

Houston Independent School District Extracurricular Code of Student Conduct

I. Extracurricular Activities

The term “extracurricular activities” means, without limitation, all interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, drill team, academic clubs, special interest clubs, musical performances, dramatic productions, student government, and any other activity or group that participates in contests, competitions, or community service projects on behalf of or as a representative of Houston ISD. The term includes any non-curricular event and membership or participation in groups, clubs, and organizations recognized and approved by the Board of Trustees and the school district and sponsored by the district or a campus. All extracurricular activity participants, including elected and appointed officers of all campus organizations, are subject to the provisions of this *Extracurricular Code of Conduct*.

II. Jurisdiction

Student participation in extracurricular activities is encouraged. Houston ISD makes extracurricular activities available as an extension of the regular school program, with this important difference: participation in the regular curriculum is a right afforded to each student, while participation in the extracurricular program is a privilege that carries additional expectations for acceptable conduct. Students engaging in extracurricular activities represent not only themselves, but also other students and the school district when performing, competing, or participating in extracurricular activities and while wearing uniforms or other clothing that identifies the student to the community or public in any setting as Houston ISD students. For this reason, their behavior must be exemplary and reflect the finest attributes of the total Houston ISD student body at all times and places.

Important goals of the extracurricular program are to give students direction in developing self-discipline, responsibility, pride, loyalty, leadership, teamwork, respect for authority, and healthy living habits.

Because participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right, Houston ISD is authorized to set higher standards for participants of extracurricular activities than it would for those students who choose not to participate in the

activities. Therefore, this *Extracurricular Code of Conduct* extends beyond the Houston ISD *Student Code of Conduct* not only in types of behavior prohibited, but also in corresponding consequences and jurisdiction for imposing discipline. This *Extracurricular Code of Conduct* will be enforced with all students grades K-12 participating in extracurricular activities.

It is possible that a student who violates the *Houston ISD Student Code of Conduct* will incur consequences from both the appropriate school administrator and from his or her coach, contest director, or sponsor for the same particular violation. It is also possible that a student participating in extracurricular activities could violate the *Extracurricular Code of Conduct* and be subject to discipline by a coach, contest director, or sponsor without having violated the *Houston ISD Student Code of Conduct*.

III. Conduct Expectations

The following conduct is expected of all participants. Failure to meet these expectations can result in disciplinary action by the coach or sponsor:

- Student commitment to a team or organization is expected for the entire season or activity. Students are encouraged to participate in more than one extracurricular activity; however, students may not quit one sport or organization in order to participate in another while the sport or club that he or she quit is still active.
- Students who participate in extracurricular activities that involve competition among schools and school districts will conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. This includes behavior toward visiting teams or hosting teams as well as the opponent's fans. Houston ISD participants will be noted for clean, tough, competitive play. Praise your opponent and compete beyond your ability.
- Students should arrive to practices (including workouts), meetings, and events on time and prepared.
- Students who cannot be present for a practice (including workouts), meeting, or event should call the coach, sponsor, team captain, or club president as soon as they are aware that they will be absent. Missed practices, meetings, or workouts will be made-up.

Injured or ill students who are unable to actively participate, but are able to attend a practice (including workouts), meeting or event are required to dress appropriately and sit or stand with the rest of the group.

- Students are required to show respect at all times to coaches and sponsors.

Students should follow the rules stated in the *Houston ISD Student Code of Conduct*. Failure to do so may result in actions related to the student's participation in extracurricular activities as determined by the coach or sponsor.

IV. Prohibited Conduct

Houston ISD students who participate in extracurricular activities are prohibited at all times from:

- possessing, smoking, selling, or using tobacco products;
- possessing or using drug paraphernalia;
- possessing, selling, or delivering to another person look-alike drugs or items represented to be drugs or contraband of any kind;
- possessing, selling, giving, delivering to another person, using or being under the influence of marijuana, alcohol, a controlled substance, or any dangerous drug;
- engaging in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to glue, aerosol paint, or volatile, mood-altering chemicals;
- engaging in serious misbehavior, as that term is defined in the Houston ISD Student Code of Conduct;
- attending any event at which underage drinking or smoking is occurring (students will be allowed a slight concession for an amount of time long enough to determine that a violation is occurring and to leave the premises);
- riding in a vehicle containing alcohol unless a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult is present and aware of the presence of the alcohol;
- stealing;
- conduct that causes injury or harm to persons or property;
- using profanity, lewd or vulgar language, or obscene gestures;
- fighting;
- any conduct resulting in arrest and/or citations from law enforcement officers;
- inappropriate touching including "public displays of affection" in public places, sexual gestures, or exposing parts of the body that are ordinarily covered up in public;
- inappropriate behavior in public places;
- sexting or inappropriate internet/electronic communications.
- vandalizing or destroying HISD property.

V. Procedures

The coach and/or sponsor will determine whether an *Extracurricular Code of Conduct* violation has occurred. The appeal of a decision made by the coach/sponsor by the student or parent is up to and including the campus principal or principal's designee, since no student "right" is affected.

- the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s); and in certain instances
- the appropriate school administrator and/or counselor to provide counseling, support, and guidance in dealing with issues associated with the violation.

