

West Broward High School Athletic Department Philosophy

The athletic program at WBHS is an integral part of the total education process. Participation in the athletic programs results in: the growing of athletic skills, understanding the concepts of work, sacrifice and achievement, cooperating with others to achieve a goal, reacting with grace under pressure, and understanding the importance of the relationship between athletics and the school, home, and community.

The interscholastic athletic program is available to the student after the regular school day. As a participant, the student assumes responsibilities in addition to those required for academic growth. These include balancing athletic participation with academic achievement, promoting good sportsmanship through personal example and complying with the rules and regulations established by the coaches, administration, and Board of Education. All students willing to accept these additional responsibilities are encouraged to participate in interscholastic athletic programs.

In addition to developing athletic skills, participants are expected to demonstrate appropriate appearance, manners, citizenship, and sportsmanship always in the school and community and at all contests.

- The opportunity to participate on a West Broward Athletic team is a privilege afforded to our students by the Broward County School Board of Education. With every privilege comes an inherent responsibility. The following Code of Conduct was developed for athletes with the intent to provide every athlete, parent, and coach a clear set of expectations and rules of behavior for a WBHS athlete. Sportsmanship practices are of paramount importance and should be always conducted.
 - Self-control and respect for teammates, opposing athletes, officials, and spectators always. Foul language, game “trash talking” and insulting remarks are not acceptable behavior. Respect the integrity, safety and dignity of others and their property.
 - Cooperation- Athletes and parents are expected to follow the rules and protocol of their sport and should not intentionally violate the integrity of the sport.
 - Follow the ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
 - Stress the values derived from playing a game fairly and to the best of ability.
 - Establish positive relations with visiting teams and hosts.
 - Respect the integrity and judgment of the game officials.
 - Encourage leadership, use of initiative and good judgment by teammates.
 - Recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the individual player.
 - Remember that the athletic contest is only a game, not a matter of life or death for the athlete, coach, school, spectator, or community.

An athlete may not use alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances at any time. Disciplinary action will be taken, and the school policy implemented if such instances occur.

Hazing is a form of harassment and will not be tolerated. Students found to have committed an act of harassment will be subjected to disciplinary action. Team members are encouraged and expected to notify their coach if such behavior occurs.

Athletes are expected to adhere to team rules and directions. Inappropriate behavior may interfere with a coach's ability to conduct games/ practices and puts the team's objectives at risk.

Students are expected to abide by the team attendance rules established by the coach.

Coaches will clearly inform students of their policy, so athletes are fully aware of the coach's expectations. Students are expected to attend every practice and competition. It will be up to the coach's discretion about attendance policy and consequences due to absences.

Spectators are welcomed and encouraged to attend. Parents, family, friends, students, and community members are an important aspect of the WBHS athletic program and enhance the involvement of the athletes. All spectators are expected to conform to the accepted standard and practices of sportsmanship. Lack of sportsmanship, especially from spectators, leads to negative school impressions and will distract athletes. Misbehavior can lead to removal from a game, or other consequences.

Please follow these guidelines:

- Respect officials, visiting coaches, visiting players, and visiting spectators. Treat all visitors as guests to our school and community.
- Booing, whistling, stamping of feet, disrespectful remarks and obscene gestures must be always avoided. Positive remarks are encouraged.
- Refrain from all derogatory comments toward any player, coach, official or spectator. If there is an issue with a coach, please use the 24-hour rule, and wait 24 hours to engage in questions or conversation.

The athletic coach will be responsible for determining the nature of any offense of this Code of Conduct and assign the disciplinary action.

The student athlete and his/her parent/guardian will be given the opportunity to discuss the issues and disciplinary action with the coach, athletic director, or school administrator, if requested.

Requirements for Tryouts

Athletes are expected to participate on the first day and all other dates of tryouts. Athletes who miss the official start date and express a late interest may be denied the opportunity to participate in the program. In programs where cuts are made, the coaches are expected to make their final selections from those who attend tryouts. Exception to this policy can be considered for those athletes that have a documented medical illness, family emergency or an injury. Consideration will only be given to those that notify the coach in advance of the tryouts. As mentioned previously in this guide, commitment is vital to the success of all involved. There is undoubtedly a sacrifice to be made, not only on the part of the athlete, but on the family as well. Athletes and parents are expected to make certain that personal plans and work schedules are adjusted so as not to conflict with tryout dates, practices, and contests.

