

WETHERSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS
WETHERSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WETHERSFIELD, CONNECTICUT

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MEMBERSHIP

Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS)
Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC)
Central Connecticut Conference (CCC)

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EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

In compliance with regulations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Civil Rights Act of 1987, and American with Disabilities Act of 1991, the Wethersfield Board of Education has policies to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students at Wethersfield High School.

Mission Statement

The Wethersfield High School Department of Athletics strives to provide an interscholastic athletic program of excellence that is an integral part of the educational philosophy and supports the goals of the Wethersfield Public Schools. The Athletic Department provides opportunities to student-athletes to participate in interscholastic sport programs that are designed to develop leadership, a sense of civic responsibility and community, sportsmanship, athletic performance, appropriate conduct within a competitive environment and a healthy understanding of values associated with participating in sport. Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege, not a right.

OBJECTIVES

- To offer to as many students as possible, an opportunity to participate in an organized, well-planned and balanced program of interscholastic athletics.
- To encourage student-athletes to achieve personal academic success by maintaining academic eligibility and to keep athletics in proper perspective.
- To encourage students to participate in athletics, not only for tangible rewards, but for the intrinsic values that make athletic competition educationally and socially beneficial and prepare them for their future life.
- To provide students with guidance and physical training designed to help them develop appropriate attitudes and behaviors towards winning and losing.
- To emphasize the importance of physical fitness, conditioning and developing proper healthful habits as a life skill.
- To provide opportunities for students to demonstrate good sportsmanship and develop lasting friendship with teammates and opponents.
- To encourage all athletes to maintain a highest standard of conduct on and off the playing field.
- To emphasize to all student-athletes the importance and value of performing as a team.
- To provide high quality leadership and coaching for all sports offered.
- To encourage all student-athletes to maintain the highest form of integrity and sportsmanship at all times while representing themselves, the community and school as a part of an athletic program.
- To foster good citizenship, moral responsibility, a positive self-image, commitment, leadership and proper competitive conduct through participation in sports.
- To provide students with decision-making skills that fosters a physically fit and healthy lifestyle.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Requirements for Participation:

The completed Online Registration documents that the students are academically eligible, the participation fee has been paid, a current physical is on file with the school. The on-line registration contains parent consent as well as state mandated information regarding concussion awareness and sudden cardiac arrest. All information is available on the WHS website.

Medical Examination

Students must undergo a medical examination each year prior to participating in a sport and that “physical” is valid for 13 calendar months.

Certain circumstances may require additional examinations, which will be determined by the School Nurse, Coach, or Athletic Director.

PARTICIPATION FEE

The following reflects the athletic participation fee, effective August, 2001.

Students will be required to pay \$60 to participate in the following sports:

Girls Cross Country	Cheerleading (fall)	Dance (fall)
Boys Cross Country	Cheerleading (winter)	Dance (winter)

Students will be required to pay \$80 to participate in the following sports:

Boys Basketball	Football	Boys Golf
Girls Basketball	Wrestling	Girls Golf
Boys Swimming	Girls Volleyball	Gymnastics
Girls Track & Field	Boys Track & Field	Indoor Track
Girls Lacrosse	Boys Lacrosse	Boys Volleyball
Baseball	Boys Tennis	Girls Soccer
Softball	Girls Tennis	Boys Soccer
Field Hockey	Girls Swimming	

Students will be required to pay \$400 to participate in:

Ice Hockey (\$90 may be applied toward limits).

Family Limit =\$350
Individual Limit=\$200

EACH INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR FEES EACH YEAR

All participation checks will be left on file in the Athletic Office for a period of ten days after the opening day of practice/try-outs. Upon request, the participation fee will be refunded to anyone who is not selected for a team, who withdraws during the preseason period, or has a season-ending injury during the preseason period. Refunds may be picked up from the Athletic Office if you paid by cash or check. If you paid by Credit card, your refund will be mailed to you upon your email request. Refunds will not be issued after the first first official contest.

Information regarding financial assistance is available from the Athletic Director.

Previous Obligations

Students must be free from all obligations to other sports in which they may have previously participated. Prior to participating in any sport, students must return all school property, equipment or uniforms that may have been issued to them and resolve any outstanding disciplinary matters.

Eligibility Requirements

The following academic and age requirements are mandated by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC). Any violation of the following eligibility requirement or other CIAC rules may result in sanctions to the entire WHS athletic program.

