Princeton ISD
Athletic Handbook

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Princeton ISD Athletic Handbook
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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 skills and the desire to participate. The policies, procedures and regulations in this handbook are in compliance with school board policies and administrative procedures. They are designed to provide for successful experiences for students and the efficient operation of the athletic program. This handbook is an extension of the student handbook and shall be used by all Principals, coaches, and players 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.

ATHLETIC VISION

The Princeton athletic vision: Inspire Effort. Empower Growth. Achieve Results. Princeton ISD Athletics believes in maintaining strong alignment between district expectations, program implementation, and the daily experience of student-athletes.

Through intentional planning, consistent coaching practices, and clear systems, the department ensures all athletes have access to a structured, equitable, and high-quality athletic experience.

PRINCETON ISD ATHLETIC PROGRAM

High School and Middle School Sports

Cross Country – Boys and Girls
Football - Boys
Volleyball – Girls
Basketball – Boys and Girls
Soccer – Boys and Girls
Wrestling – Boys and Girls
Tennis – Boys and Girls
Track – Boys and Girls

High School (only)

Powerlifting – Boys and Girls *THSPA/THSGPA Membership (Non-UIL)
Golf - Boys and Girls
Baseball/Softball

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The goal of the Princeton ISD Athletic Program is to provide all students with the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics. Athletic participation promotes competition, teamwork, discipline, perseverance, courage, poise, and the pursuit of excellence. These experiences help develop qualities that extend beyond the playing field and contribute to a student's overall growth and success.

Participation in athletics is voluntary; however, students who choose to participate are expected to enroll in and attend the athletic period. Participation in the Princeton ISD Athletic Program is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes are expected to uphold the standards, expectations, and values of the athletic program at all times. Failure to comply with athletic department rules, district policies, or team expectations may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or removal from the program.

A coach, sponsor, or director may recommend that a student be removed from a program due to concerns related to behavior, academics, attendance, citizenship, or other participation requirements. Prior to making such a recommendation, the coach, sponsor, or director will meet with the student's parent or guardian to discuss the concerns and provide a reasonable opportunity for corrective action.

SELECTION OF TEAMS

The Head Coach of each sport will determine the players on each team. The selection of teams will include, but is not limited to: skill level, knowledge of sport, attitude, and experience in the sport. Tryout rubrics will be utilized at the middle school level for sports that make cuts.

PRACTICE TIMES/SCHEDULES

In accordance with UIL regulations, school teams may not practice team skills before or after school except during UIL-approved practice periods and the designated athletic period during the school day.

Practice schedules for each sport will be established by the coaching staff in coordination with the Athletic Director. Every effort will be made to minimize conflicts between sports and to provide student-athletes with opportunities to participate in multiple programs.

Student-athletes who participate in more than one sport may occasionally encounter overlapping practices,

competitions, or other team obligations. When conflicts arise, coaches will work collaboratively to determine the most appropriate resolution based on the circumstances, the athlete's commitments, and the needs of the programs involved. Participation in multiple sports is encouraged, and student-athletes are expected to communicate proactively with their coaches regarding any scheduling conflicts.

SELECT/CLUB SPORTS

If a non-school athletic event conflicts with a Princeton ISD athletic practice, competition, or team activity, students are expected to prioritize their Princeton ISD athletic commitment. Because Princeton ISD participates in UIL competition, UIL school athletic events and responsibilities take priority over non-school athletic activities whenever possible. We understand that many student-athletes participate in outside sports and activities, and we encourage open communication with coaches in advance of any potential conflict. Failure to communicate or repeated absences from school-related athletic commitments may affect a student-athlete's standing within the program and participation in future contests.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PRINCETON ISD STUDENT-ATHLETE

Participation in the Princeton ISD Athletic Program carries both privileges and responsibilities. Student-athletes are expected to represent their school, team, family, and community with integrity, discipline, and sportsmanship at all times. Through athletic participation, students develop valuable qualities such as teamwork, perseverance, accountability, leadership, and the pursuit of excellence.

