

Alvord Independent School District 2023-2024 Athletic Handbook

This handbook explains the athletic policies and procedures that will be followed in all sports at Alvord I.S.D. This handbook works in conjunction with the Alvord I.S.D. Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. The Alvord ISD Athletic Program will operate in accordance with the rules and guidelines of the University Interscholastic League. (UIL)

Athletic Mission

Determined to create a positive but disciplined environment, where athletics and life can be fun but tough, through a process of serving and giving.

Athletic Philosophy

The purpose of the Alvord ISD Athletic Program is to provide for individual student development outside of the classroom. The goals of the athletic program are to help develop our athletes with a safe competitive environment while promoting the ideals of pride, loyalty, leadership, teamwork, self-discipline, sportsmanship, responsibility, citizenship, and respect for authority. The lessons learned by participating in athletics will help our athletes become successful, not only in the classroom, but as members of society as well.

Alvord ISD makes athletic 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 students' volunteering for participation in the athletic program is a privilege that carries additional expectations for acceptable conduct. It is possible that a student who violates the Alvord ISD Student Code of Conduct will incur consequences from both appropriate school administrators and from his or her coach or sponsor for the same particular violation. It is possible that a student participating in extracurricular activities could violate the policies of the athletic handbook and be subject to discipline by a coach or sponsor without having violated the Stratford ISD Student Code of Conduct.

Eligibility

All athletes must meet the U.I.L. guidelines to be eligible to compete. There are standards of residence, credits towards graduation, age guidelines, and schedule requirements to be eligible for varsity competition. All athletes must meet the "no pass, no play" expectations of the U.I.L. Each athlete must pass all classes each six weeks to maintain academic eligibility unless specified by the U.I.L. or T.E.A. A student that fails a class will be ineligible for three weeks. At the three-week grade check that athlete must be passing all classes to regain eligibility. Ineligible athletes are required to attend all practices during their period of ineligibility. Failure to do so may result in the athlete being dismissed from the Athletic Program.

Any athlete who continuously fails classes may be removed from the athletic program. The athletes at Alvord ISD are students first and are expected to pass all of their classes each six weeks. Athletes are expected to attend tutorial sessions with their teachers for any classes in which they are struggling academically. Tutorials must be scheduled for a time other than the athletic period or when organized team functions are being conducted. The athlete is solely responsible for their grades.

Sports Offered at Alvord High School

Boys/Girls Cross Country	Football	Volleyball	Boys/Girls Basketball
Boys/Girls Power Lifting	Boys/Girls Track	Baseball	Softball
Boys/Girls Golf			

Sports Offered at Alvord Middle School

Boys/Girls Cross Country	Football	Volleyball	Boys/Girls Basketball
Boys/Girls Track			

Practice and Game Attendance

All team members are required to attend all school practices, meetings, and games. Practice times will be scheduled by the head coach of each sport. After school practices are limited to eight hours per week in accordance with U.I.L. rules. Athletes are expected to notify the coach of a sport, in advance, when a conflict arises and an athlete must miss a required team function. Absences may be excused if the coach is informed in advance. Types of absences include but are not limited to:

1. Any school sponsored activity
2. Family emergency
3. Illness (must bring a note from parent or guardian)
4. Medical or dental appointment (must bring a note from the doctor's office)
5. Funeral

An athlete will not be punished for missing a practice with an excused absence; however, that athlete will be required to complete training missed as prescribed by the head coach to ensure that the athlete is continuing to improve his/her skills necessary to that sport.

Athletes who miss practices or games with unexcused absences will be required to complete any and all missed training and any consequence in accordance with sport policies as prescribed by each sport head coach. Some sports may have different policies than others and/or require athletes to sign contracts before the start of their season.

Three or more unexcused missed practices could result in dismissal from the team. The head coach of the sport and the Athletic Director will determine if an athlete is dismissed for unexcused absences.

Placement in ISS and or DAEP will be considered as unexcused absences on a case by case basis.

{An athlete who misses consecutive workouts during the week may receive limited or no playing time during the upcoming game(s) because someone else has been working in his/her place.}

{An athlete who misses an entire day of school on the day of the game is not eligible to play unless he/she has been granted administrative approval (under normal circumstances, athletes must be present for at least one-half day of school on the day of the game to be eligible to participate on that day).}

{In Season practice(s) or game(s) missed due to family vacation times will be considered unexcused. This includes school holidays in which practices/games are permitted by the UIL.}

Placement in ISS and or DAEP

An athlete who has been assigned to ISS may not participate in athletic competitions before/during/after school on the day(s) assigned to ISS. However, the athlete is required to attend athletic practices, either before or after the conclusion of the regular school day.