1. To be eligible for fall sports, the student must have received credit towards graduation at the close of the school year in at least four (4) units of work or the equivalent, and also be taking a minimum of four (4) units of work or the equivalent during the season.
2. **The “F” Rule:** During the remainder of the school year, the student, each quarter, must be taking and passing a minimum of four (4) units of work or the equivalent during the season and not have failed more than one course in the most recent quarterly report card.
3. The student must not be 20 years of age during the sport season in which the athlete participates.
4. Students who transfer from another school must verify eligibility with the Athletic Director prior to participating in any sport.
5. Students are eligible to participate in sports for a period of 4 calendar years starting from the 1st day of their freshman year. A repeat of any academic year will not alter the above CIAC rule.
6. The student cannot violate amateur standing in any way. Some of the violations are: playing under an assumed name, accepting remuneration for participating in any activity, and participation in athletic programs sponsored by professional athletic organizations or their representatives.
7. The student is not eligible if they play or practice with a non-school team (in that sport) while a member of the school team after the first scheduled interscholastic game of that sports season.

In addition, the full CIAC Eligibility Requirements along with a condensed CIAC Eligibility Brochure can be found at links below:

[CIAC Eligibility Rules](#)

[CIAC Eligibility Brochure](#)

School Attendance

Students who have not attended school for a minimum of three hours on a given school day must receive the Athletic Director’s approval prior to participation in any practice or contest on that day.

School Suspension/Detention

A student assigned an in-school or out-of-school suspension may not participate in practices or contests while under suspension. A student assigned to detention must complete the detention prior to participating in a practice or athletic contest. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the coach of a suspension or detention.

ESTABLISHING TEAM ROSTERS

The coach has the discretion to select students for membership on a particular team or squad. It may be necessary to release athletes after conducting tryouts for a particular team.

Try-outs

Athletes are expected to report on the first day of practice/try-outs and attend ALL tryout dates/times. The cutting of athletes, if necessary, is to occur not earlier than the third day of practice and not later than the tenth day of practice. After ten days of practice or the first official contest, students are generally considered to be part of the team, and refunds will not be issued. No student may try-out for a team after ten days without permission from the coach and Athletic Director. If a student is cut from a team, that student may try-out for another team that does not cut, if done within 3 days of being cut. If a student is cut from a team and wants to try-out for a team that makes or has made cuts, that student may try-out for the new team with the permission of the coach and Athletic Director. Transfer and injured students may try-out for a team with permission from the coach and Athletic Director after the season has started.

ATHLETIC CONTEST PARTICIPATION

Freshman/Junior Varsity Level

Students who have attended practice on a daily basis and have demonstrated sufficient skill levels will be considered by the coach for opportunities to participate in game situations. Playing time is not guaranteed for each contest or is necessarily equal among participants.

Varsity Level

At the varsity level, two additional factors from above must be considered in determining participation and playing time:

1. The development and demonstration of advanced skills during practices for effective subsequent performance in a varsity contest(s).
2. The expectation that a student's participation in a varsity contest will enhance the team's ability to compete at the highest level.

TEAM TRAVEL

All team members are expected to travel to and from practices and contests by the mode of transportation authorized by the school. Exceptions to this policy may only be granted by the Principal or Athletic Director upon completion of a Travel Release Form or other authorized communication. The form must be completed and approved **at least one day prior** to the end of the school day on which the travel is to occur. If there are any extenuating circumstances the student and/or parent should contact the Athletic Director. If allowed to take a child home from an away contest, parents must make direct contact with the coach at the venue prior to leaving.

MEDICAL INSURANCE FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPANTS

A plan of insurance covering interscholastic sports has been purchased by the Board of Education. This insurance is paid for by the Board of Education and represents no cost to the athlete. The coverage for athletes provides that valid claims for injuries be paid on an excess coverage basis only. This stipulation means that the school provided insurance will pay a valid claim in excess of that portion already satisfied by all other coverage; for example, family medical coverage. This plan only covers injuries sustained during officially scheduled practices or scheduled contests. The student must make certain that the coach and/or athletic trainer is notified of the injury within 48 hours so proper paperwork can be filed with the school nurses.

PARTICIPATION IN CONFLICTING SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

There is potential for conflicts between practice and/or game times for sports and other school sponsored non-athletic activities (i.e., band, chorus, spring production, clubs, etc.). With this in mind, the following guidelines have been designed to provide the opportunity for students to participate in both extra-curricular non-athletic activities and sports.

