



2025-2026

Leonard ISD Athletics Handbook

LEONARD INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

ATHLETICS

GUIDELINES AND BY-LAWS HANDBOOK

ARTICLE I

Purpose

As our school system and athletic programs continue to grow, it is becoming more difficult to communicate with parents, athletes, administrators, and coaches in the areas of policies, proper procedure and responsibilities. This manual is designed to help the coaches, parents, administrators and athletes understand our policies and procedures and to help effectively carry out their responsibilities.

ARTICLE II

Code of Ethics for Coaches in LISD

When choosing the coaching profession, coaches assume certain responsibilities and obligations to the school district, the student athlete and to fellow colleagues. All LISD coaches shall be constantly aware of these obligations and responsibilities and will conduct themselves in such a manner as to maintain dignity in their profession and to the School District. These obligations and responsibilities include:

1. Instilling in the athlete desirable ideas and character traits as: teamwork, integrity, honesty, unselfishness, commitment, sacrifice, humbleness, loyalty, class, respect, and a hard work ethic.
2. Support the administration in all policies, rules, and regulations.
3. Help the student athlete achieve academic success and to be an effective classroom teacher.
4. Differences of opinion among coaches or between coaches and faculty members will be discussed behind closed doors and never with the public.
5. Coaches are responsible to ensure that student athletes have a way home and are not left without supervision at the school after practices and games.

6. Ensure that student athletes have the necessary uniforms, safety and other equipment, and supplies, to compete successfully.
7. Set positive examples for students in their behavior when practicing, competing and in their daily lives.
8. Exhibit the philosophy of positive reinforcement of desirable actions, criticism should strive to be positive in nature encouraging the student athlete to improve on skills, teamwork, and acceptable behavior during athletic practice and games. Profanity should never be used.
9. Follow all UIL rules for eligibility and competition as listed in the *UIL Rules and Constitution*.
10. Complete all UIL and local required training yearly or when directed.
11. Ensure accurate schedules of meetings, practices, and games are received by student athletes, parents, and the general public.
12. Use *Remind or SportsYou* for electronic communications with students, parents, and the general public, post schedules on the district's website. Coaches/staff can't communicate with students via other social media avenues unless it is on a team/classroom page that all team members can be a part of and parents and school administrators have access to.
13. Maintains the playing fields and courts in game ready condition.
14. Use of profane language is not acceptable by coaches or athletes.
15. Coaches will always strive to ensure student safety at all times when supervising students including the athletic period, practices, games, etc.

ARTICLE III

School Attendance and Grades

Section A

Each athlete is required to attend school and all classes regularly. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated. If the student athlete fails to correct the problems, he / she could be dismissed from the athletic program. Academics are the student athletes' number one priority. All athletes will be encouraged to strive for excellence in the classroom. A student-athlete must be in attendance for a minimum of three class periods in order to participate in a practice or game on any specific day unless he or she was attending a medical/dental appointment or other excused absence as approved by the principal and athletic director beforehand.

Section B

The UIL and LISD enforce the “No Pass, No Play” rule. If a student fails one course, he / she is ineligible for three weeks. A grade report in all classes will be required after three weeks of ineligibility. If a student is passing all classes, they will regain eligibility. If a student fails two or more six weeks in a year, the athlete may be dropped from the Athletic program.

ARTICLE IV

Conduct

Section A

Athletes must always remember they are representatives of their school and community. The athletes must make a constant effort to project a positive, respectful image. Athletes should always be considerate of those around them and never allow themselves to get into embarrassing situations that may bring reproach upon them, the athletic program, or the School District. With the start of the 25-26 school year, LISD is allowing homeschool students to participate in UIL sports following SB 401. These students must adhere to the same regulations regarding conduct and expectations as all LISD athletes must follow and could face removal from the athletic program or specific sport if they do not meet these standards.

Postings on social media including texts and photos must be positive and beneficial to the athletic program. Negative, inappropriate, and / or complaints must not be posted.

Inappropriate electronic communications including texting, posting comments, or photos by student athletes will not be tolerated. Appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken by the athletic director, team head coach and / or the campus principal if this occurs.

Section B

Athletes who fail to exhibit proper behavior may be dismissed from the athletic program. Proper behavior in every social setting is expected. This includes the school/classroom setting, travel, games and after school hours. Examples of improper behavior are: Profane or vulgar language, lack of respect for superiors and / or teammates, violation of the law, and improper conduct in the classroom or during an athletic contest.

