



UNIVERSITY CHARTER SCHOOL

ATHLETICS

Student Athlete Handbook

2022-2023

University Charter School Athletic Mission Statement

University Charter School believes in the importance of athletic activities to enhance and strengthen student lives. In conjunction with academic studies it serves to enhance team building, leadership, and communication skills. In addition, athletic activities encourage a sense of community throughout the school. University Charter School strongly feels that the students' main objectives are to meet or exceed the high academic standards set forth and to be an athlete second.

Athletic Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility conditions are covered in the University Charter School policies, specifically from policy #6205 "Athletic and Academic Competition Policy", which describes these conditions:

Athletic Eligibility Requirements

While all students are encouraged to pursue athletics, University Charter School has a set of conditions that need to be met in order for a student to be eligible to participate. These conditions form the basis of Eligibility Requirements, and are meant to ensure all Students, Parents, Coaches, Athletic Directors, and school community enjoy consistent access to, and expectations from, the athletic programs offered.

The conditions under which students are considered eligible to participate in athletic programs offered are as follows:

1. Physical Examinations

A student must have a physical examination completed by a physician certifying the student is fully able to compete in athletics. The physicals will be valid for 365 days. The student athlete must submit the physical form to the Coach, Athletic Director or athletic administrative assistant. The student SHALL NOT PARTICIPATE in any TRYOUT, practice session or contests until the completed form has been turned into the team Coach, Athletic Director, or athletic administrative assistant.

2. Athletic Handbook Forms/AHSAA Forms/Participation Fee

Prior to any student participating in any tryout, they must also sign all appropriate athletic forms from the UCS Athletic Form Packet. Yearly forms to complete are physical, concussion information, consent, permission to treat/emergency contact info, UCS student athlete handbook form. On a one time basis we will need a copy of the student's birth certificate and a certificate showing completion of the NFHS sportsmanship course. Finally, each student must have his pay for participation fee taken care of as he/she will not receive their game uniform prior to payment.

3. Permission to Treat

University Charter School contracts the services of certified Athletic Trainers (ATC) to serve our student athletes. The *Permission to Treat* document must be signed and on file before the ATC may treat the student athlete, and this must be resigned annually.

4. Tryouts

There may be tryouts for each sport. Roster sizes will be dictated by state and conference rules in addition to the coach's personal preference. If tryouts are held, students are strongly encouraged to be at each tryout session deemed eligible to make a team. Only students with a doctor's note will be permitted to tryout after the tryout deadline (within 7 school days of the missed tryout).

Only students who are currently enrolled at University Charter School may attend tryouts.

5. Academic Eligibility

University Charter School is dedicated to the academic success of our student athletes as well as preparing them for post-secondary education. The following guidelines will be followed for students to be eligible for extracurricular athletic activities:

A student must meet the minimum academic standards as defined by the AHSAA Academic Rule to be deemed an eligible athlete. Students must meet ALL AHSAA Eligibility Rules to be deemed an eligible athlete.

A student who is not academically eligible at the beginning of the semester is not eligible at any time during the semester. Likewise, a student who is academically eligible at the beginning of a semester remains academically eligible throughout the semester. Students who are identified as ineligible are not permitted to tryout, attend team meetings or sit on the team benches during contests, but may attend practices if allowed by the coach and AD.

Although athletic eligibility will be semester based, the academic progress of student athletes will be monitored on 9 week terms. All students with a D or an F in any of their classes will be placed on academic probation. Any student on academic probation who wishes to remain on the team will be encouraged to attend study sessions at a time that can be agreed upon between the parent and the teacher, the time should not to interfere with practice or games.

Extenuating circumstances will be decided collaboratively by the Athletic Director and appropriate Principal, and Head of School.

6. Attendance at Athletic Practice Sessions and Contests

Students are expected to be in attendance during both contests and practice sessions. If a student is not in attendance due to illness, injury or other required school or family commitment, the student should make prior arrangements with the coach for an excused absence.

Students will be expected to attend all practices which can include Saturdays and school vacation periods that may be occurring during the specific sport season. These practices will be addressed at the beginning of the sports season with the student.