1. Actual contests or performances always take precedence over a practice or rehearsal.
2. When practice times conflict, the Athletic Director will consult the Coach and the Advisor to establish an equitable schedule (as conflict-free as possible).
3. On the occasion when both activities have contests or performances on the same day, but at different times, every effort should be made with the cooperation and support of coaches, directors, advisors, and parents to provide opportunity for the student to participate in both if possible.
4. If both activities have a contest or performance at the same time, the student and his/her parents will select the activity for participation with the approval of the principal, and all involved will abide by the decision.
5. If a student is involved in any scheduling conflict between an athletic activity and a school sponsored non-athletic activity, and these guidelines have been followed, no disciplinary action will be taken against the student by either the coach, advisor, teacher, or director.
6. The student will notify the coach and the teacher/advisor at least 5 days prior to the conflict with their decision.
7. These guidelines will be used as a process of resolution whenever a conflict arises between a school sponsored non-athletic activity and an athletic activity.

Any questions, appeals, or interpretation of these guidelines should be directed first to the Athletic Director and, if necessary, to the High School Principal.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Wethersfield High School considers good sportsmanship and fair play to be the foundation of athletic competition. Teamwork, lasting relationships, and the joy associated with personal and team accomplishments are outcomes of good sportsmanship. Good sportsmanship is expected of all Wethersfield High School athletes on and off the field.

Examples of good sportsmanship include but are not limited to:

- Offering words of encouragement
- Refraining from the use of profanity
- Respecting all participants in an athletic contest (team members, opponents, officials and fans) in victory and defeat
- Maintaining self-control at all times
- Accepting all official's decisions
- Exhibiting proper conduct on and off the field
- Displaying appropriate use of social media

TEAM AND ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT RULES

Team Rules

1. Head Coaches will establish specific team rules. The Head Coach of each sport will submit proposed team rules in writing to the Athletic Director for review and approval prior to the beginning of a season. Students will receive the approved list of team rules from the Head Coach no later than the first practice session of the season after tryouts.
2. The enforcement of team rules is the responsibility of the Head Coach (when necessary/appropriate in consultation with the Athletic Director). In specific situations, the Athletic Director may deem it appropriate to assume jurisdiction.
3. All sport team practices are mandatory. This means that an athlete may not miss, come late or leave early from a high school team practice, meeting or game without permission from their coach. This includes coming late, leaving early or missing a game or practice for an outside team's event. The coach has the right to dismiss any athlete from a high school team, who may be absent, tardy or requests for early release from practice or games because of an outside team's commitment or other circumstances. Any conflicts with other school-sponsored events and activities will be resolved between the supervising staff member in consultation with the school administration.

Athletic Department Rules

1. Length of Season

All athletes are considered to be in season starting with the first scheduled tryout/practice and ending after the last varsity competition in that sport.

2. Participating on an “Outside” Sport Team

CIAC rules state that a high school athlete may participate on an outside team during the school year, provided that participation is not on a team, in the same sport, which is **in-season** at the high school. In other words, you may not participate on an AAU or REC team in basketball if you are **in-season** playing basketball for a high school team. You can, however, play on an outside team in another sport. For example, if you are playing on the basketball team at the high school you can participate on an AAU or other organization’s indoor soccer team. Remember, if any athlete on a high school team’s roster participates on a team or in a league in the same sport during that high school sport’s season, the athlete will become ineligible to play (immediately) and all games the athlete had participated in will be forfeited. If you have any questions concerning the above, ask the Athletic Director for his/her interpretation.

A coach is not required, however, in any way, to accommodate a high school team member’s desire to play on an outside team during their high school sport’s season. This means that a coach is not obliged to allow a team member to leave early, come late, miss a practice, game or team event for an outside team’s event or commitment. If any of these situations occur, disciplinary action may be taken up to and including dismissal from the team. The Athletic Department discourages playing on two teams during one season because of the added stress academically and physically on the athlete. We have found that there is a greater frequency and chance of injury and a greater chance of academic difficulty if students play on two teams during a sport season.

3. Injury

A student must immediately inform the coaching staff, athletic trainer and the school nurse of any injury. Injuries must be cared for promptly to begin the recovery process.

Following any injury, the injured student must receive the written approval of a qualified medical person before returning to participation in an interscholastic activity.

4. Accident Report Form

In the event of an accident, a report of the injury needs to be completed within 24 hours following the injury. Accident report forms may be obtained from the school nurse and/ or the Athletic Office and completed by the student and coach. Completion of this form is necessary before insurance coverage can be considered.

