

Westwood High School  
Athletic Department  
Handbook



**Home of the Wolverines**  
**2015-2016**

**Westwood Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.**

## **FORWARD**

The Westwood High School Athletic Department Handbook is a reference guide for both coaches and student-athletes. The purpose of this document is to state the policies that govern interscholastic athletics at Westwood High School for both student-athletes and coaches. The rules and regulations stated in this document are intended to help facilitate the organization and administration of teams at the high school level. Flexibility and discretionary power is provided for all coaches at all levels.

The athletic mission of Westwood High School and the athletic department remains fundamental to the structure provided in the handbook. Coaches and student-athletes should view this handbook as a guide; it is not intended to be all-inclusive. Sound reasoning, good judgment, and adherence to the school's core values must be the standard by which situations outside these stated rules and regulations are evaluated.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**(Click link to go directly to page)**

[STATEMENT OF PURPOSE](#)

[SPORTS AT WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL](#)

[GOVERNING BODIES](#)

[CERTIFICATION OF A TEAM MEMBER](#)

[REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION](#)

[ELIGIBILITY](#)

[ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY](#)

[IN-SEASON ELIGIBILITY](#)

[ATHLETIC TEAM TRYOUTS](#)

[ATHLETIC TEAM SELECTION](#)

[THE STUDENT-ATHLETE COMMITMENT](#)

[LOYALTY TO THE TEAM: BONA FIDE TEAM MEMBERS \(see MIAA Handbook, rule 45, for further information.\)](#)

[COMMUNICATION](#)

[COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH](#)

[COMMUNICATION COACHES SHOULD EXPECT FROM PARENTS](#)

[CONFLICT RESOLUTION](#)

[THE FIRST COURSE OF ACTION](#)

[THE NEXT STEP](#)

[APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH](#)

[ISSUES INAPPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH](#)

[STUDENT-ATHLETE BEHAVIOR](#)

[CHEMICAL HEALTH](#)

[MINIMUM PENALTIES:](#)

[STUDENT-ATHLETE LEADERSHIP](#)

[ATHLETIC AWARDS](#)

[SUPPORT SERVICES](#)

[ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT](#)

[LOST/MISSING EQUIPMENT](#)

[ATHLETIC FACILITIES](#)

[ATHLETIC TRAINING SERVICES](#)

[Concussion Management Protocol](#)

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

### PHILOSOPHY

Westwood High School strongly supports the commitment to interscholastic athletic programs as an essential educational opportunity available to students. Secondary school educators have long recognized the educational value of sports. High school sports are conducted in all 50 states in a variety of sports for teams and individuals of either gender. For the participants, sports provide the opportunity to develop the skills and abilities essential to becoming a well-rounded individual and finding success in life. Young men and women develop physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially through voluntary participation in properly conducted interscholastic athletic programs. Specifically, the improvement of character and physical skills, along with the opportunity for achievement and the development of a desire to excel are all advantages associated with athletic participation.

The Westwood High School athletic philosophy parallels school goals of academic challenge. The athletic program and its coaches seek to create an environment in which students can develop themselves both as athletes and as individuals. Westwood coaches seek to challenge and develop student-athletes within this environment utilizing positive coaching techniques and personalized praise. In return, Westwood High School student-athletes are expected to demonstrate that a pursuit of excellence in athletics is fully compatible with the pursuit of excellence in the classroom, and that a combination of the two endeavors lends itself to a more complete educational experience.

Westwood High School supports a comprehensive menu of athletic activities and encourages all students to participate regardless of their level of athletic ability. By learning to think critically, withstand pressure, respect ourselves and others, adapt to change, respect authority, and hold ourselves and others to high ethical and educational standards, student-athletes and coaches accomplish the more difficult task: discovering in oneself a fundamental worth that transcends athletic performance.

The Athletic Department encourages the active involvement of the greater Westwood community. The excitement generated through sport has the ability to create a bond between school and community. We want every community member to be proud of our school and the student-athletes who represent the school and community in other cities and towns throughout our conference and throughout the state.

The ultimate goal of the athletic program is to strive for excellence not perfection. We cannot ask our student-athletes to be perfect, but we can ask them to strive to perform to the best of their ability. The true rewards of participation in sports are entirely intrinsic and do not require trophies or accolades to be known. The student-athlete will find this reward within himself or herself.

