

# Galena Park Independent School District

## Department of Athletics



Middle School

CUNNINGHAM



Middle School



Middle School



Middle School



*United in the Pursuit Of Excellence*

## Parent/Student-Athlete Handbook

2014-2015

*Making Every Day an Opportunity*

# Galena Park ISD Athletic Department

## Parent/Student Athletic Handbook

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your son/daughter has expressed a desire to participate in Galena Park ISD's athletic program. It is the belief of the coaching staff that athletics can do more for your child than teach him/her to play the sport he/she has chosen. We believe athletics instills the desire not only to win but also to attain personal goals and to build strength of body and strength of character. The latter of these qualities usually determines the success of the first.

It is our belief that strength of character is the foundation upon which to build the well-developed, well-polished individual. Athletes, as people in any specialized field, have a unique role to play. They are constantly monitored by their peers, teachers, and the community. Because of this scrutiny, athletes must possess strength of character for the role they have undertaken.

We believe very strongly that our athletes should possess these qualities. Because of this belief, GPISD has established the following set of guidelines to be followed by all GPISD athletes.

**All athletes must:**

1. Abide by all UIL rule specifications as well as local athletic policy.
2. Attend every practice session and athletic contest with the exception of illness or emergency situation. Parent or athlete must call, email, or text his/her coach if the athlete is not able to attend a practice session. High school athletes are expected to take responsibility and communicate with the coaches themselves.
3. At all times, respond to each situation with dignity and class.
4. Maintain a standard of excellence in the classroom.

Violation of these policies will result in appropriate disciplinary action taken against the students and may result in his/her removal from the Galena Park ISD athletic program. Therefore, we ask for parent cooperation in motivating your son/daughter in the observation of these rules.

Enclosed is an information handbook for Galena Park ISD Athletics, which includes guidelines and policies for the student-athlete.

Sincerely,

Vince Sebo  
Director of Athletics  
[Vsebo@galenaparkisd.com](mailto:Vsebo@galenaparkisd.com) 832-386-4330

# Galena Park ISD Athletic Department

## Mission

The Galena Park ISD athletic program is a continuation of the academic classroom. Other than specific sport skills, life-long values such as citizenship, sportsmanship, leadership, team work, work ethic, and character building will be the curriculum for all athletic programs.

## Philosophy of Athletics

Galena Park ISD believes an athletic program plays a vital role in the educational system. A successful program generates a sense of school pride for the participants, the student body, the faculty and the community.

Athletics should provide a variety of experiences to enhance the development of positive habits and attitudes that will prepare the student for adult life in a democratic society.

In addition, athletics should function as an integral part of the total curriculum. It should offer opportunities to serve the institution, to assist in the development of positive relationships and good will, to promote self-realization, all around growth and good citizenship qualities.

**The Galena Park ISD athletic program is based on the premise that athletes are students first and that athletic participation is a privilege not a right.**

## Levels of Competition Philosophy

The Galena Park ISD Athletic Department provides a wide range of competitive opportunities and does its best to enhance the special skills each athlete needs in the sport of choice. This will only be accomplished by teaching strict fundamentals at all levels of competition.

### Levels of Competition:

**Elementary/Youth Sports-** The development of the player is emphasized rather than the team. Participation and enjoyment through team involvement are the main objectives.

**Middle School-** Fundamentals and the development of individual skills are the objectives. Commitment to the team, character traits, nutrition, respect, and other principles are emphasized.

**Freshmen/Junior Varsity (JV) -** Although winning becomes more of an emphasis, fundamentals are still stressed. Team commitment, character building, leadership components and respect of the game are all objectives.

**Varsity-** Emphasis is placed on winning championships but not at all costs. Varsity teams are comprised of athletes who are the most skilled as well as the most developed mentally and physically. Individual development, team concepts, character building and leadership are continued objectives.

**NOTE:** All middle school sports practices are before or after school when in-season. Due to coaching staff and schedule constraints, some middle school sports may only practice after school when in-season.

The middle school athletic class period is designed to be a general *athletic development* class when sport is not in-season. All student athletes are encouraged to participate in the class even if his/her sport only practices before or after school.

