

HOWE ISD

**ATHLETIC
HANDBOOK**

2019-2020

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I. HOWE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

We believe that an exemplary athletic program is an extension of the classroom. As such, athletics offer students an opportunity to develop and grow physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially. The positive benefits that participation in athletics offers includes, but are not limited to self-esteem, self-discipline, self-confidence, and the development of team spirit. Further, participants learn the values associated with competition and benefit from the experience of both winning and losing.

For the participating athletes, these experiences provide an integral part of the foundation needed to be a productive citizen capable of leading a full and enriching life.

II. INTRODUCTION

The athletic program is an integral part of the total school experience for both boys and girls. It offers a variety of sports and activities to all students who have potential skill and the desire to participate.

The policies, procedures and regulations in this handbook are in compliance with school board policies and administrative procedures. They are designed to provide for successful experiences for students and the efficient operation of the athletic program.

This handbook is an extension of the student handbook and shall be used by all principals, coaches, and players in grades 7-12.

You, the student athlete, are accountable and responsible for all policies contained within this handbook. Individual coaches within their sport may add additional rules as long as they adhere to school policy.

III. PARTICIPATION

It is the goal of this athletic program to offer the opportunity of participation to every student who has the ability and desire to do so. However, no student is obligated to take part in athletics, nor is participation in athletics required. It is also to be stressed that participation in the Howe ISD athletic program is a privilege, not a right. Since it is a privilege, the coaching staff, in accordance with Howe ISD policy and due process procedures, has the authority to suspend or revoke the privilege when the rules and standards of this athletic program are not followed.

IV. GENERAL POLICIES: Responsibilities of an Athlete

All athletes have responsibility to give their best, play to win, follow training guidelines, and exhibit good conduct and fair play at all times so as to be a credit to their school. Athletes, as well as coaches, are always on display. We are judged by the company we keep. Our actions in everyday life, both private and public, are direct reflection on this athletic program and our school.

During competition, an athlete:

1. Learns that both winning and losing are part of the game and learns to accept both. Be modest in victory; be gracious in defeat.
2. Does not use illegal tactics in an attempt to defeat the opponent or to beat the rules of the game.
3. Has complete control of himself/herself at all times. Horseplay, displays of temper, use of profanity, and disrespect for coaches or officials will result in loss of respect for the athlete and in disciplinary action from the coach.
4. Will respect the decisions of officials. The breaks of the game may go against you, but the officiating is not to blame. Officials are human beings who are doing their best to see that a contest is being run smoothly and honestly and also being conducted in accordance with the established rules.

In the classroom, an athlete:

1. Must realize that he/she is a student first, an athlete second. The student-athlete must give time and energy to classroom studies to insure good acceptable grades that meet the UIL requirements for participation.
2. Must maintain a satisfactory citizenship and behavior record by giving respectful attention to classroom activities and unacceptable behavior habits.

On campus, an athlete:

1. Must maintain proper dress and appearance, good grooming and personal cleanliness. You are a leader and you have only one chance to make a good first impression.

- A. Male athletes will refrain from wearing earrings of any kind at any school-related activity.
- B. Student's hair shall be clean, neat and well groomed in accordance with school dress code policies.

2. Will refrain from fighting, scuffling, horseplay and juvenile behavior in and around the school building.
3. If suspended from school, the student athlete will not be permitted to work out with, travel with, or participate with the team. Eligibility for subsequent contests will be left to the discretion of the coach and of administration. "Suspended" includes: AEP assignments, as well as suspensions assigned by administrative personnel.

During the athletic period and during before or after school practices, an athlete will:

1. Be prompt for roll call. Tardiness to our class period is as inexcusable as it is to any other class.
2. Maintain neat and clean locker space. Be proud of your dressing area and keep it neat.
3. Take a shower for hygiene purposes and for aiding the body in its temperature adjustment after workout. Rough housing, towel popping, or throwing objects is not allowed in the shower or dressing room.
4. Dress decently as he/she leaves the dressing room.

