

WILMINGTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



PARENT/ATHLETE MANUAL

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1. Mission, Purpose and Competitive Philosophy

Wilmington Christian School provides a distinctively Christian, innovative education that effectively develops Godly influencers who are well prepared for life after high school and who impact the culture for Christ.

Our mission is to vigorously pursue athletic excellence:

So that we positively influence the culture of WCS.

So that we develop lifelong leaders of Christian character.

So that we glorify God.

Although it would be impossible to cover every possible scenario in this parent/athlete manual, our mission, purpose, and philosophy guide us through every situation and help us to make the most appropriate decisions along the way.

2. Athlete Code of Conduct

Our athlete code of conduct consists of sixteen characteristics of a successful athlete. These characteristics are supported by bible verses, and are in line with our mission, purpose, and philosophy. The purpose of the code of conduct is not to catch athletes doing something wrong, but to help guide them toward the direction of exemplifying someone who competes according TO God's Word, BY God's power, and FOR God's glory. It is expected that each athlete and a parent sign a copy of the code of conduct before and return it to the coach before being allowed to compete in a game.

3. Sportsmanship

It is important that all athletes and parents demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models. Sportsmanship is an overt display of respect for the rules of sport and for all players, coaches, officials, and fans. It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. Parents must never use vulgar language. Parents must never enter the field/court of play. Parents are expected to immediately comply with either officials or administration if sportsmanship is not being demonstrated. Officials are an important part of the game. Officials follow code of ethics. It is also important to understand that they are a necessary part of the game. A contest cannot be played without them. Home schools do not choose the officials. The sports assignor assigns all officials and neither team has control of which officials are assigned. While you may not agree with all their calls, please do not harass, or taunt them. It is also important to remember that officials oversee the contest and possess complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. The administration of the home team also has complete authority to remove unruly spectators. It is important to note that a player or coach or spectator who is ejected from a game will be suspended for the remainder of the contest and must sit out the next game, as well. The WCS administration reserves the right to review all infractions and take further disciplinary action if deemed necessary. Parents must refrain from providing instruction/criticism to any student other than their own

4. Communication and Dispute Resolution

Parents should not confront a coach before, during, or after a game or practice as these are often busy and emotional times. Parents and athletes are advised to wait 24 hours and then schedule a meeting with the coach if there is a dispute that needs to be resolved. The preferred order of dispute resolution is that the athlete first discuss the issue with the coach in a private setting. If the athlete and the coach are unable to resolve an issue, then the parent should schedule a meeting with the coach. If there is no resolution, then the athletic director and school administration may become involved. Parents must refrain from discussing playing time, team strategy or play calling, or the performance of other student athletes with the coach.

Open communication between coach, player, and parent is necessary to enable the smooth operation of an athletic team. Coaches are asked to use Team App, or group email lists for players and parents, or an occasional hand-out, to distribute general team information. Communication regarding the specific situation of an individual may require a personal phone call or face-to-face meeting involving the coach,

player, and/or parent. With a focus on professionalism and keeping the proper adult/student boundary in place, coaches are asked to refrain from regular cell phone contact with student-athletes in the form of a phone call or text unless critically necessary. Likewise, it is requested that if a coach chooses to provide a personal cell phone number to members of his/her team including parents, then the coach should only be contacted via the cell phone number in the event of an absolutely necessary situation. Cooperation on the part of the coach, student-athlete, and parent in the use of personal cell phone contacts will assure that proper decorum is maintained. Student athletes who are aware of unavoidable conflicts with the game and/or practice schedules for his/her sport are expected to use face-to-face communication with the coach to discuss any conflicts.

5. Playing Time, Participation, Tryouts and Cuts

It is important to understand that participation on an athletic team at WCS is a privilege and not a right. Being on and maintaining one's membership on the team means accepting all the responsibilities of an athlete. However, unlike recreation or intramural teams, equal or guaranteed playing time does not exist. To excel as a team and as players, a coach will use players best suited to the conditions or demands of the sport at that time.

