

Parent/Student Athletic Handbook

I. Introduction

The faculty and coaching staff at Winnebago Lutheran Academy hope that your experiences in athletics will be a successful and rewarding part of your Christ-centered education. This handbook has been prepared to help you understand:

- 1) the Christ-centered philosophy of our school,
- 2) the function and purpose of our Physical Education department, and
- 3) your responsibilities in being involved in this program.

Your participation in sports will challenge you in many ways. It is our intent that you will grow physically, intellectually, and spiritually through this program. We realize that all of our abilities come from God, and in loving response to our Savior, we desire to develop and use those talents and abilities to His glory. "For you are bought at a price, therefore honor God with your body." (I Cor. 6:20)

All policies in this handbook are in accordance with the regulations of the WIAA handbook.

II. Philosophy of Physical Education at Winnebago Lutheran Academy

Winnebago Lutheran Academy was established to serve the parents and children of the Academy Association with a Christ centered curriculum designed to make disciples of all students, that they might be dedicated members of God's kingdom, developing their God-given talents to become useful and worthy citizens.

All teaching and training at WLA rests upon and is drawn from God's Word. God's Word is the vital force and determining standard for all instruction; its admonitions and principles permeate all activities.

At WLA, our educational approach is focused on training the whole person; spiritually, mentally, socially, and physically. Physical education and athletics are each a part of the total Christian training which finds its purpose in God's Word, commanding us to preserve our bodies, the temples of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16-17). **We will strive to emphasize the process and the person over performance.** Through the process (the educational methods employed) and the person (the student-athlete in our program), we will continually strive to be excellent in our program and performance.

In particular, the Athletic Department strives to develop student athletes who are:

1. Growing Christians who will use the changeless truths of Scripture to guide them in self-development and their relationships to coaches, teammates, and opponents.

2. Self-directed learners who will establish God-pleasing goals and evaluate their own progress toward these goals.
3. Collaborative contributors who develop and sustain Christian relationships with teammates. Team activities will allow student athletes to improve their abilities to work cohesively in a group situation to attain a goal.
4. Discriminating thinkers who use game or contest situations to adjust to those conditions which require reasoning and decision-making skills.
5. Dedicated stewards who develop and use their God-given gifts to the best of their ability.

III. Responsibilities of Student Athletes

Making a team and continued participation is a **PRIVILEGE** extended to all student-athletes who meet team requirements and are willing to assume the following responsibilities:

1. Witness your love for your Lord by representing Him, your parents, your school, your community and yourself properly at all times.
2. Display Christian behavior at all times.
3. Display respect for rules, officials, coaches and all in authority.
4. Display a spirit of cooperation and teamwork.
5. Follow the rules and regulations included in this handbook.
6. Be faithful to the team and program of the sport in which you participate.

An important component of participation is commitment. Coaches and advisors will clearly indicate a level of commitment that their particular co-curricular activity requires. Students need to take responsibility for meeting these expectations. Desire to have a job and to be involved in other activities should be weighed carefully. Work schedules need to be adjusted to avoid conflict with practices and games.

IV. Program Information

1. WLA currently participates in the following interscholastic sports:

Boys

Cross Country – (V, JV)
 Football – (V, JV)
 Soccer – (V, JV)
 Basketball – (V, JV, F)
 Wrestling – (V, JV)
 Baseball – (V, JV)
 Golf – (V, JV)
 Track – (V, JV)

Girls

Cross Country – (V, JV)
 Volleyball – (V, JV, F)
 Cheerleading – (V, JV)
 Basketball – (V, JV, F)
 Dance Squad – (V)
 Soccer – (V, JV)
 Softball – (V, JV)
 Track – (V, JV)

2. Our school is a member of the Wisconsin Flyway Conference. The conference is composed of six public schools and three private schools.

3. We are a member of the **Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA)**. As a state organization, the WIAA regulates interscholastic sports and sponsors state competition in a variety of sports.
- V. **School/WIAA Policy for Participation – Forms to be handed in annually before participation: 1) Physical Exam Card or Alternate year card 2) Signature Form: acknowledges that you have read the WIAA rules of eligibility; that you have read and agree to the WIA Code of Conduct; and that you understand the potential risk of participating in athletics. 3) Awareness of Football Risk (football players only)**

A. Physical Exam/Permit Cards

A student may not participate in interscholastic athletics (practice or competition) until the school has a WIAA Physical Examination/Permit Card on file in the Athletic Director's office attesting to parental permission and to physical fitness as determined by a licensed physician. Generally, a student will need a **physical exam** as a freshman and again as a junior. (A physical exam is required every other school year and the earliest date of examination is April 1). An **alternate year card** is used for the sophomore and senior years and only needs to be signed by a parent or guardian.

