

# WEST ISLIP ATHLETICS



Athletic Handbook  
Code of Conduct  
For Athletes, Parents, &  
Spectators

## **Philosophy**

The student athlete represents the best of its school and its community and therefore is held to a high standard. Student athletes are our school's ambassadors to our community and to the schools with whom we compete. They are often leaders in school and role models to children not yet old enough to play sports.

It is the duty of all those concerned with high school athletics to emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play under all circumstances. The values to be derived from playing fairly should be stressed and any actions which tend to destroy those values should be discouraged. Courtesy should be shown toward opponents, officials, coaches, athletes, supervisors, spectators, administrators, etc. Efforts must be made to achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility and to respect the integrity and the judgment of the sport officials. It is important for all to recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of the individual players.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege, not a right. Students wishing to take advantage of the opportunities presented to them by the West Islip School District must show a commitment to the athletic program by regular attendance at practices and contests, as well as conformity to the rules established by the district and/or coach. Failure to comply with the rules of conduct will result in appropriate disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the team.

## **Eligibility**

All student athletes must meet the behavioral requirements as established in the student hand book.

1. A contestant must be a bona fide student and adhere to the NYSPHSAA rules and regulations.
2. All athletic candidates must have a completed sports physical prior to participation. For those students seeing their own physician, school forms must be used.
3. A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition in grades 9, 10, 11, 12 until his/her nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports.
4. A student in grade 7 or 8 who is selected to participate at the varsity, junior varsity, or freshman level must pass a selective classification test before being able to compete.

## **Try Outs and Selection of Teams**

As an athletic department, we try to keep as many students on our teams as possible. Size of team is determined by safety factors such as how many athletes a coach can adequately supervise. Additionally, team numbers are determined by the number of athletes who can positively contribute in some way. Unfortunately, some teams have to make "selections" or "cuts." This is one of the most difficult decisions a coach must make. When athletes are evaluated during a tryout period, coaches are asked to use as many "objective factors" as possible (sport specific skills, timing events, etc.) Some subjective factors come into play like effort, attitude and an athlete's ability to contribute to team success.

## **Club Teams**

It is recognized that many times an athlete may have numerous commitments. Some of these may include participation on outside club teams. It is important that the athletes and their parents understand that as a member of an interscholastic team, their primary commitment is to their school team.

## **Academics**

In the academic area, a good student becomes a good athlete. If one is lazy in class, one will be lazy on the practice field or floor and never reach one's full potential. As an athlete, one must plan his/her schedule to give sufficient time and energy to studies to ensure acceptable grades. In addition to maintaining good scholarship, an athlete should give respectable attention to classroom activities and show respect for other students and faculty members at all times. A healthy athlete should have a good attendance record, never cutting class or school. All athletes failing two or more subjects must comply with the district Academic Responsibility Procedures. These procedures are adopted with the hope that continued eligibility for participation will be a strong incentive for these youngsters to improve their academic performance.

The way we act and look in school is of great importance. Athletes should be leaders and fellow students should respect and follow them.

## **Attendance**

Attendance is the single most important indicator of an athlete's commitment to a team. Student athletes are expected to make all practices and contests including those scheduled on Saturdays and days when school is not in session. We ask parents to schedule vacations so as not to conflict with an athlete's commitment to a team.

1. Student athletes will provide coaches with *prior* notification of projected absences when possible. Excused absences will be permitted in cases such as medical reasons, religious observance, or personal/family extenuating circumstances approved by the coach.
2. If student athletes do not participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes, they cannot participate in any practice or contest that day.
3. If student athletes are absent from school, they will be ineligible to practice or compete in any contest that day. Extenuating circumstances will be given special consideration by the Athletic Director.

## **Travel**

1. Student athletes are required to travel to and from contests on the team bus under the supervision of a coaching staff member.
2. Proper conduct is expected at all times while riding on school transportation.
3. If a parent wishes to take a student home from an athletic contest, permission must be granted in advance and a written form signed by the parent must be given to the coach. These situations should be rare and emergency type situations.