Each year is viewed as independent of another with respect to tryouts and the tryout is open to all. Athletes who were involved with the program the year before are not “guaranteed” a place on the team roster in the next season. All athletes should be prepared to “compete” for membership every year. Some students mature from one year to the next and may be included on the team after having been cut the year before. Athletes can gain a potential advantage when they make more of a visible commitment to the program and improve significantly after having been involved in summer camps, summer league play, or community and organized club programs out of season. As was mentioned previously, as the level progresses to the varsity, the size of a team becomes more a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest.

A note for seniors: One of the most difficult situations coaches face is the dilemma of the senior who has been in the program for years and now is viewed as a limited role player. Seniors will not be accommodated with a junior varsity experience, as this is considered a developmental program. Senior athletes are not guaranteed a roster spot, or playing time due to seniority, regardless of their history with the program.

At the varsity level, the best will play, regardless of age, if program expectations are met. Coaches are encouraged to discuss expectations with seniors. If it is clear to the coach during tryouts that the role of the senior will be limited, that information will be communicated. The senior presented with the opportunity to remain in the program with a limited role must be prepared to accept this role, and still meet all the expectations of the program with respect to attendance and work ethic, while still showing support for the team. This is an arduous challenge and possibly the most difficult team player role. The senior must be willing to meet this challenge with a positive attitude if he or she wishes to remain a part of the team. If a coach feels that the senior has reached the limits of his or her potential and/or the athlete is incapable of adjusting to limited role expectations with a positive attitude, the coach may not provide the senior with the option of staying on the team.

Commitment to Practice and Games

Athletes are expected to attend every practice and contest, unless excused by their coach. If an athlete is in school attendance, he or she is expected at practice. **There are no unexcused absences from practices or games.** Excused absences are permitted for extra help (i.e., tutoring), death in the family, family illness, family emergencies, medical reasons, and religious observances. Timely communication between the coach, parent and/or athlete in this situation is essential.

Opportunities exist for WBHS student-athletes, especially at the high school level, to participate on non-school sponsored teams, while participating on school-sponsored teams. When these situations occur, sound communication between the student-athlete, parent/guardian, and coach is mandatory. As discussed in the philosophy portion of this handbook, membership on a junior varsity or varsity team requires a considerable time commitment. The school district is responsible for monitoring the wellness and safety of each of our student-athletes. Each situation involving outside school competition must be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, any anticipated conflicts regarding school commitment and program expectations must be brought to the attention of the coaching staff prior to tryouts.

An athlete's first commitment must be to the school program. Coaches are not expected to excuse athletes from school practices and/or contests due to conflicts or commitments with outside community club or travel team practices, contests and/or tournaments. Parents and athletes should not expect coaches to compromise their commitment expectations.

Family Vacations

When parents and student-athletes choose to take their family vacation during a sport season, it must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete can affect team chemistry, personal conditioning, and performance level of the individual and the overall success of the team. This could possibly affect future playing time. Every individual on the team has a role, not just in the game, but in the practice climate as well, regardless of how much playing time the athlete is experiencing. Commitment during the vacation periods involves self-sacrifice, not only on the part of the coach and athlete, but the family as well. Attendance, based on coach's expectations, is mandatory during vacation periods. Contact the coach prior to the season to fulfill team commitments and expectations.

Varsity Athletic Vacation Policy

To ensure that students recognize and understand their responsibility as a member of the varsity and JV team, parents and students are reminded that their participation requires attendance at all practices and games during non-school and vacation periods. Therefore, student athletes must be prepared to participate in athletic practices or games that are scheduled during the following recesses: Thanksgiving Break (end of November), Winter Break (end of December), Mid-winter (mid-February) and spring (March/April). At West Broward High School, we are

committed to preparing for and honoring the contest schedule during these non-school and vacation periods. In addition to these periods, the fall sports season will start prior to Labor Day. Consequently, all varsity athletes and their families are reminded to plan vacations accordingly.

