

WEST MICHIGAN ACADEMY OF ARTS & ACADEMICS

STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK

2016-2017



WILDCATS

Tighe Carter, Assistant Director
tcarter@westmichiganacademy.org
616-844-9961
www.westmichiganacademy.org

ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics believes that a dynamic program of student activities is vital to the educational development of the student while recognizing that athletic programs are secondary to academic programs. The goal of these programs is to realize the value of participation without over-emphasizing importance of winning. The purpose is to develop and improve character traits among the program's participants. Our programs should expand the experiences available to middle school students while providing students with several options to participate in athletic programs, improving fundamental skills while gaining a knowledge and appreciation for the game, develop good sportsmanship, and support and practice the WMAAA mission. WMAAA currently offers Girl's Volleyball in the Fall, Boy's and Girl's Basketball in the Winter, and co-ed Cross Country in the Spring.

THE PRIVILEGE

To represent West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics (WMAAA) through interscholastic sport is considered an honor and a privilege, not a right. When a student participates on a team, that person must abide by certain standards. Athletes represent their community as well as their school and themselves. WMAAA athletes should set a good example for younger students as well as for their fellow students. Be proud of all WMAAA athletes because only those who maintain satisfactory scholastic standing and good conduct will be a part of your team.

SPORTSMANSHIP EXPECTATIONS

The Six Fundamentals of Good Sportsmanship:

1. Show respect for opponents. They are our guests or we are their guests.
2. Show respect for the officials. They are educators who do their job to the best of their ability.
3. Know, understand, and appreciate the rules of the contest. Conform to the spirit as well as to the letter of the rules.
4. Maintain self-control at all times. The desire to win must not overcome rational behavior.
5. Recognize and appreciate an opponent's good performance. Applauding a quality performance by an opponent is good sportsmanship and goodwill.
6. Encourage others to be good sports. If you see someone displaying unsportsmanlike behavior, spend a few moments to remind that person of the role of educational athletics and how sportsmanship is a part of the process.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Students participating on sports teams should meet the following eligibility requirements in addition to having a current sports physical (the physical exam must not be dated earlier than April 15 of the previous school year) and all forms turned into the WMAAA office. Each requirement applies to each subject area and will be assessed on a weekly basis. The assessments will start one week before the season and continue every week throughout the season. Failure to meet the requirements will result in the student being ineligible to participate in games. If at the next assessment the student fulfills all the requirements, his/her eligibility will be reinstated.

Academic Eligibility

- The student's grades should not include either two D's or one F. If either of these occurs, he/she will be ineligible. WMAAA may further restrict this criteria to stress the importance of academics.
- The student is expected to turn in all homework. Two or more missing homework assignments and the student will be ineligible.
- Any student who is participating in educational services in the resource room (special education) will have their academic performance and the resulting eligibility examined on a case-by-case basis. This assessment should be done with the resource room professional, the Director/Assistant Director, and the homeroom teacher.
- The Academic Eligibility form should be completed by the classroom teachers and submitted to the coach each week.

Absences from School

- Athletes must attend **all** classes to participate in practice or contests unless they have been excused or pre-excused by the Director/Assistant Director.
- A student suspended out of school is forbidden from being present at any school-sponsored event scheduled for that day, either home or away. A suspension will be considered an un-excused absence from practice.

Absences from Practice

We expect our athletes to attend all required practices in their sport. However, realizing that there can be conflicts in time and scheduling over which the athlete may have little if any control an excused and unexcused approach will be used by all coaches.

- **Pre-excused:** An athlete knowing that a conflict exists and having an acceptable reason for missing a practice will not be penalized. Acceptability of the reason is at the discretion of the coach. An athlete who missed a practice or practices with a pre-excuse, while not being subject to any punitive action, may not be able to perform in a game due to lack of preparation.
- **Excused:** Absences due to illness, death in the family, and other emergency situations brought to the attention of the coach.
- **Un-excused:** Any athlete who misses a practice without a pre-excused or excused absence will face the following disciplinary action:
 - First offense - one game suspension.
 - Second offense - two game suspension
 - Third offense - suspension for rest of season.

Any suspension resulting from an unexcused absence will take place on the first playing date following the unexcused absence. Playing dates which involve multiple competitions, such as tournaments, double headers, or double duals shall be counted as two dates in computing the number of contest suspensions.

Coaches may have attendance rules as part of a particular program. Those rules may be approved by the Assistant Director and substituted for the above attendance rules.

