

Bluff Dale ISD

Athletic Handbook

2020-2021



Introduction

This handbook communicates important information concerning athletic policies and procedures to our parents and students. The Bluff Dale ISD School Board has approved the policies, procedures, and regulations in this handbook. The athletic handbook is designed to coexist with the Bluff Dale ISD Student Handbooks and the Bluff Dale Student Code of Conduct. Student athletes in grades 6-12 are accountable and responsible to the rules and requirements contained within this handbook. After reviewing this information, we ask that the parents and student sign the receipt page in the back of the Handbook and return it to the Athletic Director.

Anything not covered in this Athletic Handbook will be left to the judgment of the Athletic Director.

It should be noted that different sports might have additional rules and regulations that go beyond what is listed in this athletic handbook. If such rules exist, they must be in writing and submitted to the athletes. All such rules must be submitted to the athletic director for approval.

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

Mission Statement

The mission of Bluff Dale ISD Athletics is to provide a safe and competitive athletic environment, while promoting and embodying the ideals of teamwork, sportsmanship, hard work and self-discipline.

The athletic program at Bluff Dale ISD is an integral part of the total educational program. Athletics are a vital part of the physical, mental, social, and moral growth of our students.

Athletics are not designed to transcend the academic program but to supplement it. Athletic programs can provide valuable lessons for practical situations. Student-athletes experience daily victories discovering within themselves the ability to overcome adversity, to develop leadership skills, to develop winning attitudes, to be hard workers, and to be a part of a team that requires sacrifice and service to others. Many intangibles are taught in athletics that become lifelong lessons for the student athlete

Sports Offered at Bluff Dale ISD

Cross Country
Volleyball
Football
Basketball
Track & Field
Baseball
Softball
Track
Golf

Responsibilities

Participation in athletics is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the sport, to the student body, to the community, and to oneself. Athletics is not a guaranteed right to every student. If one chooses to participate in athletics, one accepts certain responsibilities. With these responsibilities will come valuable lessons which will enhance one's potential for success in later life.

Specific Responsibilities Expected of Bluff Dale Athletes:

1. Maintain a satisfactory citizenship and behavior record in the classroom and on campus by treating teachers, administrators, and fellow students with respect.
2. Maintain passing grades in all classes.
3. Exercise self-control and display positive actions during competition and other school activities.
4. Have respect for the decisions of the officials during competition.

5. Refrain from misbehavior in and around the school buildings.
6. Be a law-abiding citizen both at school and away from school.
7. Display sportsmanship and class when representing Bluff Dale ISD.
8. Be committed to attend practices, contests, and meetings of any sport that they choose to participate in.
9. Abide by training rules established in this handbook and by their coach.
10. Complete required UIL and school paperwork prior to participation.

Athletics is not about winning games or getting athletic scholarships to college; athletics is about teaching the value of dedication, commitment, goal setting, hard work, fair play, sportsmanship, teamwork, and sacrifice. If one will live up to the standards set by the athletic department, athletics can and will serve as an outstanding extension of academics.

Treatment of Officials

The Bluff Dale ISD administration and athletic department feel it is very important that sportsmanship is demonstrated at all athletic contests. Athletes must understand the importance of respecting the decisions of game officials. Spectators should exhibit the same respect to game officials. The officials are impartial arbitrators who are trained and who perform to the best of their ability. Mistakes by all those involved in the contests are a part of the game. Spectators verbally abusing officials with insults, threats and profanity can result in the athletic team being punished under the rules of the UIL. This punishment can result in a team having to forfeit a contest or possibly being suspended or disqualified from playoff competition. Be sure everyone understands the potential seriousness that could result to the school's athletic program if misbehavior of spectators is reported to the UIL.

Bluff Dale ISD Expectations of Spectators, Athletes, and Coaches

Good sportsmanship is a must. Be the example.

- 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 unable to attend games.