A participant who fails to attend a regularly scheduled practice session or contest and receives an unexcused absence, may be withheld from the next scheduled contest. If an additional unexcused absence occurs, the participant may be dismissed from the team for the remainder of the sport season.

Excused absences may also affect a student athlete's playing time as new plays, stunts and formations may have been missed.

The game and practice schedules (including expectations for potential playoff schedules) will be communicated to athletes and families prior to the tryout period if tryouts exist, or prior to the first practice if tryouts do not exist.

7. AHSAA Transfer Policy

In accordance with Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) policy, A student who is enrolled in one school then leaves and enrolls in another school at any time after beginning the seventh grade is a transfer. A student who attends a school outside of his/her home school district must attend that school for one full calendar year in order to establish athletic eligibility. As a member of the AHSAA, University Charter School students will be affected by this policy.

All students are eligible at any school upon initial entry into seventh grade. After initial entry into seventh grade, the above mentioned transfer criteria will apply. Please contact the Athletic Director for more information regarding an appeal to the AHSAA if you think an exception to this rule may apply.

Athletic Boosters

University Charter School has an All Sports Athletics Booster Club that exists to serve and expand the campus athletic community. Different levels of membership generate varying levels of benefits, but their organization (which is a part of the campus Athletic Department) seeks to serve all student-athletes across the wide range of opportunities available to them. If you are interested in serving with their numerous committees and volunteer opportunities please contact the Athletic Director.

Playing Time

One of the most emotional issues surrounding an athlete's involvement in athletics is playing time. Although attendance, attitude, commitment, effort and ability all play a role in determining playing time, it is ultimately the coach's decision. It is the responsibility of each coach to decide who starts a contest, what position the athletes play and how long they should play. All students, parents and community members are asked to respect this model and the coach's decision. Playing time is not up for discussion even in scheduled meetings.

Inappropriate Actions, Behavior and Conduct

The Coach, Principals, Head of Schools, or Athletic Director reserve the right to deny athletic participation to any student whose inappropriate actions or conduct are not specifically covered in this handbook or individual team rules.

Unsportsmanlike conduct, insubordination, inappropriate behavior/conduct in school or at home or away contests, etc. are not representative of University Charter School students, teachers or

families and will not be tolerated.

University Charter School Teachers are committed to being role models for our student athletes, and, the community we service. Our expectation is that all parents, coaches and community members conduct themselves in a similar manner. Exemplary actions, behavior and conduct are expected from all parties in attendance.

The “Community Conduct Policy” #1005 specifically notes:

The following guidelines should be followed during all campus interactions, including extracurricular activities:

- *Profanity of any type will not be tolerated during individual conferences, other interactions, or telephone conversations.*
- *Personal remarks that are or can be perceived as disparaging or negative in nature will not be tolerated during individual conferences, other interactions, or telephone conversations.*
- *Threats or physical violence of any nature will not be tolerated.*
- *Statements made on social media or blog sites of a negative nature against Head of Schools, Principals, Teachers, Staff, or Board Members will not be tolerated.*

Athletic Grievance Policy

All problems, concerns or complaints must be addressed in private during a scheduled meeting that does not interfere with regular practice or games. Concerns should not be addressed in front of the other student athletes and must first be addressed to the coach at an agreed upon time and location. If necessary, responding to concerns and complaints will follow the guidelines as outlined in Board Policy #2040 – *Responding to Concerns and Complaints*. If further necessary, all formal grievances must proceed in the manner outlined in the existing Board Policy #2030 – *Student and Parents Grievance Policy*.

Uniforms and Equipment

Student athletes are responsible for the care, security and use of uniforms and equipment issued to them.

Athletic participants will be responsible to pay the replacement fee for uniform and equipment items that are deemed abused or not returned. Student athletes will be withheld from athletics in succeeding seasons until this obligation is met.

Restitution Policy

A student found to be responsible for the loss, destruction, or damage of school equipment, supplies, uniforms, or property shall make restitution in full to the school. If a student fails to make restitution as required they will not be permitted to participate in future athletic activities.