### CORE VALUES

The Westwood High School Athletic Program believes in the following:

- Student-athletes should strive for both academic and athletic excellence.
- Young adult learning experiences are not restricted to the classroom.
- Confidence can be built through learning and achievement by positive reinforcement and constructive criticism.
- We teach, coach, learn and perform to the fullest extent of our abilities.
- All individuals deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Taking initiative should be encouraged for all student athletes.

Individuals should take responsibility for their actions and will conduct themselves with moral courage and personal integrity.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Westwood High School Athletic Department is totally committed to the academic mission of our school. The athletic program is an extension of the classroom, not a diversion from it. With this in mind, our athletic program abides by the following guidelines:

*Members of the Westwood High School community will strive for excellence in academic endeavors. We recognize that fostering a climate that promotes intellectual, social and emotional growth is the shared responsibility of students, faculty, administrators, support staff, parents and the community-at-large. We challenge all members of our school community to practice self-discipline, exhibit respectful behavior, celebrate others' achievements and demonstrate a commitment to learning as a lifelong process.*

## SPORTS AT WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

**Westwood High School offers 52 varsity and sub-varsity teams. Freshmen teams are fielded as numbers of athletes permit.**

### Fall

	Varsity	JV	Fresh.
Cheerleading	X		
Cross Country-Boys	X		
Cross Country-Girls	X		
Field Hockey	X	X	X
Football	X	X	X
Golf (coed)	X	X	
Soccer-Boys	X	X	X
Soccer-Girls	X	X	X
Volleyball-Girls	X	X	X

### Winter

	Varsity	JV	Fresh.
Alpine Skiing (coed)	X		
Basketball-Boys	X	X	X
Basketball-Girls	X	X	X
Cheerleading	X		
Ice Hockey-Boys	X	X	
Ice Hockey-Girls	X	X	
Indoor Track-Boys	X		
Indoor Track-Girls	X		
Swimming (coed)	X		

### Spring

	Varsity	JV	Fresh.
Baseball	X	X	X
Lacrosse-Boys	X	X	X
Lacrosse-Girls	X	X	
Softball	X	X	
Tennis-Boys	X	X	
Tennis-Girls	X	X	
Outdoor Track-Boys	X		
Outdoor Track-Girls	X		

## GOVERNING BODIES

### MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

The Westwood High School is a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). As a member of this state association we are governed by the rules and regulations set forth by the MIAA.

**MIAA Mission Statement:** The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and integrity should permeate all interscholastic athletics in our community. In perception and practices, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and concern for others. Our athletic fields should be a laboratory to produce good sports reflecting "fair play" in every aspect of life.

### TRIVALLEY LEAGUE

Westwood High School is very proud to be a member of the ten-school league known as the Trivalley League. The League is governed by the MIAA and its own constitution. The league sets Westwood's intraleague game schedules for all levels of competition. Members of the Trivalley League include: Ashland, Bellingham, Dover-Sherborn, Holliston, Hopkinton, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Norton and Westwood.

## CERTIFICATION OF A TEAM MEMBER

### REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

A student must be eligible according to MIAA Eligibility Rules and those of Westwood High School in order to be a candidate for a Freshman, Junior Varsity or Varsity team. The head coaches of all varsity programs will conduct a preseason meeting with all team candidates to communicate expectations, team rules and responsibilities.

The following documents must be on file with the athletic department before participation in any athletics is allowed (including tryouts and practices). The due date for each season will be listed on the Athletic webpage.

- Documentation of a current physical exam performed by a physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner must be on file. While participating on an interscholastic athletic team, a student must maintain a current physical at all times. Once a student's physical exam is older than thirteen months, the physical is considered to be out of date and the student is no longer eligible to participate even if the physical expires during the middle of the season. You may check with the school nurse (x3353) to see if there is a current physical on file.
- Registration for athletics is required before the season begins. Go to <https://www.familyid.com/westwood-high-school-athletics> to register for athletic teams

The athletic fee of \$250 is due to the Athletic Director after teams have been posted and before September 13 (fall), December 13 (winter) or April 11 (spring). Please pay all athletic fees online by accessing the Athletics page on the high school website ([www.westwood.k12.ma.us](http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us)). A bank check is also an acceptable means of payment of athletic fees and may be turned in at the main office. No family is required to pay more than \$750 per year for athletic participation of high school students on school sponsored athletic teams. No student-athlete will be prevented from participating in athletics due to financial hardship. Families with financial hardship should contact the athletic director, (x5358) or the secretary to the superintendent, Ann Brown (x1341).