Section C

The coach has the authority to dismiss the athlete or punish an athlete for improper behavior. The athletes' parents will be consulted by the head coach and/or the athletic director if a problem arises.

Section D

Quitting a sport during the season is discouraged. If an athlete decides to quit, he or she is encouraged to discuss this with the head coach of the sport to see whether or not there is an alternative to quitting. The athletic director may assign the athlete to another desired sport if this is best for the student and athletic program. Alternative disciplinary measures for quitting a sport may be administered by only the athletic director and should be consistent among all athletes in all sports and regardless of sport. Coaches should never criticize a student for their decision and it is highly suggested the coach hold a meeting with the student and his/her parents prior to this decision.

ARTICLE V

Appearance

Section A

All athletes of LISD should follow the LISD Student Handbook regarding

their personal appearance whether at school or on trips.

Section B

People notice how members of a team look as well as how they act. Team members should project a good image by dressing and acting properly. Athletes who fail to conform will be disciplined or possibly dismissed from the program.

ARTICLE VI

Training

Section A

Competing in athletics is very strenuous and the athlete must be in good physical condition. Good physical condition is a major factor to being successful. The athlete should eat properly, get adequate rest, and refrain from alcohol, drugs, dipping, smoking or vaping. The athlete should refrain from any other practices that may hinder his/her performance.

All athletes are expected to be at all called practices. If it is absolutely necessary to miss a practice the athlete or parent should notify the coach with the reason for the absence. Missed practices will be made up with activities and drills that will benefit the athlete in that sport.

Section B

Consequences arising from the athlete's involvement with alcohol, other drugs and tobacco products (including vaping) are:

- 1 Any possession of alcohol or other illegal drug preceding, during, or after an athletic contest or on school property is grounds for immediate dismissal from the athletic program. Parents, and/or proper authorities will be notified. Counseling will be recommended.
- 2 Any possession of tobacco products (including e-cigarettes/devices) preceding, during, or after an athletic contest or on school property will be disciplined by the coach and/or be handled by district policies, concerning use or possession of tobacco products on school property.
 - a. A second offense of this type will result in suspension for a game or games and/or dismissal from the athletic program.
- 3 Use of alcohol (breaking of training rules) will be handled in the following manner.
 - a. First offense – disciplinary action and possible suspension for a game or games.
 - b. Second offense – dismissal from the athletic program for one

year.

Section C

The student athlete's safety and well-being is the LISD coaching staff's main concern. The coaching staff will help any athlete who has a problem.

Section D

Any absence from a practice/game while attending another LISD sponsored event or doctor's visit for injuries will be considered an excused absence and will be exempt from any makeup due to the missed practice/game. The student-athlete should notify the coach as soon as they know they will miss practice because of a school sponsored event.

Section E

Student athletes are required to participate in the LISD Spring Strength and Conditioning Program if planning to participate in football the following school year to improve the tools, strength, and conditioning necessary for safety purposes.

Those who were not enrolled in LISD the previous year should have written proof that they participated in their previous school's similar program if offered. If not they will have to complete an alternative conditioning program and will be ineligible for varsity competition until District competition or until the athletic director determines varsity eligibility. The athletic director will ensure that the student has successfully completed the program before competition at the varsity level.

Students who do not participate in the Spring Strength and Conditioning program should contact the athletic director for information and requirements for the alternative conditioning program to be scheduled.

ARTICLE VII

Travel Procedures

Section A

All athletes will depart and return on school transportation unless excused by the coach with written permission by the parents. Always be early for departure time.

Section B

Exceptions:

If a parent / guardian requests the athlete to return with him / her they should write a note to the coach requesting release. The athlete shall be released to only the parents or guardian of the athlete. There could be situations where athletes are released to a school official. This would only be approved in writing by a recognized school administrator.

Section C

We strongly recommend that all athletes ride with their teammates to and from contests. It is important that the athletes are together for game preparation and team unity. However, there are always exceptions. The coaching staff will cooperate if possible, but planning ahead is a must.

Section D

Athletes will follow transportation rules that are set by the district. Any problems on trips will result in disciplinary action involving extra work, suspension from a game or games, or dismissal from the team.