# UIL Sports

## High Schools 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup>

- Cross Country (Boys & Girls)
- Football
- Volleyball
- Basketball (Boys & Girls)
- Soccer (Boys & Girls)
- Baseball
- Softball
- Swimming/Diving (Boys & Girls)
- Tennis and Team Tennis (Boys & Girls)
- Track (Boys & Girls)
- Athletic Training and Equipment Management (Boys and Girls)

## Middle Schools 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>

- Football
- Volleyball
- Basketball (Boys and Girls)
- Track (Boys and Girls)

# Priorities, Goals & Objectives

## Priorities

- While championships are important, developing championship people is more important.
- Graduation rates are more important than winning percentages.
- More value is placed on the education of the student than the entertainment of the public.
- Focus is on the team not the individual.

## Goals and Objectives

- Develop programs to encourage broad participation, enhance school spirit, and build unity among students, faculty and community.
- Expect student-athletes, coaches, and community to act with integrity and sportsmanship toward opponents, coaches, and game officials.
- Emphasize and encourage positive lifestyles through leadership and character building.
- Ensure safe and secure environments for practices and competitions.
- Promote improvement through self-evaluation.
- Hire, retain, and mentor exemplary coaches.
- Promote consistency and unity throughout the athletic department.
- Increase faculty/staff awareness and involvement with the athletic department.
- Maintain a high level of expectation for success.
- Promote athletic programs and activities through varied communication.
- Promote and develop daily winning attitudes.
- Win championships with class and character.

# Expectations

In order for our athletic programs to excel, we must build collaborative working relationships among parents, athletes, and coaches. Building these working relationships will help develop the winning culture we all desire for our athletic department.

## **Parent's Expectations of the Coach:**

1. Treat my athlete objectively and fairly.
2. Let me know if my athlete is experiencing any problems (physically, socially, or emotionally).
3. Clearly communicate your expectations of my athlete and me.
4. Keep in mind that, as parents, we identify with our athlete's achievements.
5. Be a good role model.
6. Prevent bullying or social ostracism.

## **Coach's Expectations of Parents:**

1. Recognize my commitment to all of our athletes.
2. Offer praise for our cooperative accomplishments and support for my efforts.
3. Keep me informed of any home issues that might affect your athlete.
4. Follow established complaint/objection guidelines when there is a problem.
5. Be an enthusiastic and respectful fan at games.
6. Support your athlete's efforts and commitment to the program.
7. Monitor your athlete's schedule to help avoid over-involvement in diverse activities.
8. Screen your athlete from conflicting input from outside coaches and "experts".
9. Be positive and encouraging about me and my role with your athlete at home.
10. Monitor your athlete's involvement in social media very closely.
11. Monitor your athlete's academic status.

## **Coach's Expectations of Athlete:**

1. Set realistic personal goals for yourself and pursue them.
2. Be honest about your ability level.
3. Let me know if you have, or incur, an injury or illness.
4. Understand that my feedback on your performance is constructive.
5. Take pride in your team.
6. Support your fellow athletes and teammates.
7. Let me know if you are having academic problems or issues with your peers.
8. Let me know if issues or concerns exist in your home or personal life that might affect your participation.
9. Refrain from any use of illegal substances including alcohol.
10. Always display good sportsmanship to opponents, coaches, and game officials.
11. Let me know if you are having conflicts with the scheduling demands of a job or school-related activities.

**Athlete's Expectations of Coach:**

1. Treat everyone objectively without favoritism.
2. Do not embarrass anyone.
3. Understand that I have an assortment of diverse interests in addition to this sport.
4. Understand the conflicts with school work and other activities.
5. Understand that I might be required to maintain an outside job to assist the family.
6. Commendations and praise should be given for good effort.
7. Maintain a cooperative and "team-first" environment.
8. Assist me in setting, maintaining, and pursuing realistic goals for myself.
9. Be there to listen when I might be dealing with personal issues in my life.

**Athlete's Expectations of Parent:**

1. Work with coaches and myself in pursuing my dreams and goals in athletics.
2. Provide support without pressure.
3. Be positive in communicating with my coach(es).
4. Understand the conflicts involving school work and other activities.

