

**ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT
POLICIES
2021 – 2022**

Mission Statement

It is the purpose of the Cushing ISD Athletic Department to complement the academic program with a quality athletic program. To this end, we will strive to teach character lessons through competitive athletics, which will hopefully, enhance the learning environment for athletes who participate in the program. Participation in Interscholastic League events is a privilege, not a vested right. Coaches/Sponsors and Athletic Director have the authority to remove or deny a student's participation in a sport or event. As coaches, we expect that our athletes conduct themselves, at all times, in a manner that will reflect positively on the athletic program, the school, and the community. We expect our athletes to be positive role models for the entire student population.

Cushing ISD Athletic Philosophy

It is the belief of Cushing ISD that athletics provide many opportunities to develop the body, mind and soul of the participating students. To facilitate the pursuit of these opportunities, Cushing ISD desires to facilitate an athletic program that gives all interested students a place and role in which to compete in a safe and healthy way.

Goals of the Cushing I.S.D. Athletic Dept.

- Provide safe, organized and productive ways for our students to compete in physical competition
- Developing work ethic through preparation for competition
- Developing teamwork and social skills
- Effectively teach the rules and strategies of each sport.
- Teach students to respect the games, the opponents and themselves by playing within the rules and showing exceptional sportsmanship
- Encourage students to grow physically, mentally, morally and socially.
- Further in students an appreciation for optimum health and physical fitness.
- Develop an overall athletic program, where the standards and values of each individual sport are cohesive with those of the entire program
- Instill in all athletes the desire to represent their school and community in a manner that will make school administrators, teachers, parents, and the community proud.

POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

- This handbook is designed to provide for a successful experience for student athletes and the efficient operation of the Cushing ISD Athletic Program. The Cushing ISD school board has approved the policies, procedures, and regulations in this handbook. The athletic handbook is designed to coexist with the Cushing ISD student handbook and the Cushing ISD Student Code of Conduct. Student athletes in grades 7-12 are accountable and responsible to the rules and requirements contained within this handbook. It should be noted that different sports might have additional rules and regulations that go beyond what is listed in the handbook. Coaches may establish these rules with the approval of the Athletic Director for their respective sports. The rules pertaining to a particular sport must be

explained in writing by the coach at the start of the season. The coach shall administer penalties for violation of team rules. Copies of all team rules are on file in the Athletic Office. These rules may be in addition to this athletic handbook, but they shall not alter the rules of this handbook.

- **DISCIPLINE TECHNIQUES**

- Discipline yourself, so that others won't have to!!!
- Each situation may require a different type of discipline. Whatever type of discipline is required, the purpose is to help athletes improve themselves, and to become better persons. Failure to accept this on the part of the athlete or parent/guardian may result in dismissal from the team and/or athletic program. The different discipline techniques listed below may be used alone or in combination for Student Code of Conduct and non-Student Code of Conduct violations. The listing is not intended to be a list of progressive sanctions.
- Oral Correction
- Counseling by coaches
- Home-visits by head coach
- Parent-Coach conference with Athletic Director
- Behavioral contracts
- Withdrawal of privileges such as participation
- Techniques or penalties identified by individual coach of sport
- Corporal Punishment (Swats)
- Dismissal from team or program

- **HAZING**

- "Hazing" is against the law and will not be tolerated in the Athletic Department. "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 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:
- Engages in hazing
- Solicits, encourages, directs, aids, attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing
- Recklessly permits hazing to occur
- Has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident involving a student, or first-hand knowledge that a specific hazing incident has occurred, and knowingly fails to report that knowledge in writing to the Principal, Athletic Director, or designee.