It is recognized that there may be situations of an emergency nature that may arise which would necessitate the missing of scheduled practices. The student athlete and family may request an exception from this policy by appealing to the coach. All athletes should be expected to plan and attend these practices and/or competitions, if they wish to remain on the team, maintain playing eligibility and earn an award letter. Student-athletes are expected to make a full commitment to the season and notify the coach of any potential commitment conflicts *prior* to tryouts. A problem with commitment may impact the selection process.

Once selected for a team, an athlete is expected to finish the season. An athlete that voluntarily quits, at any time during the season, will not be allowed to return under any circumstances for the remainder of the season. A student dismissed from a team for disciplinary reasons may not try out for another team that season.

School-Sanctioned Activities and Field Trips

There are numerous educational opportunities for students in our school system. The Athletic department supports school-sanctioned programs and trips, but also realizes that student-athletes who choose to participate in school trips or school exchange programs may miss substantial amounts of practice time, which affects personal athletic goals and team goals. Coaches, parents and student-athletes have a responsibility to each other, and parents are expected to plan and communicate well in advance of each sport season when considering participation in school sanctioned programs and/or trips. All attempts should be made to consider the practice and/or game schedule and seek the advice of the coach before making commitments to plans. If an athlete's personal commitments compromise team goals or present a conflict with respect to the standards and expectations defined for all involved in the program, the athlete should be prepared to make a choice between his/her continued relationship with the team and their commitment to other personal goals.

Team Uniforms and School Issued Equipment

Athletic equipment becomes more costly each year. Each team will have an inventory check out for uniforms/ gear that must be turned in at the end of the season. If the athlete does not return their uniforms/ gear an obligation will be placed on the student's account. It is the responsibility of the student athlete to secure all school issued equipment items and uniforms and take care of them for the duration of the school season.

Care and Maintenance of Uniform and Equipment

All athletes and parents are responsible for the cleaning and maintaining of all uniforms and equipment issued to them during a season. Some of our most costly items may shrink, fade, or bleed color if washed in hot water. In addition, our logos, numbers, and screens may crack and peel off if temperature settings for washing and drying are too hot. Therefore, do not wash uniforms in hot water and avoid drying on hot temperature settings. Please wash uniforms in cold water and hang to dry. Be sure to read the tags on the cloth for washing and drying instructions. When in doubt, speak to the coach before laundering uniforms. If the uniform needs to be replaced, the athlete will be expected to pay for the replacement item through an obligation on their account.

Return of School Issued Uniforms and Equipment

It is the responsibility of the athlete to personally sign out and return all school issued equipment to their coach at the end of their season. All team uniforms and equipment are to be returned to the coach immediately after the last practice, contest, or scheduled meetings by the coach. Athletes should never give their school issued equipment or uniform to anyone else to return for them. Coaches keep accurate records of school issued inventory and if there are any items not returned at the end of the season, the athlete will be placed on an indebted list. Athletes are not permitted to keep their uniforms at the end of a season. Athletic uniforms are costly to replace in small quantity and allowing student-athletes to keep their uniforms would be fiscally irresponsible. In addition, many of our uniforms are custom made, and cannot be matched. All parents are asked to support our inventory policies and make every effort to see to it that their child's uniform and protective equipment are returned to the coach immediately following the last game of the season. Please be advised that it is more beneficial to have the inventory item returned than to have the item paid for. Family cooperation is essential. Please make all attempts to locate and return all school issued athletic inventory at the end of the season. Athletes who are indebted will not be issued any other school uniform or protective equipment for another sport season until they clear their indebtedness with the coach or athletic office. If the uniform is lost, or ruined, the athlete will be held responsible. Coaches will also be instructed to withhold the presentation of athletic awards until the missing items of inventory have been returned or paid for. **Seniors will not be issued diplomas and cap/gowns for graduation ceremony until all outstanding equipment/uniforms have been returned or monetarily reimbursed.**

Classroom and School Attendance

No student-athlete may participate in a practice, scrimmage, or contest on a day when the student was absent from school, unless a school administrator grants special permission for the absence.