## ELIGIBILITY

Any Student is eligible for sports participation for four (4) consecutive years after completion of grade 8 providing:

1. he/she is under 19 years old as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year.
2. he/she is passing a minimum of 25 points of academic credit (see "grades" below).
3. he/she has not been ejected from a contest by an official more than once during the current season.
4. he/she has not violated athletic rules, including both Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) regulations and individual team rules presented by the coach to his or her players.
5. he/she has met other school obligations, such as serving detentions.

### You are not eligible:

1. If you are not a student currently enrolled in Westwood High School.
2. If you do not currently live with your legal parent(s)/ guardian.
3. If you transferred from one high school to another, you are ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which you participated at the varsity level or its equivalent during the one year period preceding the transfer (see exemptions listed in Rule 57.7 of the [MIAA Handbook](#) for exceptions, unless you have changed your legal residence.
4. If you were "persuaded" or influenced to transfer to your present school by a coach, athletic director, principal, or other person connected with the school.
5. If you were disqualified from a competition, including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc., you may not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule, or in tournament play. The disqualified student athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest at the same level of play in that sport until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, girls lacrosse (red card), and soccer, have been completed. (see [MIAA Handbook](#), Section 49 for further details)
6. If you physically assault an official, you are ineligible in all sports for one year.
7. If you willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempt to injure an opponent, you will be immediately excluded from participation in that sport for one year.

Waiver of certain MIAA Eligibility Rules may be submitted, allowing a student-athlete to participate. Students who wish to apply for a waiver of an eligibility rule should meet with the Athletic Director several weeks prior to the start of the season in question. The violation of any eligibility rule may result in forfeiture of a game won or tied. If, in your opinion, there is any doubt concerning your eligibility, consult the Athletic Director. The rules apply to all teams, Varsity and Sub-Varsity, and both to boys and girls sports. The Committee on Athletics of the M.I.A.A. will resolve all questions on eligibility.

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

**Grades**—A student is eligible for athletic participation providing he or she has passed a minimum of twenty-five academic credits during the last marking period. For fall eligibility the student's final grades from the previous year are used. If a student receives a report card that does not meet this standard, athletic participation shall cease that day. Students may be allowed to continue to practice if agreed upon by the Athletic Director, Guidance Department, and Coach.

**Daily Attendance, Homeroom, Class Cuts**—Students are expected to attend all scheduled periods during the school day. Athletes must be in school and report to all periods in order to practice or play on that day. Exceptions such as doctor's appointments and college visits must be cleared by the coach in advance, whenever possible.

**Absence and Tardy**—Any student absent from school for any reason may not participate in a practice or a contest on the day of the absence, unless approved in advance by the Principal or Athletic Director. Tardy students must be in school no later than 11:00 AM in order to be eligible for a practice or game the day of the late arrival. Coaches will make every attempt to check the daily school attendance of their student-athletes. The Principal or Athletic Director determine eligibility and may review absences, dismissals, and tardies for reasons other than medical. Planned absence requests should be submitted at least twenty-four hours in advance to the Athletic Director. Students absent on a Friday will be not be eligible to compete during the weekend unless they have obtained approval in advance from the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will decide the

**Absence and Tardy (cont.)**

athlete's eligibility for a practice or contest. The Athletic Director's decision may be appealed to the Principal. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive cuts or truancy and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement.

**Time Spent in the School Health/Nurse's Office** - Students who spend excessive time in the nurse's office during the school day due to illness may not be allowed to participate in any athletic activities on that day. A member of the athletic department may check the nurse's log daily.

**Early Dismissal** - Certain away games will require early dismissal from classes. A list of these dismissal times and bus departure times will be available to all teams on the "schedules" link on the website. Final permission to leave classes for early dismissal rests with the Principal. It is essential that the teams are prepared to leave on the early buses at the scheduled time(s). Students should have all essential equipment with them and proceed directly from class to the locker room. The Athletic Director will submit a list of players to be dismissed to the office for the daily bulletin. Coaches will update list as necessary.

**IN-SEASON ELIGIBILITY**

At Westwood High School, student athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of scholastic achievement possible. They are also expected to maintain the highest level of citizenship. To promote these goals the following policies are in effect:

**SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS**

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. This supports MIAA Good Citizen Rule 63.1: "Student-athletes may not represent their school if they are on in-house or out-of-house disciplinary suspension. A suspended student is ineligible for practice or competition for at least the number of days equal to the number of days of the suspension."

Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or canceled for any athletic reason. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems or citizenship issues and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that our athletes be model citizens both in and out of school; they will be held to high standards and should set a positive example for all students.

**ATHLETIC TEAM TRYOUTS**

Tryouts for programs are open to all students providing they have met the standards for participation set by the MIAA and Westwood High School. During the tryout period the coach must explain his/her expectations of their student-athletes and the criteria they will use to select players for the team. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to demonstrate that they understand the information and can meet the criteria. It is the coaches' responsibility to evaluate and communicate with each student-athlete during the tryout period and decide which students will be placed on the team. In certain sports, more students try out than can be kept on a team. When this situation occurs, coaches will cut players for whom a position on the team has not been secured. Cutting students is a difficult and agonizing process, and all coaches should realize that sensitivity and communication are essential. Students who do not make the team should be informed in person by the coach as to the reasons for the cut. If the student is an underclassman then the coach should offer suggestions as to how the student might improve their chances the next year. Coaches have discretionary authority in choosing their teams. Students cut from one team will be encouraged to try out for another team if there is space available on that team. Athletic fee is due after placement of an athlete on a team (see due dates, pg. 5, Requirements for Participation)

**TRYOUT DATES (Dates are approximate and should be verified with the coach. Dates are also listed on the athletic department website.)**

**Fall:** The Thursday eleven days prior to Labor Day. Football is allowed three non contact conditioning sessions beginning the Monday two weeks prior to Labor Day.

**Winter:** First Monday after Thanksgiving

**Spring:** Third Monday in March

## ATHLETIC TEAM SELECTION

It is reasonable to expect that varsity teams will be comprised of the best players. It is also important to recognize that high school student-athletes who work hard and can contribute to a team's success should also be given the opportunity to be on a varsity team. The athletic department must, therefore, work to balance desire and talent through a sincere effort to include as many student-athletes as possible within the varsity experience.

### **VARSITY/ JUNIOR VARSITY TEAMS**

Players who have participated as members of junior varsity teams should be given every consideration to be on varsity the following season. However, a coach must evaluate that player's attitude and effort against all other candidates for the team. Varsity team membership is an earned privilege not a guaranteed entitlement for senior student-athletes. Coaches are discouraged from playing seniors on their junior varsity teams. An exception may be made for a first year senior who requests the opportunity to play at the Junior Varsity level as long as the coach is sure that the senior player is not reducing participation of developmental players on the sub varsity squad.

### **DROPPING/CHANGING SPORTS**

According to MIAA rule, student-athletes may participate in only one MIAA sanctioned sport in any season (Fall, Winter, or Spring), including tournaments and/or championships in that season unless it is recommended and approved by a licensed physician. A student-athlete officially becomes a member of his/her team for the sport season on the date of the first regular season contest in that sport. If a student-athlete violates this rule, he/she will be declared ineligible for that season and all contests in which he/she participated in any sport during that season must be forfeited. Once a student-athlete has voluntarily chosen to leave an athletic team during the season, it is at the discretion of the coach whether or not that student-athlete is allowed to rejoin the team should they choose to. A student-athlete may pursue an alternate sport if cut from a team before the first contest as long as the coach of the alternate sport is willing to accept a new competitor.

**Refunds** - Any student who voluntarily leaves a team or is dropped from its roster for eligibility or disciplinary reasons after the start of the regular season will not be granted a refund. In special instances upon a request from a student, a refund may be granted. Refunds are in the form of a credit for the next season of participation. If the credit is not used, a check for the refund will be issued. If a student is cut from a team before the first contest, a full refund will be granted.

## THE STUDENT-ATHLETE COMMITMENT

### **LOYALTY TO THE TEAM: BONA FIDE TEAM MEMBERS (see MIAA Handbook, rule 45, for further information.)**

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (i.e. practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. First Offense: Student athlete is suspended for 25% of the season. Second Offense: Student athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season, and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation.

### **DAILY/WEEKLY COMMITMENT**

During tryouts and after team selection, the head coach will explain expectations related to practice times and locations and game schedules. Student-athletes are expected to make at least a six-day, two- to three-hour daily commitment to the team each week. Attendance may have an impact on playing time, and membership on the team. At the freshman and junior varsity levels most of our teams do not practice or play on weekends, but student-athletes may expect practices or games each school day. Normally, daily practices will consist of an average of two hours of team activity per day taking place sometime between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. The preparation times before and after practices or games bring the usual total time to three hours per day.