Conduct Eligibility

- Students should maintain an attitude that is acceptable to all staff members. Steps to be taken are as follows:
 - The teacher will address the behavior.
 - The teacher will contact the parents(s) and explain that the student will be placed on warning if the behavior does not improve.

- If the behavior does not improve, the Assistant Director will be notified and the student will be placed on warning.
- The Assistant Director will notify the coach, the athlete, and parent(s).
- A second warning means missing one week of competition.
- A third warning is dismissal from the team.
- Coaches have the prerogative to remove students from competition for unsportsmanlike conduct and /or unexcused absences from games/practices.
- If a student is ineligible, or not competing for any reason, he/she may **not** dress for the game. The student is required to practice and attend the game as a spectator.
- Students will not be eligible when on suspension.
- The student should not have any violations of the school's Student Code of Conduct as determined by the Director/Assistant Director.

Age/Grade Eligibility

- If a student turns 15 years old **before** Sept.1st, they are ineligible to compete.
- WMAAA Sports are open to 6th, 7th and 8th grade students only. No Elementary grades may participate.

NO CUT POLICY

The general philosophy for WMAAA athletics is to encourage all interested students to participate. Thus, we encourage a no-cut policy.

Obviously, time, space, facilities, equipment, personal preference, and other factors will place limitations on the most effective squad size for any particular sport. However, when developing policy in this regard, WMAAA strives to maximize the opportunities for students without diluting the quality of the programs.

Cutting Responsibilities

Choosing the members of the athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those squads. Lower level coaches shall take into consideration the policies established by the head coach in that particular program when selecting final team rosters.

Prior to tryouts, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

- Extent of try-out period;
- Criteria to be used to select the team;
- Number to be selected;
- Practice commitment if they make the team;
- Game commitment if they make the team.

Cutting Procedure

When a squad cut becomes a necessity, the process will include three important elements. Each candidate will:

- Have competed in a minimum of a one-week practice session;
- Have performed in at least one intra-squad scrimmage;
- Be personally informed of the cut by the coach and the reason for the action.

Cut lists are not posted. The coach will talk one-on-one with each student that tried out. Coaches will discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport or other areas in the activities program.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Student Guidelines

- Players may not have obligation to a particular sport more than a total of five (5) days per week which includes two (2) games per week.
- Within WMAAA athletics every student athlete will be given the opportunity to play and every student athlete will be given the opportunity to sit during each contest. Athletes that are not playing should not be dressed.
- Athletes will be removed from the game for using profanity.
- Athletes may not wear jewelry during athletic contests.
- Uniforms must be worn as the manufacturer intended. The waistband of the shorts must be around the waist of the athlete. Jerseys must be tucked in at the start of the contest.
- All players will shake hands with the other team after the game.

Transfer Students

- Transfer students must practice a minimum of five days before they may play in their first athletic contest. Scrimmages are considered practices.
- Transfer students must consult with the athletic department to review eligibility and conditions of transfer.

Cancellation Procedures

- The school hosting the game is responsible to cancel the game for any reason (no electricity, severe weather, etc.)
- Severe weather policy (tornado watch/warning or snow day):
 - Tornado watch or warning – all contests are cancelled.
 - Thunderstorm/snowstorm watch or warning – AD will determine cancellation.
 - Assistant Director will contact the school the team(s) are competing against by 2:00 pm on the day of the contest if the contest is cancelled.
- Cancelled games will be rescheduled as soon as possible after the cancellation date.
- If school is cancelled, all athletic contests and practices are cancelled.

Tournaments

- WMAAA currently operates as an independent and has no league affiliation.
- At this time, WMAAA is not eligible to compete in a league or state tournament.
- Tournaments may be added to the athletic schedules as opportunities arise.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any student whose conduct is determined to be a discredit to him/herself, the team, or the school during their middle school career shall be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the coach, Assistant Director, and/or Director. Being a participant in WMAAA's athletic program is a privilege and not a right. Any participant who does not treat it as such will lose his/her privilege to engage in it.

All members of athletic teams are bound by the following training rules (as they apply to substance use or possession) at all times throughout the entire current school year plus any school sponsored event.

Suspension

Temporary suspension of participants may be made by the coach of the sport and the Director/Assistant Director. Suspension from a team results in nonparticipation in play/practice during the entire period of the suspension.

