

Subchapter E:
HIGH SCHOOL SPIRIT

Section 1500: INTRODUCTION TO SPIRIT CONTESTS AND EVENTS

- (a) **PURPOSES OF HIGH SCHOOL SPIRIT.** The purpose of the spirit program for the member schools is:
- (1) to provide statewide spirit competitions and evaluations that foster high performance standards;
 - (2) to provide rules and regulations designed to promote the health and safety of all participants;
 - (3) to assist, advise and aid the member schools in organizing and conducting interschool spirit;
 - (4) to devise and prepare eligibility rules that will equalize and stimulate wholesome competition between schools of similar size, and reinforce the curriculum;
 - (5) to regulate competition so that students, schools and communities can secure the greatest educational, social, recreational and aesthetic benefits from the contests;
 - (6) to reinforce the concept to all member schools that spirit is an integral part of the educational program;
 - (7) to promote good sportsmanship and fair play in all contests;
 - (8) to promote among the participants, schools and communities a spirit of friendly rivalry and a respect for the rules; and
 - (9) to forward the concept of accepting decisions of contest officials without protest and treating contest officials as so-partners in the educational process of competition.

Section 1501: SPIRIT CONTEST ETHICS CODE

The Spirit Code carries the force of rule. Member school districts, member schools and/or covered school district personnel or students who violate any of the provisions of these codes will be subject to penalty.

- (a) **THE SPIRIT CODE.** The general Spirit Code means to:
- (1) Participate in the spirit of fairness and sportsmanship, observing all rules, both in letter and intent.
 - (2) Coach and sponsor the teams and individuals without resorting to unethical tactics, trickery which attempts to skirt the rules, or any

unfair tactic which detracts from sound educational principles.

- (3) Accept decisions of contest and school officials without protest and without questioning their honesty or integrity, and extend protection and courtesy to contest officials from participants, school personnel and spectators remembering the contest officials are guest.
 - (4) Win without boasting and lose without bitterness. Victory is important, but the most important thing in competition is striving to excel and the positive feelings it fosters between those who play fair and have no excuse when they lose. The development of positive human relations should be stressed in all competition.
 - (5) Remember that conduct that berates, intimidates, or threatens competitors, has no place in interscholastic activities.
- (b) **SCHOOL OFFICIALS.**
- (1) Provide support for students and coaches for implementing contests and events;
 - (2) create a climate of professional concern to assure that contests and events are carried on with sound educational qualities as the uppermost priority; and
 - (3) strive to assure that coaches are aware of and observe the letter and intent of all UIL rules and regulations.
- (c) **CONTEST OFFICIALS.**
- (1) administer and adjudicate spirit contests and events with a spirit of courtesy and cooperation among all participants; and
 - (2) see that spirit contests and events are conducted with discipline and decorum, maintaining both the spirit and intent of the rules and regulations.
- (d) **COACHES.** The code for spirit coaches includes the principles described in Subsection (a). Further, the coach's code includes:
- (1) Being aware of, understanding and following all rules governing the competition for which the coach is responsible;
 - (2) treating participants based on what is best for the education, general welfare and health of the student;
 - (3) professional loyalty to other coaches;

- (4) not removing a team from a contest as a protest;
 - (5) adhering to practice regulations;
 - (6) adhering to policies that do not force students to specialize or restrict them from participation in other activities;
 - (7) avoiding any coaching practice that would endanger the welfare or safety of any participant;
 - (8) emphasizing the academic progress of all participants by a regular, documented check of their academic standing;
 - (9) utilizing the best and most current teaching, coaching and training methods through affiliation with professional associations and publications;
 - (10) abstaining from any practice that solicits teachers to modify a participant student's grade for eligibility purposes;
 - (11) avoiding any actions that encourage, condone or tolerate the use of performance enhancing drugs by any student-participant; and
 - (12) emphasizing a chemical awareness program that informs and educates students of the damaging effects of anabolic steroids and other illegal drugs.
- (e) STUDENTS.
- (1) Know and respect the rules and regulations pertaining to participation in any UIL spirit competition or event;
 - (2) maintain a sense of the educational purpose of participating in spirit contests and events, keeping uppermost in mind the two-fold benefit of self-gratification of participation in an activity as well as the representation of one's school community, and;
 - (3) remember that conduct that berates, intimidates, or threatens competitors has no place in interscholastic activities.

Section 1502: GENERAL REGULATIONS

- (a) SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY. Schools shall participate in UIL Spirit competition and events based on assignment to conferences in even numbered years.
- (b) Schools shall abide by rules in the *Constitution*, by rules in the "Official Notices" column of *The Leaguer*, by regulations issued by the UIL office in the UIL Spirit Manual, and other official notices from the UIL office. Where any term or section of the contest rules or the UIL Spirit Manual is found to be inconsistent with the *Constitution*, the *Constitution* shall prevail and apply, and the remaining terms

and sections of the contest rules and/or the UIL Spirit Manual shall continue in effect.

- (c) STUDENT ELIGIBILITY. Eligibility regulations as outlined in the *Constitution and Contest Rules*, Subchapter M, Section 400, and Subchapter D, Section 1500 shall apply to UIL spirit competitions and events. The superintendent or designee shall certify the eligibility of participants at the time of their entry into the event.
- (d) FORFEITURE. In the event an ineligible student participates in any spirit competition or event, knowingly or unknowingly, the minimum penalty shall be forfeiture of the ratings and awards.

Section 1503: HEALTH AND SAFETY

- (a) All cheer and spirit performances at any UIL activity shall be in accordance with safety standards as prescribed by the *National Federation High School Spirit Handbook*. Cheerleading and UIL spirit coaches are required to complete a course regarding safety/risk minimization for cheerleading and present proof of course completion to the school district.
- (b) Concussion Management Protocol. At all UIL activities (including practices and contests), including cheerleading and UIL spirit, schools shall implement and follow a Concussion Management Protocol as prescribed by Texas Education Code Section 38 Subchapter D.
- (c) All coaches shall annually complete the UIL Rules Compliance Program prescribed by the UIL.
- (d) The names of coaches who complete the UIL Rules Compliance Program will be kept on file by the school.