

Gary ISD



Athletic Handbook

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Philosophy

We believe that an exemplary athletic program is an extension of the classroom. As such, athletics offer students an opportunity to develop and grow physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. The positive benefits that participation in athletics offer include, but are not limited to, self-esteem, self-discipline, self-confidence, and the development of team spirit. Furthermore, participants learn the values associated with competition and benefit from the experience of both winning and losing.

Introduction

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 the potential, skill, and desire, to participate.

The policies, procedures, and regulations in this handbook comply with school board policy and administrative procedures. They are designed to provide successful experiences for students and the efficient operation of the athletic department.

This handbook is an extension of the student handbook, and shall be used by the principal, coaches, and all athletes in grades 7-12.

You, the student-athlete, are accountable and responsible for all policies contained within this handbook. Individual coaches within their sport may add additional rules as long as they adhere to school policy.

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 compete. However, no student is obligated to participate in athletics. **Participation in the Gary Athletic Program is a privilege, not a right.** Since it is a privilege, the coaching staff, in accordance with Gary ISD policy and process procedures, has the authority to suspend or revoke the privilege when the rules and standards of the athletic program are not followed.

Playing Time

Playing time is a decision reserved for the head coach of each sport based on practice performance, work ethic, attendance, attitude, skill level, and cohesiveness with teammates.

Expectations of Athletes

1. Always be on time.
2. Work hard every day. Practice and play to the best of your ability.
3. Be responsible. This includes keeping up with schedules, clothing, equipment, etc.
4. Be academically eligible all grading periods.
5. Be accountable. OWN IT!
6. Attend all practices/contests. If unable due to illness, family emergency, or another school event, communicate with your head coach prior to scheduled practice/contest.
7. Take care of your body. Eat nutritious foods, get plenty of rest, and avoid harmful substances.
8. Have a great attitude and be eager to GET BETTER EVERY DAY!

Expectation of Coaches

1. Display professionalism at all times.
2. Proper communication about practices, game times, locations, and any changes that may occur.
3. Adhere to all UIL and District regulations and guidelines.
4. Be knowledgeable of the sports to which you are assigned.
5. Be loyal to the athletic program, school, and community.

Expectations of Parents

1. Encourage your child to attend all practices, games, or meets, unless for illness or circumstances beyond his/her control.
2. Encourage your student-athlete to maintain passing grades in all subjects and to attend tutorials if needed.
3. Ensure that your child is taking proper care of his/her body (eating properly, getting adequate rest, and avoiding harmful substances).

4. Refrain from coaching your child immediately before, during, and after competitions because of the potential negative effect it could have on his/her performance.
5. Parents should learn the rules of the sport, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.

Communication/Parent Conferences

We strongly encourage communication between parents and coaches. However, we believe there is an appropriate time to do this. **Parent conferences will not occur before, during, or after a game. Approaching a coach before or after a team competition is not appropriate.** To set up a meeting with a coach, parents should contact that coach and schedule the day and time of the meeting. If the meeting with the coach does not result in a satisfactory resolution, parents then should contact the Athletic Director.

***The following two lists were taken directly from the UIL Parent Involvement Manual.**

**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.*

We know that it is very difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches make decisions based on what they think is in the best interest of all students participating. The following issues are left to the discretion of the coach:

**Issues 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.*

All conferences will be face-to-face meetings and will have at least 2 school staff members, the parent(s), and the student-athlete present (if deemed necessary).

Disciplinary Procedures

Coaches will impose player/team discipline on a case-by-case basis. Each case requiring discipline will be evaluated on its individual merit. Student-athletes are expected to follow all school rules, as well as the classroom rules of each individual teacher. Misconduct in the classroom could necessitate actions being taken by the coach. The head coach will determine the course of action.

Dismissal from a Team or from the Athletic Program

The head coach will have the authority (in accordance with the athletic director) to suspend, to place under contract, or to remove any athlete from their program for continued disciplinary problems, for excessive unexcused absences, continued ineligibility due to grades, or for conduct detrimental to the team. Parents will be notified before this occurs, and documentation will be provided. If the athlete is allowed back into the program, they will be issued a player agreement contract to sign and to abide by.