- **ACADEMICS**

- Athletes must realize that they are students first and athletes second. All Students are required to remain academically eligible to participate. Remember No Pass – No Play. Athletes must be passing all subjects at the six weeks grading period in order to be eligible to play. Athletes failing a

course will be ineligible for competition for three weeks. They may regain eligibility after another three weeks. Tutorials are available for students that are struggling with their grades. Athletes are encouraged to take advantage of the tutorials and/or other resources that are available to help them with their grades. Any athlete who fails two six weeks grading periods during a semester will be placed on academic probations for the next semester. Any athlete on academic probation that fails two six weeks grading periods during the semester of their probation, will be removed from athletic competition for the next semester. Students attending summer school will not regain athletic eligibility upon the completion of the summer session.

- *Squad Selection*
 - In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as they can without unbalancing the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport.
- *Cutting*
 - Choosing the members of athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those squads. Prior to tryouts, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:
 - Extent of tryout period
 - Criteria used to select the team
 - Number to be selected
 - Practice commitment if they make the team
 - Game commitments

- **DRUGS/TOBACCO**

- Will not be tolerated. First offense will result in disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the team.
- Steroids: Recent studies indicate that the use of steroids by high school students is on the rise. Although the drugs are dangerous and illegal to use without a prescription, reports indicate that they are readily available to be used by high school students. TEA and the UIL request that school districts raise the awareness of the ill effects of steroids. Cushing ISD and the athletic department agree that it is imperative that our athletes and their parents are aware of the dangers of steroid use. At the back of the handbook is a fact sheet about steroids that was created by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. Athletes should also be aware that verified violations of the illegal use of steroids would be considered a violation of our illegal drug policy.

- **ALCOHOL**

- Will not be tolerated. First offense will result in disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the team.

- **PROFANITY**

- We do not allow it. First offense will result in disciplinary action.

- **STEALING**

- Taking things that do not belong to you, especially taking from your teammates will not be tolerated. A player caught and proven guilty will be dismissed from the team. We ask that you do not bring valuables or large sums of money to the dressing room. **LOCK YOUR LOCKERS AT ALL TIMES!!!!!!**

- **CONDUCT**

- The student athletes that have preceded you have given a great deal of class and pride to our program. Don't do anything to take away from this. We are noted for our clean, tough, competitive play. We expect you to conduct yourselves as ladies and gentlemen at all times. This means that you are to follow school rules and procedures while attending class. You are expected to act properly in class, giving your teachers/administrators courtesy and respect. We know that each of you do not have the same abilities, but we expect each of you to perform to the best of your ability.
 - Athletes may face disciplinary action, including possible suspension or expulsion, for demonstrating behavior that is detrimental to the team.
 - Examples of unacceptable behavior include but are not limited to:
 - Inappropriate language
 - Unwilling or lazy attitude, poor work ethic
 - Disrespect to the coaching staff
 - Disrespect to a game official
 - Display of temper
 - Not responsive to a coach's request
 - Argumentative attitude
 - Habitual disregard for rules
 - Negative effect on team morale
 - Unsportsmanlike behavior

- **ATTENDANCE**

- Be in class. Be on time. If you must miss an athletic period, be sure that it can't be helped. Avoid making appointments on our time. If you must be absent call and talk to one of the coaches before athletic period. You will be required to make up work missed when you are absent. Repeated absences may result in dismissal from the team.
- Injured Athletes: Injured athletes who cannot actively participate in the workout must still follow all attendance policies. Being injured is not an excuse to miss practice. The injured athlete will be expected to dress out and participate mentally. (Some injuries may not allow the athlete to dress out or attend practice. If there is a question, the head coach will make the decision on the athlete dressing out or attending the workout.)
- Ineligible Athletes: Ineligible athletes shall attend and participate in workouts unless excused by the head coach. By attending and participating in

workouts, the athlete may represent the team again at the end of the ineligible period.

- In order to participate in a school sponsored UIL contest, the student-athlete must be in attendance the day of, prior to, and following the contests date. Example: If a student-athlete has a contest on Tuesday, they must be in attendance on Monday and Tuesday in order to be eligible for that contest, and Wednesday to be eligible for the following contest.
- If the contest is on a Friday, student-athletes must be in attendance the previous Thursday and Friday in order to participate unless the absence falls within the below exceptions.
- Exceptions for absenteeism include a written Dr.'s note along with the student-athlete giving advance notice of an appointment to his/her coach. In cases of emergency where advance notice cannot be given, a Dr.'s note will be accepted. Funeral services that fall within the required period of attendance will also be a qualified exception for participation.

