



BOBCATS

WEST SHORE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

STUDENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Revised 2016



Pennsylvania
Interscholastic
Athletic
Association, Inc.



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WEST SHORE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Purpose of the Athletic Program

West Shore Christian Academy involves its athletes in interscholastic sports in order to build character, teach discipline, and to win within the rules of the game. Athletes are to display good sportsmanship and honor the Lord through their participation.

Participation

- Participation in athletics is a privilege. This privilege may be taken away as a result of improper conduct.
- Because of limitations with facilities and vehicles, coaches may be forced to limit the size of squads.
- Coaches will make every effort to play each player, but participation in each game is not guaranteed.

The responsibility for choosing each team is left up to the coach and his/her staff. Coaches should outline criteria for making the team prior to the first practice. Players must recognize the commitment level that will be needed to participate in the school athletic program. Trips, work schedules, and outside activities must be scheduled carefully. A commitment to a team requires time. A student on a school team is agreeing to make the commitment to practice each day throughout the season and to keep absences from practices and games minimal.

Affiliations

West Shore Christian Academy is a member of the Commonwealth Christian Athletic Conference (CCAC) and Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA). The school must adhere to all eligibility requirements set forth by these organizations.

Risks of Participation

It must be understood that there are obvious risks involved in athletic participation. Injuries can occur even when every safety precaution has been taken. West Shore Christian Academy will make every effort to ensure a safe and healthy environment for the athletes.

Participants have the responsibility to help reduce the chance of injury. Participants must obey all safety rules and regulations, report all injuries or physical problems to the coach or athletic director, follow a proper conditioning program, and inspect personal protective equipment.

West Shore Christian Academy does not provide insurance coverage for athletes. Any insurance claims must be filed with your personal insurance carrier.

Sports Offered at West Shore Christian Academy

High School

Fall— Cross Country, Boys & Girls Varsity Soccer, Girls Varsity/JV Volleyball

Winter—Boys & Girls Varsity Basketball/ JV Boys & Girls Basketball

Spring—Boys Baseball, Girls Lacrosse, Boys & Girls Track and Field

Middle School

Fall—Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Girls Volleyball

Winter—Boys & Girls Basketball

Spring— Boys Baseball, Boys & Girls Track and Field

The Commonwealth Christian Athletic Conference prohibits girls from playing on boys' teams and boys from playing on girls' teams.

Athletic Department Chain of Command

The Athletic Director oversees the entire athletic program. The Athletic Director works with the Administrator and the High School Principal to provide a quality program. Each coach reports to the Athletic Director.

Questions or concerns about a specific team should be first addressed to the appropriate coach. If your questions are not sufficiently addressed, feel free to contact the Athletic Director.

Parents are strongly encouraged to support the decisions of the coach. While you may not agree with every decision of a coach, how and when you express your feelings may have a negative effect on your child and on the team. The time immediately following a contest is an emotional time, so please refrain from approaching a coach with issues at that time.

Parent/Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are difficult tasks. Parents and coaches must have an understanding of the expectations and philosophies of one another. Clear communication is important.

Communication you should expect from the coach

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for the team members.
3. Locations and times of all games and practices.
4. Return times for all away games.
5. Team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning.
6. Procedure to follow for injuries.
7. Discipline that would effect playing time.

Communication coaches expect from parents

1. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
2. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

Appropriate issues to discuss with a coach

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with a coach

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other student-athletes.

Age Restrictions

1. A high school athlete may not turn 19 years of age before July 1 prior to the beginning of a school year.
2. A middle school student may not turn 15 years of age before July 1 prior to the beginning of a school year.