An athlete who has been assigned to DAEP may not participate in any competitions or practices on the day(s) assigned to DAEP.

Absences Due to Illness/Injury

Due to the nature of athletics, injuries are not uncommon to athletes. Any athlete who is injured is required to attend practices, if at all possible, not only to continue to learn the sport, but to receive treatment for their injury as well. Any athlete who misses a practice or a game due to sickness is required to provide a note from a parent or a physician. If an athlete misses 3 consecutive practices due to an illness that athlete is required to provide the head coach with an excuse, from a physician, stating the nature of the illness and the period of time that the athlete will not be able to participate.

If an athlete misses' practices or games while under the supervision of a physician, that athlete must bring a release, from that physician or a parent, giving the head coach permission to allow the athlete to begin participation again.

Using Athletics as a Personal Tool for Discipline

Parents are strongly discouraged from disciplining their children by taking them out of their team sport (ex: not allowing your child to play during a game because he/she did not do all his chores that day, or because he/she made a bad grade on an assignment at school). This hurts not only the child, but also his/her teammates that are counting on them.

Selection of Team Sports

The head coach of each sport will determine the players on the team. The selection of teams will include, but is not limited to, skill level, knowledge of sport, attitude, and experience in the sport.

Middle school and high school sub-varsity team members will receive adequate playing time based upon performance and meeting expectations.

Members of varsity teams are not guaranteed playing time.

Select/Club Sports

In the case of a non-school-related athletic event conflicting with a school related athletic event, athletes should give priority to the school-related athletic event.

Missing a school-related athletic practice or game for a non-school athletic activity is unacceptable and considered unexcused, and could result in a suspension from participation in the following school athletic contest or dismissal from the team.

Practice and Game Attire

All athletes will be issued school equipment for all practices and games. They are required to wear this equipment during the course of their season. The athlete is responsible for any equipment that is issued to them. The athlete will be required to reimburse the Alvord ISD athletic department for any equipment that is lost, stolen, or intentionally destroyed. The cost for each item will be based on the amount that will be required to replace it.

Travel attire or game attire is at the discretion of the head coach of each sport and will reflect a positive image upon the athlete, the athletic department, school district, and community

Personal Appearance

All members of athletic teams are expected to maintain a manner of appearance that reflects a positive image upon Alvord ISD and the community of Alvord. The dress and grooming policies reflected in the student handbook pages 66-69 for high school and middle school students will be followed for athletics. Sport head coaches may invoke dress codes as part of their sport and non-compliance will be addressed by the sport head coach. Refusal to adhere to the appearance policies may result in suspension from participating in contests until the athlete meets the required standards and may result in an athlete being removed from the athletic program.

School Spirit

Each athlete should furnish spectator and booster support for sports in which he/she is not a participant. He/she will be encouraged to participate in all sports where his/her presence will help the team.

Sports Banquet

In the spring, the Athletic Department will host a high school banquet honoring varsity athletes who participated in athletics during the competition seasons. Athletes are expected to attend the banquet to honor their sport(s) and dress appropriately.

Tobacco, Vapes, Illegal Drugs and Alcohol

The possession of, use of, or willful association with tobacco, e-cigs, vapes, illegal drugs and alcohol is strictly prohibited. The Student Code of Conduct outlines the consequences for violations of tobacco, e-cigs, vapes, illegal drugs and alcohol. Student-athletes will serve the mandatory punishment outlined by the Student Code of Conduct based on the offense number but the Athletic Director and Sport Head Coaches have the discretion to enact further consequences for these violations.

Athletic Consequences will be as follows:

First Offense: suspended from competitions related to all extracurricular activities for 5 calendar days, and one game (which may fall during the 5-day suspension period).

Second Offense: suspended from competitions related to all extracurricular athletic activities for 30 calendar days.

Third Offense: Student suspended from participation for one calendar year.

(Reinstatement after one calendar year suspension will require the approval of a committee composed of the principal, athletic director and the appropriate coach/sponsor.)

Offense Timeline

Offenses shall be cumulative through the student's enrollment in grades 7-8, beginning on the first day of their 7th grade school year and ending on the last day of their 8th grade year. All consequences must be fulfilled in order for the offense count to start anew for high school. If the consequences from junior high carry over to high school, once they are all completed, the student's offense count will start over.

Offenses shall be cumulative through the student's enrollment in grades 9-12, beginning on the first day of summer following their 8th grade year until the student graduates from high school.