While our goal is to promote the greatest athletic participation possible, it may be necessary in some sports at the varsity and JV level to cut players from a team. This may occur due to limitations of our facilities, regulations specific to some sports, and other factors. Each coach has the responsibility and authority for selecting his/her team. The criteria for selecting the team are developed by the coach. Middle School athletes will not be cut. The administration may choose to have a "B" or "C" team or may ask middle school students to participate in another sport to balance the teams.

It is also important to remember that there are no guarantees. Players from the previous year's team, for example, do not automatically have the same position the following year. Having been a member of a team during the previous year or even being a senior does not ensure that an athlete will make the varsity team. Parents should expect that every candidate is treated fairly and given every consideration.

6. Captains

Each head coach is responsible for determining the way to select a captain(s) for his/her team. There are numerous ways that coaches will use to select captain(s) for a team. Some coaches will select team captains from the pool of returning players based on demonstrated leadership skills, athletic proficiency, and/or those who have earned the respect of his/her peers, while others will select captains solely based on a vote of team members. Coaches may also choose to rotate captains on a game by game basis. A coach is encouraged to share his/her method of selection with his/her team and parent group, but an athletes ability to effectively demonstrate the WCS Athlete Code of Conduct is the foundation from which all captains are selected.

7. Scheduling and Attendance Policies for Practice and Games

For varsity and JV teams while school is in session, practice sessions on Monday through Friday must not exceed two hours including film time, devotional time, or other team building events. During fall preseason, or days when school is not in session including weekends and holiday breaks, coaches can practice longer than 2 hours, and may start at the time they desire. There are no practices on Sundays. Varsity and JV practices during normal school days will generally be from 3:15pm to 5:15pm. However, varsity and JV coaches have the discretion start their practices later than 3:15 pm while school is in session. In sports where it is necessary to conduct back-to-back practices due to lack of facilities, the last practice session must be completed by 9:00 PM.

Middle School practices will only be on Monday through Thursday from 2pm to 3:15pm. Parents should expect to pick up their middle school athlete closer to 3:25 as they will return to the locker room to get their belongings before going to the carpool line. Athletics at the middle school level are considered pass/fail, and all normal school attendance policies apply to middle school athletics.

Middle school teams may have games on Friday. Varsity and JV teams may have games on Saturday.

Varsity and Middle School coaches and assistant coaches are expected to be the first to arrive, remain with the athletes, and be the last to leave the practice/game session. At no time are athletes to practice by themselves or be left unsupervised. Coaches remain with students until everyone has a ride home.

A student who has an early dismissal/ late arrival from school may not practice or play on that day unless he/she completes 4 periods of class time **or** submits an acceptable parent's or doctor excuse as determined by the principal or the athletic director. School field trips will be treated differently as those may be longer than 4 periods of the day.

8. Post/Game Practice Responsibilities

Student-athletes waiting and/or loitering in the lobby or outside pose potential problems. Risk of injury and property damage can possibly result from unsupervised gatherings. In part to address this issue, the coach will be responsible for supervising their respected area while athletes are present. And securing all equipment, locker rooms, fields, and gyms.

The athlete is responsible for the arrangement of transportation after practices and games in advance. Leaving the building and grounds within 15 minutes after the conclusion of a contest or practice session. If an athlete is late being picked up from away games consistently, the athlete will not be allowed to go to away contests.

Practice sessions are normally closed to spectators. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher's classroom and there is real, quality instruction taking place. Interruptions and interference to an athlete's concentration and focus in practice cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in a classroom setting.

Practice will not be held when school is dismissed early due to inclement weather. Practice may or may not be held when school is not in session due to inclement weather.

9. Injuries and Training Room

The training room is for everyone's safe use and convenience and is the direct responsibility of the athletic trainer. Students should sign-in whenever they intend to use the training room facility and should always use the equipment in the instructed manner, as well as in a safe and orderly fashion. Any questions about the safe and proper use of equipment in the training area should be directed to the athletic trainer. All injuries must be reported to the athletic trainer. The athletic trainer is the one best qualified to deal with injuries; he/she must also keep a written account of injuries for insurance purposes. All doctors' notes should be given to the athletic trainer as a matter of record keeping. Any documentation for injury rehabilitation should be given to the athletic trainer so that he/she can supervise and/or administer the appropriate prescribed activity. As per DIAA regulation, students who are physically unable to participate in athletics for five (5) consecutive days due to illness/injury will not be permitted to resume participation with their team without a written note from a certified physician stating that he/she has been cleared to participate. Athletes are responsible for letting their coach know if they are going to be late for practice because of treatment for an injury.