## The Parents' Role

Being the parent of an interscholastic athlete can be a great experience. Galena Park ISD has many different sports to offer. Parents' participation with their son or daughter can be and should be an enjoyable activity. Your support is very important to the athletes, the school, and community. To make the experience the most rewarding for all concerned, the following are some suggestions on being a supportive athletic parent:

- 1. Be Positive** – Being on a school team is quite an accomplishment. Do not let playing time dictate the athlete's happiness. Celebrate the fact he/she is good enough to make a team. Being more positive and supportive when things are not going well for your son/daughter or for the team should be the norm.
- 2. Be supportive of coaching staff in front of your athlete** – Nothing can injure teamwork faster than athletes doubting the capabilities of their coaches. The coaches are trying to do their best at every moment. With concerns or issues, parents should follow the Galena Park ISD Athletic Department protocol or process. Our staff will listen, respect your confidentiality and give you a timely response.
- 3. Be part of a parent network** – Whether you are part of a booster club or not, special relationships can be fostered by socializing with other parents of athletes. This socialization can take place at games, after games, at team dinners, etc. Parents need support as well. Be positive with each other and do not hesitate to remind each other about remaining positive at all times. If you hear a "rumor" that concerns you about any athletic issue, call a Galena Park ISD coach to verify or clarify what you have heard. Don't perpetuate a rumor by passing it on or by remaining silent about an issue that could affect a program.
- 4. Booster Parents** – We appreciate the fact that you are an active booster parent and supportive of our total program. Do not feel that you are obligated to donate funds or equipment to our athletic program for it to be successful. While we have financial needs from time to time, our district, historically, has made a strong commitment to athletics. Your attendance at our sporting events and encouragement for other fans to come and watch our athletic teams perform would be of tremendous support. Booster parents are also encouraged to be involved in ongoing booster meetings and projects for all sports. Your involvement in the various fundraising activities is appreciated.
- 5. Winning and Losing** – It shall be our athletic staff's goal to pursue excellence in each school's athletic program by motivating students to achieve to the best of their ability while honoring themselves with their talents. Winning, under a positive goal-oriented environment, can be a natural and enjoyable outgrowth of this attitude. Everyone enjoys a well-played victory, but a "Winning is Everything" philosophy cannot become the controlling force. Too much is sacrificed when that philosophy is dominant. The philosophy should be to remain honorable in our attitudes and skills, and whether we win the physical victory or not, we have still won in the game of life.

- 6. College Scholarships** – Having lofty expectations for our children is a normal and healthy goal. In striving for these expectations, we must also be realistic. Not everyone can receive a college scholarship, nor should your child’s athletic success be measured by the number of offers he or she receives. We have received our share of scholarships based on all the hard work parents, athletes and coaches have put in. Our coaches will help individuals and parents in whatever way they can to find an opportunity for those who wish to pursue collegiate careers. Coaches will not, however, recommend a school at which the athlete cannot potentially be successful.
- 7. Additional Thoughts** – The success of our athletic program is not dictated by the athlete alone. Our schools’ teams, students, and adult supporters should work together. If the contributions of either are less than total, everyone stands to lose. We have a tremendous amount of support for our athletes by the coaches, administration, and the Board. In an athlete’s day-to-day pursuit of self-improvement, a winning effort should always be present. This is merely the rehearsal for the actual game where winning the game may elude the team; however, a winning effort should always be applied. We are grateful for the positive approach and effort by the participants and everyone who supports them.

## UIL Behavior Expectations of Spectators

1. Remember that you are at the contest to support your team and to enjoy the skill and competition—not to intimidate or ridicule the other team or its fan.
2. Remember that school athletics are a learning experience for students and that mistakes are sometimes made.
3. Praise student-athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes, and as people, just as you would praise a student working in the classroom.
4. A ticket is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others or be generally obnoxious.
5. Learn the rules of the game so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
6. Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups.
7. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help promote the student-athlete, and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
8. Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
9. Refrain from the use of any controlled substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before, during, and after the game on or near the site of the event (i.e. tailgating).
10. Use only cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
11. Be a positive role model at events through your own actions and by censuring those around you whose behavior is unbecoming.
12. Parents and spectators should be aware that the school can (and should) remove them from the premises and can prohibit them from attending future contests due to undesirable behaviors.
13. Game officials can ask that school administrators have unruly fans removed from a contest facility.
14. There is no such thing as a “right” to attend interscholastic athletics. Interscholastic athletics are considered a “privilege” and the spectator is expected to conduct himself or herself accordingly.
15. Keep in mind that you are a guest of the school, and that while winning is certainly an admirable goal, it is hollow if it comes at the expense of morals, ethics, and just plain common sense.