5. Locker Room Conduct

- a. No cleated or spiked shoes are to be worn in the locker rooms, corridors, or gymnasium.
- b. Student athletes should not bring valuables or money to any practice or game. If they do, they are solely responsible for these items.
- c. Horseplay at any time in any place is dangerous and is prohibited.
- d. Lockers are to be kept locked, clean, and in good condition at all times.
- e. Athletes are expected to keep the locker room in an orderly condition.

6. Team Travel

While traveling as members of an interscholastic team, athletes are to conduct themselves as directed by their coach, according to the policies of the company providing the transportation service, and according to the policies of WHS.

7. Training Room

This room is to be used only under the supervision of the trainer or other authorized school personnel. No personal electrical appliances are allowed in the Training Room. Appropriate dress is required at all times in the training room.

8. Equipment/Uniforms

All athletic equipment and uniforms must be turned in to the coach promptly upon the conclusion of the season. Uniforms must be cleaned unless otherwise specified by the coach. Athletes are responsible to financially compensate the school for missing items. Until the student has returned or made payment for missing items, the school may withhold report cards, transcripts, diplomas, Athletic Department awards, and participation in other sports. You may NOT loan out your uniform to anyone else.

9. Dropping or being dropped from a Sport

Any athlete withdrawing voluntarily or as the result of a STUDENT/ATHLETE HANDBOOK violation will forfeit all athletic awards earned for that season. In addition, the athlete shall not be permitted to participate in another sport until the current season is completed.

10. Hazing

Hazing which includes harassing, intimidating, or physically abusing another student is prohibited. Any initiation activities are considered hazing. An athlete found responsible for or participating in hazing will be subject to school discipline and suspended from participation in the athletic program for a minimum of five days or up to the remainder of the season.

11. Training Rule/Substance Abuse Policy

The nature of athletics requires that the athlete will continuously strive to maintain optimal physical conditioning. The use of alcohol, inhalants, and other controlled substances impairs an individual's reactions and is detrimental to an athlete's overall physical health. Impaired reactions and an athlete's inability to think clearly place the athlete and the athlete's teammates at risk of injury. Possession and use of such items is also a violation of the school's behavioral code and is illegal.

Reporting an Infraction of the Training Rule/Substance Abuse Policy

A school official, coach, police officer, or parent/guardian of the athlete involved may report an infraction that he/she has observed to the Athletic Director, coach or administrative staff. A student-athlete need not necessarily be arrested by the police or suspended from school for the Training Rule to apply. The coach of the student-athlete and Athletic Director (or his/her designee) will review the incident. Based on the outcome of the review/investigation, the Athletic Director, Principal and/or his designee will make a decision. All student-athletes found to be in violation of the Training Rule will be subject to disciplinary action outlined on the following page(s).

In-Season Infractions of the Training Rule/Substance Abuse Policy

Any athlete who is on a team's roster and in-season found to be in possession of, consuming, purchasing, selling, distributing or under the influence of any alcohol, inhalant, tobacco, or a controlled substance/illicit drug or its paraphernalia, will be suspended from the team for up to 2 weeks. During the first half of the suspension, the player may not practice or compete in games/matches/meets. During the second half of the suspension the player may practice but not compete in games/ matches/meets. Prior to returning to practice, the player must meet with the school social worker and/or school psychologist as well as complete 5 hours of community service approved by the Athletic Director. Failure to abide by the stipulation agreement with the Athletic Director will result in the player being dismissed from the team and made ineligible to receive any athletic department awards. Any second infraction in-season will result in immediate dismissal from the team.

12. Performance Enhancement Drug Policy

A student-athlete who has been determined to have used, in or out-of-season, androgenic/ anabolic steroids or other performance enhancing substances shall be declared ineligible for all CIAC-controlled activities for **one hundred eighty (180) school days on each occurrence.** (CIAC Rule)

TEAM CAPTAINS

Selection Process

1. The head coach will determine whether a captain(s) is to be utilized for a particular sport.
2. The coach will determine whether to utilize a season or game captain(s).
3. The head coach will establish the role of captaincy, the duration of the assignment, and the number of captains for a team. There will be a maximum of three (3) captains for a team. The Athletic Director must approve any greater number.
4. The coach will determine the method of selecting captains.

