

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The athletic program in Jefferson Davis Parish represents a large expenditure of time, energy, and money. It involves hundreds of students in the system on a direct basis, and all of the others on an indirect basis. It is an important visible aspect of our entire educational effort. As a result, it has a significant impact on the total community. In order that the School Board properly addresses such additional community responsibility generated by a program as dynamic as the athletic program, the School Board has adopted the following statement of philosophy and purpose. The School Board's philosophy shall serve as a point of reference for administrators and instructional staff assigned the task of supervising all athletic activities. It shall also assure that all schools within the school district are working towards the same goals and objectives in their athletic programs, and will encourage those involved to continue the excellent effort that has made Jefferson Davis Parish's program one of the best.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Jefferson Davis Parish School Board believes that the competitive athletic program is a part of the overall educational program of the school system. It also believes that the athletic program should be closely coordinated with the general instructional program of the school, and that the aims achieved through athletics should justify its inclusion in the overall educational program. The athletic program shall also be based on a spirit of non-professionalism so that participation is regarded as a privileged opportunity.

Interscholastic athletic programs should exist mainly for the value which they have for students, and not for the benefit of the sponsoring institutions. The activities and contests involved shall be psychologically sound by being tailored to the physical, mental, and emotional maturity levels of the youth participating in them. Athletics are for all students who are physically able to participate, who qualify under eligibility requirements, and who adhere to the rules set forth by the state and local school officials. Participation will contribute to the following:

1. The improvement of health, fitness, and general welfare of all individuals taking part in a safe well supervised program.
2. The involvement of a maximum number of students in both supportive and active areas of the program.
3. The stimulation of all participants to achieve academic progress as their primary school objectives.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Interscholastic athletics may be made available for students in the schools of the school

district. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall develop and maintain an athletic program in the school district that emphasizes participation of all students. The conduction of all athletic programs within the school district shall comply fully with regulations of the *Louisiana High School Athletic Association* (LHSAA) and policies of the School Board.

The School Board shall allow students to participate in as many sports activities and academic activities as he/she is capable of participating in without fear of reprisal.

PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN HOME STUDY PROGRAMS

A public school shall not disqualify a student from participating in interscholastic athletics solely because the student is enrolled in an approved home study program, so long as the student lives in the attendance zone of the public school, and meets the qualifications as detailed in policy *IDCH, Home Study Program*.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

No student shall be permitted to practice or participate in any interscholastic athletic program in any public school of the Jefferson Davis Parish School Board until such student shall have furnished to the principal of the school documentation that he/she has met the following requirements:

1. Evidence of having had a physical examination by a licensed physician who shall have completed documentation as required by the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA).
2. Properly complete a *School Entrance and General Health Exam Form/LHSAA Medical History* and pass a medical examination by a licensed physician prior to the first time he/she participates in a sport in a LHSAA school. Physicians may continue to use the original *LHSAA Sports Physical Form* in performing sports physicals. In addition, parents shall be required to complete the *Authorization for Release of Confidential Information*.
3. Once a student passes the initial medical examination and completes an *LHSAA Medical History Form* prior to the sports season in which he/she participates, he/she shall annually pass any medical screening or medical examination required by a licensed physician and shall update his/her *LHSAA Medical History Form* as required.
4. A copy of all completed and signed medical examination and participation/release of information forms (and any others required by the School Board) must be on file at the school for every student before he/she practices or participates in interscholastic athletics during that school year.

5. An agreement signed by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to hold the School Board and its members, employees, agents, assigns and insurers harmless from and against any liability for any accidents involving the student while participating in such athletic activities and any injuries suffered by the student during, or as a result of, such participation. The agreement shall also authorize team physicians to treat the student in the event of an injury requiring emergency treatment.
6. Students shall sign a form consenting to random drug screening and must obtain the written consent of their parent(s) or guardian(s) for said tests in order to be eligible to participate in any athletic activity. (See policy *IDFAA, Athletic Drug Testing*)

JUNIOR HIGH ATHLETICS

Eligibility for junior high athletics shall be as follows:

1. Students in the 8th grade or below must pass 5 of 7 subjects each nine weeks in order to be eligible for participation.
2. No student may participate if they have reached their 15th birthday before September 1 of the current school year.
3. Students "promoted" or "placed" to the next grade are eligible provided they meet academic requirements each nine weeks and are age appropriate. A student retained at the end of the previous year will be ineligible for the first nine weeks of the current session.
4. Students who have earned passing grades but have been intentionally retained at the request of their parents or guardians are eligible if they meet age and academic requirements. These students will, however, lose one year of high school eligibility in an LHSAA High School.

RULES VIOLATION

Adherence to the rules of athletic representation and participation shall be strictly enforced by the School Board. Any violations of athletic rules shall be immediately reported to the Superintendent by the principal. In the event that a member school, member school principal, or member school coach is penalized or cited by the LHSAA due to a violation, the athletic director, principal, and coach involved shall provide a full report to the Superintendent. If found warranted, the Superintendent in turn shall make a report to the School Board with pertinent recommendations for disciplinary action.

SCHOLASTIC REQUIREMENTS

The School Board endorses the scholastic eligibility requirements as a condition for participation in high school extracurricular activities as stipulated by the LHSAA. Scholastic requirements shall be as follow:

1. To be eligible for the first semester of the school year, a student shall have earned at least six (6) units from the previous school year, which shall be listed on the student's transcript, and shall have at least a "C" average as determined by the School Board when considering all "graded" subjects.
2. To be eligible for the second semester of the school year, a student shall pass at least six (6) subjects from the first semester. A senior must take the number of courses which allow them to earn a minimum of four (4) half Carnegie units or a total of two (2) Carnegie units per semester.
3. The LHSAA includes specific eligibility rules for special education students which must be met for their participation.

Individual schools or the School Board may set higher, but not lower scholastic requirements for interscholastic athletic participation.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

Athletes shall have either school student insurance or a signed statement from the parent showing that the student is otherwise covered for any accident or injuries that may occur during any athletic participation. No students shall be allowed to practice or participate in interscholastic athletics until this requirement has been met.

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Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:169, 17:176, 17:176.2; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education; Official Handbook, Louisiana High School Athletic Association; Board minutes, 2-15-96, 8-21-97, 10-16-97, 9-16-10, 9-15-11, 11-21-13, 5-18-17, 6-13-24, 7-18-24.