- **INJURY OR ILLNESS**

- If you have an injury, see the head coach. He will either treat the injury or refer you to a physician. If you must leave school because of illness come by the field house and check with the head coach first. If you are ill or injured, we don't expect you to work out, but if you are at the field house, we expect you to wear the uniform of the day and accompany your group from station to station unless given special permission by the head coach.

- **RESPECT FOR OTHERS**

- Coaches should receive "yes sir", "no sir" or "yes ma'am", and "no ma'am" responses from players. Players in return will be treated with respect by their coaches. Whenever a coach is speaking with you, either individually or as a group, you will give him/her your undivided attention and always establish eye contact with him/her.
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, officials, spectators and support groups. Treat others as you would want to be treated.

- **PROMPTNESS**

- Always be on time. On trips, the bus will not wait. After the final period bell rings, you do not have time to waste, go directly to your sport. The sooner you are ready to begin, the earlier you leave. Tardiness will result in disciplinary action.

- **DISCIPLINARY REMOVAL**

- If it becomes necessary to consider removing a student from a team or the athletic program, the coach of that team will notify the Athletic Director. The student will have an opportunity to confer with the coach and the Athletic Director. Parents will receive notification and be invited to attend the conference.

- **DRESS AND APPEARANCE**

- Athletic participation is voluntary upon the part of the student, and by entering the program, the athlete agrees to abide by the spirit, rules, and regulations, which pertain to athletes. One of the most important rules is that athletes must maintain a neat appearance at all times. You should be very professional in uniform and out. Your appearance away from the field house or gym, especially at school, should reflect the same class and pride that you show in our program.
- Everyone will wear his/her uniform in the same manner. No one will be different. We will furnish your equipment, so do not bring your own. Men and women will wear attire requested by the head coach. Any lost clothes or equipment must be paid for before replacements will be issued.
- The athlete's hair should be kept neat at all times. The athlete's hair should not be in a manner that will draw attention to the individual instead of the team. Example: A Mohawk, tail, lightning bolt, swirl parts, multiple parts, different color hair, or any other hair style considered inappropriate or dangerous (too lengthy or gang affiliated) by the coaching staff.
- No jewelry of any kind will be worn during practice or games.
- Athletes are public relations ambassadors for their school and such serve as role models for other students.

- **CONFLICT IN ACTIVITIES**

- An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations. The Athletic Department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities, and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts. Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about participation in too many activities where conflicts are bound to happen. It also means immediately notifying the faculty sponsor and coaches involved when a conflict does arise.
 - When a conflict arises, the sponsors and coaches will work out a solution so the student does not feel caught in the middle. If a solution cannot be found, the Athletic Director will make the decision based on the following:
 - The relative importance of each event
 - The importance of each event to the student
 - The relative contribution the student can make
 - How long each event has been scheduled
 - Talk with parents
- Once a decision has been made and the student has followed the decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by either faculty sponsor or coach. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, he/she should withdraw from that activity in a timely fashion so as not to place an unreasonable burden on the team, coach or sponsor.

- **CARE OF EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES**

- You are to hang your equipment in your locker as you are shown. You are to clean your equipment at least weekly. Do not track mud and dirt into our dressing rooms. Take off cleated shoes before entering the field house/locker room areas. When you change into workout gear, your clothes are to be hung up in your locker. Latrines and toilets are to be flushed; showers and faucets turned off so they don't drip, and all soda cans placed in the trash can. Clean up in and around your locker each day. Failure to adhere to this will result in disciplinary action. Any equipment that is lost shall be paid for before any new equipment is issued. All items will be paid for at the cost of replacement.

