

Cherokee Independent School District



UIL Athletics Handbook 2023-2024

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Mission Statement

Athletics are a vastly important part of any educational process. Education and athletics are not separate from one another, but co-exist and enhance each other. Both must conform to the values and ethics of the school.

The athletes at our school are in a unique position. He or she is part of a team and must learn to work and function effectively with a wide variety of personalities. They represent our school and community in very visible roles, and we will always encourage them to conduct themselves with character, poise, honesty, integrity and humility. They will learn that dedication, sacrifice, hard work, and perseverance are necessary in performing any task that will lead to the attainment of a valued goal or life objective.

The athletic program provides these activities based on the needs of participants. These activities promote the respect for rules and authority, opportunities for physical excellence, and an understanding of the value of cooperation and competition through practice and interscholastic games.

Individual sports in the athletic program will begin and end on the dates specified in the *Constitution and Contest Rules of the University Interscholastic League*. Winning within the spirit of the rules is of prime importance as an objective of the athletic program and necessitates that every participant understands and complies with the rules of the University Interscholastic League.

Athletic Philosophy

In the Cherokee Independent School District, the program of competitive athletics should be comprehensive, diversified and flexible to meet the individual needs, interests and abilities of our athletes. It should comprise an integral and vital part of our district's total educational program. Whenever and wherever athletics are planned or played, it is mandatory that definite rules, regulations and procedures be developed and implemented for the proper conduct of these activities. It is essential that these procedures be aligned with school district policies and in accordance with the accepted and established philosophy of education that prevails in the district. It is with full consideration and recognition of the important role competitive athletics should have in the total school curriculum that this handbook has been developed.

The athletic department believes that each student should be given a fair chance to participate in competitive athletics according to his own individual and personal choices. However, we believe that all athletes should be encouraged and motivated by coaches to participate in a variety of activities in accordance with their interests, needs and abilities. The members of the coaching staff are expected to serve as positive role models for the student athletes. Coaches will abide by the rules on drugs, alcohol, smoking, and profanity during all student functions.

It is recognized that some of the expectations for athletes exceed the expectations for the general student body, and that some of the athletic rules are stricter than those for the general student body. Regardless, athletes are expected to follow the established rules. Membership in athletics is a privilege, not a requirement, for our students.

Rule violations will result in corrective and/or disciplinary action. All facts and circumstances will be taken into consideration when determining what action will be taken. When combinations of rules are violated, punishment may be more severe.

Winning is important and will always be stressed in our athletic program, but not at the expense of the individuals who make up our teams. There is no philosophy of "win at any cost" in the Cherokee Independent School District, and winning will not be stressed to the point of endangering the integrity of our school or our community. This is not to mean that there is no emphasis put on winning. Winning is the American way of life, it is the measure of success in any endeavor. Athletics instills the desire to win, to attain personal goals which insure team effort, character, responsibility and CHEROKEE PRIDE!

Requirements for Participation

Academic Eligibility

A student in grades 9-12 may participate in extracurricular activities on or off campus at the beginning of the school year only if the student has earned the cumulative number in state-approved courses:

Beginning the 9th grade year – must have been promoted from the 8th to the 9th

Beginning the 10th grade year – must have at least 5 credits toward graduation

Beginning the 11th grade year – must have at least 10 credits toward graduation or during the preceding 12 months, he or she must have earned 5 credits

Beginning the 12th grade year – must have 15 credits toward graduation or during the preceding 12 months, he or she has earned 5 credits

A student participating in University Interscholastic League (UIL) activities will be suspended from participation in games after a grading period in which the student received a grade lower than a 70 on a scale of 100 in any academic class (other than an identified honors or advanced class). This suspension continues for three weeks. At the next grading period, the suspension will be removed after the student is passing all classes with a grade equal to or greater than 70. [See policies FM(LEGAL), FMF(LOCAL) and the Cherokee ISD Student Handbook]

Physical Examinations

All athletes must have a completed physical exam form on file before participating in the athletic program. (All incoming 7th, 9th, and 11th graders must take a physical for that year.) If a student sustained a serious injury, which required surgery or removal from participation, the student will need to take a physical examination prior to participation. The physical examination forms are available from the coaches or the front office. [See policy FM(LEGAL)]

Cherokee I.S.D. Athletic Handbook

The student athlete and the parent or guardian should sign the Athletic Handbook Acknowledgement Form which is provided in this packet. This confirms receipt of the Athletic Handbook, and acknowledges that the student athlete and parent or guardian will comply with the rules and policies in the Athletic Handbook. If a signed form is not returned the athlete will not be allowed to participate.

