

2020-21 Era Independent School District Athletic Department Policies and Procedures

Article I: Purpose, Benefits and Privilege

Era Independent School District provides an Athletic Department as school sponsored activities that support, but are not directly related to the instruction of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills as mandated by the Texas Education Agency. The purpose of these extracurricular activities in the educational system is to teach the intangible factors of work ethic, character, discipline, responsibility, teamwork, respect and trust.

These factors, which form the basis of ethical and moral standards, are of paramount importance in today's highly competitive world society. High school athletics in Texas in the 21st century is the catalyst for preparing our young people for success in this society. Era Athletic Department offers the above, and many more, worthwhile and significant contributions to a student's personal, physical and social development.

It also requires a student to meet specific requirements that are above and beyond the normal school standards for all students.

Participation in extracurricular activities is a voluntary privilege and not a right. Students must meet the specific requirements in order to participate. These requirements will be monitored and consequences enforced by Era ISD Administration, Athletic Director and Coaching Staff. This document has been created to outline the general concepts of these specific requirements.

Article II: Objectives and Standards

Interscholastic athletics represents an area of great potential for the pursuit of excellence. Athletes must strive to reach their highest potential in character, academic and athletic development in order to receive the full benefits of their athletic endeavors. The focus of an intensive, well-balanced program of athletics revolves around standards designed to progress athletes in these three major objectives. Era Athletic Department and personnel will strive to support the objectives of strong character, high academic achievement and athletic excellence in positive and constructive avenues.

However when an objective is compromised, consequences must be evoked to reinforce the objective. Consequences may include, but are not limited to conferences, physical exercise (hornet reminders as outlined by individual sport discipline charts), suspension, zero tolerance contracts or removal from athletics. Any athlete that continually falls short of objective expectations or persistently commits offenses may be subject to reduced playing time, suspension, zero tolerance contracts or removal from athletics. Era ISD Athletic Policies & Procedures

Article III: Major Offenses and Consequences relating to Character

The character of an athlete is the essence of who they are and what they stand for in life. Choices student athletes make when faced with difficult dilemmas are at the very heart of personal character progression. Demonstrating a strong personal character, both on and off the field, is critical in the development of a student's ethical and moral base. The following standards and consequences are of significant importance in the development of a strong character.

- 3.1** *Offenses related to:* Vaping, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, theft, criminal mischief, vandalism, and assault...etc. *Consequences may include:* 40 hornet reminders, suspension, zero tolerance contracts or removal from athletics. UIL or TEA rules may apply that affect eligibility.
- 3.2** *Offenses related to:* Quitting the athletic program. *Consequences:* Handled on an individual basis depending on the circumstances involved; reinstatement may be granted by the athletic director and will include 40 hornet reminders, possible limits on playing time and compliance with a zero tolerance contract pertaining to future quitting.
- 3.3** *Offenses related to:* Quitting an individual sport during the season *Consequences:* 40 miles before the athlete may participate in any other sport and compliance with a zero tolerance contract pertaining to future quitting. Exception: The first two weeks of the season is considered a "trial period" for athletes. If an athlete makes the decision not to participate during this "trial period" these consequences may be waived upon a conference and review of the circumstances with the head coach.
- 3.4** *Offenses related to:* Inappropriate or derogatory remarks put on social media. *Consequences:* Handled on an individual basis depending on the severity of the post. 40 hornet reminders, removal from athletics.

Article IV: Major Offenses and Consequences relating to Academics

The most important priority of Era Athletic Department is to support the educational efforts of Era ISD. Athletes should passionately pursue excellence in the classroom. Success in academics will greatly prepare student athletes for their future pursuits and broaden college or career opportunities. Students should not only strive to achieve high grades, but also strive to learn as much as they can in their academic arenas. The following standards and consequences are of significant importance in the development of a strong academic foundation.

- 4.1** *Offenses related to:* Placement in DAEP. *Consequences:* Athlete will be suspended from all athletic activities until AEP assignment is complete. Athlete's status will be reviewed by the Athletic Director. 40 hornet reminders, suspension, zero tolerance contracts or removal from athletics.
- 4.2** *Offenses related to:* Placement in ISS. *Consequences:* Athlete will be suspended from the next athletic contest if placement occurs during an active season. Athlete must accompany team and dress in appropriate game attire, but not allowed any playing time. 10 hornet reminders.

