

North Zulch Bulldogs

Athletic Handbook



2025-2026

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Administration

Kevin Compton, Superintendent

Kevin R Bartley, Athletic Director

Janie Pope, Elementary Principal

Donald May, Principal

Coaches

Alexandra Grier

Elizabeth Jesurun

Brad Wallin

Colton Jones

Matt Collins

School Board Members

Karl Raddle, President

Tammy Gilbert, Secretary

Becky Wilson

Kathryn Knotts

Rinza Stewart

Brian Baker

David Kirk

Philosophy/Vision

We believe that an exemplary athletic program is an extension of the classroom. As such, athletics offers students an opportunity to develop and grow physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. The positive benefits that participation in athletics offers include, 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 athlete, these experiences provide an integral part of the foundation needed to be a productive citizen capable of leading a full and enriching life.

Introduction

The athletic program will follow all policies/procedures in the NZISD student handbook. Athletics 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 the 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 supersedes all prior publications governing North Zulch athletic teams and shall be used by the principal, coaches and players in grades 6-12.

You, the student athlete, are accountable and responsible for all rules and procedures contained within this handbook and for any additional ones that your respective coaches might add.

Participation

It is the goal of the NZISD 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 North Zulch ISD athletic program is a privilege, not a right. Since participation is a privilege, the coaching staff, in accordance with North Zulch ISD policy, has the authority to suspend or revoke the privilege when the rules and standards of this athletic program are not followed.

Athletic Program Participation Policy

1. Athletic Period Enrollment:

All student-athletes must be enrolled in the appropriate athletic period for the entire school year in order to participate in any sport.

2. Off-Season Participation:

Student-athletes must be actively involved in an off-season training program during periods when they are not participating in a sport.

3. Academic and Attendance Standards:

Excessive absences and/or consistent academic failures may result in dismissal from the athletic program.

Chain of Command/Open Door Policy:

The student-athlete is encouraged to discuss issues with their head coach as a first step to resolving any issue. Parents can schedule a meeting with a head coach to discuss any concerns about their child within that sport and are encouraged to do so. Playing time is at the full discretion of a head coach. Please do not approach a coach directly after competition. If a parent is not satisfied with the results of a meeting with the head coach then they may follow the chain of command to address their concerns: Head Coach, Athletic Director, Superintendent, School Board.

~ Parent / Coach Relationships ~

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 that 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.

Collegiate Signings and Commitments:

If the opportunity arises for a college signing or commitment, please inform your coach and the Athletic Administration. Arrangements can be made for an official signing to take place at North Zulch High School.

Available Sports

Volleyball **
Cross Country
Basketball **
Track
Softball **
Baseball **
Wrestling

****Team sports will take priority over individual sports****

In Conference A schools or in small junior high schools whose enrollment corresponds to Conference A enrollment, 6th graders may be used when it is vital to field one combined 7th and 8th grade baseball, basketball, softball, or volleyball team on the first day of the season. Sixth graders may not be used on either team when a school has more than one team playing. The first day of the season is defined as the first day of practice outside the school day or the day of the first competition, whichever occurs sooner. If fewer than the below listed number of 7th and 8th grade students report the first day of the season, then 6th graders shall be notified the next day that they may try out for the combined 7th and 8th grade team and may participate for the entire season. If the number of 7th and 8th graders reporting the first day of the season meets or exceeds the number listed below, then 6th graders shall not be used any time during the entire season.

Basketball – 10
Girls Volleyball- 12
Baseball-18
Softball-18

The following sports are available for athletics in grades 7-12:

Volleyball-Girls
Cross Country-Boys and Girls
Basketball-Boys and Girls
Track-Boys and Girls
Baseball-Boys
Softball-Girls
Wrestling

Letter Jacket Policy

As an award for success in athletics, NZISD will award an athlete a letter jacket and letter. The jackets will be ordered in the spring of every year and will be distributed to students once they arrive. A student may add individual, last name, etc. at their own cost at time of order or on their own.

Students must significantly participate in at least two semesters of a varsity sport and may receive their jacket in the fall of the student's junior year at the earliest, based on when the jacket was earned. Failure to pass academic classes or present significant behavior violations may disqualify a student. Final eligibility for a letter jacket is determined by the head coach of the sport and the athletic director in the spring of each school year.

Eligibility and Regulations

A student in grades 6-12 may participate in extracurricular activities on or off campus at the beginning of the school year only if he/she has earned the cumulative number of credits in state-approved courses indicated.

