ELIGIBILITY AND TRANSFER POLICIES

Athletic eligibility of students transferring within the Wichita Falls Independent School District is determined by District policy in compliance with the U.I.L. eligibility guidelines. Listed below is a condensed version of local policy that regulates intra-district transfers. Detailed information may be found in Board Policy FDB (LOCAL).

High School

The Board of Trustees may deny eligibility to any student, but may not grant eligibility to any student in violation of rules as provided by the University Interscholastic League (U.I.L.) Constitution and Contest Rules.

The first time a student attends an in-season practice, the student shall have established eligibility in that high school for UIL purposes.

When a student transfers to another local school and wishes to participate in athletics, the coach at the new school shall initiate and obtain a Previous Athletic Participation Form (PAPF) signed by the coach at the previous school. If the previous coach indicates on the PAPF that he/she believes the student was recruited or transferred for “athletic reasons”, by UIL rule, the transfer is referred to the UIL District Executive Committee (DEC) for disposition. The DEC will determine if the transfer was motivated for “athletic reasons” or not.

If the DEC determines that the transfer was for “athletic reasons”, then the student shall be:

1. Totally ineligible for UIL competition for a period of 120 calendar days occurring within the school year from the date the student enrolled at the new school. “School Year” for the purpose of this policy shall mean from the first day the students are to attend school in the Fall semester until the day students are dismissed at the end of the Spring semester.
2. **Eligible for sub-varsity UIL competition for a period of 270 calendar days following the 120-day period.**

If, on the PAPF, the sending coach indicates he/she does not believe the transfer was for “athletic reasons” or if the DEC determines the transfer was not for “athletic reasons”, then the student shall be:

1. **Totally ineligible for UIL competition for a period of 15 calendar days from the date of enrollment at the new school.**
2. **Eligible only for sub-varsity competition for a period of one calendar year following the 15-day period.**

The eligibility of a student transferring to a magnet high school shall be governed in the same manner as in any other school within the District.

If a student moves from the city and returns, athletic eligibility will remain in the District high school where eligibility was last established.

When a student withdraws from his/her assigned school and enrolls in another district, the student forfeits his/her seat at the assigned campus. When a student re-enters the District, the student must submit a new Choice application in the Student Assignment Office for an assignment to a school.

A student who transfers to Harrell Center becomes ineligible to compete in U.I.L. activities while enrolled. If a student transfers back to his/her original campus, the student is ineligible for U.I.L. activities until he/she has attended one complete grade reporting period and meets the other requirements described in Board Policy FM (LOCAL).

A freshman (9th grade) student may compete at the varsity level in all sports except football. The physical maturity of ninth grade students is such that they should not be exposed to the contact ever present in football.
Junior High School

A junior high school student is eligible to participate in U.I.L. competition in the school in which an assignment has been made.

Refer to Subchapter D, Section 1400, Eligibility Requirements for Seventh and Eighth Grade Participants, in the Constitution and Contest Rules of the University Interscholastic League for more specific information.

RECRUITING

Both the UIL and the WFISD consider recruiting a very serious issue. Listed below are some excerpts from the Constitution and Contest Rules concerning recruiting:

1. Section 5 (bb) defines recruiting as: to encourage a student in any way to change schools for the purpose of participating in UIL activities at any grade level. It could include offering a student or the student's parent cash, waiver of tuition, board or lodging, transportation, promise of better conditions at the participant school or on its team, a job, or other valuable consideration to induce the student to enroll in a participant school.

2. Section 405: Recruiting is not only a violation by the student who has been recruited, but it is also a violation by the school and/or the school district who recruited the student. It is a violation to recruit at all grade levels.

3. Section 1203 (c): The district executive committee shall investigate efforts on the part of any school official or local fan to recruit players. Recruiting is a violation and may subject the school at fault to disqualification. Disqualification may be made by the committee after the school has been given an opportunity to be heard. A school in violation shall remain disqualified for the period of time specified.