***The school is responsible for the behavior of their spectators. The school district can be and will be punished for actions of patrons in violation of UIL standards and rules.***

## GPISD Spectator Expectations

Galena Park ISD is a member in good standing with the University Interscholastic League (U.I.L.). As such, there are rules and regulations our athletic programs and our FANS are required to follow. We expect fans to support students and coaches and contribute to the positive environment they deserve.

All members participating in GPISD programs and events are **required** to adhere to the following guidelines:

- No use of profanity
- No threats directed toward officials, players or coaches
- No taunting
- No loitering

Please be aware that anyone who chooses to violate the UIL sportsmanship regulations will be **removed immediately** from the event and may be **banned from attendance at future events.**

## Athletic Complaint Process

Our goal is to facilitate communication between player and coach, then coach and parent/student and to address concerns in a collaborative, effective manner. If you are a student or parent who has a concern or a complaint about a sport, coach, or coaching style, please follow the prescribed process and follow the recommended UIL guidelines. If more information is needed, please call the athletic director's office for further guidance.

Coaches cannot address a problem unless they know that a problem exists. Often times, problems stem from miscommunication or misinterpretation of an issue. Therefore, we ask that your child speak with the coach first and address the problem directly. If the outcome of that meeting is not satisfactory, we ask that the parent and student meet together with the coach.

The Galena Park ISD Athletic Department is here to work alongside parents to encourage an enjoyable experience for the student-athlete in Galena Park ISD Athletics. We will do whatever it takes in working with parents to achieve this goal. The concept that we refer to as the "24 hour" rule serves as a reminder to please wait 24 hours before approaching a coach – in person, by phone, or through email or text. This allows all involved a "cooling down" period and also provides for a time for reflection thereby gaining a better perspective of the particular situation.

*If you have a concern to discuss with the coach, the following procedure should be followed:*

### **Informal:**

Telephone the coach or send an email about your concern(s) and allow time for the coach to get back with you to discuss your concern and a possible solution. Please do not approach a coach during a game or practice. If both parties agree that it is necessary, a "face-to-face" meeting will be held.

### **Formal:**

#### **Step 1**

If the informal interaction does not resolve the issue, put your concerns in writing (email or letter) to the coach with an explanation of why the informal process did not solve the problem. You will receive a written reply from the coach offering a solution in a timely manner.

#### **Step 2**

- If the Step 1 response does not resolve the issue, detail your reasons for disagreement with the offered solution in writing to the Galena Park ISD Athletic Director.
- Attach the Step 1 response from the coach.
- The Galena Park ISD Athletic Director will conduct an independent investigation of the issue and contact you to schedule a meeting, if needed, to seek resolution of the issue.
- After the investigation is completed, the Athletic Director will provide a written response to all concerned parties.

**NOTE:** Each sport will provide an "Orientation" meeting with parents prior to the start of that sport's season. Coaches will discuss, in detail, the district's process for filing/pursuing issues and/or complaints, providing phone numbers and e-mail addresses for facilitating communication, and that sport's expectations of participants and parents. The guidelines for discussing concerns or complaints, established by the UIL, will also be reviewed.

## **Athletic Code of Conduct**

The discipline code for athletes has been developed to comply with the District's Board approved Galena Park ISD Student Code of Conduct but with increased requirements due to the leadership role assumed by athletes. It is the intent of the athletic staff of Galena Park ISD to emphasize that self-discipline is an integral and essential part of any successful academic and athletic program.

All students are expected to adhere to the Galena Park ISD Code of Conduct as it applies to school-related or school-sponsored activities. Students involved in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, as leaders in the school, are expected to exhibit the highest standards of ethics and conduct. GPISD students, staff, and parents view participation in these extracurricular or co-curricular activities as a privilege and not a right. Therefore, the teachers, sponsors, coaches, and directors of these activities may develop and enforce codes of conduct that will take into consideration both school-related misconduct and conduct that occurs outside of the school's jurisdiction, regardless of time or location.