Student-athletes serve as ambassadors of Princeton ISD and are expected to model positive behavior both on and off the field of play. The privilege of representing Princeton ISD Athletics comes with the expectation that student-athletes will meet the standards established by coaches, teachers, administrators, teammates, and the community. As a student-athlete, your actions reflect not only on yourself, but also on your team and school.

Student-athletes are expected to:

- Strive for excellence in the classroom, in competition, and in their daily conduct.
- Follow all policies, procedures, and expectations outlined in the Athletic Handbook.
- Attend and actively participate in all practices, workouts, meetings, and team activities.
- Communicate directly with their coach regarding absences and miss practices only when necessary and approved.
- Follow the directions and decisions of coaches and athletic staff. Insubordination will not be tolerated.
- Properly care for all school-issued equipment, uniforms, and athletic gear. Athletes may be held financially responsible for items that are lost, damaged, or not returned.
- Treat coaches, teammates, teachers, administrators, staff members, officials, opponents, and spectators with respect.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and refrain from unsportsmanlike conduct at all times.
- Comply with all Princeton ISD Board policies, the District Code of Conduct, and applicable campus and athletic department expectations.

PRINCETON ISD ATHLETIC PROGRAM RULES & REGULATIONS

DRUG TESTING POLICY

Student-athletes participating in Princeton ISD athletics are subject to the District's Extracurricular Drug Testing Policy. Participation in athletics requires compliance with all procedures, requirements, and consequences

outlined in the District policy. Students and parents/guardians must complete all required forms and acknowledgements prior to participation. Questions regarding testing procedures, eligibility, or consequences should be directed to the Athletic Department or campus administration.

Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug use

Student-athletes are expected to make choices that reflect positively on themselves, their team, and Princeton ISD. The use, possession, purchase, distribution, or being under the influence of tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited.

Any student-athlete determined to have violated this standard through self-admission, a positive drug test, law enforcement action, school disciplinary findings, or other credible evidence may be subject to disciplinary action. Consequences may include suspension from athletic activities, probationary status, additional educational interventions, or removal from the athletic program, depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

ATHLETIC SUSPENSION

The Athletic Director may suspend or place on probation for the duration of the term, duration of the seasonal activity or the duration of the school year any student-athlete for major infraction of the standards set forth in this athletic handbook or student Code of Conduct.

The Athletic Director empowers the coaching staff to enforce and maintain all policies and standards described in the Athletic Handbook. Communication will be maintained between the coaching staff and the Athletic Director when infractions warrant suspension from athletic activities. Princeton ISD Athletic Directors will follow UIL guidelines regarding ejections and apply the appropriate disciplinary decision defined by each sport. (See UIL Addendum below.)

UIL Addendum:

(A) Football. The ejected player misses the rest of the game in which they were ejected plus the first half of the following game. *(Exception: Disqualification/ejection as a result of a targeting foul does not require the player to miss the first half of the following game.)*

(B) Other Team Sports. The ejected player misses the rest of the game in which they were ejected plus all of the following game. Soccer exception. This section does not alter the current point penalty structure for soccer player ejections, as required by National Federation of State High School Associations soccer playing rules, that is outlined in the soccer coaches' manual

However, if in the opinion of Princeton ISD Athletic Directors, the ejection is determined to be unsportsmanlike, the following consequences may also apply.

Student-athletes ejected from a school-related event

Individuals ejected or removed by an official from a contest or event will be subject to the following discipline:

1st Offense	Student-Athlete will be suspended in accordance with UIL Addendum.
2nd Offense	Student-Athlete will not participate in the next three contests or events.
3rd Offense	Student-Athlete will not participate in any extracurricular activities the remainder of the school year.

The punishments are on a continuum and include all contests or events in which a student participates. Parent, Fans, Coaches, Sponsors ejected from a school-related event

Individuals ejected or removed by an official from a contest or event will be subject to the following discipline:

1st Offense	Fan, Coach or Sponsor will not attend the next contest or event.
2nd Offense	Fan, Coach or Sponsor will not attend the next three contests or events.
3rd Offense	Fans will not attend any extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year.
	Coach or Sponsor will be dismissed of their coaching or sponsoring duties.

The punishments are on a continuum and include all contests or events in which the individual attends.