Organized presentations to students and parents are allowed in an effort to encourage enrollment at a particular school (magnet tours, etc.). Prior to the Choice period, high school coaches will be permitted one visit per sport to each junior high campus to present information relative to his/her athletic program prior to the Choice period. These presentations must be supervised by the coach of the host campus during the athletic
class and not take instructional time from other classes. Presentations may be conducted during the fall semester only. Parents are welcome to attend all presentations.

Coaches may accept invitations to speak at non-school functions (i.e. civic organizations, businesses, etc.) to market/promote their program. Presentations in which pre-choice students are in attendance (banquets, pep rallies, classes, etc) must receive prior approval from the three campus athletic coordinators.

Visits to a student’s home, personal contact (written or verbal), negative comments regarding competing schools, and distribution of materials and/or invitations that are not available to all students are also considered not to be acceptable behavior for a district employee.

The first step in reporting a suspected recruiting violation is to complete and submit a request for a formal investigation of the alleged violation. Investigation/Complaint Forms may be obtained in the Athletic Office or the Student Assignment Office. Should an allegation be confirmed, the violation will be referred to the Director of Athletics for an Athletic Hearing.

The Director of Athletics will schedule an Athletic Hearing within ten (10) days of receiving the written report. The members of the hearing may include: the Director of Athletics, Student Assignment Coordinator, the three high school principals, the three campus coordinators, and the individual accused of the recruiting violation. The outcome of the Athletic Hearing will be reported to the Superintendent/Board of Trustees.

Consequences of recruiting violations:

District Personnel * 1st Offense Written reprimand and probation of one (1) year.
2nd Offense 1 year suspension from organized presentations for the coach and possibly the sport in question. Possible termination of coaching duties.
3rd Offense Termination of coaching duties.
Student  Students may lose their eligibility in all athletics if it is determined they were recruited to choose a school for athletic reasons.

Parent/Booster Club  Suspension of one calendar year from organized meetings, fund raising, and presentations for the sport and possibly barred from all WFISD athletic facilities during the period of suspension.

Role of Booster Clubs
Booster clubs are formed by school patrons to help enrich the school’s participation in extracurricular activities. It is a violation of the UIL athletic amateur rule for booster club funds to be used for non-school purposes. The fund-raising role of booster clubs is particularly crucial in today’s economic climate.

The majority of activities supported by booster clubs are related to UIL activities. Since UIL rules regulate what UIL participants, sponsors, and coaches may and may not accept, it is important that booster clubs are aware of these rules.

Relationship with the School
* The superintendent or a designee has approval authority over booster clubs and should
  be invited to all meetings.
* Booster clubs do not have authority to direct the duties of a school district employee. The schedule of contests, rules for participation, method of earning letters, and all other criteria dealing with interschool programs are under the jurisdiction of the local school administration.
* All meetings should be open to the public.
* Minutes should be taken at each meeting and kept on file at the school.
* School administration should keep booster clubs informed concerning all school activities.
Expenditure of Funds

* Booster club funds shall not be used to support athletic camps, clinics, private instruction, or any activity outside of the school.

* Booster groups or individuals may donate money or merchandise to the school with prior approval of the administration. These kinds of donations are often made to cover the cost of commercial transportation and to cover costs for out of town meals. It would be a violation for booster groups or individuals to pay for such costs directly.

* To avoid violation of the UIL athletic amateur rule, money given to a school cannot be earmarked for a particular expense. Booster clubs may make recommendations, but cash or other valuable consideration must be given to the school to use at its discretion.

* Coaches and directors of UIL academics, athletics, and fine arts may not accept a petty cash fund or a miscellaneous discretionary fund. All funds must be given to the school administrator and spent at the discretion of the school, with the approval of the school board.

* Coaches and directors of UIL academics, athletics, and fine arts may not accept more than $300 in money, product, or service from any source in recognition of or appreciation for coaching, directing, or sponsoring UIL activities. The $300 limit is cumulative for a calendar year and is not specific to any one particular gift. The district may pay a stipend (fixed at the beginning of the year) as part of the annual employment contract.