During team travel, an athlete will:

1. Travel to and from all out of town contests with the team. If, for some reason, you need to ride home with your parents, you must clear this with the coach before leaving the contest; their parents or legal guardian must sign out athletes.
2. Dress neatly and properly on all trips. Coaches will advise you regarding the proper attire.
3. Conduct himself/herself properly on the bus or in any school vehicle. He/she will follow the printed rules for bus riders that govern Howe ISD bus riders.
4. Receive permission from the coach before bringing any radios, electronic games, etc. aboard the bus.
5. Be informed of departure and return times for each trip by a notice posted on the bulletin board or chalkboard. It is your responsibility to be on time for all departures and to inform your parents of the time to pick you up after the contest. Every effort will be made by the coaching staff to notify proper personnel as to unexpected changes in arrival time.
6. Athletes will not be allowed to bring parents, family members, or friends on the bus trips. The principal and athletic director will decide any exception to this rule.
7. Dress for all home contests according to the school and team dress policies. Your appearance before and after home games is as important as it is on out-of-town trips.

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.

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. The high school number is 903-532-3236. If you cannot reach anyone at the high school, you may 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.

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.

V. GUIDELINES FOR HOWE ATHLETES:

1. ALL athletes are required by law to pass all classes every 6 weeks. (NO PASS-NO PLAY) Athletes that fail 3 consecutive 6-week periods may be removed from athletics for the next semester or until grades have improved.
2. ALL athletes will be dressed and ready to meet with coaches at the assigned athletic time.
3. ALL athletes will dress out and wear school issued uniforms.
4. ALL athletes will ride to and from contests in school vehicles unless written and verbal communication with parent has been completed. Parent or legal guardian must sign out athlete.
5. ALL athletes will dress in an appropriate manner as decided by the Head Coach within school policy. Male athletes may not wear earrings in school during athletics or on any school-sponsored trip.
6. Never question the coach openly. Meet after practice in private.
7. Never show temper in contest and draw an unsportsmanlike foul.
8. Never question the officials. Captains and the Head Coach will confer with officials.
9. When the coach is speaking, keep your eyes and ears open and your mouth closed.
10. ALL athletes will answer all coaches, teachers, and adults with "yes sir, no sir, yes ma'am, no ma'am."
11. Never criticize your teammates.
12. Never talk and visit with people in stands during contests.

13. Never make excuses for mistakes or cast blame on teammates or anyone but yourself.
14. Athletes will be disciplined for the use of profanity and it will not be tolerated.
15. Athletes will be disciplined for vaping, smoking and dipping tobacco. (400yds of sleds 1st offense, 1000yds 2nd offense, Suspension for 3rd offense (Subject to Removal from athletics))
16. Athletes that have been convicted of a felony will immediately face consequences in accordance and with coordination with district policy and the student code of conduct.
17. To be enrolled in the athletic period an athlete will participate in a team sport. (Football, Basketball, Volleyball, Cross Country, Powerlifting, Track, Softball, and Baseball)
18. ALL athletes will be enrolled in the "year-round" athletic conditioning class. The Athletic Director can approve exceptions.
19. ALL athletes are subject to every one of these rules and the disciplinary measures that we use in our department as set up by the Athletic Director, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Extra running (DO RIGHTS) - Set up by head coach of each sport
- Grass drills (up downs/bleachers/extra drills etc.)
- Suspensions (Discretion of coach)
- Removal from Athletics

20. All athletes will participate daily in athletics. (Dr. Notes will be the only notes accepted to miss a workout.)

Being an athlete is special and requires extreme sacrifice. Young people in the community watch each Bulldog and Lady Bulldog. We must set a great example for our future athletes. These simple guidelines will help you become a better student /athlete. The coaches trust that each one of you will follow these GUIDELINES.

Each of us will be treated the way we treat others. If we are respectful, positive and caring then we will be treated that way!

VI. **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

Suspension: The Athletic Director will have the authority to suspend or place on probation from athletics any student-athlete for major and minor infractions of the rules. The coach "sitting out" an athlete does not constitute a suspension.

Any student suspended from athletics must be given:

1. The reason(s) for the suspension.
2. The time and provisions of the suspension.
3. The procedures for reentering the program.
4. Information on class schedule change or options.
5. Meeting conducted with Coaches, Parents, and athlete

DISMISSAL FROM A SPORT

On some occasions, an athlete will need to be dismissed from a sport due to unacceptable behavior or violations of the athletic handbook. The following guidelines will be in effect for any athlete that is dismissed from a sport or from athletics.