10. Academic Eligibility

Students will have to attain a 2.0 GPA to be eligible to participate in Athletics. All grades and courses taken will be counted towards the GPA. Student receiving an "F" for the marking period in any subject will not be eligible to compete for a minimum of the first week of the next marking period. Participation may resume any time after the week period once the teacher, AD, and coach determines that the student is doing passing work. Students receiving a failing grade in two (2) successive marking periods will not be eligible to participate, regardless of GPA.

11. Eighth Graders on Varsity or JV Teams

The faculty, coaches and administration feel strongly that eighth grade students should compete with their peers on middle school athletic teams due to the social, emotional and physical aspects of sports, however at times it is necessary for 8th grade students to compete at the high school level. This would only happen because the 8th grader is talented enough that they would make a significant contribution to the varsity team, or they are needed to fill out numbers to have a JV or Varsity team. Students must understand that being offered an opportunity to try out for a varsity team is not a guarantee that they will be selected to stay with the varsity team for the season. According to DIAA rules, once an eighth-grade student participates in a recorded game with an upper school team, he/she may not participate with the middle school team in the same sport that season. The process for trying out for varsity or JV as an eighth grader is by invitation only and will not happen without the full support of the parents/guardians. The length of a tryout may be as long, or short as necessary to determine the proper outcome. If the student-athlete does not get asked to stay with the varsity team for the season, he/she will then return to the middle school sports program to continue to hone his/her skills. Eighth graders who are offered a varsity roster position, and their family must be willing to make a full commitment to the schedule of a varsity level athlete for the entire sport season. This includes games/contests/practices that run later into the afternoon/evening hours and may include weekends, school vacations, holidays, and days that school is not in regular session, as well as fall sports pre-season that begins prior to the start of the school year and participation in all post-season competition/state tournament events. As the academic component in the life of all student-athletes take priority over the athletic component, school scheduled activities such as field trips will be considered an excused absence from the sport commitment. Eighth grade students selected for a varsity team will take part in a study hall in when middle school peers head to practice each day at 2:00 pm. Students who transfer to WCS as 8th graders will not be able to play varsity/jv sports, as the DIAA requires that 8th graders who play varsity/jv must have been enrolled in the school as 7th graders.

12. Changing Teams

Whether by being cut, by quitting, or by being dismissed, an athlete's membership on a team may be altered. Any player cut from a team during tryouts is free to try out for another team, with that coach's approval. Any player quitting a team must get the approval of the first and second coach, and the athletic director before joining a second team. All obligations such as returning equipment must be completed prior to joining a second team. Any player dismissed from a team must get the approval of the athletic director before joining another team. The athletic director will mediate all problems when an athlete changes team.

13. Discipline

At times, it may be necessary for discipline to be used as a method of helping athletes develop. It is important to note that in educational based athletics, there is a strong connection between what happens during the school day and the impact to athletics. Therefore, issues that generate during the school day may have both school, and athletic ramifications. As well, issues that generate during athletics may result in both athletic, and administrative consequences. The school administration and the athletic director will work together on these issues and make sure that student athletes understand the outcomes from both.

Athletes receiving individual infractions without warranting detention may face consequences for each infraction as determined by the coach.

If a student has accumulated enough infraction points to warrant a detention, they are not permitted to practice or play on the day of detention and may have additional consequences at the discretion of the coach depending on what the practice and game schedule is for the week. Receiving additional detentions (2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc) will result in additional consequences including missing additional practices, additional games, and may warrant suspension from the team based on the severity of the situation.

If a student is suspended from school, the coach and the athletic director will work with the principal to determine the right athletic outcome. It is not uncommon for athletes who are suspended from school to miss multiple practices and multiple games and have some level of suspension from the team.