B. Acknowledgement of Potential Risk

In order to fulfill the legal obligation of the school to inform the student-athletes and parents of the potential risks involved in participating in athletics, each student-athlete and his or her parents must read the **Potential Risk Statement**. The signature form acknowledging potential risk must then be signed and returned to the athletic director before the student will be allowed to participate. Those participating in football must read, sign, and return a copy of the **Awareness of Football Risk** form before participation will be allowed.

C. Rules of Eligibility Form

Student-athletes, as well as parents are asked to read the **High School Athletic Eligibility Information Bulletin**. The signature form acknowledging that you have read and understand the rules of eligibility must then be signed before practicing and competing. Specific requirements with regard to Age, Academics, Amateur Status, Residence, etc. are outlined in this document.

D. Academic eligibility

WIAA regulations require that a student-athlete must meet the DPI requirements defining a full-time student and have received no more than one failing grade (including incompletes) during the most recent grading period in order to be eligible for participation. A student who becomes academically ineligible may regain eligibility by meeting the academic standard following a period of 15 scheduled school days and nights of ineligibility. If the student becomes ineligible at the end of the second semester, the ineligibility will affect participation in fall sports. The minimum ineligibility period for fall sports shall be the lesser of (1) 21 consecutive calendar days beginning with the date of the earliest allowed competition in a sport

or (2) one-third of the maximum number of games/meets allowed in a sport (rounded up if one-third results in a fraction).

In order for a student at WLA to be eligible he or she must be working up to his or her potential as established with the guidance office and may not have three Ds, any failing grades, or incompletes. Students who are part of a team and become ineligible will not be allowed to play in games or matches, but will be allowed to practice with the team. A student who is involved in a co-curricular will need to have a signed note from the instructor given to the Learning Coordinator by the end of the Noon hour the day before the contest, competition, performance, or event in order to be eligible. This allows the coach or director to know the day before who is eligible to play for the game. The responsibility for obtaining the note and getting it to the Learning Coordinator on time is the students. Until their eligibility is restored, they will not be excused early from classes to accompany the team if the team should need to leave before the end of the school day.

E. Attendance

In order for a student-athlete who has been absent due to illness for a part of the school day to participate in a practice, game, meet, or match on that day, the student-athlete must arrive at school **in time to attend chapel**, have a valid excuse, and attend classes for the remainder of the day. Attendance matters will be handled by the Vice-Principal in consultation with the coach/advisor.

Any student-athlete excused from participation in Physical Education class because of illness or injury will not be allowed to practice or take part in a game, meet, or match on that day.

F. Undue Influence for Participation

It is the philosophy of the athletic department that student-athletes should enjoy as many sport seasons as they and their parents wish them to participate in without influence from any coach to specialize in one sport.

Although student-athletes may choose the sport(s) they wish to enjoy, once the season has started no one shall change sports without the consent of each coach involved.

Student-athletes cut from one sport may try out for another sport providing they were not cut from the first sport for disciplinary reasons.

G. Athletic Code of Conduct

As a Christian school, WLA wants to point out those types of behavior that discredit our Savior and at the same time encourage our students to do all things to the glory of God.

- **Inappropriate conduct**

The WLA administration and coaching staff have agreed that conduct unbecoming an athlete shall not be tolerated. Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. Conduct unbecoming an athlete may include, but is not limited to the following:

1. Stealing in or out of school
2. Flagrant misbehavior in the classroom
3. Suspension from school
4. Disorderly conduct as defined by state law in or out of school
5. Criminal behavior
6. Harassment/hazing – Any unwanted physical or verbal acts, acts that cause pain or excess fatigue, acts of a demeaning or a sexual nature. Initiations and “rite of passage” ceremonies or activities are expressly prohibited. Penalties will be imposed whether the hazing activity occurs on or off campus on a year round basis.
7. Attendance at an event where alcohol or other drugs are being used illegally.

It is the expectation of this code that athletes disassociate themselves from these events. All misconduct referrals must be submitted to the athletic director in writing. The disposition of each case will be based on each incident’s individual set of circumstances. The athletic director in consultation with the Vice-Principal will determine the penalty for each case. Minimum action: Conference with athlete and/or parent(s)/guardian(s). Maximum action: Suspension from athletic competition for one year.

In addition to the previous behaviors listed, all athletes are expected to follow the rules and regulations as established by their coaches. These rules will be distributed to every participant.