While scrimmages and practices are not considered athletic contests or events for the purpose of calculating suspension lengths, disciplinary consequences may extend to all athletic activities, including practices, scrimmages, team workouts, meetings, travel, and other team functions, as determined by the Athletic Director and coaching staff.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES/TARDIES

Student-Athletes are expected to be dressed and on time for all practices and competition and remain for the duration of the practice or competition. It is a student-athlete's responsibility to notify the coach if he/she must miss a practice or competition. Unexcused absences may result in suspension from a game, additional unexcused absence may result in suspension or removal from the program.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate respect and good citizenship in the classroom by treating teachers, administrators, staff, and fellow students appropriately. Tardiness, disruptive behavior, fighting, disrespect, insubordination, or other misconduct may result in disciplinary action by the coaching staff or Athletic Director, up to and including suspension from athletic activities or removal from the program.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

A student is ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school, if the student receives a grade lower than 70 on a scale of 100, in any academic class (nine-week grading period). An identified advanced class (Honors and AP) will meet a grade of 60 on a scale of 100 (nine-week grading period). Additionally, students may lose eligibility after the first six-weeks of the year. The grades of the ineligible student shall be reviewed at the end of each three-week period following the date on which the ineligibility began. The ineligibility is removed if the student's grade in each class is 70 or higher at the end of the three-week grading period. The Principal shall make the determination concerning the student's eligibility.

A student that is ineligible under the "no pass – no play" rule may practice or rehearse with other students. **Ineligible students shall not travel with the school organization to a contest, wear uniforms, sit on the bench/sidelines, or participate in competition during the student's ineligibility.**

Eligibility changes become effective seven calendar days after the end of a grading period. Students who pass all courses remain eligible during the following grading period, while students who fail one or more courses become ineligible after the seven-day grace period. Semester grades are not used to determine eligibility. Dual credit and college courses do not affect eligibility due to their semester grading structure.

DISCIPLINE

All extra-curricular activities are extensions of the educational program of Princeton ISD. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a constitutional right. Participation is contingent on the student maintaining eligibility and an acceptable behavior record in the school district. Each participant is subject to the discipline management plan and student Code of Conduct of the school district. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each extra-curricular participant to be aware of the student Code of Conduct and discipline management plan of the district.

Placement in In-School Suspension (ISS), **will allow** the student to participate in after school practice or rehearsal during their time in ISS. *(Students will not be allowed to participate in **games or contests** during their days in ISS, unless it is their final day in ISS. For example, a student placed in ISS Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, will be eligible for participation in an extra-curricular activity on Thursday at the end of the school day.)* **Any further disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the Athletic Director or sponsor of the activity**.

Placement in the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP), out-of-school suspension, or expulsion will not allow students to participate in extracurricular for the same dates the disciplinary action is in force. **(This includes practice or rehearsal time).**

The student will be eligible to participate at the end of the school day on the last day of their discipline. Disciplinary actions resulting in removal from the student's regular education program are determined on a first available date basis. Extra-curricular schedules will not be taken into consideration for disciplinary placement.

If a student has not completed their time in DAEP prior to summer, they are not able to participate in summer programs for any activities, until their time is completed at the start of the new year.

CRIMINAL CHARGES

Depending on the severity of the charges (including serious misdemeanors) and the outcome of the case, a student-athlete may be suspended for one or more games, dismissed from the sport for the remainder of the season, or dismissed from the athletic program for the remainder of the year. If the student-athlete is not found guilty or all charges are dropped, then the student-athlete will be reinstated into the athletic program.

DRESS CODE

In addition to following Princeton ISD Board approved dress code (found in the student handbook) student-athletes have additional expectations in regard to hairstyle and jewelry. In accordance with UIL rules and regulations, for safety reasons, student-athletes are not allowed to wear jewelry of any kind during athletic competition unless authorized by the UIL. Student-athletes will also be required to maintain a hairstyle

suitable for athletic competition. Suitable may be defined as (1) not impairing vision (2) suitable in length as to not create a safety hazard (3) not promoting disunity (shaved insignias, symbols, alternative colors).