ARTICLE VIII

Care of Equipment

Section A

All uniforms, practice gear, shoes and equipment are property of LISD. Anything issued to the athlete must be returned.

Section B

If the athlete fails to return items issued to them, he/she will be responsible for paying the replacement cost.

Section C

The athlete will also be asked to take care of the transportation vehicles and playing facilities. If an athlete fails to properly take care of his/her equipment, disciplinary steps will be taken. The actions may involve suspension or dismissal.

ARTICLE IX

Medical Policies

Section A

The Athletic Department does carry insurance for our athletes. This is a SECONDARY POLICY that supplements the student's primary health insurance provided by the parents. **The school district will not be held responsible for medical costs in case of injury associated with athletic participation.** If an athlete is injured the parent or guardian should contact the head coach or athletic director for the proper insurance forms and assistance with procedures for filing claims. The athletic insurance covers the athlete in the following situations:

- 1 Actually engaged, as an official representative of LISD, in the play or practice of an Interscholastic Sport or Activity; or
- 2 Actually being transported in a school furnished vehicle as a member of a group for the purpose of participating in a scheduled play or practice of an Interscholastic Sport or Activity; or
- 3 While under the district supervision of a school official, coach or trainer regularly employed by LISD or duly delegated adult representative of LISD.

ARTICLE X

Athletic Periods

Section A

Athletic periods provide a time during school hours for athletic teams to meet. The time may be used for practice, weight lifting, off season work or meetings. An athletic period is a class period. The students must be on time, in attendance and will receive a grade. Homeschool students who are involved in UIL sports must attend all practices including during the school day.

Leonard ISD will also utilize the 1 hour per day outside of the athletic period(allowed by UIL), if needed during off-season.

Section B

Seniors may be reassigned to another class if they no longer participate when their sport is completed. Approval must be given by the principal and AD. Coaches may, however, work out a system that allows a senior to stay.

Section C

UIL rules state that a student cannot be required to participate in one school sport as a prerequisite for participation in another school sport.

ARTICLE XI

Drug Testing

Section A

Leonard ISD has a drug testing program each school year.

Any student involved in UIL extracurricular activities will be drug tested including homeschooled students who play sports for LISD.

All students will be tested within the first few weeks of school, from that point about 15% of the testing population will be tested every 60 days.

DRUG TESTING OBJECTIVES:

A student who participates in UIL athletic activities, UIL academic activities,

extracurricular activities and programs, and students who receive a parking permit, shall be subject to a mandatory drug testing program throughout the school year for the presence of alcohol and illegal drugs. The District shall employ a drug-testing program with the following objectives:

1. Provide a deterrent to drug/alcohol use for students in grades 7-12
2. Ensure the health and safety of students representing Leonard ISD.
3. Recommend a drug education program for those students who test positive for drug/alcohol use and for those students who are at risk for drug use.

The United States Supreme Court has ruled that drug testing is legal for students participating in UIL athletic and academic activities and extracurricular programs. The court noted that the effects of drugs could contribute to a greater risk of injury and those who use drugs are often leaders in the student drug culture. This confirms the opinion of the Leonard Independent School District Board of Trustees that for the safety and well-being of all students, it is the district's obligation to ensure, to the extent possible, that participants in UIL athletics and academic activities and extracurricular programs are drug and/or alcohol free.

Drugs to be tested for:

Drugs which an individual shall not buy, possess, use, sell, or distribute under either federal or Texas law. Such drugs may include, but are not limited to:

1. Marijuana (tetrahydrocannabinoids-THC)
2. Opiates
3. Cocaine
4. Phencyclidine (PCP)
5. Amphetamines
6. Barbiturates
7. Benzodiazepines (Tranquillizers)
8. Propoxyphene
9. Methadone
10. Methaqualone (Quaalude)
11. Hallucinogens
12. Steroids
13. Alcohol and or their metabolites
14. All prescription drugs upon reasonable suspicion that they were obtained without authorization.
15. All prescription drugs and over the counter drugs upon reasonable suspicion that they are being used in abusive manner.