- 4.3 **Offenses related to:** School conduct referrals or communication of a problem from a teacher. **Consequences:** 3 hornet reminders per offense.
- 4.4 **Offenses related to:** Failing grade at three or six weeks grade report. **Consequences:** UIL rules will apply and may affect game eligibility. 3 hornet reminders per course failed.
- 4.5 **Offenses related to:** 70 – 79 grade average at six weeks grade report
Consequences: 1 hornet reminder per course with a 70 – 79 grade average.

Article V: Major Offenses and Consequences relating to Athletics

Athletic competition in Texas is strong. It is imperative that Era Athletic Department create an organized and highly developed program that gives Era athletes every opportunity to reach their full athletic potential. This program is very reliant on full participation and support of athletes and parents. Effort, sportsmanship, attitude, teamwork, respect and trust are key components in successful athletic programs. The following standards and consequences are of significant importance in the development of a competitive athletic atmosphere.

- 5.1 **Offenses related to:** Attendance. **Consequences:** Absence from a mandatory game, practice or meeting without prior communication to the coach of the absence results in 6 Hornet reminders and may result in reduced playing time, suspension or a zero tolerance contract. If the athlete communicates the absence and the reason for the absence before the event begins, the result is 3 hornet reminders and may result in reduced playing time, suspension or a zero tolerance contract.
- 5.2 **Offenses related to:** Tardiness or missing partial events **Consequences:** Being late or missing part of a mandatory game, practice or meeting without prior communication to the coach of the absence results in 3 hornet reminders and may result in reduced playing time, suspension or a zero tolerance contract. If the athlete communicates the absence and reason for the absence before the event begins the result is up to 3 hornet reminders and may result in reduced playing time, suspension or a zero tolerance contract.
- 5.3 **Offenses related to:** Lack of sportsmanship or disrespect for officials, coaches, teammates, opponents or fans **Consequences:** Handled on an individual basis depending on the circumstances involved. Consequences may include hornet reminders, possible limits on playing time, suspension and compliance with a zero tolerance contract pertaining to future offenses.
- 5.4 **Offenses related to:** Issued equipment. **Consequences:** Loss of issued athletic equipment will result in financial replacement and may result in hornet reminders, suspension and compliance with a zero tolerance contract pertaining to future offenses.

Article VI: Minor Offenses

There are many other expectations of behavior and process that athletes are required to follow. Rules and expectations are developed to support an organized, safe, team oriented and respected environment. Many of these are sport specific and are outlined in individual sport's discipline chart. They include, but are not limited to, things like: the use of profanity, dress, appearance and team attire, cleanliness of lockers and locker rooms....etc. These offenses may result in individual or team punishment and may include hornet reminders.

Article VII: Athletic Injuries

Student athletes and parents should be aware that any athletic participation will always have inherent dangers. Although rare, death or catastrophic injury can result from participation in sports. Other, less serious, injuries may also occur. Care should be taken by all concerned to minimize such dangers through the use of appropriate equipment and proper training methods. Coaches are not doctors; however, they are trained and very familiar with athletic type injuries and need to be consulted before an athlete seeks medical attention from a doctor. *If an athlete seeks medical attention of any kind, written documentation with specific instructions must be presented to the coach.*

Article VIII: Relationships, Expectations and Communication

Respectful interaction between coaches, athletes and parents will provide the quality experience desired from scholastic athletics. As in any competitive environment with high expectations, disagreements and conflicts will arise. Parenting, coaching and being a student athlete are all very difficult endeavors. By establishing common understanding, all are better able to accept the actions of others and provide a more positive experience for everyone. Student's involvement in extracurricular activities has been proven to increase their chances of success later in life. Athletic participation provides lasting images and memories that will last a lifetime. In order to establish the best environment possible, some necessary expectations and communication guidelines have been developed. Coaches, parents and athletes should strive to maintain these guidelines.

8.1 *Expectations of Coaches:*

1. Be organized, thorough and professional.
2. Communicate philosophy and expectations to all players.
3. Communicate locations and times of practices, contests and transportation issues.
4. Have a "big picture" team and program mindset.
5. Create an atmosphere and program that gives the team and individual players the best opportunity to compete and be successful.

8.2 *Expectations of Parents:*

1. Positively support your athlete's and the school's athletic endeavors.
2. Aid your athlete in meeting all requirements of team participation including full attendance at practices, contests and meetings.
3. Communicate any scheduling conflicts well in advance.
4. Communicate with the coach any situation or issue that requires a conference by following the conflict resolution policy.
5. Create an atmosphere of school spirit and positive support that enhances the team oriented aspect of athletics.