Following are a list of behavior expectations of athletes and spectators. These lists appear in the Sportsmanship Manual developed by the UIL. Become aware of these expectations, as well as the ones above, and put them into action. Together we want to present a positive image to the game officials and to our opponents.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OF THE STUDENT-ATHLETE

- Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility, and the privilege of representing your school and the community.
- Live up to standards of sportsmanship established by the school administration and the coaching staff.
- Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with parents, fans, and fellow students. This will assist both them and you in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.
- Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend. Who better than yourselves can understand all the hard work and team effort that is required of your sport?
- Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a courteous manner following either victory or defeat.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote you and your sport. Treating them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, will only make a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of the officials and everyone at the contest.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OF SPECTATORS

- **Remember that you are at the contest to support and yell for your team, and to enjoy the skill and competition – not to intimidate or ridicule the other team or its fans.**
 - Remember that school athletics are a learning experience for students and that mistakes are sometimes made. 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.
- **A ticket is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others or be generally obnoxious.**
 - Learn the rules of the game, so that you may understand and appreciate why certain situations take place.
- **Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and support groups.**
- **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.**

- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- **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.**
- Use only cheers that support and uplift the teams involved.
- **Be a positive role model at events through your own actions and by censuring those around you whose behavior is unbecoming.**

ATHLETICS CLASS

Athletic Period: All athletes that wish to participate in athletics must be in athletic period at the beginning of the school year. Students will not be allowed to join the athletic period at second semester and be allowed to participate in a spring sport. The exception is for new students who enroll at a later time in the school year. Any student who transfers out of the athletic period must wait until the following school year to get back into athletics

Grades of 100 will not be given automatically. Each student-athlete will begin each six weeks with a 100 and will maintain that grade by dressing out and participating every day. A total of 5 points will be deducted from the six weeks grade for every day that a student-athlete does not dress out and participate unless excused with medical documentation or the Athletic Director's approval. If a student-athlete dresses out but refuses to participate satisfactorily in all workouts and drills assigned for that day, 5 points will be deducted from the six weeks grade.

Commitment

Student-athletes are expected to complete the entire season of every sport that they choose to participate in. There will be a two-week window from the time an athlete begins participation in each sport for student-athletes to determine if they want to participate for the season. After this two-week period, the consequences for dropping the sport will be determined by the Athletic Director and Head Coach of that sport. There are many factors that can contribute to an athlete's decision to drop a sport and each factor will be given full consideration before consequences are determined. All athletes and parents should be aware that there WILL BE a set of consequences enforced in every situation when an athlete quits a sport after the two-week grace period.

ACADEMICS

Athletes must realize that they are students first and athletes second. Athletes must plan their schedule so that they give sufficient time and energy to their studies to ensure acceptable grades. 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 three weeks if they are passing all subjects at that time. If not, they remain ineligible for another three weeks.

Team Travel

Transportation: ALL athletes are expected to ride on the school provided transportation to and from all out-of-town athletic events in which they will participate. Parents/Guardians must give the head coach at least 24 hours of notice in writing if they plan to sign their child out after a game. Cell phone communication on the bus is not allowed unless the head coach determines that it is necessary and grants permission.

Equipment

Team uniforms, warm-ups, and equipment belonging to Bluff Dale ISD should be treated with care. The use and wear of the school equipment outside of athletic sponsored activities is prohibited. If an athlete loses equipment due to neglect and/or carelessness, he/she will be charged the replacement cost of that equipment. At the end of the season, the athlete is responsible for turning in equipment in the best possible condition or paying replacement costs.

Locker Room

Athletes are expected to help keep locker rooms as neat and sanitary as possible. It is the responsibility of the athletes to throw away trash, pick up equipment, and keep the locker room clean. All equipment should be hung or placed in the lockers. No equipment should be left on the floor. Specific locker and locker room guidelines will vary from season to season.

Appearance

Student-athletes are expected to dress for school, and travel, on game days in a “like manner” to be determined by the head coach of that team. All visible tattoos must be covered at the student-athlete’s expense during travel to and from, and participation in, any athletic event. **Male student-athletes** must keep their hair “cut” no lower than the earlobe and off of the collar in order to remain in the athletic program; it has nothing to do with whether he is participating in a sport at that time. **Male student-athletes** must keep sideburns trimmed and no lower than the earlobe and must keep their face **clean** shaven. **Male student-athletes** must remove all body piercing jewelry when at school or any school sponsored event. Hats and caps are never appropriate indoors. Hats and caps are also inappropriate on the bus unless they are part of a school team uniform (i.e. baseball or softball teams). Unless a shirt tail is designed to be worn outwardly, such as a football jersey, it must be tucked in and a belt must be worn. Pants must be worn on the waistline, “sagging” is not allowed at school or school sponsored events. Female student-athletes must remove all body piercing jewelry, other than earrings, when at school or any school sponsored event. The coaching staff reserves the right to determine arbitrarily whether any student-athlete is dressed or groomed inappropriately.