CONDITIONAL PARTICIPATION

As a condition of participation in interscholastic athletic activities, UIL academic activities, extracurricular programs and students who receive a parking permit, each student in grades 7-12 and his/her parent/guardian must sign the student handbook acknowledging that students will be tested for drugs/alcohol before or during the school year or extended period in which students participate in any interscholastic athletic activity, UIL academics, extracurricular programs and/or park on school grounds. If a student and/or parent/guardian refuse to consent to drug testing, the students shall be denied involvement in any school-sponsored interscholastic athletic activities, UIL academic activities, extracurricular programs, and/or park on school grounds for the remainder of the school year.

TESTING

Any student involved in interscholastic athletic activities, UIL academic activities, extracurricular programs, and/or parks on school grounds, in grades 7-12 in Leonard ISD, shall be subject to the random testing program. Testing shall be done in accordance with the established practices and procedures as established by the drug-testing laboratory affiliated with the District.

The following procedures will be used for the testing:

1. Each sponsor of an interscholastic athletic activity, UIL academic activity, extracurricular program, shall submit a list of students to be consolidated into a master list of participants and campus admin. will submit a list of students with parking permits.
2. The master list shall be submitted to the company employed by Leonard ISD to conduct the testing.
3. The testing company shall computerize the master list, generating a random list of participants to be tested.
4. Minimum of 15% High school and 15% Middle School students generated from the list will be randomly selected to be tested every 60 days.
5. A certified/licensed drug-testing vendor that has been approved by the Board, by the use of a urinalysis test or swab test, will conduct testing.
6. The test shall occur at a time, place, and date scheduled by the superintendent or designee, in cooperation with the testing agency, without prior announcement to the students.
7. A number will identify the students to the testing agency.
8. All positive results from a drug screen will be verified.
9. The drug-testing administration shall inform the designated campus administrator of the results. The campus administrator shall notify the parents and staff member responsible for the implementation of the consequences as outlined in this policy.
10. A student who refuses to submit a sample shall be given one hour to change his or her mind without leaving the testing area. If the student still refuses, he or she shall be subjected to the consequences associated with a positive test result.

11. If after agreement to submit to testing, if a student is unable to produce a sample within two hours, he or she shall be subject to the consequences associated with a positive test result.
12. Tampering with or assisting others in tampering with any sample shall, subject the student to the consequences associated with a positive test result.

SANCTIONS FOR POSITIVE TESTING

All offenses are cumulative for the student's career through grades 7-12 at Leonard ISD.

Positive Test

1. The school official to whom the results are reported shall notify the Superintendent or designee, the interscholastic athletic sponsor, campus administrator, the student and the student's parents/guardians.
2. The Principal or designee shall schedule a conference with the sponsor of affected activity, the student and the student's parents/guardians. The parents/guardians will be presented with the test results and allowed an opportunity to offer a clarification for the results. The parents/guardians will also be informed of the opportunity to respond to a positive test. A re-analysis of the original specimen can be requested to be performed by the drug-testing laboratory, at the expense of the parents/guardians. The request for a retest must be made in writing within 48 hours of the meeting, at which time payment must accompany the written request.
3. The student shall remain ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic activities, academic activity, extracurricular activity, or park on campus until the terms of the policy have been followed. (Students may practice with the team/group but not participate in the contest.)
4. In addition, the student shall be subject to disciplinary action as stated in the Code of Conduct. Also, students will be subject to any additional consequences outlined in the District Drug Testing Policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Results of any drug test administered under this policy shall be used only for determining eligibility for participation in school-sponsored interscholastic athletic activities, academic activities, extracurricular activities, and parking on campus grounds.
2. Records of positive tests will be maintained by the principal in a secure location, and disclosed only to the appropriate school personnel, the student and the student's parents/guardians.

3. Upon graduation, the information will be destroyed and under no circumstances will this information become part of the student's permanent file.

ARTICLE XII

Complaints/Concerns

Section A

Any complaints about student athletic activities can be directed to Athletic Director Justin Dozier: 903-587-3556 or dozierj@leonardisd.net.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN AND STUDENT ATHLETE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

**I HAVE RECEIVED OR AGREED TO ACCESS THIS HANDBOOK ONLINE,
READ, AND UNDERSTAND THE LEONARD ISD ATHLETIC HANDBOOK.**

Parent or Guardian signature

Date

Student athlete printed name

Date

Student athlete signature

Date

CONFERENCE REPORT

Date: _____

Athlete: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Situation:

Results:

Does the situation require a conference at the next step?

Yes

No