General Policies and Procedures

Academic Requirements

All U.I.L. and school board guidelines will be followed for academic and eligibility requirements.

Assignments

A student that misses class due to extracurricular activities is expected to pick up work missed prior to leaving for the activity. The student will be expected to join class and participate in any assignment or activity upon returning. Assignments will not be received as “late work” and will be due upon the return of the student to the classroom. Athletics will not be an excuse to turn work in late or get extra time for assignments.

Attendance

Students must be counted in attendance for State ADA purposes in order to participate in a scheduled contest or event. Students who are absent from school the entire day, or do not earn State ADA for the district, of the scheduled contest or event may not participate.

If the student is sent home for an illness, or is at a doctor’s office for any reason, the student must present a doctor’s release to the office, administrator on duty prior to participation in the contest or event. If no administrator on duty is present the coach or sponsor will accept the documentation. Otherwise, students must establish attendance during the school day as described above in order to participate.

(Campus Administration has the right to override the Attendance guidelines if extenuating circumstances exist.)

Citizenship

Athletes are expected to follow all rules and policies of the Cherokee I.S.D. at all school functions, and to conduct themselves in a positive manner at all times.

Club Sports

A club sport is a sports program outside the school that is not affiliated with UIL athletics. We are very fortunate to live in a community where the school can be the main focus. We believe our athletes’ obligations are to his or her school team first. An athlete will not be excused to miss a school contest or practice for a club event. If an athlete pursues club participation he or she must understand and be willing to assume the consequences related to his or her status on the squad (as a starter, 2nd string, or even dismissal) if a conflict occurs.

Electronic Communication

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites, editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites. Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication, such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

In accordance with administrative regulations, a certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the Superintendent or a campus principal, may use electronic media to communicate with currently enrolled students about matters within the scope of the employee’s professional responsibilities. All other employees are prohibited from using electronic media to communicate directly with students who are currently enrolled in the District.

Equipment and Lockers Rooms

All equipment issued by the school to the athlete must be returned by the athlete at the conclusion of each sport. All equipment that is lost or not returned will be paid for by the athlete. Athletes are responsible to keep locker rooms clean and organized. Vandalism or theft will not be tolerated at any time.

Injuries

All injuries must be reported to the coach in charge of that sport in order to be treated and/or referred for further medical assistance. Injuries should be reported as soon as they occur.

Insurance

Students who participate in athletic activities will be provided supplemental insurance purchased by the school district. This policy acts as a primary policy only if the athlete has no other form of insurance.

Picking Up Students After Events

Parents/Guardians should make arrangements for their children to be picked up from the campus following after-hours activities including practices. Coaches or sponsors will make sure that students and parents know times so that proper arrangements can be made to ensure that students are not waiting for extended amounts of time to be picked up following activities.

Practice, Game and Team Guidelines

- Athletes are expected to be at every practice and on time
- If practice is missed, athletes are expected to notify the coach of their sport in advance
- All absences from practice will be made up, extra conditioning will be at the discretion of the coach or sponsor
- Athletes will travel to and from every athletic event with their team unless his or her parent or guardian has given consent for the athlete to ride home with them after the contest; the consent must be given, in writing, to the coach in charge of that team by the **parent or guardian** at the conclusion of that contest

There may be times when the mandatory school transportation requirement may be waived by campus administration or the Athletic Director. Such instances include, but are not limited to: school events taking place during the holidays; multiple school events occurring on the same day where the student is participating in both; funerals. When such instances occur, the administrator, along with the sponsor(s) or coach(es) of the events, may make an exception and allow the student to be transported to the event by means other than school transportation. Arrangements will need to be made as soon as the conflict is known and written approval will be required by the sponsor(s) or coach(es) and administrator.

Parents have every right to pull their students from participation in a game day event. Students have every right to refuse participation in a game day event. However, should any of these situations occur, the athlete will face consequences ranging from game suspension to dismissal from the program.

Quitting a Sport

All students will be given a trial period in which no penalty will be assessed. This should encourage students to try a sport without risk of penalty. The trial period will be two (2) weeks in length or until the next school day following the first scrimmage or game.

Before any athlete is permitted to quit a sport, he or she must meet with the head coach of that sport and then with the athletic director.

If a student wants to quit a sport after the trial period, he or she has a 48-hour cooling off period in which to reconsider his or her decision and approach the coach for reinstatement to the team. After this 48-hour period, any athlete who resigns a sport will not be allowed to participate in another sport for the remainder of the current school year and up to and including the following semester depending on the time of the resignation. Disciplinary action may not be attached to the 48-hour cooling off period. It is the expectation that our student athletes begin and complete a sport.