Eligibility to Assume Captaincy

To be eligible for a team's captaincy, a student must:

1. Have varsity experience.
2. Have demonstrated leadership potential; dependability; commitment to the team, the sport, and the coach.
3. Have received a passing grade in all subjects on the most recent grade report.
4. Be a positive role model for other students in all school and non-school settings.
5. Have shown an adherence to all school, team, and athletic department rules.
6. Have not violated the Training Rule for the previous 180 school days.
7. Must maintain at least a C average (2.0) on their last quarterly report card.

Expectations and Responsibilities

The Captain will:

1. Abide by school, Athletic Department, and team rules at all times.
2. Be a positive role model for other students in all school and non-school settings.
3. Demonstrate positive leadership to other students in team and school activities.
4. Assist the coach whenever possible.
5. Act as a liaison between the coach and team members.
6. Help to build team and school spirit.

Procedure for the Removal of a Captain

If the captain of an athletic team violates the expectations and/or the responsibilities of the captaincy, the Coach and the Athletic Director or his designee will speak with the captain to afford him/her an opportunity to respond to any allegations. If the Athletic Director or designee determines there is sufficient cause for removing the student from the captaincy, such communication will be communicated in writing to the student and the parent/guardian. An appeal decision may be made through the athletic appeal process. If granted an appeal by the Principal, the Athletic Hearing Panel will hear the appeal and make a recommendation to the Athletic Director and Principal. The school principal reserves the right to accept or reject the recommendation of the Athletic Hearing Panel.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT AWARDS

In order to be eligible to receive an Athletic Department award, a student must complete the season as an active member of the team and must have fulfilled all other team and Athletic Department requirements as specified in this handbook.

Year of Graduation Numerals

Numerals are awarded, upon request, to student athletes for participation in the first sport in which they compete.

Freshman/Junior Varsity/Participation Certificate

A Freshman, Junior Varsity or Participation certificate is awarded upon the recommendation of the coaching staff and with the approval of the Athletic Director.

Varsity Letter/Pin

The varsity letter is awarded upon the recommendation of the Head Coach and with the approval of the Athletic Director. A student may receive a Varsity Pin in different sports.

Gold Bar

A Gold Bar is awarded to a student who has earned a second varsity letter in the same sport. A student may receive Gold Bars in different sports.

Gold Pin

A Gold Pin is awarded to a student who has earned a varsity letter for three years in the same sport. A student may receive Gold Pins in different sports.

Blanket

A blanket is awarded to a student who has earned a varsity letter for four years in the same sport. Should a student qualify for the blanket award in more than one sport, only one blanket will be awarded, and the blanket will be enhanced by identifying each sport by name.

CRITERIA FOR VARSITY LETTERS

The following criteria will be used to determine eligibility for varsity letters:

Baseball	Participation in 50% of the innings played. (pitchers must participate in 25% of the innings played.)
Basketball	Participation in 50% of the periods in games played.
Cheerleading	Participation in 75% of games cheered during the sport season.
Cross Country	Run as Varsity (top seven) for a majority of meets and/or run top seven in State competition.
Dance	Participation in 75% of games danced during the season.
Field Hockey	Participation in 50% of the periods in games played.
Football	Participation in 50% of the quarters in games played.
Golf	Participation in 50% of the matches.
Gymnastics	Participation in 50% of the regular season meets.
Ice Hockey	Participation in 50% of the periods in games played.
Lacrosse	Participation in 50% of games played.
Softball	Participation in 50% of the innings played. (pitchers must participate in 25% of innings played.)
Soccer	Participation in 50% of the games played.
Swimming	Avg. 3 pts. per meet; diving to avg. 2 pts. per meet qualify for the State Class Meet.
Tennis	Participation in 50% of the matches.
Track	Score 15 points and/or qualify for the State Meet.
Indoor Track	Qualify for the Conference meet.
Volleyball	Participation in 50% of the matches.
Wrestling	Participation in 50% of the matches.

A coach may recommend a student to the Athletic Director for a varsity letter who has not fulfilled the varsity letter criteria. The coach must, however, describe to the Athletic Director the reasons that warrant consideration for an exception.