At the varsity level, weekend and/or evening practices and games are more commonplace, and student-athletes should expect regular involvement during these times. Because many of our teams share facilities, practice and game hours may vary considerably. Coaches will provide a schedule at all levels, in all sports, of practices and games. Go to: <http://miaa.net/schools/public/WestWe9> for bus and game schedules. Student-athletes are expected to provide their own transportation to and from practices.



## **PLAYING TIME**

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, coping, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being and striving towards excellence.

Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is "playing time" during contests. If a student has questions as to his/her "playing time" he/she is encouraged to discuss them with the coach (See also section on Conflict Resolution).

## **FRESHMAN AND JUNIOR VARSITY TEAMS**

At the Freshman level the emphasis is on participation. The emphasis on the junior varsity team is balanced between participation and winning. Coaches will make a conscious effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual's playing time but perhaps the most important are practice attendance, quality of effort, attitude, commitment and athletic ability.

## **VARSITY TEAMS**

While coaches at the varsity level will make a strong effort to play all team members, the emphasis at the varsity level shifts towards fielding competitive teams with the goal of winning as many games as possible. This emphasis may result in uneven playing time among the student-athletes, with some not playing in every game. The coach makes the often-difficult decisions of who starts, who plays and for how long.

Note: When the coach feels that the winning or losing of a particular contest is not in doubt, the coach shall make every effort to insert as many players as possible who see little playing time.

## **SCHOOL/FAMILY VACATIONS, EXTENDED ABSENCES, CONFLICT WITH SCHOOL EVENTS**

Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and contests. Due to scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations and/or holidays. Although extended absences are discouraged, the athletic department recognizes that certain circumstances do require them.

Student-athletes who anticipate being absent from team activities for an extended period of time due to family vacation plans, religious obligations, school sanctioned activities, or college visitations are expected to contact their coaches to discuss absences before making plans. If the student-athlete contacts the coach and the coach feels such absence is excused, they can expect to return from such absences as a team member "in good standing." It is the discretion of the coach whether or not the status of the student-athlete, with respect to playing time, changes as a result of the absence. If disagreement arises over this or any situation, see Conflict Resolution for guidance.

Although practices may be conducted on religious or school holidays, athletic practices are not mandatory on religious holidays. There will be no penalty for missing practice on a religious holiday. Coaches should be notified in advance if a student-athlete will not be at a practice or game.

Sometimes student-athletes are involved in many school-sanctioned activities and sometimes these activities conflict with their athletic commitment. Student-athletes who recognize that such a conflict may exist should also notify their coach well in advance of any absence. If the student-athlete, parent and coach cannot reach a satisfactory agreement concerning extended absences due to school-sanctioned activities in advance of the absence, please refer to the section on Conflict Resolution for guidance.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely challenging responsibilities. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to our student athletes. For our Athletic Department to be successful, communication is vital. This requires involvement, dedication, sacrifice and commitment from parents, student athletes and coaches.

## **COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD'S COACH**

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad.
- Locations and times of practices and contests.
- Team requirements including special equipment needed, user fees, consent forms, team rules, practice organization and out-of-season conditioning.
- Procedure followed should your child be injured during practice or games.
- Any discipline that may result in denial of your child's participation.

## **COMMUNICATION COACHES SHOULD EXPECT FROM PARENTS**

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach (see Conflict Resolution below).
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

As your children become involved in the Athletic Program at Westwood High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you and your child wish. Issues concerning team selection, playing time and award recognition can become highly emotional. It is important to address these issues as soon as possible.

### **THE FIRST COURSE OF ACTION**

As a general rule, if a student-athlete has a conflict or concern, he/she should request a meeting between the student-athlete and the coach. This promotes independence and self reliance.

### **THE NEXT STEP**

If the meeting between the coach and student-athlete does not result in a satisfactory resolution to the problem, a conference between the coach and the parent is encouraged. The following procedure should be followed to promote resolution:

1. Call the Athletic Department at (781)326-7500, ext. 5358 to set up an appointment.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, speak to the Athletic Director and he will arrange a return call from the coach or set up a meeting. A coach email contact sheet is available on the athletics website.
3. The Athletic Director will sit in, if necessary, to help mediate a resolution.
4. Don't call a coach at home unless he has clearly made his telephone number available to parents.
5. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before, during or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings under these circumstances do not promote resolution.

### **APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH**

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

### **ISSUES INAPPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH A COACH**

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you may have seen from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those in the following section, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

- Playing time at the varsity level
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

## STUDENT-ATHLETE BEHAVIOR

### SPORTSMANSHIP

Westwood High School expects all parties present at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, parents and spectators should treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators with respect. Cheer for your team, never against the opponent.