* Booster clubs cannot give anything to students, including awards. Check with school administrators before giving anything to a student, school sponsor, or coach. Schools must give prior approval for any banquet or get-together given for students.

* Individuals should be informed of the seriousness of violating the athletic amateur rule. The penalty to a student athlete is forfeiture of varsity athletic eligibility for one calendar year in that sport. Student athletes are prohibited from accepting valuable consideration for participation in school athletics (anything that is not given or offered to the entire student body on the same basis that it is given or offered to an athlete). Valuable consideration is defined as tangible property or service, including anything
that is wearable, useable, or saleable.

* Homemade “spirit signs” made from paper and normal supplies a student purchases for school use may be placed on students’ lockers or in their yards. Trinkets and food items cannot be attached. Yard signs made of commercial quality wood, plastic, etc., must be purchased or made by the individual players’ parents or returned after the season.

* For purposes of competing in an athletic contest the school may provide meals for out of town trips only. If the school does not pay for meals, then the individual parents need to purchase their own child’s food. Parents may purchase anything they wish for their own child, but may not provide food or other items of valuable consideration for their child’s teammates.

* Parties for athletes are governed by the following State Executive Committee interpretation of Section 441 of the Constitution and Contest Rules:

Valuable Consideration School Teams and Athletes May Accept:

1. Pre-Season. School athletic teams may be given no more than one pre-season meal per sport, per school year, such as a fish fry, ice cream supper, etc., provided it is approved by the school and given by a non-profit organization (usually the booster club) before the team plays its first contest. It may be given after a scrimmage.

2. Post-Season. School athletic teams are limited to no more than one post-season meal or banquet per sport, per school year, and it must be given by a non-profit organization and approved by the school. Banquet favors or gifts are considered valuable consideration and are a violation if they are given to a student athlete at any time.

3. Other. At any time school athletic teams and athletes may be invited to and may attend functions where free admission is offered, or where refreshments and/or meals are served, provided all students from that high school are invited to attend for the same
fee and on the same basis as the athletes or the athletic team. Athletes or athletic teams may be recognized at these functions, but may not accept anything that is not given to all other students.

Valuable Consideration School Teams and Athletes Cannot Accept:
Parties provided by parents or other students strictly for an athletic team, or anything that is not given, or offered, to the entire student body on the same basis that is given to or offered to an athlete.

Local school district superintendents have the discretion to allow student athletes to accept, from their fellow students, small ‘goodie bags’ that contain candy, cookies, or other items that have no intrinsic value and are not considered valuable consideration.

Gatherings of school athletes at parents’ or patrons’ home require each athlete to contribute equally to any food or refreshment. The burden of proof will be on the athletes if these occasions are questioned. Certainly, no sports instruction or practice is permitted during these gatherings.

Fund Raising
* Funds are to be used to support school activities. To provide such funding for non-school activities would violate UIL rules and the public trust through which funds are earned.
* Fund raising projects are subject to state law. Non-profit status may be obtained from the IRS.
* Community-wide sales campaigns should be coordinated through the school administration to minimize simultaneous sales campaigns.
* Sales campaigns should be planned carefully to insure that the projects provide dollar value items sold, and that most of the money raised stays at home; otherwise donations are often more rewarding than letting the major part of the money go to outside promoters.
* Fund raising activities should support the educational goals of the school and should not exploit students. Activities and projects should be investigated carefully before committing the school’s support
Written Policies

Booster clubs should develop and annually review policies to cover the following areas:

* How to plan and publicize meetings.
* Methods of financing the club; compliance with tax laws; administering funds; and method of bookkeeping.
* Election of officers.
* Taking, distributing, and filing minutes.
* Effective communication * press releases, etc.
* Proper interaction with fine arts directors and academic and athletic coaches through the lines of, guests, judges, etc.
* Plans to support the school authority as established by the school board.
* Sportsmanship code governing behavior of booster club members and fans at contests,
  treatment of officials regardless of success in competition, keeping the educational goals of competition at the forefront of all policies.