Attendance

It is the obligation and responsibility of team members to attend scheduled practices, contests, and meetings regularly and on time. If an unavoidable conflict arises with a practice or contest, one of the coaches should be notified before the workout or game. Failure to make contact prior to the practice, contest, or meeting may result in the absence being considered unexcused.

Game Day Attendance:

Student-Athletes must attend all of their scheduled classes on the day of the athletic contest to be considered eligible for that contest. All exceptions will be under the consideration of the Athletic Director/Principal/Superintendent.

Excused Absences:

Excused absences will be made up. The make up for an excused absence is not punishment but is administered so that the athlete can make up missed work and conditioning. Examples of excused absences are illness, a death in the family, school sponsored activities, or emergency situations. **Athletes should understand that when they have to miss, it is imperative that a coach be notified prior to the absence.**

You may call the high school office at 254-728-3277 and leave a message for the coaches. Athletes should understand that habitual absences, even though they may be excused, become detrimental to their ability to perform and to their knowledge of team concepts. Habitual absences will result in disciplinary actions, including loss of playing time and/or possible suspension or dismissal.

Unexcused Absences:

Athletes and parents should understand that failure to notify the coach prior to an absence will usually result in the absence being considered unexcused. Some extenuating situations will be considered an excused absence without prior notification. If there is a question as to whether it is excused or not, the head coach and/or athletic director will make the decision. Unexcused absences will be made up and disciplinary action will be taken also. Disciplinary action for unexcused absences will be as follows:

- 1st unexcused absence – make up work plus additional disciplinary exercise
 - 2nd unexcused absence – make up work plus suspension from the next contest
 - 3rd unexcused absence – dismissal from the sport
- Unexcused absences will accumulate on a per sport/per season basis.

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. 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.

ISS:

An athlete placed in ISS is **NOT** allowed to participate in a game or contest during his/her placement, but he/she is allowed to practice after school. Failure to report to after school workout will result in an unexcused absence for the athlete unless prior notification is given that the athlete is missing for a justifiable reason. It is the athlete's responsibility to find out if their team is working out after school and find out the time of the workout.

Tardy:

It is also very important for a team member to be on time and to remain at a practice for its duration. Any team member who arrives late to practice or who leaves early is disruptive to the team's improvement and game plan. Athletes that are tardy or that leave practice early will be expected to do make up work for the time they missed. Habitual tardiness will result in disciplinary action including possible suspension or dismissal.

Prohibited Conduct: Behavior, Alcohol, Drugs, and Paraphernalia

Because participation in athletics is a privilege and not a right, BDISD is authorized to set higher standards for participants of athletics than for those who choose not to participate. Therefore, the Athletic Policy extends beyond the BDISD Student Code of Conduct not only on types of behavior prohibited but also in corresponding consequences and jurisdiction for imposing discipline.

***This code applies at all times, on or off campus, while participating in an activity or not, during the school year as well as holidays, weekends, and summer. **Violations of the Prohibited Conduct Policy may be established by:**

1. Student Admission

2. Admission by parent/guardian of student

- 3. Violation witnessed by BDISD staff member**
- 4. Issuance of a local agency report or citation**
- 5. Video or picture evidence reviewed by administration**
- 6. Failure of school drug test**

Participation by a student/athlete in a social gathering where alcohol or drugs are illegally served will not be tolerated. Participation at these gatherings could lead to consequences for the athlete and possible removal from the program. **Note: Attendance at social events (i.e. wedding reception or professional sporting event) where alcohol is legally served to adults is not a violation of this code because alcohol is not being served illegally.

Alcohol and drugs are illegal for student-athletes and detrimental to long term health and athletic success. If it is proven that an athlete is using any of these (on campus or off) they will face the following disciplinary action in accordance with the Bluff Dale Independent School District Athletic Program Policy:

First Offense: In order for a student to regain eligibility for athletic activities:

- 1. Parents and students are required to meet with the campus principal.**
- 2. The student must serve a suspension from all athletic activities (tryouts included) for 14 calendar days.**

Second Offense: In order for a student to regain eligibility for athletic activities:

- 1. Parent and student are required to meet with the campus principal.**
- 2. The student must serve a suspension from all athletic activities (tryouts included) for 28 calendar days.**

Third Offense: The student will be suspended from all athletic activities for the remainder of his/her school year at Bluff Dale ISD.