If school is not in session, the suspension will begin immediately upon return to athletic participation, (practices or games.)

Drug Testing

In accordance with Alvord ISD Board Policy, all students wishing to participate in the Alvord ISD Athletic Program must consent to random drug testing. If an athlete is deemed to have a "positive" test result the following punishments will be assigned in accordance with Alvord ISD policy:

1. First offense of athlete's career: Suspension from all practices and contests for 15 school days, student must bring a "negative" test result at the end of the suspension from a reputable drug testing entity to return to practices and games.
2. Second offense of athlete's career: Suspension from all practices and contests for 30 school days, student must bring a "negative" test result at the end of the suspension from a reputable drug testing entity to return to practices and games.
3. Third offense of athlete's career: Suspension from all practices and contests for 180 school days, student must bring a "negative" test result at the end of the suspension from a reputable drug testing entity to return to practices and games.

Practices and games missed due to a "positive" drug test result will be considered as unexcused absences.

Felony Offenses

In accordance with the Texas High School Coaches Association's Code of Ethics, an athlete charged with a felony will not be allowed to participate until charges have been dropped or the issue is resolved.

If an athlete is found guilty of committing a felony they will be permanently removed from the athletic program.

Unsportsmanlike Behavior

There is no excuse for any athlete to exhibit unsportsmanlike behavior towards an official, opponent, or coach. Any athlete who receives a foul for unsportsmanlike behavior will be subject to the sport head coach's guidelines for disciplinary action when unsportsmanlike behavior occurs. Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated. Any athlete that continuously exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior may be removed from the athletic program permanently.

Racial Intolerance

Racial intolerance towards teammates and/or opponents will not be tolerated by athletes or spectators. Any athlete who makes inappropriate comments about a teammate's or an opponent's ethnic background will be punished including but not limited to suspension and or removal from the team. Continued racial remarks may result in dismissal from the athletic program.

Hazing, Bullying, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Misconduct

The Alvord ISD Athletic Department will not tolerate any form of abuse, bullying, or harassment. Any athlete, who participates in hazing, bullying, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, or sexual misconduct of another athlete or student, will be immediately suspended from that athletic program and turned over to the campus principal. This athlete will be subject to the punishments outlined in the Alvord ISD Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. If a crime has been committed, the necessary law enforcement agencies will be notified immediately. Any athlete found guilty of hazing, bullying, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, or sexual misconduct will be permanently removed from the athletic program.

Behavioral Expectations

One of the most important ideals of athletics is respect. Alvord ISD athletes are expected to be respectful towards their teachers, coaches, administrators, auxiliary staff, teammates, opponents, and especially game officials, and represent Bulldog Athletics in a positive way both on and off the playing field. Any athlete that continually displays a lack of respect will be punished with the following consequences, including but not limited to, reduction of playing time, suspension and removal.

During practices and contests athletes will not be allowed to communicate with anyone off of the field or court. Athletes are expected to be paying attention to the game and any instruction from coaches. Any athlete who ignores this rule will be disciplined and possibly removed from the contest.

Dropping a Sport

Any athlete dropping from the team will receive the following consequences:

1. Forfeit any award from that team.
2. Be removed from the athletic program for the remainder of the semester.
3. Be subject to expulsion from the athletic program.
4. Exception to articles 1-3: athletes will be given a 5 practice "trial" at the beginning of each sport. During this time if the athlete chooses not to participate in the given sport, and it is agreed upon by the coach, he/she will be allowed to drop without punishment.

{One of the most important things an athlete learns is not to be a quitter.}

Dismissal from a Team

Alvord ISD coaches have the authority to make personnel adjustments they deem necessary due to negative effects to the program entity. Any athlete that is dismissed from a team must adhere to the following:

1. Forfeit any award from that team.
2. Complete the current off-season training requirements such as weight and running workouts before moving on to the next sport.

Reinstated to Athletics after Being Dismissed/Quitting

Any athlete who wishes to return to athletics after being dismissed or quitting the program will:

1. Be allowed back in the program upon the consent of the Athletic Director.
2. Be required to participate in all off-season workouts for a semester before being allowed to represent the school in athletic competition (summer also counts as one semester).
3. Be held to a higher standard than the average athlete: any offense that is deemed negative to the athletic program can result in automatic dismissal from the athletic program without warning.

Off-Season Programs

Athletes not practicing in an in-season sport during the athletic period are required to participate in an off-season program. Off-season programs will include performance training regimens and various activities designed to improve intangibles necessary for athletics. The only exception allowed is for seniors who have finished their sports seasons and are not playing any other sports. If they remain in the athletic period, they will be required to adhere to attendance policies and expectations consistent with those in the off-season program.