1. An athlete dismissed from a sport may be dismissed from the athletic program if the violation is deemed to justify such action.
2. An athlete dismissed from a sport will not be allowed to start another sport until the first sport is completed.
3. An athlete dismissed from a sport, may regain participation privileges in that

sport the following season by requesting to complete the Athletic Re-Entry Program.

4. An athlete dismissed from a sport a second time (same sport or different sport) will not be allowed to use the Re-Entry Program to regain participation privileges in athletics.

ATHLETIC RE-ENTRY PROGRAM

The purpose of the athletic re-entry program is to allow an athlete an opportunity to show his/her commitment to return to the athletic program or sport. Any athlete who quits a sport or is dismissed from a sport will be required to complete the re-entry program before they are allowed to participate in that particular sport or any other sport. If an athlete is suspended from the program or competition for a period of a semester or longer, he/she will have to complete the re-entry program before he/she may return to participate in any sport. At the discretion of the athletic director or head coach, an athlete may be denied the privilege of using the re-entry program.

Requirements of the Re-Entry Program:

1. Complete the request form to re-enter a sport or athletics.
2. Successfully complete five miles of running over a five-day period. The running will be in addition to the regular daily workout. A coach will supervise the running and the coach will determine the pace.
3. Write a two-page essay on a topic deemed appropriate by the head coach.
4. Must have passed all classes in at least two of the three six weeks of the previous semester.
5. Must have demonstrated good citizenship and good behavior in school and in the community the previous semester. Detentions, ISS assignments, D AEP placements, and criminal activities will be considered detrimental to a student requesting to complete the re-entry program.
6. Requests to re-enter basketball must be made at the beginning of the fall semester or earlier. Request to re-enter football, baseball, softball or track must be made at the beginning of the spring semester or earlier. Request to re-enter cross country or golf must be made at the beginning of workouts for these sports.

Athletes will only be allowed to use the Re-Entry Program one time during their junior high career and two times during their high school career.

VII. THEFT, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, VAPING & DRUGS POLICY

1. Tobacco, Vaping and Alcohol use is not allowed. Students caught using or in possession of these substances will face punishment that could include extra conditioning, suspension from the team, or removal from the program.
 - School Discipline for the above offense will be handled by the Campus Principal and Assistant Principal.
 - Athletic Discipline for these offenses will be handled by the Head Coach of the sport and the Athletic Director.
2. Drugs are tested for in accordance with the Howe ISD program for drug testing of all extracurricular participants. The athlete is also subject to random testing throughout the school year. Sanctions, which include suspensions and dismissals, are outlined in the Howe ISD Drug Testing Policy.
3. Athletes caught stealing will be subject to all district policies pertaining to theft. Thieves will not be tolerated and will be punished as seem fit by head coach and athletic director.

These rules apply to all athletes and prospective athletes at all times during his/her school career. After the athlete's punishment is served, he or she is on probation for one year and if the same offence occurs during that time, the athlete could permanently expelled from athletics. At the end of one year, all parties may review the situation on a case by case basis.

VIII. **QUITTING A SPORT**

There will be some times when some athletes decide to quit playing a sport before, during, or after the season. Whatever the reason, an athlete must follow the steps listed below.

1. The athlete should think the whole situation through before reaching a final decision.
2. The athlete should talk to the coach to see if a solution can be reached without having to quit. A conference between the parents, athlete, and coach or any combination thereof, may be required and is highly recommended before an athlete will be permitted to quit.
3. If an athlete decides to quit, he/she must check out of the sport just as he/she would check out of any academic class.
4. All equipment must be turned in clean. Also, an athlete must pay for any equipment not returned.
5. If an athlete wants to return to a sport, he/she must consult the appropriate coach. The decision as to whether the athlete will be allowed to return to that sport shall be the decision of the individual coach.
6. If the athlete decides to quit one sport, they may not start the other sport until the sport that was quit is finished.
7. No athlete will be permitted to quit more than once. Any attempt to do so will result in the athlete being dismissed from the athletic program. Basically they get one free quit.