The MIAA reserves the right to "warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship." Westwood High School, in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests, home and away.

### HAZING

Hazing is prohibited by Massachusetts state law and is forbidden at Westwood High School. The law defines hazing as "any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization...which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person." Examples of hazing include, but are not limited to, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor or beverage, drug or other substances or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which physically endangers someone or subjects them to extreme mental stress. Incidents of hazing must be reported to an administrator as soon as is practical.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Coaches must be well aware of the Westwood High School policy on sexual harassment and hazing. Coaches who do not have this policy should see the athletic director for a copy.

### CHEMICAL HEALTH

#### **Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco**

From the earliest fall practice date, through the end of the academic year or final athletic competition of the year, whichever is later, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including "e-cigarettes"); marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer". It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor. A student who is found to be in the presence of illegal substance use is also subjected to this rule.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

#### **MINIMUM PENALTIES:**

**First violation:** When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

**Second and subsequent violations:** When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated. (i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.)

If after the second or subsequent violations the student, of his/her own volition, becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

**Student-Athlete Behavior (cont.)**

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

For further details click on [MIAA Handbook](#) section 62.

**STUDENT-ATHLETE LEADERSHIP****TEAM CAPTAINS**

Coaches decide how team captains are selected. Captains may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach.

Captains may be chosen at the end of a season, or sometime prior to the first contest of the following season. Captains may also be elected or appointed on, a game-by-game basis. The coach will inform the team as to how captains will be selected.

It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and be ready to assume duties their coaches outline. They are expected to be well aware of the team rules and student-athlete responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach, team and the Athletic Director in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director during the school year to discuss the athletic program. Out of season "captain's practices" are a violation of MIAA Rules and not sanctioned by Westwood High School.

**Captains of teams may be relieved of their position for violation of team, department or school rules.**

**ATHLETIC AWARDS**

Coaches will establish the criteria for athletic awards. The criteria are sport specific. Student managers are eligible for varsity letters. Students who participate in athletics at Westwood High School may qualify for a variety of awards such as certificates, plaques, and trophies.

**TYPES OF AWARDS**

Trophies/Plaques: Every Varsity team has three awards that may be given to individuals at the conclusion of each season. Sportsmanship, Unsung Hero, and Most Valuable Player are honored for each varsity team. Awards are given out at the conclusion of each season. The coach of each team is responsible for designating which student-athlete receives each award.

**SUPPORT SERVICES****TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM CONTESTS**

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to most away contests. For safety reasons, all team members are expected to travel to and from these contests using the school-provided transportation.

Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing to the coach and Athletic Director by a student-athlete's parent prior to the contest. Reasonable requests will be honored. Student-athletes may only be transported by their own parent.

Non-team members may occasionally be allowed to ride team transportation if room exists, the coach in charge has given approval, and prior written parent permission has been given to the coach or Athletic Director. (The athletic department does not provide transportation at any level to or from practices or contests within the Town of Westwood).

**DIRECTIONS TO AWAY CONTESTS**

Directions to away contests can be retrieved on the athletic department website ([www.westwood.k12.ma.us](http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us)) by accessing WHS then athletics. Directions are provided by accessing "schedules". Click on the desired schedule then click the location link for directions to the event on the schedule.

## **POSTPONED CONTESTS**

Some contests throughout the school year are postponed due to factors such as inclement weather. In most instances it is the "home" school that calls for a postponement. By Trivalley League rule, games are to be made up on the next available open date in common. School schedules may require play on weekends or holidays.

Decisions on postponements are made as late in the day as is practical for proper notification of all interested parties. On school days, the most common time is about 1:00 p.m. for afternoon contests. Postponed contests will be immediately updated on <http://miaa.net/schools/public/WestWe9> . Parents and fans can receive instant notification of schedule changes by clicking on a team and then click the "Scheduling Notification Options" button.

On non-school days and for evening contests, postponements are made approximately two to three hours prior to the contest. Check [www.miaa.net](http://www.miaa.net) for the most up to date scheduling information.

## **ADMISSION TO GAMES**

It is the practice at Westwood High School to charge admission to home contests in varsity football, varsity basketball and varsity ice hockey, and may charge for any other sports played in the evening or under the lights. The admissions collected at our contests help offset the costs of the athletic program. All sports benefit from admissions revenues. The admissions collected at Canton Ice Rink during the varsity hockey games helps offset the fees charged for ice rental. MIAA tournament fees are in effect for certain tournament games; prices are determined by the MIAA. Only MIAA issued passes are valid at tournament games.