If a new head coach for that sport is hired, then all athletes will be given a new opportunity to play.

Social Media

We will work with our students to teach them how to properly address and answer media questions. Always remember that you represent all of us in these situations: choose your words accordingly, be unselfish, handle criticism professionally, and portray our team in a way that would make you proud.

Social Media Policies

Social media has changed many things, including sports. It is a platform that can be used positively or negatively. Below are the program guidelines and consequences for social media use in regards to our teams. These can be adapted at the coach's, sponsor's or administration's discretion.

- Information posted concerning our coaches, players, and any other team member must be positive
- Comments that are deemed degrading or inappropriate toward any team member will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis
- Posting inappropriate pictures will be dealt with in serious circumstances
- Videos posted will be ONLY of game, practices, or other competition settings
- Players may not post to social media during any game, competition, or practice setting
- Absolutely no photos or videos in locker room settings
- Anything that is posted depicting or implying bullying, violence, sexual harassment, hazing, under-age drinking, and possession/use/sale of illegal substances will be dealt with severely

Remember that what you post is posted forever and cannot be taken back. Use discretion when putting your thoughts, photos, and videos out there for the world to see. It can impact your future.

Theft

Taking things that do not belong to you, especially from your teammates will not be tolerated. A player caught may be dismissed from the team. Do not bring valuables or large sums of money to the dressing room.

Tutorials

Students participating in extracurricular events may be required to attend tutorials if grades drop below 75 in any class. They will attend the tutorials until the next grade reporting period (progress report or report card) and will only be released from tutorials if all grades are above 75.

Conflict Resolution

If the player has a problem with the coach's decision or actions these are the steps that need to be taken to resolve the problem.

1. Player/Athlete addresses the coach with whom the problem began
2. If no resolution: Player/Athlete speaks to Head Coach of the sport they are playing to try to resolve the problem
3. Parent may contact the Head Coach to set up an appointment for a conference
4. If no resolution: Athlete/Parent meets with the Athletic Director to try to solve the problem
5. Finally, if no resolution is reached, the Athlete/Parent may contact the Superintendent in order to address the problem

How to avoid conflict between parents and coaches

- Limit after game/contest conversations with coaches
- Schedule time later to address problems in a respectful manner

Things coaches do not discuss with parents.

- Playing time
- Other players
- Strategy or play calling

Things coaches will discuss with parents.

- What his or her athlete needs to improve upon
- The attitude and effort of his or her athlete
- Times and schedules

Responsibilities and Consequences

Coaches' Rules

Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations with the approval of the Athletic Director for their respective sports. The rules pertaining to a particular sport must be explained in writing prior to their start of the season. The coach shall administer penalties for violation of team rules. Copies of all team rules will be kept on file with the Head Coach.

Consequences for Violating Coaches' Rules

Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis according to severity of actions. Potential consequences may include:

- Suspension from games or practices
- Extra conditioning
- Removal from the team
- Legal action

DAEP Assignments

Students are not allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities, including practices, while they are assigned to DAEP. When a student completes the DAEP assignment, reinstatement into extracurricular activities will be determined by the coach or sponsor of the sport or activity.

Discipline

Any athlete refusing to accept punishment for any discipline problems may be dismissed from the athletic program and forfeit all athletic awards and recognition for the school year.

Dismissal from an Athletic Team or Program

An athlete may be suspended by the Athletic Director or the head coach of that sport for:

- A serious violation of existing athletic or Cherokee ISD policies and rules
- An accumulation of minor violations of athletic or Cherokee ISD policies and rules

Any student that is assigned to an athletic period, but is not participating in athletics, will only be removed from the athletic period at the semester.

Dress Code

Students must, at a minimum, follow the dress code established by the campus. Coaches or sponsors have the right to enact more stringent dress codes.

In School Suspension (ISS) Assignments

An athlete assigned to ISS will have his or her future participation in athletics reviewed by the coach, principal, and athletic director, and appropriate action, including extra conditioning or possible suspension from an athletic contest, will be taken. While an athlete is in ISS, he or she will not be allowed to participate in team activities.

Profanity

Profanity will not be tolerated, and disciplinary action may be taken.

Respect

Disrespect toward coaches, teachers, or administrators will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be taken and can result in dismissal from the team.

Demonstrating Disrespect or Embarrassing Behavior While Representing School

Any disrespectful behavior or behavior that embarrasses the school in any fashion will not be tolerated when students are representing Cherokee ISD at any event. Students who are disrespectful or embarrass the school while representing the school will face consequences appropriate to their actions. Removal from extracurricular activities may be warranted.

Hazing

Hazing of students will not be tolerated. Students caught hazing may be removed from all extracurricular activities.