- **Training rules**

Training rules have traditionally been a part of interscholastic sport activities. The purposes for such rules stem from several areas. The most significant is to stress the importance of doing all things to the glory of God. Training rules are used to stress the importance of taking care of a person’s health. They are also used to point out the dangers of substance abuse and to discourage the use of such substances. ***When deemed necessary a professional assessment may be required at the athlete’s expense to help them understand and deal with their problem.*** Another area of importance is that training rules reinforce laws that are already in place that forbid the use of certain substances by minors. Part of the privilege of participating in co-

curricular activities is that the participant plays by the rules. State athletic associations expect schools to have training rules and to have disciplinary procedures in place to deal consistently with violations. **The training rules are in effect year round.**

The use or possession of alcohol, tobacco products (smoking or chewing), illegal drugs, or performance enhancing substances (for a complete list of performance enhancing substances, please refer to the WIAA website, www.wiaawi.org) is strictly forbidden by any WLA student at any time while enrolled at the school. **An athlete receiving the Lord's Supper would obviously not be in violation of the training rules, but toasting with alcohol at weddings, graduations, or other ceremonies would be considered a violation.**

1. First Violation:

The athlete will be suspended from athletic competition for the remainder of the season in which the infraction occurred. An in season violation will result in a minimum suspension of 50% of the contests based on the regular season of that sport. Any remaining percentage of that suspension not served shall be recalculated and applied toward the next sport in which an athlete participates and competes.

An out of season violation will result in the athlete losing 50% of the contests for the next sport in which the athlete participates and competes.

2. Second Violation

The athlete will lose athletic eligibility for one calendar year from the date of the training rule violation.

3. Third Violation

Athletic eligibility will be lost for remainder of the athlete's high school career.

HOT LINE CONCEPT

In an effort to prevent alcohol-related parties from happening, we strongly encourage the "Hot Line Concept" between school and parents. In the best interest of the athletic program, anyone hearing of an alcohol-related party should contact the athletic director, vice principal, or principal. When school personnel are aware of such parties before they take place, efforts can be made to try to prevent them. Parents and students are often "privy" to information that school officials do not hear about until "after the fact".

VI. WLA General Athletic Policies

A. Squad Selection

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program at WLA, coaches desire to keep as many students as they can without unbalancing the integrity of the sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment and other factors place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. Our coaching staffs strive to maximize the opportunities for our student-athletes without diluting the quality of our program.

B. Practice policies

1. **Closed practices** – All practices at WLA are closed. This means that no spectators will be allowed in the practice areas nor will they be allowed to interrupt practices. Spectators are welcomed to observe practice as long as that observation is done from the designated areas. If the practice is held indoors spectators may observe practice from the east mezzanine of the gym. Practices that are held out of doors may be observed from outside the fence that surrounds the track and baseball field.
2. **Attendance** – The student-athlete must attend, be on time, and stay until the conclusion of all practices unless previously excused by the coaching staff. If possible student-athletes should try to arrange appointments outside of the practice schedule.
3. **Conduct** – Athletes must comply with all of the rules and regulations established by the coaching staff and athletic directors regarding practices. At no time should an athlete jeopardize the safety of, interfere with, or disrupt the practice of another team.
4. **Discipline** – Athletes who violate any of the policies or rules pertaining to practices may be subject to disciplinary action, suspension, or dismissal by the coaching staff and/or the athletic director.

C. Game policies

1. **Attendance** – Athletes must be on time for, attend, and stay until the conclusion of all games, meets, or matches unless previously excused by the coaching staff.
2. **Transportation** – Transportation will be provided for most away contests. Athletes are expected to ride to the contest and return back to WLA on the school arranged transportation unless excused by the coach. Permission for an athlete to travel to or from any off campus athletic event by non-school sponsored transportation must be arranged by a parent or guardian in writing. **Travel release forms** are available from the coaches and in the school office.
3. **Conduct** – In keeping with the Lord's directive to "let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven," (Matt. 5:16) whether enroute, at home or away contests, WLA students are expected to comply

with all school rules relating to their behavior and appearance. In addition, student-athletes are expected to follow all team rules and regulations established by the coaching staff and/or the athletic department.

4. Playing time – In athletics it is very difficult to give everyone on the team as much playing time as they desire. Our coaches continually strive to be fair and consistent with playing time. Every effort will be made to give all athletes as much playing time as possible, but the athletes must be willing to sacrifice their own goals in favor of the goals of the team. Coaches are not obligated to discuss playing time.

5. Over night housing – Athletic teams will not stay overnight to participate in activities. The exception to this rule would be state tournament competition. Other exceptions may be granted by the administration on a case by case basis as circumstances dictate.

6. Missed class time – The student-athlete is responsible for all class work, lecture notes, and assignments he or she may miss due to an early departure time for a contest.