DROPPING/QUITTING A SPORT

When a student quits a sport during the season, they will not be able to participate in another sport until the current sport regular season is complete. This includes practice or games. They are permitted to workout during the class period. If a student decides to not play a sport prior to the season, the athlete can go to another sport with no recourse. Before an athlete is allowed to quit or drop, the coach needs to contact parents and discuss the athletic change. An athlete that quits one sport and is seeking to join another sport within athletics will be at the discretion of the two involved Head Coaches.

TEAM TRAVEL

All regular school transportation rules and regulations apply when on an athletic trip. All varsity student-athletes are expected to ride the transportation provided by Princeton ISD to and from all competitions. The approval of the Head Coach must be obtained for a student-athlete to return home with his/her parent/guardian, and this will only occur upon completion of a Princeton ISD Athletic Department Travel Consent Form. The Athletic Department strongly urges that all student-athletes leave with a parent/guardian only in emergency situations.

Head Coaches of each sport will determine if they will allow Sub-Varsity players to travel home after an away contest. Middle school athletes will be allowed to ride home from away athletic events with a parent/guardian signature on a travel consent form. These forms can be downloaded from the school website.

Student-Athletes will follow the dress code for all bus trips, if not dressed in the team uniform before leaving the school. Head Coaches reserve the right to set the expectations for travel dress code to other campuses. The coaching staff retains the right to ban the use of any radios, electronic games, cell phones, etc. on away bus trips.

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

It is important that students do not use social media inappropriately. Examples of inappropriate use include but are not limited to: bullying, threats, demeaning comments, references to alcohol/drugs, posting inappropriate pictures, etc.

Athletic staff will use the following procedures when inappropriate social media posts/behavior are made:

1st Event	Warning
2nd Event	Sponsor directed consequences
3rd Event	Suspended for 1 contest/game/performance
4th Event	Suspended for the remainder of the semester

HAZING

"Hazing" is against the law and will not be tolerated. "Hazing" means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring on or off school property directed against a student by one person, alone, or acting with others,

that endangers the mental and/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 to include other students. Under Education Code 37.152, a person commits an offense if the person commits any of the following:

1. Engages in hazing;
2. Solicits, encourages, directs, aids attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing to occur;
3. Recklessly permits hazing to occur;
4. Has first-hand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student, or has first-hand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report that knowledge to the Principal or the Athletic Director.

AWARDS AND LETTERING

The school letter is among the highest awards the school bestows; the highest, of course, is the diploma. Athletes may receive from the school only one major award (a jacket) during their high school career. In order to letter, you must be on a varsity team and satisfy the requirements stated below. Sub-varsity athletes will receive certificates provided they are recommended for the award by their coach as a result of having shown good citizenship and character, attitude and attendance, in addition to having adhered to the policies contained within this handbook.

Varsity awards will consist of letter jackets. The school furnishes these major awards to each athlete who meets the qualification for lettering.

Guidelines for lettering:

- UIL rules will be followed in regard to the cost of jackets.
- No participant will receive more than one letter jacket during their high school career.
- Athletes will receive a jacket in the sport in which they letter first.
- The jacket will have no marking of patches on it except the letter. All other patches will be the responsibility of the athlete.
- Letter jackets will be the same for all sports.

Qualifications to letter:

Each coach will keep records of student participation in each sport. Such records will be used as a basis for determining whether a student qualifies for a letter. The athlete must complete the sport in order to letter or receive any post district award. Below are the recommended criteria to letter in each sport offered at Princeton High School:

- Football - play in 20 varsity quarters to letter
- Basketball - play in 60 varsity quarters to letter
- Volleyball - play in 15 varsity matches to letter
- Softball - play in 30 varsity innings to letter
- Track - score a point in district meet, participate in 4 varsity meets, or qualify for the regional meet
- Cross Country - place in the top 6 in the district meet, run in 4 varsity meets, or qualify for the regional meet
- Powerlifting - lift in 3 varsity meets or be a regional qualifier
- Tennis - play in 5 varsity meets including district
- Golf - play in 5 varsity meets including district

- Soccer - play in 25 varsity halves in a year
- Wrestling - fulfill 2 of the following: compete in 60% of the varsity matches, record a team point at the district meet, or compete in the district meet
- Managers - complete 2 full varsity season to letter
- Athletic Training Students - work at least 3 sport seasons to letter.