Alcohol and Drug Use

Remember, these are the minimum consequences. Some extracurricular activities may have more stringent consequences than are listed here, including immediate removal from the team, club, organization, or squad.

On Campus Possession/Use of Alcohol or Illegal Drugs

The use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs will not be condoned. Students who possess or use alcohol or drugs on campus or while at a school sponsored activity will be disciplined in the following manner:

Possession of Alcohol:

1st Offense: DAEP assignment, with no participation in extracurricular activities during DAEP assignment

2nd Offense: DAEP assignment, with removal from extracurricular activities for remainder of school year

Use or Under Influence of Alcohol:

1st Offense: DAEP assignment, with no participation in extracurricular activities during DAEP assignment

2nd Offense: DAEP assignment, with removal from extracurricular activities for remainder of school year

Possession, Use or Under Influence of Illegal/Controlled Substances:

1st Offense: DAEP assignment, with no participation in extracurricular activities during DAEP assignment

2nd Offense: Possible expulsion, with no participation in extracurricular activities for remainder of time on campus.

Positive Drug Test

The use of alcohol will not be condoned. Students who are issued a citation for Minor in Possession (MIP), Driving while Intoxicated (DWI), or Driving Under the Influence (DUI), while off campus and not at a school sponsored activity, at a minimum will receive:

1st Offense: Competition suspension per the administrator, coach or sponsor; Student must attend a drug/counseling program selected by the district at student's expense; Parent must provide a negative drug test to be in good standing to return to extracurricular activities

2nd Offense: Removal from extracurricular activities for remainder of year

3rd Offense: Removal from extracurricular activities for remainder of time on that campus

Each case will be considered individually to determine if further consequences should be administered.

Off Campus Possession/Use of Alcohol

The use of alcohol will not be condoned. Students who are issued a citation for Minor in Possession (MIP), Driving while Intoxicated (DWI), or Driving Under the Influence (DUI), while off campus and not at a school sponsored activity, at a minimum will receive:

1st Offense: Competition suspension per the administrator, coach or sponsor; Student must attend a drug/counseling program selected by the district at student's expense; Parent must provide a negative drug test to be in good standing to return to extra-curricular activities

2nd Offense: Removal from extracurricular activities for remainder of year; Student must attend a drug/counseling program selected by the district at student's expense

3rd Offense: Removal from extracurricular activities for remainder of time on that campus; Student must attend a drug/counseling program selected by the district at student's expense

Each case will be considered individually to determine if further consequences should be administered.

Off Campus Misdemeanor Possession/Use of Illegal Drugs/Controlled Substances

Students who arrested or charged with a *Misdemeanor* Possession or Under the Influence of an illegal drug/controlled substance, while off campus and not at a school sponsored activity, at a minimum will receive:

1st Offense: Competition suspension per the administrator, coach or sponsor; Student must attend a drug/counseling program selected by the district at student's expense; Parent must provide a negative drug test to be in good standing to return to extra-curricular activities

2nd Offense: Removal from extracurricular activities for remainder of year; Student must attend a drug/counseling program selected by the district at student's expense

3rd Offense: Removal from extracurricular activities for remainder of time on that campus; Student must attend a drug/counseling program selected by the district at student's expense

Each case will be considered individually to determine if further consequences should be administered

Off Campus Felony Possession/Use of Illegal Drugs/Controlled Substances

The possession/use of illegal drugs will not be condoned. Students who are arrested or charged with Felony Possession of or Under the Influence of an illegal drug while off campus and not at a school sponsored activity, at a minimum will receive:

1st Offense: DAEP assignment, with no participation in extracurricular activities during DAEP assignment

2nd Offense: DAEP assignment or possible expulsion, with no participation in extracurricular activities for remainder of time on campus

Each case will be considered individually to determine if further consequences should be administered.

Receipt of Athletic Handbook

Please return this form to the campus office.

Student's Acknowledgement

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Cherokee ISD Athletic Handbook. I have read and understand the information in the handbook.

Student's Name (please print): _____

Activities/Sports: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's or Guardian's Acknowledgement

- I understand the information in the Cherokee ISD Athletic Handbook.
- I understand that my child is responsible for complying with the guidelines set forth in the Athletic Handbook, as well as the Student Code of Conduct.
- I understand that Cherokee ISD policies and procedures can change at any time and that the Athletic Handbook is not a substitute for the Code of Conduct or the Cherokee ISD Policy Manual.
- I understand that my child's participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right, and that my child will be held to higher standards of behavior and performance in and out of school.

Print Parent's or Guardian's Name(s)

Sign Parent's or Guardian's Name(s)

Date

Please return this form to the campus office.