Athletic training rules forbid the use, possession, or distribution of tobacco (in any form), alcohol, drugs, narcotics, or any controlled substance or any item represented to be a controlled substance by any athlete who represents WMAAA.

- The first offence will result in a suspension for the remainder of the current athletic season.
- Second offense will result in a suspension from all athletics for twelve months.

Removal from Participation

A student athlete may be removed from his/her team for the following reason:

- Violations of the school's Student Code of Conduct
- Violations of school, athletic, or team policies
- Personal misconduct that involves police or court action during the sport season either before, during, or after hours
- Verbal or physical attack upon any individual
- Acts of poor sportsmanship
- Continuous weekly academic ineligibility as determined by the Athletic Eligibility Form
- Refusing to participate in athletic practices or contests

Student athletes will be given the opportunity for a hearing with the appropriate school administrator if the student or his/her parent/guardian indicated the desire for one. A hearing shall be held to allow the student and his/her parent/guardian to contest the facts or to contest the appropriateness of the sanction imposed by a disciplinary authority. The suspension will be in effect until the appeal process has been resolved.

Steps for Review

- The student athlete should have met with the coach involved to try to solve the problem.
- The student athlete may request a review by the Assistant Director who will arrange a meeting with the coach, the student athlete, and the parents. This meeting shall take place within five school days of the request for the review.
- If the decision resulting from the meeting with the coach, parents, and Assistant Director is unsatisfactory to the parents, they may appeal to the Director.

FORMS

All of the following forms need to be turned in to the listed locations before a student will be allowed to participate in any practices, scrimmages, or games.

Forms to be on file in the WMAAA Office

- Physical Form (must not be dated earlier than April 15 of the previous school year)
- Concussion Form
- Athletic Permission Form
- Transportation Form

Forms to be on hand with your Coach

- Emergency Information Form

ATHLETIC PERMISSION FORM

Your son/daughter has indicated an interest in interscholastic athletics. In order for them to compete, please read the Student-Athlete Handbook and fill out the following information. Please keep in mind that this document once signed, is applicable to your child from the first day of practice until the end of their athletic participation for the school year.

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

I have read the Student-Athlete Handbook and I agree to abide by the regulations stated herein. I have also discussed this with my parents (or legal guardian) and they attest to this by their co-signature.

Athlete's Signature

Parent/legal Guardian Signature

INJURY CONSENT WAIVER

In case of medical treatment, a coach or representative from the WMAAA will contact you for permission and direction. If we are unable to contact you, we will seek the necessary care.

I have read the above statement and agree to the procedure involved.

Parent/legal Guardian Signature

OR

I do not agree to the above procedure and will accept full responsibility in case medical treatment is necessary.

Parent/legal Guardian Signature

Family Doctor

Date

Hospital

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Each athlete is responsible for their athletic equipment issued to them by the coaching staff. If this is lost or stolen they will be held responsible for the cost.

Athlete's Signature

Parent/legal Guardian Signature

Athletes are to return this form to their coach or WMAAA office as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORM

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENT

Student Athlete's Legal Name _____

Address _____

Birth Date _____ Age _____

Father's Name _____

Cell Phone (_____) _____ Other Phone (_____) _____

Mother's Name _____

Cell Phone (_____) _____ Other Phone (_____) _____

Legal Guardian (if other than above) _____

Cell Phone (_____) _____ Other Phone (_____) _____

Family Physician _____

Physician Phone (_____) _____

Medical Problems or Allergies _____

Insurance Carrier _____ Policy # _____

In case of accident or illness, I request the coach to contact me. If unable to reach me, and the emergency is acute, I hereby authorize permission to seek emergency medical care including transportation to an emergency room. I hereby authorize the physician in charge to administer whatever emergency treatment is necessary at my expense.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Athletes are to return this form to their coach as soon as possible. The coach will keep on file with them.

TRANSPORTATION FORM

West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics does not provide any form of transportation to and from sporting practices. WMAAA will provide busing when possible to and from athletic contests. The recommended and preferred method would be to have transportation provided by the student's parent or legal guardian.

If I am unable to provide transportation, I give my permission for my child to be transported to and from sporting events by someone other than myself. I understand that it is my responsibility to coordinate transportation when I am unable to provide transportation for my child.

In case of an accident, I will not hold the driver of the vehicle or anyone associated with West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics liable for any injuries or damages.

Student Name

Parent/Legal Guardian (print name)

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

Date

Athletes are to return this form to their coach or WMAAA office as soon as possible.