SPORTS AWARDS

Team specific Sports Awards are a celebration of both individual and team accomplishments. At the end of each season the head coach will organize, sometimes jointly with the booster clubs, a recognition event where all athletes from all levels would receive certificates, letters, and other awards. All student-athletes on a team during that season of play are expected to attend. In June, an End-of-the-Year Athletic Awards Night is planned to honor the Fall, Winter, and Spring captains, all-conference and all-state selections, special award winners, and blanket recipients.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

1. Be positive with your athlete. Let them know that they are accomplishing something by being part of a team.
2. Don't offer excuses to your athlete if he/she is not playing. There is usually a reason for it. Encourage your child to advocate for him/herself.
3. Don't bash your athlete's coach in front of your athlete. It will distort their view of the coach and overall attitude toward playing.
4. Always encourage your athlete to do his/her best.
5. Insist on good grades in and out-of-season. Research shows that athletes perform better academically during the season.
6. Encourage your athlete to maintain a positive self-image by believing in herself or himself.
7. Don't compare and contrast athletes with a family member who may have previously played. Each athlete brings something special to the team.
8. Being a fan does not entitle you to be belligerent or abusive toward players, coaches, opponents, officials or your son/daughter, nor should you "coach" from the sidelines. Parents who may become verbally or physically abusive may be temporarily or permanently prohibited from attending WHS competitions. Please consider that your son or daughter is embarrassed by parents who can be heard from the stands.
9. Encourage your athlete to play for the love of the game and what participating in sports teaches about life. Deemphasize playing for scholarships or college admission. This alleviates a lot of pressure for a high school athlete.
10. Keep the game in perspective and always be a role model of good sportsmanship! It's very important to your son/daughter's experience in athletics.

Conflict Resolution Procedure

If an athlete has an issue or conflict with a coach, the following is the appropriate procedure to follow to resolve the conflict. This applies to all athletes and parents and all meetings need to involve the student-athlete.

1. The athlete should first attempt to resolve any issues by meeting and speaking with the coach. Most conflicts are resolved in this manner.
2. If the conflict cannot be resolved between the athlete and coach, the athlete should make an appointment to meet with the Athletic Director. This meeting will involve the parent and athlete, coach and Director of Athletics.
3. If the problem is still unresolved, the parent can meet with their student-athlete, the principal, Athletic Director, and coach.
4. Areas that will not be discussed include the following: playing time, discussions about and comparisons to other players and game strategies.

APPENDIX A

WHS STUDENT & PARENT CONCUSSION EDUCATION PLAN

This document was developed to provide coaches with an annual review of current and relevant information regarding concussions and head injuries. It includes guidance from the 2017 Concussion in Sport Group consensus statement that was developed to provide further understanding and management of sports-related concussion.

In addition to reviewing this document, the annual review must include one of the following prescribed resources: Connecticut Concussion Task Force video, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports training course, or the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) concussion training course. Links to these resources can be found at: <http://concussioncentral.ciacsports.com/>. A new form is required to be read, signed, dated and kept on file by coaches' associated school districts annually to comply with Section 10-149b of the Connecticut General Statutes, Concussions: Training courses for coaches. Education plan. Informed consent form. Development or approval by the State Board of Education. Revocation of coaching permit.

What is a Concussion?

"A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. This sudden movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, stretching and damaging the brain cells and creating chemical changes in the brain" (CDC, 2017).

Section 1. Concussion Education Plan Summary

The Concussion Education Plan and Guidelines for Connecticut Schools was approved by the Connecticut State Board of Education in January 2015. Below is an outline of the requirements of the Concussion Education Plan. The complete document is accessible on the CSDE website at <http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Concussion-Education-Plan-and-Guidelines-for-Connecticut-Schools>.

State law requires that each local and regional board of education must approve and then implement a Concussion Education Plan by using written materials, online training or videos, or in-person training that addresses, at a minimum, the following:

1. The recognition of signs or symptoms of concussion.
2. The means of obtaining proper medical treatment for a person suspected of sustaining a concussion.
3. The nature and risks of concussions, including the danger of continuing to engage in athletic activity after sustaining a concussion.
4. The proper procedures for allowing a student athlete who has sustained a concussion to return to athletic activity.
5. Current best practices in the prevention and treatment of a concussion.

Section 2. Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion: Overview

A concussion should be suspected if any one or more of the following signs or symptoms are present following an impact or suspected impact as described in the CDC definition above.

Signs of a concussion may include (i.e. what the athlete displays/looks like to an observer):

- Confusion/disorientation/irritability
- Trouble resting/getting comfortable
- Lack of concentration
- Slow response/drowsiness
- Incoherent/ slurred speech
- Slow/clumsy movements
- Loses consciousness
- Amnesia/memory problems
- Acts silly/combatative/aggressive
- Repeatedly ask same questions
- Dazed appearance
- Restless/irritable
- Constant attempts to return to play
- Constant motion
- Disproportionate/inappropriate reactions
- Balance problems

APPENDIX A (cont.)