Quitting a Sport

We encourage all athletes to finish what they start. Once an athlete quits, or is released, from a team and wishes to return, it will be handled on an individual basis by the head coach. A conference between the parents, athlete, and coach may also be required in some situations. **24-hour rule:** An athlete will not be permitted to quit the program until he/she has counseled with his/her parents/guardians.

-Once an athlete quits a sport, they can only return to the sport with the approval of the head coach. If the athlete is allowed back into the program, they will be issued a player agreement contract to sign and to abide by.

-Once an athlete quits a sport, they cannot move on to the next sport until the season of the sport that they quit is completed. The only exception will be if both head coaches agree to allow the athlete to move on to the next sport.

-Quitting two sports can result in the removal from the athletic program.

Tobacco, Alcohol, & Drugs

Use of these harmful substances will be handled according to the student handbook/code of conduct. This also includes vaping and any other type of electronic smoking devices. If an athlete is found to be using any of these substances, they will be subject to extra conditioning, as well as, possible suspension or dismissal from the athletic program.

Social Media

Everything you post online is public information once you post it. This includes any text, tweet, photo, or video. Once you post a photo or comment on a social networking site, it becomes the property of the site and may be researchable even after you remove it. **A screen shot only takes a second, but can last a lifetime.** Many employers, college admissions officers, and athletic recruiters review social networking sites as a part of their overall evaluation of an applicant.

Online social network sites are NOT a place where you can say and do whatever you want without repercussion. Posts, tweets, photos, comments, etc. that could be deemed to have a negative effect on Gary ISD, or the athletic program and individuals involved, would be considered in violation of Athletic Policy.

Equipment and Uniforms

The school will provide all uniforms and most equipment necessary for participation in athletics.

-Each athlete is responsible for his/her issued equipment. Lost or ruined equipment must be replaced. If an article is lost, new equipment/clothing will be issued after payment is made to replace the lost article.

-All practice and game gear will be washed by the coaching staff. No school-issued equipment/clothing should be taken home.

Travel Policy

Athletes will travel with the team. When appropriate, they will eat with the team, and on overnight trips they will stay with the team. The only possible exceptions to this policy are: another extracurricular activity, another school-related event, a family emergency, or special circumstances requiring the coach's discretion. The athlete will need to provide the head coach with a note prior to leaving Gary HS and turn in his/her uniform before leaving with his/her parent/guardian. **The athlete's parent/guardian must be present for the athlete to be released.** Additional travel rules such as dress/attire, cell phone policy, etc. is up to the head coach of their sport.

Lettering Policy

Athletes may receive only one major award (letter jacket) from the school during their high school career. Gary ISD will buy each member of athletics one letter jacket once he/she has met the criteria for lettering.

- Athletes will receive a jacket in the sport in which they letter first.
- An athlete must be a varsity team member for 2 years in order to letter. Exceptions would be athletes that letter for the first time as a senior.
- The school purchased jacket will have no markings or patches on it except the letter. All other patches will be the financial responsibility of the athlete.
- Managers must work as varsity manager for at least 2 years to letter.
- Any athlete who has quit or been dismissed from the team will not receive an award.

Paperwork Required for Athletic Participation

- Pre-participation Physical Examination Form (UIL)
- Medical History Form (UIL)
- Acknowledgement of Rules Form (UIL)
- Parent/Student Steroid Agreement Form (UIL)
- Concussion Acknowledgement Form (UIL)
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Form (UIL)
- Signed Acknowledgement of Gary ISD Athletic Handbook Form (back page)

These forms can be found on the Gary ISD website (www.garyisd.org) under the "Athletics" tab, or obtained from the coaching staff.

Closing

Other issues may arise which are not covered in this handbook. The coaching staff will use their discretion as to how to handle those issues. All decisions made by the coaching staff are made with the program's best interest in mind.

Gary ISD Athletic Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Athlete

I have received a copy of the Gary ISD Athletic Handbook. I understand that I will be held accountable for the information outlined in this handbook.

Athlete's Name (print): _____

Athlete's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian

I have received a copy of the Gary ISD Athletic Handbook. I understand that my child and I will both be held accountable for the information outlined in this handbook. I give approval for my child to participate in the athletic program at Gary ISD under the guidelines of the Athletic Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____