IX. **STUDENT-ATHLETE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Howe ISD student-athletes are representatives of the school and community. The athletic department requires student-athletes to exercise good judgment in their use of social media websites, and to conduct these activities in a responsible and respectful manner.

It is impermissible for student-athletes to post information, photos, or other representations of sexual content, inappropriate behavior (e.g., vaping, drug or alcohol use), or items that could be interpreted as demeaning or inflammatory.

Student-athletes are required to abide by all team policies, athletic department policies, and HISD student code of conduct rules when utilizing social media websites.

It is not permissible to comment on injuries, officiating, or team matters in such matter that would cause conflict and possibly damage working relationships with teammates and coaches.

It is not permissible to comment on or trash talk to opponents. Student-athletes are required to follow all respective social media website rules.

Best Practices and Reminders

Think twice before posting. If you wouldn't want your coach, parents, or future employer to see your post, don't post it. Be respectful and positive.

Remember, many different audiences view your posts including fans, alumni, kids, local authorities, parents, faculty, etc.

The internet is permanent. Even if you delete something, it's still out there somewhere. Be in the right state of mind when you make a post. Do not post when your judgment is impaired. Coaches and administrators monitor social media websites. Potential employers use these social media websites to screen candidates. Use the privacy/security settings made available on these sites.

Violation of the Student-Athlete Social Media Policy may result in disciplinary action-- including temporary or permanent suspension from the team--as determined by athletic director and head coach.

Deferred Adjudication

Deferred adjudication does not infer innocence. A judge may, after receiving a plea of guilt or a plea of nolo contendere, defer further proceedings without entering an adjudication of guilt, and place a defendant on community service. In effect, if the defendant complies with the conditions of probation as ordered by the judge for a specified period of time, the defendant would receive the benefit of not actually being found guilty of the offense as charged. During the period of deferred adjudication, athletes will serve a suspension (Administrative Discretion) from participation in any athletic activities.

Indictment for a Felony

Athletes, while under indictment for a felony whether on or off campus, will not be allowed to participate in any capacity in the athletic program. (This includes exclusion from both practices and games.) When guilt or innocence is established, re-admission to the athletic program will be determined based upon the outcome. In cases where a campus has jurisdiction to take disciplinary action, athletes must complete any campus-level disciplinary sanctions before being eligible to return to the athletic program. Likewise, students on deferred adjudication will need to complete the probationary period specified by the judge prior to consideration for reinstatement in the athletic program.

Appeals

Disciplinary actions resulting from a violation of the Howe ISD Athletic Code of Conduct are not appealable.

X. AWARDS AND LETTERING

The school letter is among the highest awards the school bestows; the highest, of course, is the diploma. In order to letter, you must be on a varsity team and satisfy the requirements stated below. After receiving the one major award, plaques, letter certificates or similar awards (called minor awards by the UIL) shall be given by the Respective coach each time an athlete letters in any sport. Sub- varsity athletes will receive plaques/certificates provided they are recommended for the award by their coach as a result of having shown good citizenship and character, attitude and attendance, in addition to having adhered to the policies contained with this handbook.

Varsity Teams:

Awards for the varsity teams will consist of letter jackets.

Guidelines to be followed:

- UIL rules will be followed in regard to cost of jacket.
- No participant will receive more than one letter jacket.
- Athletes can purchase a jacket in the sport in which they letter first.
- Letter jackets will be the same for all sports.

Qualifications to Letter:

Each Head coach will keep records of student participation in each sport. Such records will be used as a basis for determining whether a student qualifies for a letter. The athlete must complete the sport in order to letter or receive any post district award

Below are the Criteria to letter in each sport offered at Howe High School:

Football	must play in 12 quarters to letter.
Basketball	must play in 40 quarters to letter.
Softball	must play in 20 innings to letter.
Baseball	must play in 20 innings to letter.
Track	must score a point in the district meet/attend 4 meets.
Cross Country	must run in four varsity meets.
Power Lifting	must lift in four varsity meets.
Tennis	must play in varsity matches including district
Golf	must play in varsity meets including district.
Volleyball	must play in 12 varsity contests.
Managers/Trainers	must work at least two sports a year to letter.