- **PHONE USE**

- The use of the field house phone is a privilege. Do not abuse it or the privilege will be taken away. Do not use the phone for social calls. There is a two (2) minute limit on all calls. Girls are not to use the phone in the boys' field house, or vice-versa.

- **QUITTING OR EXPULSION**

- Anyone quitting a sport after a trial period (usually after the first contest) will not be allowed to participate in another sport until the season of the sport quit is completed or unless the head coaches of both sports agree that the student would be better off in the other sport. The Athletic Director may, at his discretion, make an exception to this rule when an event outside the control of the athlete or his/her family causes the athlete to drop a sport. A clear understanding is to be reached by the Athletic Director and the athlete at the time the sport is dropped. Anyone walking off the field or gym floor during a practice or game will be considered by the coach to have quit that team.
- If at any time an athlete quits or is expelled from a team in or out of season, they give up all rights to any honors, which they have earned, but have not yet received.
- He must bring a note from his parents stating they are aware of his intention to quit and its implications.

- **TRAVEL**

- All athletes represent the community, school and coaches. Therefore, it is expected that all will dress in an acceptable manner on trips and conduct themselves in a proper manner. When missing classes because of an athletic event, it is the responsibility of the athlete to see his/her teacher the day before the missed classes. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher. All athletes making a school sponsored trip shall be required to ride in transportation provided by the school to and from the event. Students may return home with the parent or guardian when the parent or guardian presents a written request to the coach. On school athletic trips, students will only be released in person to their parent or

guardian. If an athlete is injured in a contest away from home, the above policy may be altered to meet the circumstances.

- **VACATIONS**

- Vacations by athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged and while family values will always take precedence over program requirements, parents and athletes in conflict between vacations and program requirements may wish to reassess their commitment to being involved in athletics. We urge parents not to plan their vacations during times when there will be conflicts. In the event of an absence due to a vacation that is unavoidable, an athlete must:
- Contact the head coach prior to the vacation
- Practice one day for each practice or contest day missed prior to resuming competition (contest day will count as a practice day)
- Be willing to assume the consequences related to their status on the squad as a starter, 2nd string, etc., for the time missed.

- **CLUB SPORTS**

- A club is a sports program outside of school that is not affiliated with U.I.L. athletics. We are very fortunate to live in a community where the high school can be the main focus. We feel our athletes' obligations are to their school team first. We will not excuse our athletes to miss a school contest or practice for a club event. If an athlete pursues club participation he/she must:
- Contact all head coaches of sports at the school in which he/she is participating in.
- Be willing to assume the consequences related to their status on the squad as a starter, 2nd string, or even dismissal for the time participating in club activities without approval of all head coaches involved at the school.

- **CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

- Any activity that brings disgrace or dishonor to the Cushing Athletic Program will not be tolerated. Such activity may result in dismissal from the program.

- **PARENT-COACH CONFERENCES**

- Parents who wish to confer with coaches need to make arrangements to meet with them during their conference period.
- Issues not appropriate for discussion with Coaches
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Playing time
- Other student/athletes
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or after a contest or during practice. Call the athletic department to set up an appointment with the coach of your child's team or the head coach of the sport. If after the initial coach/parent conference you are not satisfied, you may then set up an

appointment with the Athletic Director. All conferences will include at least two coaches, the parent, and the athlete.

- **BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OF SPECTATORS**

- Show respect at all times.
- Profanity will not be tolerated.
- Insults directed to officials, players, coaches, or other fans will not be tolerated.
- No noisemakers are allowed at indoor competitions.
- Only cheers that support the teams will be allowed.
- Those unable to exhibit proper sportsmanship will be asked to leave and possibly unable to attend future games.