The school reserves the right to withhold transcripts for transfer or graduation purposes until payment is made.

Travel and Transportation

As described in the current Transportation Policy #3120:

Athletes are not permitted to travel with other students to practice, contests or team meetings. Students desiring to travel with other parents/legal guardians to practice, contests or team meetings may do so only after written permission has been submitted by their own parent/legal guardian to the coach. Coaches will provide parents/legal guardians with expected arrival times for practice, contests and meetings. It is expected that parents/legal guardians will respect the coaches' time and be prompt in picking up their children. Coaches are expected to stay with students no more than twenty minutes past the anticipated arrival time that was given to the parents/legal guardians.

***Please note that student athletes are not permitted to ride with coaches in coaches' personal vehicles regardless of circumstance. In the event that transportation is provided by University Charter School, only students who have turned in the transportation permission slip will be permitted to ride. Students authorized to ride in transportation provided by UCS will be expected to follow all UCS policies in reference to student code of conduct and behavior.*

Game Day Dress Code

Athletic teams and club members (e.g. Robotics, Musical, and Science Olympiad) may dress up or wear team shirts with school uniform bottoms, on HOME game days or event days. AWAY game or event days will be treated as regular uniform days.

Boys: Dress pants, dress shirt with collar, one tie, belt, dress shoes and socks. Please no tennis shoes or shirts.

Girls: Knee length skirt or dress, dress pants (corduroy is okay with no back pockets), closed toe/closed heel shoes. All shirts must be at the minimum collar bone level. All tops must have sleeves.

It is the discretion of the coach or club advisor as to whether the team will dress up or wear a common team shirt before a competition or event. Team shirts must meet other requirements for appropriate attire (e.g. must have distinctive sleeves). Any non-uniform items worn must meet the non-uniform policy guidelines. Student Athletes may choose to dress up on game days if granted permission by the coach.

If the guidelines are not followed the entire team will lose the ability to dress up on game days. Please note that athletic uniforms and attire may not be worn to school on game days.

Emergency Action and Inclement Weather Plans

The school policy covering Inclement Weather and emergency action plans regarding Athletic events can be found in Policy #3015:

University Charter School creates and maintains action plans to clearly prepare Athletic Trainers, coaches, administrators, spectators, and players for various emergency plans. If you wish to see a copy of these plans please contact the Athletic Director.

NCAA Eligibility Center Information

Any student athlete planning to enroll in college as a freshman wishing to participate in Division I or Division II athletics must be certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. Students should begin the certification process when they are in their junior year at www.eligibilitycenter.org. Students should also be registered to take the ACT or SAT as a junior. Students may use the code “9999” to have their official ACT or SAT scores sent directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center. For additional information, including high school academic requirements, please visit www.eligibilitycenter.org.

Student Athlete Transportation

Student athletes are expected to travel with the team to a contest and return with the team on the bus when provided. I understand when signing the Student Transportation Permission Slip/Transportation Waiver form, I am acknowledging that all rules and policies apply. I understand that inappropriate student behavior will be handled by the school personnel in the same manner as all other student behavior and that privilege of riding this bus may be suspended or lost.

I also understand and acknowledge that students must have the prior approval of the coach/AD if they are not riding the bus or with a Driver Volunteer to or from an athletic event. The coach must personally release the student to the parent or parent designee after the contest. With the coaches' approval, a student may travel with his/her parent or the parent of a teammate if there is advance consent provided in writing. Students will not be released to another student for transportation. This information is applicable to UCS or Booster Club field trips, sporting events, and other school related functions and remains relevant whether it is a school owned bus or a chartered motor coach.

Additional rules specific to the activity bus

- There will be no excessively loud noise on the bus, and no shouting out the window
- No food or beverages with the exception of water will be allowed on the bus, unless permission is granted by the coach or bus driver
- Cleats and spikes are not permitted to be worn on the bus
- Keep heads, hands and feet to yourself on the bus
- Keep aisle open and unobstructed