### **Types of suspensions: ISS (in-school suspension) or OSS (out of-school suspension)**

**ISS...1<sup>st</sup> Assignment:** Suspension from athletic period while assigned ISS. Coaches and administrators will work together as to the extent of violation.

**OSS...1<sup>st</sup> Assignment:** Suspension from all activities while assigned OSS.

### **Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP):**

DAEP Placement: Suspension from all activities while assigned to the DAEP.

Expelled students are subject to more severe extracurricular and co-curricular activity restrictions.

Any form of disciplinary action taken by the school or school district regarding a student-athlete, will result in (1) notification to the Athletic Department and (2) reviewing the student-athlete's status/standing in district-sponsored activities.

Student-athletes who commit offenses outside of the school's jurisdiction may be suspended from participation by the athletic director after a review of the incident. Before an extracurricular or co-curricular activity sanction will be imposed, evidence must be presented to the athletic director describing the offense and action taken, in its entirety.

When such evidence of a non-school-related infraction is presented to the athletic director, the student and parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified of the offense. The student and/or parent(s) or guardian(s) will be afforded the opportunity for a meeting with the athletic director to discuss the offense and the penalties which have been rendered by legal authorities.

**Offenses for Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Use:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Suspension from activities for the disciplinary period assigned by the school and four (4) hours of counseling. Parent(s) will consent to provide monthly drug testing for one (1) calendar year. Student may continue practicing.

**Additional Offenses:** will result in sterner forms of reprimand.

**Offenses for Off-Campus, Illegal Issues:**

For activities that are of an illegal nature resulting in charges being filed, the student-athlete may not continue participating in the athletic program.

***NOTE:** If a conflict exists between sanctions in the athletic handbook, student code of conduct, and/or local district policy, district policy and the student code of conduct will take precedent over the handbooks.*

*While under suspension from extracurricular and co-curricular activities, students will continue to attend their academic classes as well as their athletic period. Additionally, while under suspension from activities, students may participate in any tryout, election, or process that would allow them to participate in an activity that begins after their athletic suspension is lifted.*

# Athletic Department Policies

## Academic Requirements & Eligibility

### No Pass No Play

A student who fails a class will continue to attend practice but shall be suspended from participation in after-school athletics after a grade evaluation period (six weeks) in which the student received a grade lower than the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100 in any academic class. A suspension continues for at least three school weeks and is not removed during the school year until the conditions of reinstatement, described below, are met.

Until the suspension is removed or the school year ends, the district shall review the grades of a student suspended under these provisions at the end of each three-week period following the date on which the suspension began. At the time of a review, the suspension is removed if the student's grade in each class, other than an identified honors or advanced class, is equal to or greater than the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100. The principal and each of the student's teachers shall make the determination concerning the student's grades.

### Credit Requirements for Eligibility

The standards below determine academic eligibility for the first six weeks of the school year. Students in noncompliance may request a hardship appeal of their academic eligibility through the UIL.

- **Grades nine and below** - Students must have been promoted from the previous grade.
- **Second year of High School** - Five accumulated credits that count toward state graduation requirements.
- **Third year of High School** - Ten accumulated credits that count toward state graduation requirements or student must have earned at least five credits within the last twelve months that count toward state graduation requirements.
- **Fourth year of High School** - Fifteen accumulated credits that count toward state graduation requirements or student must have earned at least five credits within the last twelve months that count toward state graduation requirements.

### Athletics & Academic Assistance

Coaches will be proactive in stressing the importance of Academics. It is important to make sure we have created a trusting relationship with our student-athletes. It is important to learn about our athlete's strengths and weaknesses academically, as well as athletically.

### Study Hall Assistance Program

All Galena Park ISD high school student-athletes will be held to high standards of academic achievement and accountability. Our athletic coaches will require their athletes to attend tutorials, provided by faculty, daily as needed upon periodic grade review/checks. Since it is the obligation of an athlete to maintain eligibility, it is also an athlete's obligation to attend tutorials when they are assigned by his/her respective coach(es) and/or teachers.