1. At the beginning of the 6th grade year, the student must have been promoted from the 5th to the 6th.
2. At the beginning of the 7th grade year, the student must have been promoted from the 6th to the 7th grade.
3. At the beginning of the 8th grade year, the student must have been promoted from the 7th to the 8th grade.
4. At the beginning of the 9th grade year, the student must have been promoted from the 8th to the 9th grade.
5. At the beginning of the 10th grade year, the student must have at least five credits towards graduation.
6. At the beginning of the 11th grade year, the student must have at least ten credits towards graduation or have earned five credits during the previous 12 months.
7. At the beginning of the 12th grade year, the student must have at least fifteen credits towards graduation or have earned five credits during the previous 12 months.

Grade Checks

Grade Checks will be conducted at every 3 week period by the head coach of their sport to help athletes achieve a passing grade and maintain eligibility during their sport(s). If a student/athlete quits or is removed from the athletics program due to grades, he/she must prove consistency, passing at each 3 week grade check period, for one 9 week period.

Disciplinary Procedures

Suspension

Each coach will have the authority, with the concurrence of the athletic director, to suspend or place on probation for an extended period of time, any student-athlete for major or accumulated minor infractions of rules for that team.

Dropping a Sport

We understand that there may be times when an athlete decides not to finish a sport season. "Quitting" a sport means choosing to leave the team before the season officially ends, for any reason—academic concerns, personal issues, or parental decision.

If you're considering leaving a team, the following steps must be followed:

1. **Think It Through**
Take time to carefully consider your decision. Think about how it might affect your teammates, coaches, and your future in athletics.
2. **Talk with Your Coach**
Before making a final decision, speak directly with your coach. Many situations can be resolved through open communication. A meeting with your parents/guardians, coach, and the athletic director is encouraged before officially quitting.
3. **Return All Equipment**
All school-issued equipment must be returned clean and in good condition. If anything is lost or damaged, you are responsible for covering the cost of replacement.
4. **Returning to the Same Sport**
If you want to return to the same sport in the future, you must talk to the head coach. The decision to allow you back on the team will be made by the coach and the athletic director.
 - If you are allowed to return and quit again, you will be banned from participating in all school sports for **one (1) full year**.
5. **Joining Another Sport**
If you quit one sport, you may not start or practice with a new sport until the season of the sport you left has officially ended.
 - In addition, you will be ineligible to play in the first **three (3) contests** of the next sport you join.
 - For individual sports (like track or cross country), this may be reduced to **one (1) contest** at the discretion of the athletic director.

Procedures for Illness or Injury

Your health is a concern to every member of your team. When you are ill, you need to notify your coach with a phone call, text message or email if you will miss practice. Whenever you are injured or have an illness of a minor nature, you may be required to dress out (but not participate) and stay with your team during the workout. You learn from each practice session, whether you are actually working out or simply observing. Conditioning will be made up for any missed practices.

Athletes need to notify their coach immediately if injured. Athletes are encouraged to first see their coach as a first step to treating an injury. If a physician has treated an injury, you must receive clearance to return to participation from that physician before being allowed to participate. Trainers and Doctors can limit participation in games, practice, or off-season. Student/ athlete must get a medical clearance before returning to competition.

Athletic Director Phone Number (936) 241-7100 Ext 1714

Your coach will give you their contact information at the beginning of the season.

Drug Policy and Screening Procedure

Philosophy

The NZISD Athletic Department believes that all athletes, athletic managers, licensed drivers, and cheerleaders who represent North Zulch School, the community and their families have an obligation to perform at the highest level of their ability and to behave in a manner that casts a positive light on everyone and everything they represent.

Drug abuse is a major problem in our society. Drug abuse has a negative effect on a person's health, behavior and learning. Drug abuse limits the individual's ability to develop to his/her potential and to become a positive member of our society. Drugs have proven to be detrimental to an individual's contribution as a team member.

Purpose

The purpose of the NZISD Drug Screening procedure is to:

1. Provide for the health and well-being of the individual.
2. Ensure safety of others with whom the individual interacts.
3. Promote order and positive discipline.
4. Make a statement of right and wrong.
5. Conform to public laws.
6. Assist young people in resisting negative peer pressure.