Exceptions to lettering qualifications:

A participant may letter at the coach's discretion if the participant is considered to have been of exceptional value to the team. Exceptions may include playing on a team for four years and never lettering, a letterman who is injured and is unable to complete the season, or a specialist of some type.

Note: Any student who has qualified for an award but has quit or been dismissed from the squad for disciplinary reasons will not receive an award

REQUIRED FORMS FOR PARTICIPATION

Prior to participation, a student-athlete must have the following on file:

- Pre-Participation Medical History and Examination form (UIL form only)
- Parent Consent Form (Includes the following)
    - Acknowledgment of
        - Emergency Contact Information
        - Non-Prescription Authorization
        - Hippa Release
        - Parent/Guardian Permit
        - Assumption of Risk & Release of All Claims
        - Helmet Warning
        - Athletic Insurance Coverage
        - Emergency Heat Stroke Protocol
        - Medical History
        - Corrective Vision
        - Permission to Treat
    - Concussion Acknowledgement Form (UIL form only)
    - Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Form (UIL form only)
    - Parent/Student Steroid Agreement Form (UIL form only)
    - Acknowledgement of Rules (UIL form only)
    - Princeton ISD Athletic Handbook acknowledgement form
    - Strength & Conditioning Release Form
    - UIL Previous Athletic Participation Form (if applicable)
    - UIL Foreign Exchange Student forms (if applicable)

The school district cares about the well-being of student-athletes; however, the school district does not assume liability for injuries incurred in athletics.

The Athletic Director empowers the coaching staff to enforce and maintain all policies and standards described in the Athletic Handbook. Communication will be maintained between the coaching staff, the Athletic Director, and the campus Principal when infractions warrant suspension from athletic activities.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The Princeton ISD Athletic Department believes that concerns are best resolved at the lowest appropriate level through respectful and timely communication. Student-athletes and parents are expected to follow the chain of command outlined below when addressing athletic concerns.

Athletic Concerns

1. Assistant Coach (if applicable)
2. Head Coach
3. Head Varsity Coach (for programs with multiple levels)
4. Campus Athletic Coordinator/Assistant Athletic Director (if applicable)
5. Athletic Director
6. Superintendent or Superintendent's Designee

Academic Concerns

1. Teacher
2. Coach (if related to athletic eligibility)
3. Counselor
4. Assistant Principal
5. Principal

Parents and student-athletes are expected to schedule meetings with coaches rather than addressing concerns immediately before, during, or after practices or contests. Coaches and administrators are committed to maintaining open communication and working collaboratively to support the success of all student-athletes.

The Princeton Independent School District does not discriminate against any person because of race, creed, national origin, age, sex, economic status, or handicapping condition in employment, promotion, or educational programming. Student-athletes and parents are expected to follow the chain of command and first confer with the coach in question, then if necessary, the Head Varsity Coach of the Sport, followed by the Athletic Director and finally the Superintendent of Schools when an athletic concern exists. All academic concerns should be initiated with the teacher and then the campus Principal. Concerns addressing both athletic and academic matters should be addressed to the campus Principal and Athletic Director.

Thank you for taking the time to review the policies of the Princeton ISD Athletic Department. Please contact the Athletic Director or any member of the coaching staff with additional questions or concerns regarding the contents within the Athletic Handbook. Please sign the acknowledgement form attached below and return it to a member of the coaching staff.

PRINCETON I.S.D. ATHLETIC HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I understand the policies and procedures of the Princeton I.S.D. Athletic Department, I am also aware of the consequences for violating said policies. If at any time I have questions regarding the handbook, I will address these questions to the Head Coach/Athletic Director. I understand that the Athletic Director and coaching staff will enforce these policies, procedures, and consequences.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I understand the policies and procedures of the Princeton I.S.D. Athletic Department, I am also aware of the consequences for violating said policies. If at any time I have questions regarding the handbook, I will address these questions to the Head Coach or Athletic Director. I understand that the Athletic Director and coaching staff will enforce these policies, procedures, and consequences.

Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____