## NCAA Guidelines

It is the athletic department's expectation of the coaches to help our student-athletes have an opportunity to receive a college education. This can be achieved by educating our students and their parents about potential college scholarships, grants, and other forms of financial assistance.

The athletic director will offer various group presentations to our student-athletes and families on ways they can help their child be ready and prepared by the time their child is a senior. Coaches can help our athletes with potential scholarship offers by getting the athletes exposure and presenting opportunities for potential exposure.

### **Head Coaches responsibilities:**

- Create positive public relationships with college recruiters.
- Sell our athletes, displaying their talents and performances shown throughout their time in high school.
- Provide recruiters with profile sheets of prospective athletes and game video for their files.
- Inform our athletes about various college camps and/or combine opportunities.
- Provide media outlets with the name of our students for outstanding performances.
- Maintain accurate and updated individual/team statistics in order to nominate/promote student-athletes for awards and commendations.
- Share opportunities as early as possible to help our students in preparation for the ACT and SAT.
- Be mentors to our athletes in helping them to decide what classes would help them the most when preparing for college.
- Provide academic assistance regarding specific core classes for our student-athletes.

### **NCAA and the NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER**

The NCAA has increased the number of required core courses to be completed in order to attain eligibility for participation in college athletics. Students interested in pursuing athletic participation in college should be aware of the facts.

### **For More Information**

Students and/or parents, wanting more information, should contact their high school counselor or visit this web site [ncaa.org](http://ncaa.org) and click on the [\*high school portal\*](#) section.

# General Information

## Athletic Periods

The athletic period is considered a class period and will be treated as such. All students must attend their respective athletic period each day. Please make every effort to schedule appointments after school so that the student-athlete will not miss any class periods.

## Equipment & Uniforms

Each athlete will be issued the proper equipment, workout uniform, and game uniform. In the event the equipment or uniform(s) is not returned at the end of the season, the athlete will have to reimburse the athletic department for the replacement cost. Per UIL rules (C & CR Section 441), no equipment or uniforms may be given to athletes to keep on a permanent basis.

## Multi-Sport Athletes

The Athletic Department believes in the value of athletic participation in all its forms. Such participation sparks the qualities of team commitment, individual commitment, and personal excellence. We are committed to a range of sports activities for every athlete who has the time and desire to play them, and we oppose the recommendation that athletes restrict participation to a single sport. For students participating in more than one sport, the sport that is “in-season” will take priority.

## Strength & Conditioning Expectations

All athletes will participate in strength and conditioning activities. The strength and conditioning program is the period of time when athletes, from any sport, are not competing against other schools in a UIL sanctioned event in their chosen sport.

- An athlete who participates in only one sport will be required to participate in that sport’s conditioning program. For example, an athlete may not quit the football team after football season in December and expect to get back on the team the next season in August.
- Athletes who participate in two or more sports will participate in their non-spring sport conditioning program. For example, a basketball player will go through a conditioning program before he/she participates in his/her spring sport (i.e. track).
- When a multi-sport athlete reaches the varsity level of competition, the conditioning requirement will be waived according to the discretion of the athletic director and the head coaches of the sports involved.

***NOTE: In the event of seasonal conflicts, the following rules will apply: District contests will take precedent over non-district contests and team sports will take precedent over individual sports, unless it is District, Regional, or State contest.***

## **Club & Non-School-Sponsored Athletic Participation**

Galena Park ISD Athletic Department encourages club and non-school offered activities as long as they do not cause a conflict with our school-sponsored athletic program

Student-athletes participating in Galena Park ISD Athletics make a commitment to the team, their teammates, and their school. Each program demands the dedication of time and energy of the athlete. Part of this commitment is to be a student first and strive for academic excellence. Another integral part of that commitment is to place the Galena Park ISD Athletic team above participation in any non-school-sanctioned activity and attend all practices and games scheduled by our district's coaches.

### **Practice**

- If an athlete chooses to miss an athletic practice because of participation in an activity which isn't under the direction of GPISD, the athlete could be suspended for one game.
- On the second offense, he/she could be released from the team.