8.3 *Expectations of Athletes:*

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

1. Believe in yourself, teammates and coaches.
2. Participate with passion, purpose and full effort.
3. Strive to be the best you can be in the classroom.
4. Conduct yourself with strong character, poise, dignity and class. Do what is right.
5. Have a team oriented mindset and be ready to sacrifice for the Team.
6. Represent your Community, Family, School and Team to the best of your ability.

Article IX: COMMUNICATION WITH THE COACH

Conflict Resolution Policy: Communication Procedures

It is important to understand there may be times when things do not go the way an athlete or parent may have envisioned it. There are certain concerns that are very appropriate for a parent to discuss with a coach. There are also issues that are not appropriate for discussion with an athlete's coach. Coaches make decisions based on years of preparation and experience as well as many hours of observation and evaluation of the whole team. These decisions are made in the best interests of all athletes participating and not necessarily of one particular athlete.

9.1 *Appropriate concerns to discuss with a coach:*

1. The mental or physical treatment of your athlete.
2. What your athlete needs to do to improve, both athletically or academically.
3. Concerns about your athlete's behavior either at or away from school.

9.2 Issues not appropriate for discussion with a coach:

1. How much playing time each athlete is getting.
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Specific situations relative to student athletes other than your athlete.

9.3 Conflict Resolution

Era Independent School District is committed to the following procedures for successfully resolving any conflict that may arise. Conferences should be held at the coach's regular conference time during business hours. Contact athletic department personnel by school phone or e-mail and communication will be returned in a timely manner.

It is inappropriate to approach any coach with concerns prior to and especially at the conclusion of an athletic contest. No conference will be held for at least 24 hours after an athletic contest. The following conference steps should be taken in the order listed to resolve conflicts.

1. Athlete and coach conference.
2. Parent, athlete and coach conference.
3. Athletic Director, parent, athlete and coach conference.

*****If after this process the parent wishes to appeal a decision concerning a situation, an appeal must be directed to the Superintendent of Era ISD.*****

Article X: Drug Testing Policy

All participants must submit to a drug test prior to their first competition, and random drug testing throughout the school year. In order to insure a safe, healthy drug free environment for our athletes, we require that they submit to drug testing per Era ISD extracurricular policy. The following procedures apply for a failed drug test.

The **1st failed test** will result in a 30 day suspension from all extracurricular activities and 10 Hornet reminders. The athlete will remain with the team and continue to practice throughout his or her suspension. The athlete in question will also be retested per Era ISD policy.

The **2nd failed test** will result in a 180 day suspension from all extracurricular activities, removal from the current sport or sports and 40 Hornet reminders. As well as, the signing of a zero tolerance contract. The athlete in question will also be retested per Era ISD policy.

The **3rd failed test** will result in indefinite removal from athletic program.

Article XI: Conclusion

The Era Athletic program is under the governance of the University Interscholastic League. It is obligated to follow all UIL rules and regulations. UIL policy may be viewed online at the following link: [UIL Parent Manual](#). This is a document that provides good concise information for parents is called the “UIL Parent Information Manual”. Era Athletic Department highly recommends all parents read and be familiar with the information in this manual. It covers many topics including general rules, sportsmanship, booster club guidelines, thoughts on college scholarship opportunities as well as safety and health information pertaining to scholastic athletics.

The Era Athletic Department is committed to provide an atmosphere that leads to a positive and rewarding experience for all athletes. This document is designed to aid in the accomplishment of the objectives that are outlined in its content and provide a consistent avenue for the handling of situations that arise in the daily aspects of athletic activity.

In order to meet the growing needs of our student population we have added programs, therefore we need maximum participation in all sports. We also believe participation in multiple sports creates more well-rounded athletes. We do not believe that specializing at this age has any benefits to our athletes or our athletic program. Therefore; we encourage our athletes to participate *in a minimum of two sports* that are conducted as part of the athletic program.

***Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Era Independent School District
Athletic Department Policies and Procedures***

Please sign and return the completed form below so we may verify that you have received and reviewed the Athletic Department Policies and Procedures for Era Independent School District. Please return this acknowledgement that you sign and date and keep the rest of the document above the dotted line for your future reference. Your signature(s) signify that you and your student have read and understood the policies and procedures and agree to abide by the guidelines presented.

Student Name: _____

Grade Level: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____