The coach or sponsor may **require a conference** at school with the student's parents(s) or guardians(s). The coach/sponsor may consider any and all related matters in determining what actions should be taken to appropriately and effectively address any violations of the **Extracurricular Code of Conduct**.

The *Extracurricular Code of Conduct* does not limit the authority of a coach or sponsor to impose reasonable sanction for students who breach team or organization conduct expectations but do not engage in prohibited conduct.

VI. Disciplinary Action

Coaches/Sponsors will review all the facts, circumstances surrounding a particular violation, and impose an appropriate disciplinary action. Coaches/Sponsors will strive for consistency in determining punishment for Extracurricular Code of Conduct violations, but will also exercise sound professional discretion. Violation of any of the above-mentioned rules by a student participating in extracurricular activities will be subject to one specific punitive action or the next in a progression, from less to more punitive, from the following disciplinary actions:

- Each extracurricular activity may have specific conduct expectations in addition to the expectations outlined in the *Houston ISD Student Code of Conduct and Extracurricular Code of Student Conduct*. The expectations outlined in the extracurricular activity documents in each handbook are specific to each program and will be developed and approved by the sponsor and principal. The document will be disseminated to students and parents during orientation and/or group meetings.
- Students who commit *Student Code of Conduct Level I Offenses** will receive campus and/or specific extracurricular consequences.

- Students who commit *Student Code of Conduct* Level II Offenses* will receive administrative Intervention.
- Students who commit *Student Code of Conduct* Level III Offenses* will receive Suspension and/or Optional Removal to a Disciplinary Alternative Educational Program.
- Students who commit *Student Code of Conduct* Level IV Offenses* will receive Required Placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Educational Program.
- Students who commit *Student Code of Conduct* Level IV Offenses* will receive Required Placement in a Disciplinary Alternative Educational Program.
- Students who commit *Student Code of Conduct* Level V Offenses* may or shall receive Expulsion.
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- Extracurricular expectations apply to all students participating in extracurricular activities, regardless of whether:
 - School is in session;
 - The offense occurs on or off school property or at a school-related event
 - The student is directly involved with the extracurricular activity at the time the prohibited conduct occurs;
 - The extracurricular activity is in-season; and regardless of where or when the conduct occurs.

Coaches and sponsors will review all facts and circumstances surrounding a Level I-II particular event and determine appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions.

- 1st offense – Parent/student/sponsor or coach conference to discuss the event, *Student Code of Conduct* consequences and possible sanctions.
- 2nd offense – Parent/student/sponsor or coach conference to discuss the event, *Student Code of Conduct* consequences, possible sanctions and possible suspension from extracurricular activities.
- 3rd offense – Parent/student/sponsor or coach conference to discuss the event, *Student Code of Conduct* consequences, possible sanctions, suspension or dismissal from extracurricular activities.

Coaches and sponsors will review all facts and circumstances surrounding Levels III - V particular event with DAEP/JAEP Placements or Expulsions and determine appropriate extracurricular activity suspensions, probations or dismissals.

- 1st offense – Upon the student's return to his/her home campus he/she will be placed on probation for 2 weeks along with a behavior contract for the remainder of the year.
- 2nd offense – Upon the student's return to his/her home campus he/she will be placed on probation for 6 weeks along with a behavior contract for the remainder of the year.
- 3rd offense – Upon the student's return to his/her home campus he/ she will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity for a calendar year.

*** Level I-V offenses are listed in the *Houston ISD Student Code of Conduct***

Definition: “**weeks**” means school weeks, but also includes any non-school weeks in which an extracurricular competition or event occurs, such as camps during the summer or on school holidays.

Definition: During “**probation,**” the student will not be permitted to participate in any competition, contest, scrimmage, performance, or election associated with an extracurricular activity. The student may continue to participate in practices.

Note: An extracurricular activity participant starts each school year with a clean slate, unless he or she had participation in extracurricular activities revoked during the previous school year, in which case that revocation continues from year to year. In addition, any consequences that were assessed during the prior school year for which the student owes additional suspension or behavior contract time must still be completed. For example, a student who was suspended from participation for 4 school weeks during the last week of school may have an additional 3 weeks of suspension to complete beginning with the next school year.

The principal will not ordinarily interfere in a coach or sponsor’s judgment regarding appropriate discipline but has the authority to increase or decrease the punishment based on his or her assessment of the situation.

VII. Acknowledgment

A condition to participating in any extracurricular activity or holding an office (elected or appointed) is to sign an acknowledgment that the student has read and understands the Extracurricular Code of Conduct. The student's parent or guardian must also sign an acknowledgment. The acknowledgment states that the signing party understands the consequences for engaging in prohibited conduct.

-----Please Sign and Return-----

Date: _____

I have read the Houston ISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct and agree to adhere to these rules as a condition for my voluntary participation in Houston ISD extracurricular activities. I understand that failure to do so will result in disciplinary measures related to my extracurricular participation.

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

I have read the Houston ISD Extracurricular Code of Conduct and understand requirements for my child's voluntary participation in Houston ISD extracurricular activities. I understand the consequences that my child will face if he or she fails to adhere to these rules and agree to such terms.

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____