### **Game or Contest**

- In the event a student-athlete misses a GPISD Athletic contest to participate in an activity not under the sponsorship of GPISD, he/she could be suspended.
- On the second offense, he/she could be released from the team.
- Non-athletic GPISD school-sanctioned activities do not fall under this policy.

### **Team Participation**

Each varsity head coach sets the criteria for participation on a team. The opportunity to participate on a school team may require a try-out. Expectations for making a team or staying on a team will be communicated prior to the season at the sport's pre-season "Orientation Meeting".

### **Team Selection & Tryout Policy**

The GPISD Athletic Department is sensitive to the needs of the athletes during the tryout period. It is our desire to see that as many student-athletes as possible are involved in the athletic program during the year.

Unfortunately, due to facility space, time constraints, equipment needs, and additional factors, limitations may be placed on sizes of teams for each individual sport. The athletic department recognizes these concerns and is striving to maximize the options available for student-athletes in the athletic program.

### **Tryout Procedures**

1. Choosing the members of the various athletic teams is the responsibility of the head coach.
2. Before tryouts begin, coaches will provide team information to all candidates and parents of the team at a pre-season orientation meeting. Such information shall include:
  - a. Length of tryout period (2 to 3 days)
  - b. Distribution of practice and competition schedule.
  - c. The level of commitment necessary to be on a team.
3. When lowering the numbers on teams becomes a necessity, the coach will discuss options or alternatives for those individuals who do not make the team. Such alternatives could include participation in another sport or activity.

### **Failure to Complete a Sport Policy**

The UIL believes that most students enjoy the pursuit of excellence and seek opportunities to test themselves against their own accomplishments and those of their peers.

A student's level of commitment to the sport in which he/she participates is an important factor in the attainment of these values. Students are encouraged to complete all endeavors (sports) in which they begin. Quitting is not considered a solution to conflict-resolution. Students are provided a fifteen (15) calendar-day grace period from the first practice date in each sport to determine their interest in the sport. Once committed, a student who fails to complete a sport (quits), before the sport concludes, will not be eligible to participate (practice or game) in another sport until the conclusion of the sport in which he/she failed to complete. *An exception:* An athlete may leave one sport for another sport if the coaches of both sports and the athlete reach an agreement that the transition is in the best interest of the athlete. A student removed from a team for disciplinary reasons (and allowed to remain in the athletic program) will also be subject to this policy. Students who participate in more than one sport simultaneously (i.e. baseball, softball, track) are not subject to this rule.

### **Transportation**

GPISD athletes will be required to ride to and from an athletic event in transportation provided by the District. Only in extenuating circumstances will a student be allowed to ride to or from an event in a private vehicle with a parent or guardian. A note signed by the parent or guardian would be presented to the coach 24 hours prior to the event.

Athletes are reminded that their conduct while in transit or aboard school district-provided transportation should be exemplary. The same rules, guidelines, policies, and expectations of a classroom-setting prevail when an athlete is being transported by district-sponsored vehicles.

### **Awards and Lettering**

Each varsity sport has specific criteria for earning a varsity letter award. The head coach of each sport will provide each varsity team member with the lettering criteria, as well as, parents attending their respective orientation meeting prior to the season. Earned letter awards (letter jackets) may be denied or taken up in the event a student-athlete violates the code of conduct of the GPISD Athletic Program.

# Health & Safety

## **Warning about Dangers of Athletic Participation**

Student-athletes and parents should be aware that any athletic participation will always have inherent risks and dangers. Although rare, death or catastrophic injury can result from participation in sports, and care should be taken by all concerned to minimize such dangers through the use of appropriate equipment, proper training methods and common sense.

## **Athletic Trainers**

Galena Park ISD employs fully licensed Athletic Trainers. Athletic trainers are health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to optimize activity and participation of patients and clients. Athletic training encompasses the prevention, diagnosis, and intervention of emergency, acute and chronic medical conditions involving impairment, functional limitations, and disabilities. In Texas, athletic trainers practice under state statutes recognizing them as qualified health care professionals similar to physical therapists, occupational therapists and other health care professionals.