The discipline for unexcused absences from practice or a game will be determined by the head coach in conjunction with the athletic director and the principal, particularly if the athlete was also absent from school.

Athletes are expected to make the team a priority. Parents and athletes should not put coaches in a position to determine what is “acceptable” or “unacceptable” reasons for missing practice or games. Known conflicts with the schedule should be communicated as early as possible. Based on each individual situation, coaches have the authority to prescribe additional conditioning, suspension from practices, or suspension from games if students are unable to make games and practices the appropriate priority.

14. Club and Travel Teams, and Additional Workouts

WCS endorses athletes seeking extra development through club or travel teams, or individual coaches and trainers. It is suggested that these be minimized while an athlete is in season, but in all cases, it is expected that the sport at WCS be the priority.

15. Athletic Insurance

If you need Health Insurance for your athlete, you should contact the business office and they will provide you with the appropriate forms you will need.

16. Physicals

An athlete must have an annual sports physical dated **after April 1** for the up coming school year. **Your doctor must complete a DIAA physical form** to be eligible to play in compliance with our state organization. All forms must be on file with the school nurse and athletic trainer before an athlete may participate in any way on a sports team, this includes practice. Forms are available at www.wcswarriorssports.com, or go to the Board of Education for Delaware Website, then on go to DIAA, then Forms.

17. Travel Policy

Traveling in WCS vans is the preferred method and will always be the first option. Buses will be used in a limited capacity as the second option. When possible, a team will have two vans available, but based on away game schedules there may be times when only one van is available. When necessary, student drivers may drive to and from away games with coach approval. Student drivers may only transport siblings to and from games. When necessary, parents may transport athletes to and from games in their personal vehicles. When necessary, coaches may transport athletes to and from games in their personal vehicles. Vans driven to games will return to school to drop off athletes after the game. Athletes should text their parents to make sure they are waiting for them at WCS when the vans arrive. Parents are allowed to pick up at athletes at away games but must be on time, as we will not leave students at an away site. Parents, students, and coaches must always be in close communication with travel plans and the coach must approve all travel plans outside of a WCS van or bus. All drivers of WCS vans must have passed a motor vehicle background check.

18. Guidelines for Athletic Awards

Athletic department awards are presented to varsity athletes who complete the season in good standing. A varsity letter is presented to an athlete who, as determined by the coach, participated in most varsity games in that sport. For subsequent letters earned in the same or alternate sports, the athlete will receive a pin for each letter earned. Varsity certificates will be awarded to students who have participated in a varsity sport but have not seen significant playing time at the

varsity level. Cross Country and Track have point requirements for receiving awards.

Any senior who has participated with a sport without meeting the awards requirements may receive their varsity letter. An athlete who was injured playing the sport may also receive awards. If a student quits or a parent has pulled their child from the team the athlete will not receive any awards or honors. WCS also recognizes additional athletic honors such as the DIAA Scholar Athlete award for any athlete with a 3.5 weighted GPA while earning a varsity letter. The Tri – Athlete Award for athlete who participate in all three seasons during high school. The Chris Landa Memorial Award which is presented to a senior athlete who best represents Leadership, Commitment and Christian Character. The Outstanding Senior Male/Female Athletes.

Coaches may also recognize team awards at the conclusion of their season with permission from the athletic director.

19. Use of Fields, Courts, Athletic Facilities and Locker Rooms

Athletic facilities at WCS should always be used appropriately. The use of the weight room, athletic fields and courts must be under the direction and supervision of the coaching staff, a WCS employee, or approved adult. The locker rooms should be used for changing and getting ready for practice and games.

Roughhousing is not allowed. All showers must be turned off after showering. No female managers are allowed in the boy's locker room. No male managers are allowed in the girl's locker room. All spiked or cleated shoes are not allowed in the locker rooms or any part of the building. It is expected that each locker room is left clean and neat at the end of every day. Coaches are expected to ensure the locker rooms are kept in order and address their athletes if this is not the case.

