhancing drugs or alcohol; help enforce a drug-free educational environment; deter student use of illegal and performance-enhancing drugs or alcohol; help students avoid peer pressure; educate students regarding the harm caused by the use of illegal and performance-enhancing drugs or alcohol; and remind students that the opportunity to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities is a privilege offered to eligible students on an equal-opportunity basis.

How will students be chosen for testing?

The third-party testing company West ISD has contracted with uses a software program to randomly choose a list of students to be tested at various times throughout the school year.

How will students be tested?

Students will provide a urine sample to a certified technician of the same gender. Samples will be taken under conditions that are no more intrusive to students than the conditions experienced in a public restroom. Students will provide their samples in the privacy of a restroom stall.

What drugs will be detected by the test?

The drug-testing laboratory shall test for the presence of, but is not limited to: marijuana, cocaine, methaqualone, benzodiazepines, phencyclidine (PCP), methadone, barbiturates, propoxyphene, amphetamines, and metabolites of any of these substances.

What happens if a student tests positive?

All positive results must be confirmed by a second, more definitive, test before being reported as positive. The same sample will be used to conduct the second test. When there is a positive, confirmed test result, the following steps will be taken:

1. The school official to whom results are reported will notify the principal and student drug testing program designee.
2. The principal or district administrator will notify the student's parent/guardian, the student, and the sponsor or coach of the affected activity. The principal will inform the parent of the opportunity to respond to a positive test. The principal will schedule a meeting with the appropriate campus counselor, the parent/guardian, the student, and the student's physician to develop a plan of assistance for the student.
3. At the meeting, the principal and student drug testing program designee will give the student and parent a copy of the test results and provide them an opportunity to offer an explanation for the results. Parents may also request a retest of the original specimen to confirm the results, but the retest will be at the parent's expense. A request to retest must be made in writing within two school days of the meeting with the principal and student drug testing program designee, and payment for the retest must be included with the request.

Will results be reported to law enforcement?

Results of any drug test administered under West ISD's drug testing policy will be used only to determine eligibility for participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities. Results will not be placed in student records. Results will be kept confidential and disclosed only to the student, his/her parent/guardian, and school officials with a need to know (as designated by the Superintendent). Test results will not be provided to districts outside of West ISD for any reason, including through the withdrawal process.

Will students be punished apart from becoming ineligible for extracurricular activities?

No, there will be no other action taken against the student except for suspension from participating in extracurricular activities. West ISD also has service, counseling, and education components as part of the suspension plan for positive drug tests.

How can parents appeal a removal from extracurricular activities?

An appeal of the sanction may be instituted by the parent/guardian by giving written notice to the principal within five days. The student shall be ineligible for participation pending the appeal. All appeals shall utilize the procedures outlined in West ISD Board Policy FNG(LOCAL).

If a student does test positive and it is confirmed they have been using drugs, will they be able to participate in extracurricular activities again?

Upon a first offense of receiving a confirmed positive drug test, a student shall be suspended from any extracurricular activity, and the student's parking permit shall be suspended, for 15 school days following the date the student and parent are notified of the test results. During the period of suspension, the student may participate in practices but not in any competitive activities or performances. Any student who tests positive, completes all program components, and is reinstated will be retested each random test dates for as long as he or she participates in school-sponsored extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

What if there are additional offenses?

Upon a second offense of receiving a confirmed positive drug test, a student shall be suspended from any extracurricular activity, and the student's parking permit shall be suspended, for 45 school days following the date the student and parent are notified of the test results. During the period of suspension, the student may participate in practices but not in any competitive activities or performances.

Upon a third offense of receiving a confirmed positive drug test, a student shall be suspended from participation in any extracurricular activity, and the student's parking permit shall be suspended, for 90 school days following the date the student and parent are notified of the test results. During the period of suspension, the student may participate in practices but not in any competitive activities or performances.

Upon a fourth offense of receiving a confirmed positive drug test, a student shall be suspended from participation in any extracurricular activity, and the student's parking permit shall be suspended for one calendar year.

Again, any student who tests positive, completes all program components, and is reinstated will be retested each random test dates for as long as he or she participates in school-sponsored extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

What if a parent or guardian refuses to sign the consent form?

Without a signed consent form on file, a student will not be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activity or park on a West ISD campus.

What happens if a student refuses to be tested?

Any student who refuses to be tested or who tampers with, or assists in tampering with, any sample, will be removed from extracurricular activities or not allowed to park on a West ISD campus. If a student is in school and fails to report for testing at the appointed time, he/she will be removed from extracurricular activities or not allowed to park on a West ISD campus.

Will advance notice be given when the district plans to conduct testing?

No, students will not be notified in advance of any drug test.