Attendance Guidelines

1. A student must be in school by 9:00 a.m. to participate in a game or practice for that day. Exceptions will be made for medical or dental appointments as well as events such as funerals or previously scheduled college admissions appointments. This does not include all-day absences to visit a college or family vacations.
2. A student leaving the building for a situation as described in the above (point #1) must be in attendance for four (4) periods to be eligible for the day.
3. A student must be in all classes unless on an approved school activity to be able to practice or play that day.
4. A student who misses more than one class for reasons such as in-school- suspension may not participate on that day.
5. A student may not spend more than one period in the health room to be able to participate that day.
6. A student may not be absent more than twenty school days in a semester. After the twentieth day, a student may not participate until he/she has been in attendance sixty school days after the twentieth absence.
7. A student who receives a suspension while a member of a team will be forced to miss one game/meet for each day suspended. The missed game will be the next scheduled game after the suspension is issued, but not sooner than three days after the suspension letter is sent. Suspensions for “tardies to school” will not cause an athletic suspension.
8. A student ineligible to participate may not attend practice and may not travel with the team to an away game.

Athletic Eligibility

Academic eligibility will be checked by the Administrator. Eligibility reports will be emailed to the coaches on Friday afternoons.

Upper School

1. A student must have passed four credits the previous school year to be eligible for fall sports.
2. A student must be passing at least four credits to be eligible to participate.
3. Athletic eligibility checks will begin 10 school days into each new marking period.
4. Athletic eligibility will be checked at noon every Friday. Any student failing 2 classes will be ineligible to participate in any games, meets, matches, scrimmages or practices the following week (Sunday-Saturday).
5. If a student fails two classes on a report card, the student is ineligible to play or practice for 10 school days from the day the Report Card is issued. If a season has not begun at the time the report card was issued, the 10 school days will take effect at the beginning of the official season.
6. If a student is athletically ineligible for a total of 3 weeks during the season, they will be dismissed from the team.

Pre-Participation Athletic Physical

Upper School

Every athlete must have the PIAA four-page participation papers completed prior to beginning practice. A physician must sign the paper giving clearance for the student to participate. A parent must sign the form giving consent to participate and agreeing to abide by the PIAA eligibility guidelines. An athlete may **NOT** attend practice unless he/she has had a physical. The physical must not be administered prior to June 1 of the next school year.

Emergency Cards/Permission Form

Each athlete will be issued an emergency information card as part of the PIAA participation packet. The card must be filled out and returned to the athletic office prior to the first practice. Athletes will not be permitted to travel to away games unless the coach has an emergency card on file.

Amateur Status

A high school athlete must be an amateur in the sport in which he/she is competing. Amateur status can be lost by competing on a professional team or receiving compensation other than items listed in Article II, section 4 of the PIAA bylaws. Parents receiving compensation for their child's athletic accomplishments can also cause loss of amateur status.

Length of Participation

A student shall not represent the school in interscholastic athletics if the student has:

1. Reached the end of the student's fourth consecutive year beyond eighth grade, without regard to the student's period of attendance.
2. Participated in six seasons beyond the sixth grade or four seasons beyond the eighth grade in any sport.
3. Completed the work of grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve, inclusive.

Uniforms

Athletes will be issued school uniforms. The uniforms will remain the property of WSCA. The uniforms are to be worn **only** for the athletic contest. They may not be loaned to anyone or worn by spectators to contests. This includes jerseys, and shorts, warm-ups, jackets, and shooting shirts. Care should be taken when laundering the uniforms. Uniforms that are lost, stolen, damaged, or have unusual wear may need to be replaced by the athlete. Cost will be determined by the age of the article. Uniforms are not to be worn to school, unless given special permission by the Athletic Director or Principal.

Coach/Team Rules

A coach has the right to establish team rules. These rules must be communicated to the team at the start of the season. They must also outline the consequences for an athlete who breaks a rule. These rules would include, but not be limited to practice attendance, lateness to practice and games, or care of uniforms.

School Rules

The rules and regulations set forth in the “Middle School and High School Handbook” apply to athletes both after school and at all away contests.

A student who is suspended from school for any reason (in-school or out-of-school) will not be permitted to participate in the next athletic contest. This may carry over into another season, but will not carry over from one school year to another.

The only exceptions are the rules governing dress. At WSCA, we feel it is important to look presentable when traveling to another school. Therefore, teams that travel to games in street clothes may not “dress down” for travel. Coaches have the option of requiring athletes to dress up (i.e. guys wearing ties, or girls wearing skirts) or to wear team athletic clothing.