Symptoms of a concussion may include (i.e. what the athlete reports):

- Headache or dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Blurred or double vision
- Oversensitivity to sound/light/touch
- Ringing in ears
- Feeling foggy or groggy

State law requires that a coach **MUST** immediately remove a student-athlete from participating in any intramural or interscholastic athletic activity who: a) is observed to exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion following a suspected blow to the head or body; or b) is diagnosed with a concussion, regardless of when such concussion or head injury may have occurred. Upon removal of the athlete, a qualified school employee (principal, teacher, licensed athletic trainer, licensed physical or occupational therapist employed by a school district, coach or school paraprofessional) must notify the parent or legal guardian within 24 hours that the student-athlete has experienced a head injury and has exhibited signs and symptoms of a concussion.

Section 3. Return to Play (RTP) Protocol Overview

It is impossible to accurately predict how long an individual's concussion will last. There must be full recovery before a student-athlete is allowed to resume participating in athletic activity. Connecticut law now requires that no athlete may resume participation until she/he has received written medical clearance from a licensed healthcare professional (physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), athletic trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.

Concussion Management Requirements:

- No athlete shall return to participation in the athletic activity on the same day of head injury or concussion.
- If there is any loss of consciousness, vomiting or seizures, the athlete **MUST** be immediately transported to the hospital.
- The athlete should not be left alone after the injury. Close observation and monitoring of an athlete **MUST** continue following a concussion or head injury to ensure that there is no worsening/escalation of symptoms.
- Any athlete with signs or symptoms related to a concussion **MUST** be evaluated by a licensed healthcare professional (physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), athletic trainer) trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
- The athlete **MUST** obtain an initial written clearance from one of the licensed health care professionals identified above directing her/him into a well-defined RTP stepped protocol similar to the one outlined below. If at any time signs or symptoms return during the RTP progression, the athlete should cease activity*.
- After the RTP protocol has been successfully administered (no longer exhibits any signs or symptoms or behaviors consistent with concussions), final written medical clearance is required by one of the licensed health care professionals identified above (or, if indicated, by a medical professional deemed appropriate/necessary by the school's AT) for the athlete to fully return to unrestricted participation in practices and competitions.
- Treatment for any concussion will be on an individual basis according to the athlete's symptoms and must be free of all symptoms prior to return to play.
 - o With the **exception of a concussion resulting in loss of consciousness**, the athlete must be symptom free for at least 48 hours prior to beginning the outlined gradual return to play program below.
 - o If a concussion results in a loss of consciousness, the athlete must remain symptom free for 1 week at rest prior to beginning the gradual return to play program.
- When applicable, the athlete must also pass any neurocognitive or Impact test prior to return to contact.

Gradual Return to Play:

- The gradual return to play program will be conducted under the guidance of the ATC.
- Return to play must occur in a stepwise fashion.
- There should be approximately 24 hours (or longer) for each stage.
- If any symptoms return during any one stage the athlete should stop activity and return that stage 24 hours later (or longer).

APPENDIX A (cont.)

Rehabilitation Stage	Exercise/target HR	Goal
No Activity	Complete physical and cognitive rest 30-40% max HR	Recovery
Light Aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming, stationary bike, no resistance training 40-60% max HR	Increase HR
Sport-specific exercise	Skating, running, no contact 60-80% max HR	Add movement
Non-Contact Training	Progression to complex training drills i.e. passing drill in football Resistance training 80-90% max HR	Exercise, coordination, cognitive load
Full Contact Practice	Sports specific standard training drills	Restore confidence and skill

Section 4, Head Injuries

Injuries to the head includes:

- Concussions: (See above information). There are several head injuries associated with concussions which can be severe in nature including:
 - a) Second impact Syndrome - Athletes who sustain a concussion, and return to play prior to being recovered from the concussion, are also at risk for Second Impact Syndrome (SIS), a rare but life-altering condition that can result in rapid brain swelling, permanent brain damage or death; and
 - b) Post-Concussion Syndrome - A group of physical, cognitive, and emotional problems that can persist for weeks, months, or indefinitely after a concussion.
- Scalp Injury: Most head injuries only damage the scalp (a cut, scrape, bruise or swelling)... Big lumps (bruises) can occur with minor injuries because there is a large blood supply to the scalp. For the same reason, small cuts on the head may bleed a lot. Bruises on the forehead sometimes cause black eyes 1 to 3 days later because the blood spreads downward by gravity;
- Skull Fracture: Only 1% to 2% of children with head injuries will get a skull fracture. Usually there are no other symptoms except for a headache at the site where the head was hit. Most skull fractures occur without any injury to the brain and they heal easily;

Section 4, Head Injuries (cont.)