D. Injuries/Injury management

If an athlete suffers an injury he or she should report the injury to the coach immediately so that appropriate measures can be taken to prevent further injury, and so that therapy can be started to aid recovery. We have engaged the services of an athletic trainer, Brooke Roth, from Agnesian HealthCare. The trainer will be at WLA on Mondays and Thursdays after school. In the case of some injuries a clearance from the trainer or the attending physician may be required before the athlete will be allowed to resume participation.

Training Room Procedures

- a. No athletes are allowed in the training room without a coach or trainer present.
- b. Athletes will not be given taping supplies. Any taping that is required will be done by a coach or trainer in the training room. Athletes with chronic joint problems should order braces.
- c. Athletes who do not return reusable equipment to the training room will be charged for the equipment.

E. Coach/Player/Parent Communication

As in all areas of life where people interact with one another there may be times when misunderstandings and problems occur. You are encouraged to follow the principles found in Matthew 18 by first going directly to the individual. If the issue is unresolved then contact the Athletic Director, and further resolution may involve the Principal and finally the Executive Board. God directs us to put the best construction on such situations, commands us not to gossip, and in Matthew 18 has given us direction on how to resolve problems with our fellow Christians. Following these principles should help us to deal with one another in Christian love to resolve conflicts that arise.

F. Uniforms/Equipment

Athletes are responsible for the care, safe keeping, and return of all uniforms and equipment assigned to him or her. Athletes will be responsible for the full replacement cost of items of school equipment or uniforms that are not returned.

Uniforms should never be bleached. Uniforms are not to be used as personal wearing apparel. With the consent of the coach, uniforms may be worn on game days.

G. Insurance

WLA does not carry accident insurance that covers all students while involved in school related activities on and off the campus. If an accident occurs, the claim for coverage should be made against any family accident coverage that applies. Enrollment forms for purchasing supplemental insurance to cover involvement in athletic activities are available from the school office.

H. Awards

The primary goal of athletes at WLA should be to use their God—given talents to the best of their ability to glorify Him. An additional goal that most athletes have is to earn a varsity letter. Varsity letters are awarded in various sports based on the following criteria established by the coaches of their respective sports.

- Baseball** – Play in $\frac{1}{2}$ the innings of the games
- Basketball** – Play in $\frac{1}{2}$ the quarters of the games
- Cheerleading** – One year varsity football or basketball
- Cross Country** – Run varsity in $\frac{1}{2}$ the meets
- Dance Team** – Two years of faithful service
- Football** – Play in $\frac{1}{2}$ the quarters of the games
- Golf** – Play in $\frac{1}{2}$ the varsity matches
- Soccer** – Play in one $\frac{1}{2}$ of each game
- Softball** – Play in half the innings of the games
- Track** – One more point than the number of meets
- Volleyball** – Play in $\frac{1}{2}$ the games
- Wrestling** – Wrestle varsity in $\frac{1}{2}$ the meets

Meeting the necessary criteria listed above does not automatically entitle an athlete to a varsity letter award. The coach's evaluation of an athlete's contributions to the team effort is a necessary part in determining who will receive a letter. Seniors who have faithfully participated in a given sport all four years at WLA will receive an honorary varsity letter in recognition of their dedication to the WLA athletic program.

I. Weight Room Policy

The WLA weight room is available for all students to use with proper supervision by a coach. Students are expected to abide by the posted rules whenever using the weight room.

J. Locker Room Rules

1. Rough-housing and throwing of any objects is not allowed in the locker room. Hazing of other players is not allowed.
2. No food, drink, or glass containers of any kind are allowed in the locker rooms.

3. All spiked or cleated shoes must be put on and taken off outside the locker rooms.
4. The Phy. Ed. Department will assign lockers to in season athletes.
5. Cell phones must be turned off in the locker rooms.

Conclusion

The nature of team sports requires that all members of the team work toward a common goal. This cannot be accomplished if the team harmony has been disrupted by one team member criticizing the effort of another, or being jealous of the participation of another team member. If an athlete makes a mistake or performs poorly, criticism by his fellow teammates will not correct the mistake nor will it likely improve his effort. Criticism of coaching decisions or second guessing of strategy does nothing to enhance the confidence of the team in their coaches. Support and encouragement will help the entire team keep a God pleasing focus and a positive attitude realizing the blessings received come from God.

Finally, we would suggest that to have this part of your WLA experience be most rewarding, keep in mind your motivation for life. That is to glorify God. "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (I Cor. 10:31) Should Christian athletes want to do their best and strive to win? Definitely-God expects no less than your very best efforts to use the gifts He has given to you. God expects excellence! Excel through Christ. Keep your motivation for excellence based on your desire to serve God with your gifts. **He will bless those efforts!**