## **ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER DRUGS**

The avoidance of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is a realistic goal that all student athletes must strive to uphold and which parents, teachers, and administrators and the community-at-large should endorse and support.

A student athlete's inappropriate behavior, whether in or out of school as it pertains to the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs will not be tolerated.

If a student athlete is observed participating in a behavior connected with the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, or other substances, disciplinary action will be taken. In addition to any disciplinary action which might be taken for in-school infractions, such as detention, ISS, OSS, etc., the student athlete may be suspended from a sport contest and may lose the privilege to participate in interscholastic sports. These sanctions will be determined by the coach and administration. In order for a student athlete to be sanctioned for this behavior, it must be observed by West Islip administrators, teachers, or coaches or the police, security, or administrators from other school districts.

While the role of the school does not extend to the regulation of private activities of the athlete's families, we encourage them to serve as positive role models for their children. Parents and the school must not condone a student athlete's use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome verbal, electronic or physical interaction between two or more people. Sexual harassment can happen between people of the same gender or people of different genders. Any athlete, male or female, proven to sexually harass any other student will be subject to suspension or removal from the team, a program or the school.

## **HAZING- INITIATION CEREMONY**

West Islip coaches will not permit their athletes to stage any type of "initiation" or "hazing" at any time. We respect that there are individual differences in how each of our teammates may react to a designated task, activity, or request. Whereas one teammate may find a team activity entertaining, another teammate may find the same activity humiliating.

At no time should a teammate be subjected to a behavior, task, or activity that is physically, psychologically, or emotionally abusive. At no time may an athlete gossip about, disparage, belittle, ridicule, or bully any other person for any reason whatsoever. Causing social or emotional distress to another individual will jeopardize the athlete's continued participation on the team. Unauthorized, inappropriate use of photo or video of West Islip athletes or teams is prohibited and will result in discipline, suspension or removal from the team. It is the right of each teammate to communicate his or her feelings at any point where he or she feels personally devalued or dehumanized. Team members are expected and required to notify a coach or other school official if any such behavior is rumored or observed. The goal of the team is that each member of the team be treated with dignity and respect.

Any team member who initiates a hazing incident will be disciplined. The extent of the consequences for the hazing behavior will be determined by the severity of the incident as determined by the coach, administration and district code of conduct. The consequences for the initiation of and/or participation in hazing behaviors will subject the individual(s) to appropriate disciplinary action which may include lost of participation, suspension, exclusion, expulsion in all extra curricular activities, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

## **Uniforms**

Only school-issued uniforms may be worn during athletic contests. Athletes cannot compete if they fail to dress appropriately.

## **Awards/Letters**

1. Awards and/or letters will be issued only to those student athletes who complete their season (including post-season play-offs) in good standing. Student athletes who are dropped from the team and those who resign before the last contest are not eligible for awards.
2. Student athletes who fail to return their practice/ game uniforms and/or any piece of equipment are ineligible for awards and cannot participate in any other sport until the uniform obligation is met.

## **Behaviors**

Foul language and insulting remarks are not permissible. Athletes are expected to obey a coach's directions. Disobedience, unwarranted comments and other subversive behavior are unacceptable since it may interfere with the coach's ability to conduct a practice/contest and may distract from the time a coach should be devoting to the team. Athletes are expected to communicate with coaches before or after practice to avoid detracting from team practices/contests and team goals. Athletes are also expected to follow the rules and protocol of their sport and not intentionally violate the rules of the sport that they are playing during practice or competitions. The coach, building administrator or athletic director will impose all penalties for violations. Penalties will be consistent throughout the athletic program and dependent upon the severity of the violation and behavioral history of the violator.