Any athlete who drops out of athletics and misses the off-season workouts for any sports will not be allowed to participate in that sport the following year. If a student wants to participate in athletics, they must go through the off-season programs in order to participate the following year.

Team Travel

Alvord ISD will provide transportation for out of town contests. All members of teams are required to ride to and from all contests on the school provided transportation unless previous arrangements have been made with the head coach of the sport. If an athlete is going to ride home with a person other than their parent or guardian, they must provide a written note, signed by a parent or guardian, before leaving Alvord ISD to travel to the game.

Cell Phone Policy

Unless given permission by a coach or staff member, cell phone usage during athletics, practices and games is strictly prohibited. There shall be no cell phone usage in these areas including but not limited to locker rooms, buses, gyms, weight room, practice fields and/or playing fields. If an athlete is found guilty of using his/her cell phone without permission, they will receive consequences including but not limited to playing time reduction, suspension and/or removal from the team.

Social Media Guidelines

Due to the accessibility and use of social media in today's society, the Alvord ISD Athletic Department is implementing guidelines to assist our athletes in developing the skills needed to make positive decisions while using social media outlets.

It is important for our athletes to understand how social media can affect their opportunities in future endeavors. Many employers and colleges now use potential candidate's social media activities as a reference to that candidate's character, life choices, and habits.

Guidelines:

1. Social Media use should not violate the AISD Code of Conduct for students.

2. Posts should not contain language or remarks that may harm teammates or coaches, other students or representatives of other schools, including comments that may be disrespectful to opposing teams.
3. Posts should not contain profane, vulgar, obscene, racial/ethnic, or offensive language.
4. Photos should not contain nudity, be vulgar, obscene or offensive in nature.
5. Photos or written post should not contain or reference illegal acts such as: violence, sexual harassment, selling, possessing, or using controlled substances, stalking, underage drinking, or any other inappropriate behavior.
6. Posts should not cast a negative image or negative perception of the athlete, team, or school.

Consequences: Provided are a set of possible consequences for any athlete who does not adhere to the AISD Athletic Social Media Guidelines. Ultimately, the coaches/AD/School officials will determine consequences for their team(s). It is expected the consequences will be progressive if behavior is not improved through previous attempts.

Potential Consequences:

1. Conference between the athlete, head coach of the sport, and the Athletic Director. The conference may or may not include the parent.
2. Playing time reduction.
3. Game suspension.
4. Expulsion from the team.

****Any and all decisions regarding athletes in the afore mentioned policies are subject to coaches' discretion.***

Insurance

Alvord ISD is not responsible for injuries of its athletes who are participating in sports. However, Alvord ISD will carry insurance covering participation in practice or competition for athletes. The coverage for each injury will vary according to the accident. More detailed information can be obtained by contacting the Alvord ISD Athletic Department.

Parent/Coach Relationships (From the UIL Parent Information Manual)

“Both parenting and coaching are very difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding between coaches and parents, both are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide a more positive experience for everyone. Parents have the right to know, and understand the expectations placed on them and their children. Coaches have the right to know that if parents have a concern, they will discuss it with the coach at the appropriate time and place.

Communication parents should expect from their child’s coach:

- 1) Coach’s philosophy.
- 2) Expectations the coach has for your son or daughter, as well as other players on the team.
- 3) Locations and times of practices and contests.
- 4) Team requirements, i.e., fees, special equipment needed, school & team rules, off-season expectations.
- 5) Procedures that will be followed if your child becomes injured during participation.

Communication coaches expect from parents:

- 1) Concerns regarding their son or daughter expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time and place.
- 2) Specific concerns in regard to the coach’s philosophy and/or expectations.
- 3) Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.

As your child becomes involved in interscholastic athletics, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It’s important to understand there may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. These are the times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with a coach:

- 1) The mental and physical treatment of your child.
- 2) What your child needs to do to improve.

3) Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child is not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches make decisions based on what they believe is in the best interests of all students participating. As you can see from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those listed next, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues NOT appropriate for discussion with your child's coach:

- 1) How much playing time each athlete is getting.
- 2) Team strategy.
- 3) Play calling.
- 4) Any situation that deals with other student-athletes.

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and parent. These are not discouraged, as it is important for each party to have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure is suggested to help promote resolution to the issue.

