

I. ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION PHILOSOPHY

- A. Independent School District 16 believes that a dynamic program of student athletics is vital to the educational development of its students. This program should provide a quality experience to aid in the development of favorable habits and attitudes in students that will prepare them for adult life.

Athletics should function as an integral part of the total curriculum. Athletics should assist in the development of fellowship and good will, promote self-realization and all-around growth, encourage learning the qualities of good citizenship, and offer students opportunities to represent their school.

- B. Athletics play an important part in the life of students in Independent School District 16. Young people learn a great deal from their participation in interscholastic athletics. Lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, competition, and how to succeed and fail gracefully are an integral part of each activity in our athletic program. Athletics play an important part in helping the individual student mold a healthy self-concept as well as a healthy body. Athletic competition adds to our school spirit and helps all students - spectators as well as participants - develop pride in their school and in themselves.
- C. The major objective of the program is to provide wholesome opportunities for students to develop favorable habits and attitudes regarding social and group interaction.

Coaching should be of the highest quality so as to exemplify to the participants the desired behavior to be developed within the athletic program. Measurement of coaching success should not solely be in terms of the quantifiable evidence of team or individual success, but rather in the total educational outcome of each activity.

The athletic program and administration should always conform to the general objectives and policies of the school. At no time should the program place the total educational curriculum secondary in emphasis; the program should constantly strive for the development of well-rounded individuals, capable of taking their place in modern society.

- D. We believe that the opportunity for participation in a wide variety of student-selected activities is a vital part of the students' educational experiences. Such participation is a *privilege* that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the activity, to the student body, to the community, to the coaching staff, to the team members, and to the participants themselves. These experiences contribute to the development of learning skills and emotional patterns that enable students to make maximum use of their education.

Independent School District 16 student activities are considered a part of the school's program of education that strives to provide experiences that will help to develop students physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.

- E.** The interscholastic athletic program shall be conducted in accordance with existing school board policies, rules, and regulations. While the school board takes great pride in success, it does not condone "*success at any cost*" and discourages any and all pressures that might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental and physical health. At all times, the athletic program must be conducted in such a way so as to justify it as an educational activity.
- F.** Every effort should be made to support the athletic program with the best facilities and equipment, and with the most qualified staff available. Coaches and advisors should teach the specific skills necessary for improvement in activities and provide guidance in the nurturing of self-realization, good sportsmanship, cooperation, leadership, ethical behavior, and appreciation of the importance of practice. As much as possible, classroom objectives should be applied and developed further through participation in the athletic program.
- G.** The ultimate goals of the athletic program should be to teach students the value of participation and competition, while balancing the importance of winning and the growth of positive citizenship traits.
- H.** The success of a team and enhancement of team values and objectives shall be a major consideration, but individuals shall not be demeaned in order to forward the success of the team.
- I.** Respect for team membership shall be observed by the team members and the coaching staff. Roles and expectations for team membership and participation shall be stated as clearly as possible.
- J.** The commitment to remain free of alcohol, tobacco, and chemicals while a participant in high school athletics shall be an integral part of participation. The athlete's pledge to do so shall be of the highest regard. The failure to adhere to this pledge will result in severe consequences.