## **COLLEGE/CAREER GUIDANCE**

One of the most important decisions facing high school student-athletes is what to do with their lives after they graduate. The athletic director is able to assist all student-athletes with this extremely important decision. He may be able to answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send videotapes, if available, and write letters of recommendation. If a student-athlete's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) regulations. Copies of the latest NCAA regulations are available online at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org). The guidance department also has a wealth of information and experience on this topic. Please be familiar with these regulations and seek assistance if needed.

## **NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE**

The NCAA Clearinghouse is a central repository for information on high school curricula. The NCAA maintains this information to conduct evaluations of incoming college freshmen. The NCAA evaluates high school graduates' academic records in light of current NCAA initial-eligibility requirements. A prospective collegiate athlete needs to apply and receive a final certification by the Clearinghouse in order to participate in college athletics at the Division I or II levels. A student athlete does not need to apply if he or she will attend a junior college, NAIA or NCAA Division III institution. Students may get valuable information and forms at [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net).

# **ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT**

## **ISSUANCE**

The coach of the sport is responsible for the proper issuance of equipment to the team members.

## **CARE OF EQUIPMENT**

Coaches will instruct their team members on the proper storage and care of all issued equipment with great emphasis on cleanliness. Equipment that is washable is to be taken home by the student to be laundered at least once a week. Coaches are to strongly enforce the rule that issued equipment is to be worn by students only at practices and games, not as an article of clothing for personal use. Westwood Public Schools has invested a great deal of money in athletic equipment and care.

## **PLAYERS LEAVING TEAM**

If a player leaves the team during the season (injury, dropped from the team, quits the team, etc.) the player must return any equipment or uniform issued by the athletic department to the coach within 24 hours of the players' leaving the team.

## **LOST/MISSING EQUIPMENT**

Student-athletes have an obligation and responsibility to properly care for and return all equipment issued to them. Student-athletes failing to turn in all issued equipment, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible for the current replacement cost for such equipment. Payment is required at the time of the loss. Payment must be received prior to the next season of athletic involvement or graduation; whichever comes first. Student-athletes may not be allowed to try out for a team if they have an equipment obligation. The cost of lost items will be the sum of money to replace them (face value). Only a check will be accepted in payment of lost equipment. Checks are to be made out to Westwood Public Schools and provided to the Athletic Director.

## **END OF SEASON**

The coach is responsible for seeing that all items of equipment issued are turned in when appropriate. The Athletic Director will direct and assist the coach in the administrative procedures necessary to insure proper issuance and collection of the equipment, cleaning of equipment, inventory and budgeting.

## **ATHLETIC FACILITIES**

### **LOCKER ROOMS**

Once team rosters are set, if not before, each team member may be issued an athletic locker. Students are expected to lock all personal items and team equipment in their own athletic lockers at all times. Students should never give their locker combination to anyone else. Experience has shown that most losses are due to lockers left open or unlocked. On road trips, when lockers are not available, it is highly recommended that students leave valuables at home or give them to parents for safekeeping at the game site. Students should neither bring large amounts of cash or other valuable personal items to school, nor should they leave them at school.

### **CARE OF FACILITIES**

Students are expected to treat all facilities, both home and away, with proper care. Westwood High School prides itself in the quality facilities that have been provided for use by area athletes. Only proper care and respect will keep them this way. Vandalism is cause for dismissal from a team and further disciplinary action by the school administration. Teams are responsible for cleaning up the area around their bench and the locker room before leaving the premises after practice and games. Be especially vigilant about picking up water bottles from gyms and fields. Please do not leave sunflower seed shells or other food items anywhere other than a trash receptacle.

**Athletic Shoes:** At no time should shoes with cleated soles be worn inside the building. Serious injury can occur from slipping on cement or tiled surfaces.

**Weight Room:** The weight room is available to student-athletes with the supervision of their coach. Student-Athletes wishing to use the weight room should coordinate a time with their coach.