If a parent has a concern to discuss with the coach, the following procedure should be followed:

- 1) Call the coach to set up an appointment.
- 2) If the coach cannot be reached, call the athletic director and ask him or her to set up a meeting with the coach for you.
- 3) Think about what you expect to accomplish as a result of the meeting.
- 4) Stick to discussing the facts, as you understand them.

5) Do not confront the coach before, during or after a practice or contest. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution of the situation, but often escalate it.

What should a parent do if the meeting with the coach didn't provide satisfactory resolution?

- 1) Call the athletic director to set up a meeting with the athletic director, coach, and parent present.
- 2) At this meeting, an appropriate next step can be determined, if necessary.

Students' involvement in co-curricular activities has been proven to increase their chances of success later in life. We hope the information contained in this manual helps make that experience more enjoyable for everyone involved."

Behavior Expectations of Spectators (From the UIL Parent Information Manual)

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 judgement 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 (i.e. tailgating).

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.

Parents and spectators should be aware that the school can (and should) remove them from the premises and can prohibit them from attending future contests due to undesirable behaviors.

Game officials can ask that school administrators have unruly fans removed from a contest facility.

There is no such thing as a “right” to attend interscholastic athletics. Interscholastic athletics are considered a “privilege” and the spectator who avails themselves of it is expected to conduct himself or herself accordingly.

Keep in mind that you are a guest of the school, and that while winning is certainly an admirable goal; it is hollow if it comes at the expense of morals, ethics, and just plain common sense.

The school is responsible for the behavior of their spectators. The school district can be and will be punished for actions of patrons in violation of UIL standards and rules.

Lettering Policy

1. Football: (A) Play in at least three Varsity games (OR)
(B) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
(C) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
(D) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director
2. Volleyball: (A) Play in at least six Varsity games or ½ of the Varsity district games (OR)
(B) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
(C) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
(D) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director
3. Basketball: (A) Play in at least 10 Varsity games or ½ of the Varsity district games (OR)
(B) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
(C) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
(D) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director
4. Cross Country: (A) Finish in the top fifteen in at least 2 pre-district Varsity meets (OR)
(B) Finish in the top ten at the District Meet (OR)

- (C) Run in the Regional Meet (OR)
- (D) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
- (E) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
- (F) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director

5. Powerlifting:
- (A) Compete in the Regional Meet (OR)
 - (B) Win first or second place in an Invitational Meet (OR)
 - (C) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
 - (D) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
 - (E) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director
6. Track:
- (A) Score fifteen points in Varsity pre-district meets (each member of a relay team receives $\frac{1}{4}$ the sports scored by that relay team (OR)
 - (B) Score 1 point in the District meet
 - (C) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
 - (D) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
 - (E) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director
7. Baseball:
- (A) Play in at least $\frac{1}{2}$ the Varsity games or in $\frac{1}{2}$ of Varsity District games (OR)
 - (B) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
 - (C) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
 - (D) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director
8. Softball:
- (A) Play in at least $\frac{1}{2}$ the Varsity games or in $\frac{1}{2}$ of Varsity district games (OR)
 - (B) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
 - (C) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
 - (D) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director
9. Golf:
- (A) Score 15 points in Varsity pre-district meets where individual results Count as follows: First Place = 10 points, Second Place = 5 points, and Third Place = 1 point (OR)
 - (B) Qualify for the Regional Golf Tournament (OR)
 - (C) Be a Senior and finish the season in good standing with the Head Coach.
 - (D) Must be recommended by the Head Coach.
 - (E) All cases are subject to the discretion of the Athletic Director

Acknowledgement

A condition for participating in the Alvord ISD Athletic Program is to sign an acknowledgement that the student-athlete has read and understands the Alvord ISD Athletic Handbook. The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) must also sign the acknowledgement. The acknowledgement states that the signing party understands the consequences for engaging in prohibited conduct.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN

.....Please detach on this line.....

DATE _____ GRADE _____

I have read the Alvord ISD Athletic Handbook and agree to these rules as a condition for my voluntary participation in Alvord ISD Athletics. I understand that failure to do so will result in disciplinary measures related to my athletic participation.

Student's Name (Printed) _____

Student's Signature _____

I have read the Alvord ISD Athletic Handbook and understand the requirements for my child's voluntary participation in Alvord ISD Athletics. I understand the consequences that my child will face if he or she fails to adhere to these rules and agree to such terms. I am aware of the sections dealing with Parent/Coach Relationships and Behavior Expectations of Spectators. I agree to abide by the conditions stated therein.

Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Name (Printed)

Parent(s) or Guardian(s) Signature