Exceptions to lettering qualifications:

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

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

XI. MEDICAL AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR ATHLETES

Howe ISD provides supplemental athletic insurance. It is the intention and purpose of this policy to provide secondary or "excess" coverage in the event of an athletic injury. Primary coverage is the responsibility of the athlete's family. In the event no primary insurance exists, the insurance provided by Howe ISD becomes primary. This coverage is only available while the student is participating in an athletic practice, event or travel.

In the event of an athletic injury, the student should immediately report the injury to his/her supervising coach for proper procedure and documentation. The coach will make notation of time and date of the injury for the injury for the insurance claim. If medical attention is necessary, it is the responsibility of the parents or guardian of the student to obtain a claim form from the district. The head coach or designee will have the form available in his office once the supervising coach has notified them. At that time, the proper procedure for filing a claim will be reviewed with the parent or guardian.

XII. PROCEDURES WHEN ILL OR INJURED

Your health is of utmost concern to your team and coaches. Without healthy athletes, the whole team will suffer. It is imperative that the student athlete takes care of his/her body at all times and seeks medical attention when necessary. Great care and expense have been taken to help accommodate health concerns for the student athlete, and it is imperative that proper procedure be followed.

In the event that you begin to feel ill, seek medical attention at school from the school nurse immediately. If the condition is not remedied, becomes worse, or is prolonged, seek the advice of a physician for further diagnosis/care. Make sure you bring a note from the doctor about your condition and status of participation.

An injury could hamper your ability to participate in athletics. All injuries should be immediately reported to your supervising coach. If severe enough, you will be referred to the nurse or a doctor. If it is an emergency, proper first aid will be provided for you and professional care will be summoned in accordance with the Campus Emergency Plan of Howe ISD. Most injuries will be minor in nature and can be taken care of at practice and will allow you to continue to participate. You will receive specific instructions on how to care for your injury by school personnel upon evaluation and /or treatment.

If you feel that you need to seek the consultation of a physician about an injury, please go through the proper channels first (supervising coach and athletic trainer). Many times significant time and money can be saved by seeing the supervising coach and trainer first.

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).

When ill or injured, make sure you call the head coach of your sport. If you call, there will be makeup work to be done, just as if you missed a day in an academic class. If you do not call, you will be considered skipping practice and disciplinary action could be taken.

XIII. ATHLETIC TRAINING ROOM RULES

1. Athletes will report at the time prescribed by the Coach or Athletic trainer.
2. Cleats, spikes, pads and other equipment are not permitted in the training room.
3. After practice, shower and dry off before coming into the training room.
4. Do not dress, undress or change clothes in the training room.
5. All athletes must be clothed in gym shorts and T-shirts for treatment.
6. The training room is not a "lounge."
7. ASK!!!! Nothing is to be taken without permission.

8. "Horseplay" and foul language will not be tolerated.
9. Drinks, food and gum are not permitted in the training room
10. Help keep the training room clean.
11. Return all wraps, braces and pads
12. Do not bring in shoes, books, purses, coats and other items

XIV. **SHARING OF ATHLETES**

An athlete may participate in any sport they wish, as long as they have met the standard set forth in the handbook concerning behavior and conduct.

Coaches will not try to persuade anyone to specialize.

UIL activities will take precedence over any practice or contest that is not UIL sanctioned.

Student Athletes will not be punished for missing practices or contests for any school related function. (FFA, UIL Academics, One Act Play. Etc..)

District contests take precedence over non-district contests.

Playoff contests take precedence over non-playoff contests.

The Athletic Director shall have the final decision where an athlete will compete if there is a conflict between two sports.

XV. **RESOURCES**

Parents are encouraged to contact the appropriate school personnel when questions and concerns arise regarding athletics. Please feel free to contact them during the school day. Listed below are athletic personnel and their area of responsibility.

District Website: <http://www.howeisd.net/>

Bill Jehling

Athletic Director/Head Football Coach

Jehling.bill@howeisd.net

Howe ISD Athletic Handbook acknowledgement page:

Athlete's and Parent's: Make sure you read and understand the Athletic Policy Handbook. Retain the Handbook for your reference, Sign and date the signature page and return it to the proper coach.

I have read and understand the Athletic Policy Handbook.

Student Name (Printed)

Grade

Date

Student Signature

Parent or Legal Guardian Signature