## **ATHLETIC TRAINING SERVICES**

Westwood High School employs a MA licensed and NATABOC Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC). The Athletic Trainer is responsible for the prevention, recognition, management and reconditioning of injured athletes. The Athletic Trainer works under the direction of the athlete's physician regarding care and return to play status. The ATC also acts as a liaison between athletes, coaches, parents, the athletic director, the school nurse and any other medical professionals involved in the athletes' care. The hours vary seasonally, but are usually from 1:00pm until the end of the last home practice session or home contest. During weekends or on days when school is not in session, the ATC is required to be on site only for contests and for some scheduled scrimmages. Occasionally, the Athletic Trainer will be on site for non-school day practice sessions.

**The Athletic Training Room** is located in the Gym building near the pool locker rooms. At certain times, the Athletic Trainer and facility are extremely busy. Access to the athletic training room and its services is limited to athletes who are there for care only. No cleats; food or drink; bags or coats are allowed in the athletic training room and appropriate behavior and language is expected. Athletic training services will be granted on a first come, first served basis on practice days. On game days, students will be treated in an order that will allow bus and/or game commitments to be met. The athletic training program exists to help; please feel free to take advantage of it.

### **Athletic Training Services (cont.)**

**Athletic Injury:** In the event of an athletic injury, the Athletic Trainer is the primary responder and directs the course of action unless a physician is present. At away contests, if the Athletic Trainer is not present, the host school medical personnel are in control. If no medical personnel are present, members of the coaching staff are instructed to act within the scope of their first aid education and, if warranted, call for emergency care. After an injury, a student-athlete may not return to competition without clearance by the athletic trainer. WHS requires that the ATC be informed of all injuries and conditions that may affect an athlete's ability to participate. If an athlete has been referred to the Emergency Department or to a physician, the athlete is required to bring any and all written medical clearance notes from the doctor that states they are cleared to return to play.

**Medical and Hydration Supplies:** The coaching staff for each individual sport is responsible for obtaining a properly stocked first aid kit and any coolers, cups, water bottles, ice chests, etc. from the athletic trainer based on team needs. These items should be available at all games and practices. The kit should be inspected frequently by the coach and expended items re-supplied through the athletic trainer at the request of the coach. It is each team's responsibility to provide water for hydration.

**Concussion Management:** At WHS, we are committed to taking concussions and head injuries seriously; all coaches, parents and athletes are required to complete an online course which teaches the signs and symptoms of concussion. We employ a comprehensive team approach so that an athlete's concussion is managed properly both in the athletic and academic arenas. Our Concussion management protocol is as follows:

## **Westwood High School - Athletic Training**

### **Concussion Management Protocol**

A concussion is a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (MTBI) resulting from a blow, violent jarring or rotational force to the head. The injury involves an acceleration-deceleration mechanism in which a blow to the head or the head striking an object results in one or more of the following conditions: headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, balance problems, feeling "slowed down", fatigue, trouble sleeping, drowsiness, sensitivity to light or noise, loss of consciousness, blurred vision, difficulty remembering, or difficulty concentrating. Symptoms may last from several days to several months and both the presentation and length of symptoms is highly individualized.

At Westwood High School, we utilized the ImpACT neurocognitive test battery and formally consult with Sports Concussion New England and Dr. Neal McGrath, clinical neuropsychologist.

- Upon assessment of concussion, the student-athlete is removed from the contest and is not allowed to return under any circumstances. Assessment of concussion is made by a certified athletic trainer or physician covering the contest.
- Within 24-72 hours of concussion assessment, an initial Post-Injury ImpACT test is administered by the Athletic Trainer.
- The School Nurse is alerted in the case that academic accommodations are necessary.
  - The 1st benchmark the student-athlete must achieve is resolution of symptoms, at rest.
- One or more RESTING Post-Injury ImpACT tests will be administered until neurocognitive scores return to baseline (if baselined for collision/contact sports) or fall into age-appropriate average range.
  - The 2nd benchmark the student-athlete must achieve is the ability to perform light exertion, without recurrence of symptoms.
- Once benchmarks 1 and 2 have been achieved, one or more POST-EXERTION ImpACT tests may be administered.
  - The 3rd benchmark the student-athlete must achieve is for neurocognitive scores to remain in normal range after Post-Exertion ImpACT testing, in combination with the absence of symptom recurrence.
- Finally, as a guiding rule, all collision/contact athletes must be at least one week asymptomatic before returning to potential contact.
- Consultation with Sports Concussion New England and dialogue between the athletic trainer, the school nurse, the student-athlete and his/her coach is on-going throughout the concussion management process. Additional dialogue with parents, guidance counselors, pediatricians and others may be necessary.

Only after all of these benchmarks have been met, will a student-athlete be able to return to play after sustaining a concussion.