



Statement of Philosophy

for

Extracurricular Programs

Lake Travis ISD extracurricular programs are a vital and vibrant part of the educational experience for many students in our district. As we continue to experience growth that will result in our soon becoming a UIL Class AAAAA school district, we are faced with the challenge of creating conditions and understandings inside and outside of the classroom that are aligned with the Board of Trustees adopted *Core Commitments*.

This *Statement of Philosophy* is written with an understanding and deep appreciation for the LTISD students, staff, parents and community members who expect excellence in all District programs, and give unselfishly of their time and energy toward that goal.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the administration, please accept a thank you and our sincere request that as we continue to work together, the *Statement of Philosophy* will be the hallmark of our collective investment on behalf of the LTISD students who participate in extracurricular programs across the district!

D. Rockwell “Rocky” Kirk, Ed.D.

Statement of Philosophy

LTISD Extracurricular Programs

Any school district, worthy of the confidence and investment of its community, must reflect authenticity in its educational priorities. Simply stated, this means that our *academic* programs must hold first priority as we direct the energy, focus and resources of the district on behalf of our students. On occasion, schools are criticized for overemphasizing extracurricular programs—and in some cases the criticism is legitimate. However, most often, extra-curricular programs receive much more media attention than a school system's academic programs that may be equally successful, thus creating conditions for misperception. So, what is the Lake Travis ISD's philosophy on extracurricular programs, and specifically, what emphasis and support do they deserve?

The District knows well—through day-to-day experience and research to back it up, that students who are involved in extracurricular activities are generally: 1) more successful academically; 2) more engaged in the broader educational experiences of their school; and 3) learn to invest their own time, talents and energy on behalf of endeavors that require sacrifice, discipline and teamwork—all beneficial lifelong values. Simply stated, academic and extracurricular programs are not mutually exclusive. Yes, academics must have first priority, but both programs can and should complement each other. When the proper balance and relationship between the two exists, wonderful things can happen for students.

Lake Travis ISD is fortunate to be able to offer a variety of extracurricular programs, each with unique characteristics—and each committed to the highest ideals and standards of educational value to the students they serve. LTISD extracurricular programs will be viable, healthy, relevant and successful in direct proportion to the commitment of LTISD staff, parents and community to participate consistently within the following context:

All sponsors, coaches, directors, boosters, parents, administrators, counselors, support staff or community members, in order to be directly involved or associated with one or more extracurricular programs in LTISD, are expected to personalize and embody the following standards:

- I will consider the *physical, mental and emotional well-being* of each *student* to be my *first priority*, and I will defer to this priority when considering the implication for the short, mid and long-term success of the program. Students are people first, rightly possessing an inherent expectation that they be treated fairly, with dignity and in a manner that reflects personal and professional integrity by the adults in their lives.
- I am in a *service* role. I am here because of the student participants; they are not here because of me. As such, I must reflect through actions, words and attitude that I am *servicing* them through a passion I have for the extracurricular program with which I am associated.
- No *individual* is bigger than the program. Simply stated, without exception, *my interests take second place* to the overarching interest and health of the extracurricular program.
- My association with the program *honors* the true purpose of the program and *advances* the *educational commitments* of the school and the school system. My actions, attitudes and behaviors support the philosophy, values and character of the school district and reflect with clarity that I do not distract from or work in opposition to the greater mission of the district.
- My association with the program provides opportunities for me to *build* strong, lasting *relationships* with many people—and especially my colleagues in the profession and/or the volunteers with whom I associate. At times this will require me to teach, mentor and guide—at other times I must be willing to learn, grow and follow.
- I will commit to *excellence in my assignment*. I will devote my time, energy and intellect to being an exemplary role model for the young people with whom I am entrusted. As an employee I will strive to *grow* in my professional expertise so that I am a powerful, positive contributor to the success of the program. Whether an employee or volunteer, I will reflect *honor, service* and *integrity* in my efforts on behalf of the program and the District to whom it belongs.