If late to school or leaving early, students must be present for at least HALF a school day per Broward County School Board policy. Students who demonstrate problems with school absences, tardiness, either excused or unexcused, are subject to suspension and/or dismissal from the team. Athletes are expected to get to school on time, make a commitment to classroom attendance and demonstrate appropriate behavior. Students who are suspended may not participate in or attend any athletic activities during the period of suspension.

Academic Expectations

Therefore, no student may participate in extracurricular activities or interscholastic athletics unless he/she is demonstrating satisfactory academic progress. To participate, a student must have a minimum of a 2.0 unweighted GPA. If they are below a 2.0, they are ineligible to play. Coaches may input additional sanctions for unsatisfactory grades.

Students who are placed on the Ineligibility List may continue to participate in extracurricular activities and Interscholastic Athletics by meeting the following three criteria:

- Obtaining academic assistance three times each week
- Completing regularly assigned course work
- Exhibiting appropriate school behavior.

Student Athlete Possessions

All athletes are provided with a locker for their personal use located in the physical education locker room or team room facility. Since this area is used by numerous students throughout the course of an afternoon and teams dismiss their athletes at varying times, it is impossible to make certain that the locker room facility is always secured. Therefore, it is essential that each athlete purchases their own combination lock and assumes the responsibility for locking up and securing their books, clothing, and personal possessions prior to leaving the facility for practice and contests each day. The school district is not responsible for lost/stolen property.

If the athlete leaves their personal belongings unlocked or out on the team bench in the locker room facility, they are inviting theft. Athletes are discouraged from bringing valuable personal items to school, where they will be left in the locker room facility. Excess cash, expensive jewelry and electronics should be left at home.

Spectator Code of Conduct

Spectators are an important part of the game and shall conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior. Spectators shall always respect officials, coaches, and players, and extend all courtesies to them. While wholesome cheering is encouraged, taunting, foul and

abusive language, inflammatory remarks and disrespectful signs and behavior are not acceptable.

The school expects our adults and parents to set the tone for all spectators and serve as appropriate role models for all our student-athletes. Please assist the school officials and coaches in providing a healthy educational climate that our school can be proud of by maintaining an appropriate competitive perspective throughout the contest.

Spectators shall observe and obey the rules and regulations of the school concerning tobacco, smoking, food, and soft drink consumption, use of lavatory facilities and the parking of their vehicles on school grounds. The law further prohibits any person under the influence of alcohol to be on school property. Spectators shall respect and obey all school officials, supervisors, and security and police at all athletic contests.

Spectators who fail to adhere to conduct expectations during a contest should be prepared to accept consequences for their inappropriate behavior. These consequences may include ejection from the contest site for the day or for an extended period.

Creed for Competitors

- **PLAY HARD** - After the contest is over, you can say, "I gave everything I've got physically. I fought my heart out."

PLAY SMART - Keep your poise. Be intent. Stay focused. Concentrate only on the game.

PLAY FAIR- Fight clean. Obey both the letter and the spirit of the rules. No hedging, no cheating.

PLAY TO WIN - Never concede. Never quit. Never give up or give in. Maintain your self-respect and respect your opponents by giving an all-out effort.

HAVE FUN - Don't shrink from the fear of defeat or let the bitter taste of defeat destroy your love of the game.

KEEP PERSPECTIVE - When the game is on, it is important that you win. After it is over, it makes no ethical difference whether you won or lost. Self-worth is not predicated on the vagaries of victory or defeat. What does matter most is that you love the challenge of the game, savor the camaraderie of your teammates, and earn the respect of your opponents; namely, that you have been true to your best self.

Parent-Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each role, we are better able to accept the actions of others and provide greater benefit to the students. As parents, when your children become involved in a school's sports programs, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication between coach, parent, and student athlete.