## **Sportsmanship Expectations - West Islip Athletes, Spectators, etc**

It is important for all athletes to remember that participation is a privilege that is not to be abused by unsportsmanlike conduct. The West Islip athlete is to demonstrate self control and respect for teammates, opponents, other athletes, coaches, officials and spectators at all times. West Islip athletes and spectators are expected to follow the SPORTSMANSHIP code:

1. Follow the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play.
2. Make no remarks or gestures at any time toward any other person which would be considered belittling, disparaging, bullying or in any way judgmental or critical of that person.
3. Stress values derived from playing the game fairly.
4. Show cordiality and courtesy to visiting teams, coaches, supervisors and officials.
5. Establish positive relations with visiting teams, coaches, supervisors and hosts.
6. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials.
7. Follow the Section XI, NYSPHSAA and the school rules of eligibility.
8. Encourage leadership, initiative and good judgment in teammates.
9. Recognize the purpose of educationally based athletics is to promote the physical, moral, social and emotional well being of players.
10. **BE LOUD, BE PROUD, BE POSITIVE!**

## **Spectator Behavior**

Spectators are expected to:

1. Conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior.
2. Respect officials, coaches, and players and refrain from disrespectful remarks.
3. Obey the regulations of the site authorities, whether home or away.

Failure to abide by the above items and/or behavior deemed inappropriate by district administration could result in a suspension.

## **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 the other and provide greater benefits to athletes. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach and your child's program.

## **Communication to Expect from Your Child's Coach**

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for all players on the squad
3. Locations and times of practices
4. Team requirements, team rules, special equipment, off-season recommendations for improvement of skills

## **Communication Coaches Expect from Parents**

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach; in private, away from team members
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy

## **Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches**

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

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you hoped. Coaches are professionals....they make judgments based on what they believe to be the best for all student-athletes involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain topics can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other topics, such as those described in the next segment, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

## **Issues Not Appropriate To Discuss With Coaches**

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

**Coaches are making decisions that are in the best interest of all members of the team or program. Please be supportive of their decisions.**

## **Positive Parenting**

1. Be a positive role model.
2. Be a "team" fan not a "my kid" fan.
3. Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups.
4. Be respectful of all officials' decisions.
5. Gain an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the sport.
6. Avoid instructing one's child/teammates during a game, because it conflicts with the coach's plans and strategies.
7. Help your child learn that success is experience in the development of his/her skills, and that he/she can feel positive about their skill development during the season, regardless of the team's record.
8. Support the alcohol, tobacco, and other drug-free policies of the school by refraining from the use of any such substances before and during athletic contests. Support your child and hold him/her accountable for his/her commitment to non-use of substances.
9. Take time to talk with coaches in an appropriate manner, including proper time and place, if there is a concern. Respect the coach by following the designated chain of command.

## **Procedures for Discussing a Concern with a Coach**

1. Contact the coach to set up a meeting to discuss your concerns.
2. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a practice or contest. These can be emotional times and may not benefit either party to attempt to resolve concerns at these times.
3. If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, contact the Athletic Office to set up an appointment with the Director of Athletics.

# WEST ISLIP ATHLETICS

Please return this page signed by all parties to your coach.

I have read all of the materials in the West Islip School District Athletic Handbook for Parents and Athletes. I am aware of the expectations set forth in the handbook including behavior/ expectations inside and outside of school including bullying, harassment, hazing, alcohol, tobacco and other substance use. I am aware that participating in any sports can be a dangerous activity involving **MANY RISKS OF INJURY**. I understand that these risks may include death, neck and spinal injuries, complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, injury to the muscular-skeletal system, as well as injury to other parts of the body.

**CONCUSSIONS-** A concussion is a common but serious traumatic brain injury that alters the way the brain functions. Effects are usually temporary but can sometimes result in prolonged difficulties with headache, memory, concentration, balance and other symptoms. ***NYS Law requires return to play clearance following a concussion to be provided by the school's Chief Medical Officer (CMO).*** West Islip Public Schools Concussion Management and important additional information regarding concussion symptoms and safety can be found under the Athletics' section of the schools website: [www.wi.k12.ny.us](http://www.wi.k12.ny.us)

I agree to support the Athletic Department in its enforcement of these expectations of conduct and understand the consequences of my son/daughter's failure to do so.

Student Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Athletic Team \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

***Lion Pride!***  
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