20. Uniforms and School Equipment

Athletes will be issued school athletic uniforms, and possibly equipment, specific to each sport season. All uniforms and equipment are the property of WCS. Each athlete is responsible for the care of uniforms/equipment issued. It is expected that they will not loan uniforms/equipment to someone else.

Athletes who wish to exchange uniforms/equipment with another player must receive permission from the coach. Uniforms are to be worn only for games/contests or on special occasions as designated by the coach. Practice wear should be clean and in good repair. Any apparel not in line with the mission, purpose and competitive philosophy of the athletic department will not be allowed at practices or games. At the completion of the season, students are required to clean and return all school uniform/equipment items issued to them. These items are to be returned to the coaches within 1 week of the completion of the season. Athletes will be held financially responsible for any lost or misplaced uniforms and equipment. In addition, they will not be issued a uniform in their next season or receive athletic credit until these obligations are fulfilled. The purchase of personal items needed for participation in some sports may be required. Many of these items will be made available to team members for purchase through an online team store or through the athletic department.

21. Sexual Harassment, Hazing, and Initiations

All forms of hazing or initiation of Wilmington Christian student-athletes is strictly prohibited.

Upperclassmen are expected to lead by example and make sure all underclassmen are immediately and permanently welcomed to the team with zero tolerance for hazing or other forms of inappropriate initiation.

WCS is committed to maintaining an environment free of sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually oriented jesting, or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature. WCS will not tolerate any kind of harassment; vulgar, lewd, abusive, humiliating, or threatening language; practical jokes; or other inappropriate behavior. Harassment of a sexual nature is a violation of state and federal law, which may subject the individual harasser to criminal or civil liability for any such behavior. Violators of this policy are subject to immediate disciplinary action up to, and including, termination. Non-employee violators of this policy are subject to expulsion from the campus when harassment occurs on premise. For off-campus incidents, WCS may sever the relationship with the offender and report the harassment to the proper authorities.

WCS prohibits retaliation of any kind against employees, volunteers, student athletes, or any other individuals who, in good faith, bring sexual harassment complaints or assist in investigating complaints. Exercising rights under this policy does not in any way affect an employee's ability to register a complaint or seek relief through the State of Delaware Department of Civil Rights, or a court of proper jurisdiction for any complaint for which a remedy is provided under state or federal law.

Reporting of Sexual Harassment

Coaches or athletes who become aware of suspected sexual harassment or who believe they have been subjected to such treatment have an obligation to promptly report such actions to their immediate supervisor, or to the Headmaster, or School Board President. WCS takes all complaints seriously and handles complaints as promptly, thoroughly, and confidentially as possible. In addition, any employee may at any time report suspected sexual harassment directly to law enforcement.

WCS takes the following steps when *any* sexual harassment complaint is reported:

- The appropriate supervisor and the Headmaster will handle all complaints. If a supervisor is the first person to be informed about the complaint, he or she will immediately inform the Headmaster, without delay. (If the alleged perpetrator is the Headmaster, then the report should be filed with the School Board President.)
- The Headmaster will immediately inform the School Board President and school attorney for counsel and assistance in planning the investigation.
- In most cases, an independent, third party shall conduct interviews with the complainant, the alleged harasser, and any third parties who may have relevant information. Written statements may be requested, and all interviews will be thoroughly documented.
- After the interviews have been completed, the Headmaster along with the supervisor and School Board President will weigh the seriousness of the allegations. The alleged harasser will be cautioned that any attempts to retaliate or influence the testimony of the complainant or witnesses will result in the alleged harasser's immediate dismissal. Depending on the circumstances, the alleged harasser may be suspended, with or without pay, pending completion of the investigation.
- WCS will consider whether it is necessary to take immediate measures while the investigation is ongoing (i.e., changing schedules or positions of individuals involved in the complaint, informing law enforcement, etc.) to ensure that further harassment does not occur, or to protect the complainant. A decision will be made in this matter based on all findings, conclusions, recommendations, and general and legal counsel.
- Interviews, allegations, statements, and identities remain confidential to the extent possible and allowed by law. However, WCS will not allow the goal of confidentiality to be a deterrent to an effective investigation, and it may be necessary to reveal certain information.
- WCS has a duty to prevent and correct harassment even when the complainant asks that no action be taken, and that the complaint be kept confidential.
- All documentation related to the complaint or investigation will be handled in the most confidential manner possible, with all such documentation being clearly marked as such.
- At the end of each inquiry, the investigator will prepare a thorough report that sets forth the dates that various witnesses and parties were interviewed, summarizes witness statements, and describes factual issues on which the parties disagree. The report will also offer the investigator's conclusions along with recommendations for action by WCS.
- The Headmaster, supervisor, and School Board President will review the report and submit it to the school attorney for counsel. If the investigation determines that the harassment occurred, appropriate and legal corrective action will be taken.