Communication You Should Expect from Your Child's Coach

- Expectations the coach has for the team.
- Location and times of all practices and contests.
- Team requirements: special equipment, off-season conditioning responsibilities, etc.
- Procedure should your child be injured during participation.
- Team rules and guidelines

Communication Coaches Expect from Athletes

- Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance
- Additional health concerns.
- Special concerns regarding the coach's philosophy and/or expectations.
- Prompt reporting of injuries.

As your children become involved in an athletic program, 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 that your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach is of paramount importance. Parents are urged to encourage their child to discuss issues/concerns with their coach. This step is an important aspect in confidence building, self-esteem, personal responsibility, and maturation.

Appropriate Parental Concerns to Discuss with the Coach

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

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you desire. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be in the best interests of the team and for all students involved. Certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues Not to Be Discussed with the Coach

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes on the team

Procedures to Discuss Concerns with the Coach

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedures should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

- Call/email the coach to set up an appointment.
- If the coach cannot be reached, call the athletic office to ask for assistance in setting up the meeting.
- Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice.

These can be emotional times for the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution. Please take into consideration the coach's responsibilities at this time, as the coach is responsible for the supervision and safety of all athletes involved in the program, before, during and after an activity. If meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution of your concerns, call, and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation. If needed, a meeting with the High School Principal may be arranged to assist.

Some Rules for Parents

- The following is a suggested "code of conduct" for parents:
 - Remain seated in spectator areas during competition.
 - Do not yell instructions or criticisms to the children.
 - Do not make derogatory comments to players, other parents or fans, officials, or administrators.
 - Do not interfere with your child's coach.
 - Be willing to let the coach be responsible for your child during the duration of the contest.

- If necessary, remind those around you of the rules.
- Provide unconditional love, acceptance, and emotional support, regardless of the game's outcome.

Athletic Facility Use

- The following guidelines must be observed when students are using WHBS facilities.
 1. Students may only use the athletic facilities under direct supervision of a coach.
 2. Students using any athletic facilities (indoors or outdoors) must be dressed appropriately. Shirts and appropriate athletic footwear must be always worn.
 3. No food or drinks will be allowed in the weight room.
 4. Weights should be returned to the designated racks and equipment returned to the storage rooms before students leave the areas.
 5. All weight room and fitness center equipment must be disinfected both prior to and after use. NOTE: Squeeze bottle disinfectant and paper towels are provided.

Transportation

Athletes are expected to use transportation provided by the school “to” and “from” all athletic contests. Student-athletes are expected to arrive for bus departures on time and may not drive to the site, unless approved beforehand. If a student does not make the bus and arrives at the site without administrative approval in advance, the athlete should not expect to participate. In special cases, a parent may need permission to transport their child from a game site on a given date. In such cases, the request must be made to the coach in advance of the contest and approved by the High School Principal. These shall be considered only as the “rare exception” and should be reserved for emergency situations.

Athletes at away contests are expected to remain “on site” and under the direct supervision of the coach at all times. All students will be expected to conduct themselves appropriately when traveling with the team. Parents should not expect to take their athlete home from the game site unless without signing out with the coaching staff. **Under no circumstances will a parent be allowed to take any other child home, but their own, nor will a child be permitted to leave an away site with anyone other than his or her parent. Unless prior authorization and paperwork have been put in place.** Failing to comply with our transportation and supervision policies at away contests may jeopardize an athlete's team eligibility. Parents are expected to pick up athletes in a timely fashion after home games, or when the athlete returns from an away contest. Athletes should check with the coach for the estimated time of pick up.

Acknowledgement of Code of Conduct

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the WBHS Code of Conduct for the WBHS athletic department.

I further acknowledge that I have read and understand all my obligations, duties, and responsibilities under each principle and provision of the WBHS Code of Conduct, and will read and understand all my obligations, duties, and responsibilities under all future amendments and modifications thereto.

I understand that violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including suspension from the program. I certify that this is a true and correct statement by my signature below:

Parent/Guardian #1 Name _____

Parent/Guardian #1 Signature _____

Date _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Name _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Signature _____

Date _____

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____