Vaping or Tobacco: If a student athlete is caught with or proven to have engaged in the use of tobacco or vaping on school premises or at school sponsored activities the student athlete will face the following consequences:

First Offense: The athlete will face an automatic one game suspension and must complete 5 miles of running before they can participate in another game/contest. The student athlete must schedule a time with the Athletic Director to complete the running outside of athletic period and normal practice time.

Second Offense: The athlete will face an automatic three game suspension and must complete 10 miles of running before they can participate in another game/contest. The student athlete must

schedule a time with the Athletic Director to complete the running outside of athletic period and normal practice time.

Third Offense and beyond: The athlete will face an automatic 5 game suspension and must complete 15 miles of running before they can participate in another game/contest. The student athlete must schedule a time with the Athletic Director to complete the running outside of athletic period and normal practice time.

Injury

The potential for injury is inherent in all interscholastic sports. Even with the best coaching, the most advanced protective equipment, and a strict observance of rules, injuries can happen. Although serious injuries are not common in supervised school athletic programs, it is impossible to eliminate the risk. Parents and students must be willing to accept the risks associated with school sports. Athletes should report all injuries to the coach and to the athletes' parents.

Please remember that coaches are neither doctors nor athletic trainers. They can make suggestions and give advice, but they are not certified to diagnose, treat, and release athletes from injury. If an athlete is seriously injured, he/she must have a doctor's release before continuing practice or competing in athletic contests.

If your child is injured at an athletic event, the coaches will do the following:

- 1) get emergency help,
- 2) contact the parent or legal guardian,
- 3) contact athletic director and administrator,
- 4) be advised by emergency personnel the next and safest step to follow to insure proper care of our athlete. (If this is EMS, or hospital trip, all parties will be updated continually).

Communication/Parent Conferences

Both parenting and coaching are difficult vocations. By establishing lines of communication and understanding each position, we are better able to accept the actions of others and provide greater benefits to children. One purpose of this handbook is to provide a line of communication between the athletic department and parents. Hopefully, the handbook will help parents understand what is expected of their child. At the same time, the athletic department hopes to receive support from the parents in enforcing the rules and regulations of the handbook.

Despite the communication, it is important to understand that there may be times when things do not go the way the athlete wishes or the parent wishes. At these times, a conference or discussion with the coach may be needed. Please understand that there are appropriate issues to discuss and there are issues not appropriate to discuss.

Appropriate issues to discuss with coaches:

1. Treatment of your child
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

1. Team strategy
2. Play calling
3. Other student-athletes

Conference procedures and guidelines:

1. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during, or after a contest or during a practice. This can be an emotional time for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. Productive meetings require calm, rational attitudes in a private setting.
2. Call the high school/junior high (254-728-3277) to set up an appointment with the coach of your child's team or the head coach of the sport.
3. If you are not satisfied with your conference with the coach and/or coaches, you may then set up an appointment with the Athletic Director.
4. After discussing the issue with the head coach and the Athletic Director, you may then contact the Principal if you feel the situation has not been justly attended to.

Following the above order of contacts will generally get your concerns answered in the best fashion. If you prefer to have a conference with a combination of the individuals above, attempts will be made to accommodate your request.

Athletic Physical Examinations

No student/athlete shall be eligible to practice or play a school sport until they have passed an adequate physical examination and have it on file in the Athletic Directors Office. The UIL physical form must be completed and signed by a licensed physician, a parent or legal guardian, and the student. Bluff Dale ISD local policy requires a physical examination for student/athletes entering grades 7, 9, and 11.

If 6th graders are participating, they must have a physical examination as well.

**BLUFF DALE ISD HANDBOOK
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT**

I have received a copy of the Bluff Dale ISD Athletic Handbook. I understand that I will be held accountable for the information outlined in this handbook.

Athlete's Name (Print)_____

Athlete's Signature_____

Date_____

I have received a copy of the Bluff Dale ISD Athletic Handbook. I understand that all athletes will be held accountable for the information outlined in this handbook. I give my approval for _____ to participate in the athletic program at Bluff Dale ISD under the guidelines of the Bluff Dale Athletic Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)_____

Parent/Guardian Signature_____

Date_____