- **INSURANCE**

- Cushing ISD will provide insurance coverage for interscholastic activities for the school year. The coverage period begins with the first day of practice. The coverage provided is secondary to any medical insurance that you may already have. Benefits are intended to supplement other collectible insurance by assisting with balances left unpaid by your primary carrier. **If you have no other insurance, the benefits will not be adequate to cover the full cost of medical treatment.** Claim forms must be sent within 90 days of the date the athlete first receives medical care. In order to expedite payment of claims, parents/guardians of athletes who have sustained an injury as a result of athletics should obtain a claim form from the coach or athletic director as soon as possible. Filing claims are the parent/guardian's responsibility.

- **CONCUSSION PROTOCOL**

- Cushing ISD will follow the UIL guidelines for a student athlete to return to play using the UIL's protocol measures. Information can be found on the UIL website uiltexas.org under the Athletic > Health and Safety > Concussion tabs.
- UIL Return to Play form can be found on the school website or requested by the student-athlete's coach.

THE FACTS ABOUT STEROIDS

Steroids affect the heart. Steroid abuse has been associated with cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke. These heart problems can even happen to athletes under the age of 30. Steroids affect appearance; both sexes experience cysts, acne, oily hair and skin, and in males can cause baldness. Steroids increase risk of infection. Sharing needles or using dirty needles to inject steroids create risk for diseases such as HIV/AIDS and hepatitis. Steroids are illegal to possess without a prescription. Doctors prescribe steroids for specific medical conditions. They are only safe for use when prescribed by and monitored by a doctor.

Signs of Steroid Use:

How can you tell is a person is abusing steroids? Here are a list of warning signs. If a person has one or more of the warning signs, he/she may be using.

For boys:

- Baldness
- Development of Breasts
- Impotence

For Girls:

- Growth of facial hair
- Deepened voice
- Breast reduction

For Both:

- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin)
- Swelling of feet or ankles
- Aching joints
- Bad Breath
- Mood swings
- Nervousness
- Trembling

To learn more about steroids, contact:

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
800/729-6686 – TDD 800/487-4889

Linea gratis en espanol 877/767-8432

www.ncadi.samhsa.gov

AWARD POLICIES

U.I.L rules prohibit athletes from accepting anything of value other than as listed in these policies. All athletes must strictly adhere to all training, attendance, conduct, discipline and appearance rules set forth by the coaches for the entire school year before being considered for an athletic award. All scholastic eligibility rules established by the School Board, the University Interscholastic League and Texas Education Agency must be met. It must be clearly understood that the coach recommends an athlete for an award. Award criteria will be set in each sport. The criteria will be clearly explained before the start of each individual sport. Letters of recommendation for awards will be submitted to the Director of Athletics for final approval. The Cushing Athletic Department will fit for jackets and order twice per school year. This procedure will be done in December and May.

Schools may give one major award jacket, not to exceed \$70.00 in value, to a student during high school enrollment at the same school for participation in one of the U.I.L. interschool competitions. One additional symbolic award, not to exceed \$10.00 in value, may be presented for participation in each additional U.I.L. activity. The \$10.00 award shall not be given to a student for an activity during the same year that the major award is given for that activity.

Any athlete who letters as a freshman will not receive a letter jacket until after the completion of their sophomore year

The following guidelines will be the criteria for lettering. However, coaches may, at their discretion, award a letter to an athlete who has contributed in other ways to the program.

Football	Play in 50% of the varsity games
Cross Country	Score a point at the varsity district meet.
Basketball	Play in 50% of the varsity district games
Powerlifting	Score a point at the varsity district meet or qualify for regional competition.
Track	Score a point at the varsity district meet
Tennis	Medal at the district meet
Golf	Medal at the district meet
Softball	Play in 50% of the varsity district games
Baseball	Play in 50% of the varsity district games

Managers	Attend every practice and game
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PARENT/STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Cushing ISD Athletic Handbook has been drawn up to help you gain the greatest possible benefit from your participation in athletics.

The school is in need of your help and cooperation. It is important that every parent and student athlete understands the policies of the Athletic Department and follows the rules and regulations set forth in the handbook. The handbook will be explained to you by the coaches. Your signature acknowledges receipt and review of the Athletic Handbook.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date