After-School Policy

The school does supervise student athletes staying in the high school building after school who are waiting for practice to begin. The student athletes must report to the designated study hall room assigned for that afternoon. The after school study hall bell will ring at 3:15 and the room will be open till 5pm. Athletes are to stay there until their practice begins. The school is not overseeing the coming and goings of the students prior to practice if they do not report to the study hall room. If a student chooses to leave campus at the end of the school day they are not permitted on campus until the start of practice unless prior arrangements have been made with the athletic office. Once they return they should then report to the study hall room.

Alcohol, Tobacco, Illegal Drugs

Student athletes are not to use, or be in possession of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs. A student who is found to be in possession of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs will immediately be removed from the team. This includes in school, as well as, out of school situations. Illegal drugs can be defined as improper use of prescription medications, or taking prescription medications prescribed to another individual.

Travel Guidelines

All athletes must travel with the team to away games. Athletes may ride home from a game with their own parents. Athletes desiring to travel home from a game with other parents must have permission in writing from their own parent. Athletes may not travel home from games with other students.

Coaches will provide parents with expected arrival times from away games. It is expected that parents will respect the coaches' time and be prompt in picking up their children after away games. Coaches are expected to stay with students no more than fifteen minutes past the anticipated arrival time that was given to the parents.

Since practices are after school activities, WSCA will not monitor traveling to practices that are off campus (Messiah College track or cross country). Transportation will be provided to students who need it.

Fans are not permitted to travel with the team to away games.

Practice Policy

It is understood that an important aspect of athletics is practice. Teams may practice after school each day, except Wednesdays. Occasional Wednesday practices are limited to varsity teams.

Regular practices may not last more than 2 1/2 hours per day. Additional time is permitted during summer preseason workouts. Coaches have the right to practice on Saturdays and during vacation time. Care will be given by coaches not to be extreme in practice time. It is understood that fall sports teams will begin practices prior to the beginning of school and students may be required to adjust summer job schedules or vacation times. Summer practice schedules should be distributed by coaches well in advance of the start of practice.

Fall and spring sports will normally practice after school. Basketball teams must share the gym, and practice times will be staggered. Middle school basketball teams will generally practice after school until 4:15. High school basketball teams will stagger practices from week to week.

Coaches spend a tremendous amount of time away from their families during the season. Forcing a coach to wait in the building for parents long after a practice is finished is unfair to the coach. It is imperative that athletes are picked up promptly at the end of practice.

Team Starting Dates

The starting dates for each sport are regulated by PIAA. The first legal practice date for fall sports will be the Monday three weeks prior to Labor Day. The first legal practice date for winter sports is usually the second Monday in November. In years when Labor occurs on September 6 or 7, then the first practice date for winter sports is the third Monday in November. Practice for spring sports will begin on the first Monday in March. In years when Labor Day falls on September 7, then the first spring practice will be the second Monday in March.

Coaches may conduct optional practices, conditioning exercises, and open gyms prior to the first practice.

Sportsmanship Standards

The Apostle Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 10:31, “whether therefore you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” Athletics can be used to develop many positive qualities in both athletes, parents, and spectators. We must maintain a Christ-like testimony while in the midst of competition. The following guidelines have been developed to help us maintain a godly walk and testimony.

For the Coach:

1. Exemplify godly character, behavior and leadership at all times.
2. Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athletes.
3. Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
4. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
5. Respect the integrity, judgment, and authority of the officials. Show respect to the officials.

For the Athlete:

1. Accept the responsibility of representing West Shore Christian Academy.
2. Treat opponents and teammates with self-control and respect.
3. Avoid actions and words that demean or taunt opponents.
4. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat.
5. Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials.
6. Shake hands with opponents after the game. Treat the competition as a game, not a battle.

For the Spectators:

1. Remember that you are at an athletic contest involving high school students.
2. Show respect for opposing players, coaches, spectators, and cheerleaders.
3. Respect the integrity, judgment, and authority of the officials.
4. Avoid personal contact with the officials.
5. Avoid booing, taunting, and sarcastic and personal comments directed at opposing players and referees.
6. Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
7. Refrain from yelling or waving objects at inappropriate times during the contest.
8. Do not use noise makers or display signs or posters during the contest.