Method

1. Athletes must submit a signed parental consent form (required for participation in extracurricular activities).
2. Qualified lab personnel will administer testing.
3. The lab technician will explain the procedure and collect the athlete's specimen
4. The qualified lab that is chosen by the North Zulch ISD will accept urinalysis and recording of results.
5. Reports will be confidential to coach/sponsor, parent/guardian, student, school administrator and administering physician.
6. Athletes will be selected at random from a pool of in-season and off-season athletes.

Drugs Eligible for Testing:

- Nicotine – Cotinine
- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Amphetamine (includes Ecstasy)
- Opiates
- Phencyclidine (PCP/angel dust)
- Barbiturates (central nervous depressants)
- Benzodiazepines (Valium®, Xanax®)
- Methadone
- Propoxyphene (PCP/Darvon®)
- K-2 (synthetic marijuana).

Grade Range

All students participating in extracurricular athletics and cheerleading, grades 6-12.

Records

All records will be kept in the Main School office in a confidential file. All test results will be destroyed when the student is no longer in school

Consequences

1. For refusing consent, immediate suspension until reviewed by the athletic director with a possibility of removal from the program.
2. If the drug test is positive, confidential notification of results will be given to the student and parent/guardian.
3. Any athlete who receives a positive screening will have an opportunity to retest within 24 hours at student's expense (only if positive was for drugs other than alcohol).
4. If re-test is negative, confidential notification will be given to the student athlete and parent.
5. If re-test is positive or no re-test is done, the student will follow sanctions for positive testing.
6. If caught in possession, the student-athlete will be added to the drug testing list for the remainder of the school year. Also, the NZISD student code of conduct policies will be enforced.
7. If caught under the influence, this will serve as a positive drug test. Also, the NZISD student code of conduct policies will be enforced.
8. All NZISD student code of conduct policies will be enforced on a case-by-case basis.

Sanctions for Positive Testing

The following disciplinary measures will be taken for any student-testing positive to a drug test.

First Offense Procedure

1. Conference with parent/guardian to discuss the student-athlete.
2. Student-athlete must enroll in and complete drug/tobacco/alcohol education program in a timely manner.
3. Approval by the Athletic Director and Head Coach before reinstatement into the program.
4. Student will receive counseling from North Zulch counselor

Sanctions

1. Suspension from athletic program for 14 calendar days (this includes participating in all sports but does not include practicing sports with athletic director and coach's approval.)
2. The coach of the student's sport may require additional sanctions.
3. Student-athlete shall be subject to testing for the remainder of the school year.
4. Student-athlete shall be retested and his/her system must be clear of any drugs before being reinstated.
5. If not in season, suspension from competition and/or additional consequences is at the athletic director's discretion.

Second Offense

1. Conference with parent/guardian to discuss the student-athlete.
2. Student-athlete must complete drug/tobacco/alcohol education program, before being allowed to participate.
3. Approval by Athletic Director and Head Coach before reinstatement into the program.

Sanctions

1. Suspension from athletic program for minimum 30 calendar days (this includes participating in all sports but does not include practicing sports with athletic director and coach's approval.)
2. The coach of the student's sport may require additional sanctions.
3. Student-athlete shall be subject to testing for the remainder of the school year.
4. Student-athlete shall be retested and his/her system must be clear of any drugs before being reinstated.

5. If not in season, suspension from competition and/or additional consequences is at the athletic director's discretion.

Third Offense Procedure

1. Conference with parent/guardian to discuss the student-athlete.
2. Student-athlete must complete drug/tobacco/alcohol education program, before being allowed to participate.
3. Approval by Athletic Director and Head Coach before reinstatement into the program.

Sanctions:

1. Suspension from athletic program for a minimum of 60 calendar days (this includes participating in all sports but does not include practicing sports with athletic director and coach's approval.)
2. The coach of the student's sport may require additional sanctions.
3. Student-athlete shall be subject to testing for one calendar year.
4. Student-athlete shall be retested and his/her system must be clear of any drugs before being reinstated.
5. If not in season, suspension from competition and/or additional consequences is at the athletic director's discretion.

Refusal to Test

North Zulch ISD Athletics is an elective and students are in these classes by choice. If a student-athlete refuses to take part in the drug-testing program, he/she will be suspended from the athletic program and reinstated at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

Cost

The district shall not be responsible for any cost incurred for retesting or drug education.

North Zulch Athletic Handbook Acknowledgment

I have read and understand all rules and regulations in accordance with the North Zulch Athletic Handbook. In signing this acknowledgment, I am giving my permission for my child to participate in extracurricular activities.

Print Student Name _____

Grade _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

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