22. Illegal Drug/Substance Abuse/Tobacco/Alcohol Use or Other Illegal Activity

If a student on a WCS athletic team purchases, possesses, distributes, and/or uses alcohol, tobacco products, and/or illegal drugs, on or off campus, they will be immediately suspended from participation in the sport until appropriate discipline is determined. Discipline could include suspension from practices and games or removal from the team and forfeiture of all privileges that accompany being a member of that team, in addition to other school discipline. Other breaches of the law will be dealt with accordingly

23. Social Media

If a student on a WCS athletic team inappropriately uses social media, they have the potential to be suspended from participation in the sport until appropriate discipline is determined. Discipline could include suspension from practices and games or removal from the team and forfeiture of all privileges that accompany being a member of that team, in addition to other school discipline. Parents and athletes should always remember that our social media presence must appropriately reflect the WCS and athletic department mission, athletic purpose and competitive philosophy. Many future employers and colleges also will investigate potential athletes by searching easily accessible platforms like Facebook, Instagram, etc.

Parents and coaches should not have social media pages for individual teams. The athletic department has created social media pages that will cover the entire span of athletics at WCS. Parents or coaches who have great photos that can be shared are encouraged to send them to the athletic director.

24. Admission Fees to Athletic Events.

WCS, along with other DISC members, does not charge admission fees to any school-sponsored home athletic event. Non-conference schools, however, may charge admission fees to their contests. Admission fees are charged at DIAA sponsored state tournaments, including those DIAA events held at WCS, and at various invitational tournaments that many of our teams may participate in during the season.

25. Early Dismissals

Upper School team members are often dismissed early from classes for away contests. Students are dismissed approximately 20 minutes prior to the scheduled bus departure time. It is during this time that student-athletes should change into team uniforms, gather equipment and personal belongings for the game, and if necessary, see the athletic trainer

26. Off Campus Sports Credits

Although participation in the WCS athletic program is required, occasionally a student will be involved in an off-campus athletic activity not offered at WCS that could possibly fulfill a co-curricular or team credit. With very few exceptions, approved off-campus credits will not typically count toward completion of the co-curricular credit. Permission to receive credit for an off-campus sport must be approved by the Principal.

27. Pursuing College Athletics

Students wishing to pursue college athletics should discuss those goals with his/her coach and the guidance counselor. Members of the Athletic Department are available to write letters of recommendation and to make follow-up phone calls on behalf of the student-athlete after he/she has made the initial contact. If a videotape of game action is desired to send to college recruiters, it is the responsibility of the student-athlete to arrange for the recording of game footage. The Athletic Department has limited ability to record games for instructional purposes only. All recording of games for college recruiting purposes is the responsibility of the student and his/her family. Students who plan on trying out for a collegiate team must be cleared by the NCAA Clearinghouse prior to the tryout.

28. COVID Protocol

Unless otherwise stated, Wilmington Christian School will abide by all DIAA, DPH, and Independent Conference COVID related rules. These **may** include but are not limited to wearing masks in practice and games. Social distancing during practices and games, in locker rooms, and the trainer room. Washing hands and or disinfecting hands before and after practices, games, or use of the locker room and training room. It is acknowledged that certain schools may have additional policies above and beyond the DIAA regulations, and WCS parents and athletes commit to honoring those requests. It is also understood that policies for athletics may be different from WCS school policies that apply during the normal school day. It is expected that all parents, athletes, and coaches always observe and adhere to these policies for all practices and games, both home and away.