## **Head Injuries**

### **Signs and Symptoms of Mild Head Injury**

Parents need to be aware of the observable signs and symptoms of a concussion:

Headache	Sensitivity to light or noise
Nausea	Feeling “foggy” or “not sharp”
Balance problems or dizziness	Change in sleep patterns
Double or fuzzy vision	Concentration or memory problems
Feeling slowed down	Irritability
Sadness	Feeling more emotional

### **Post-Concussion Syndrome**

Following a mild head injury, athletes may suffer a number of lingering symptoms for varying lengths of time. If any of the following post-concussive symptoms are noted, the athlete should not be allowed to return to participation and should be referred for physician evaluation:

Depression	Sensitivity to noise	Excess sleep
Numbness/tingling	Irritability	ringing in the ears
Dizziness	Trouble falling asleep	Fatigue
Poor balance	Vomiting	Sadness
Drowsiness	Memory problems	Feeling “in fog”
Poor concentration	Nervousness	Sensitivity to light
Headache		

### **Second-Impact Syndrome**

Second-impact syndrome is a rare event, which poses a significant concern for athletes who return too soon after suffering a previous concussion. Second-impact syndrome is characterized by an auto regulatory dysfunction that causes rapid and fatal brain swelling and can result in death in as little as two to five minutes. It is particularly important to note that virtually all of the second-impact syndrome cases that have been reported have occurred in adolescent athletes. The progressive signs of second-impact syndrome are as follows:

- Previous history of concussion
- Visual, motor or sensory changes
- Difficulty with memory and/or thought process
- Collapse into coma
- Signs of cranial nerve and brainstem pressure

### **Cumulative Effects of Repeated Concussions**

At this time, there is little known about the cumulative effect of concussions. However, early research suggests that athletes who have sustained at least one mild head injury (MHI) have a greater risk for repeated MHI and that the severity of subsequent MHI may be increased. Until research can further illuminate the potential cumulative effects of concussion, it is recommended that athletes sustaining more than one concussion should be referred for follow-up evaluation and assessment to determine any residual effects that might preclude participation in contact or collision sports.

### **Concussion Management Protocol Compliance**

It is the mission and commitment of Galena Park ISD to refer all concussion issues to independent medical specialists that practice medicine in the field of head trauma. The district's athletic training staff will refer the athlete to a specialist to examine and maintain compliance with the UIL guidelines for returning to play and activity.

***NOTE: The entire concussion management, "return-to-play" protocol, and compliance is detailed in the GPISD Student/Parent Athletic Packet. It serves as mandatory reading and signing by parent(s) and student-athlete prior to participating in any district-sanctioned athletic activity.***

## **Heat Issues**

### **Dehydration, Its Effects on Performance, and its Relationship to Heat Illness**

- Dehydration can affect an athlete's performance in less than an hour of exercise—sooner if the athlete begins the session dehydrated.
- Dehydration of just one to two percent of body weight (only 1.5 – 3 lb. for a 150-pound athlete) can negatively influence performance.
- Dehydration of greater than three percent of body weight increases an athlete's risk of heat illness (heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke).
- High-body-fat athletes can have a harder time with exercise and can become dehydrated faster than lower-body-fat athletes working out under the same environmental conditions.
- Poor acclimatization/fitness levels can greatly contribute to an athlete's dehydration problems.
- Medications/fevers greatly affect an athlete's dehydration problems.
- Environmental temperature and humidity both contribute to dehydration and heat illnesses.
- Clothing, such as dark, bulky, or rubber protective equipment can drastically increase the chance of heat illness and dehydration.

## **Sports Medicine Rules & Policies**

- All injuries should be reported in a timely manner.
- Athletes must report to the trainer for morning treatments if injured.
- Athletes are responsible for all equipment issued (braces, crutches, modalities, etc.)
- Athletes are expected to report to scheduled treatments on time.
- Athletes are required to be as clean as possible when reporting to the training room.
- No loitering or "horse playing" will be tolerated.
- Shirts and shorts are required to be worn in training room.
- Profanity/derogatory remarks will not be tolerated.

## **Galena Park ISD Athletic Department Parent/Student Athletic Handbook Agreement**

We have read and understood all parts of the Galena Park ISD Athletic Handbook. As a Galena Park ISD student-athlete and parent, we **will** abide by the stated policies, guidelines, and rules of Texas UIL and Galena Park ISD.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Contact Information:

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_