Ejection from a Contest

Any athlete or coach who is ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct or for flagrant misconduct shall be disqualified from participation for the remainder of that day and shall be ineligible to participate in the next contest on the next play day at the same level of competition. Penalties will carry over from one school year to the next. An athlete or coach who is ejected from a contest for the second time in one season will appear before the Administrator, High School Principal, and Athletic Director before he/she may return to competition.

Hazing/Peer Harassment Policy

Hazing or peer harassment that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in, or affiliation with any team will not be tolerated. All athletes must be given the opportunity to compete without the threat of any type of abuse. Coaches have a responsibility to maintain a safe and positive environment for all athletes.

Students are encouraged to notify coaches or other school personnel of instances of hazing or harassment.

Athletic Awards

Varsity letters and varsity pins will be awarded to students who meet certain participation requirements. The first time a student meets the requirements, that student will be awarded a letter. Each additional time a student meets a participation requirement, the student will be awarded a team pin. The requirements for earning letters and pins are listed below:

Baseball	Must appear in at least ½ of all innings a team plays.
Basketball	Must appear in at least ½ of all quarters a team plays.
Cross Country	Must participate in ¾ of all meets.
Soccer & Lacrosse	Must appear in at least ½ of all halves team plays.
Track and Field	Must participate in ¾ of all meets and practices.
Volleyball	Must participate in ½ of all games team plays.

To qualify for a letter, an athlete must finish the season in good standing. Academic probation does not disqualify an athlete from earning a letter unless the athlete has been removed from the team.

Three special awards will be given by the coach of each team. The awards are Christian Testimony, Most Improved, and Coach's Award.

All seniors who have earned a varsity letter in at least two different sports, which includes participation in their senior year, will be given a special award at the Awards Ceremony in May.

The Athlete of the Year award will be given to one senior boy and one senior girl.

The criteria for the award are as follows:

1. Each senior receives one point for each season he/she has participated in athletics. (12 points)
2. Teachers rate each student in the area of Christian testimony. A 1-10 scale will be used. If a student receives below a "3" on three different evaluations, then that student will be removed from consideration for the award. The average score of the evaluations will be used. (10 points)
3. A student receives points based on overall GPA. A—10 points, B—8 points, C—6 points, D—4 points. (10 points)
4. Coaches will rate the athletes on athletic ability (30 points) and leadership (10 points). Ratings from each coach will be averaged.
5. Add each category together. The girl and boy who receive the most points will receive the awards. (Maximum score 72 points)

Athletes and Physical Education Classes

All athletes who are enrolled in Physical Education classes are expected to dress and participate in all activities. Coaches, who want athletes to participate in less strenuous activities on game, meet or match days must communicate this with the Physical Education teachers. Without communication from a coach, athletes will be required to participate in all activities of that day.

PIAA Policies

PIAA has established many guidelines regarding amateur status, out-of-season participation, transfers to other schools, and recruiting violations. Any questions concerning any of these guidelines should be directed to the Athletic Director.

Recruitment to/from other High Schools

It is a violation of PIAA rules for a coach or school employee to influence a student from another school to change schools. If the District III Committee determines that a coach or any other school personnel is guilty of this issue, the school will face sanctions.

It is also illegal for a student to transfer to another school for athletic reasons. This would include, but not be limited to the hope of more playing time, more exposure, problems with a coach, or following a coach to another school. If the District III Committee feels that a transfer occurred in whole, **or in part**, for athletic intent, the athlete may lose one year of athletic eligibility.

NCAA Clearinghouse

Any senior athletes who anticipate participating in athletics at the collegiate level should register with the NCAA clearinghouse. This is mandatory for athletes attending a NCAA division I or division II school. Information can be obtained through the guidance office or the athletic office.

There is always the possibility that a situation will occur that has not been discussed in this document. West Shore Christian Academy reserves the right to address any situations that arise that have not been covered in this Athletic Handbook.