- Brain Injuries are rare but are recognized by the presence of the following symptoms:
(1) difficult to awaken, or keep awake or (2) confused thinking and talking, or (3) slurred speech, or (4) weakness of arms or legs or (5) unsteady walking” (American Academy of Pediatrics – Healthy Children, 2010).

References:

1. NFHS. Concussions. 2008 NFHS Sports Medicine Handbook (Third Edition). 2008: 77-82.
<http://www.nfhs.org>.
http://journals.lww.com/cjsportsmed/Fulltext/2009/05000/Consensus_Statement_on_Concussion_in_Sport_3rd.1.aspx.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports*. http://www.cdc.gov/NCIPC/tbi/Coaches_Tool_Kit.htm.
3. CIAC Concussion Central - <http://concussioncentral.ciacsports.com/>

Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Injury Prevention & Control: Traumatic Brain Injury*. Retrieved on June 16, 2010.
<http://www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/index.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports Guide for Coaches*. Retrieved on June 16, 2014.

APPENDIX B

WHS STUDENT & PARENT SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST AWARENESS PLAN

NOTE: This document was developed to provide student-athletes and parents/guardians with current and relevant information regarding sudden cardiac arrest. A new form is required to be read, signed, dated and kept on file by the student-athlete's associated school district annually to comply with Connecticut General Statutes Chapter 163, Section 10-149f: SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST AWARENESS EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Part I – SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST - What is sudden cardiac arrest?

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is when the heart stops beating, suddenly and unexpectedly. When this happens, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs. SCA doesn't just happen to adults; it takes the lives of students, too. However, the causes of sudden cardiac arrest in students and adults can be different. A student's SCA will likely result from an inherited condition, while an adult's SCA may be caused by either inherited or lifestyle issues.

SCA is NOT a heart attack. A heart attack may cause SCA, but they are not the same. A heart attack is caused by a blockage that stops the flow of blood to the heart. SCA is a malfunction in the heart's electrical system, causing the heart to suddenly stop beating.

PART II - HOW COMMON IS SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST IN THE UNITED STATES?

SCA is the #1 cause of death for adults in this country. There are about 300,000 cardiac arrests outside hospitals each year. It is a leading cause of death for student athletes.

According to an April 2014 study for PubMed the incidence was

- 0.63 per 100,000 in all students (6 in one million)
- 1.14 per 100,000 athletes (10 in one million)
- 0.31 per student non-athletes (3 in one million)
- The relative risk of SCA in student athletes vs non-athletes was 0.65
- There is a significantly higher risk of SCA for boys than girls

Leading causes of sudden death among high school and college athletes, according to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) (on CBS News, June 28, 2012)* are heat stroke, heart disease and traits associated with sickle cell anemia. Prevention of sudden death, the same study concludes, is associated with more advanced cardiac screening with attention to medical histories and birth records, improved emergency procedures, and good coaching and conditioning practices. SCA can be prevented if the underlying causes can be diagnosed and treated.

PART III - WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

Although SCA happens unexpectedly, some people may have signs or symptoms, such as: fainting or seizures during exercise; unexplained shortness of breath; dizziness; extreme fatigue; chest pains; or racing heart.

These symptoms can be unclear in athletes, since people often confuse these warning signs with physical exhaustion.

Sudden cardiac arrest is a medical emergency. If not treated immediately, it causes sudden cardiac death. With fast, appropriate medical care, survival is possible. Administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) — or even just compressions to the chest — can improve the chances of survival until emergency personnel arrive.

(<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/sudden-cardiac-arrest/basics/>)

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF PRACTICING OR PLAYING AFTER EXPERIENCING THESE SYMPTOMS?

There are risks associated with continuing to practice or play after experiencing these symptoms. When the heart stops, so does the blood that flows to the brain and other vital organs. Death or permanent brain damage can occur in just a few minutes. Most people who experience SCA die from it.

APPENDIX B (cont.)

REMOVAL FROM PLAY

Any student-athlete who shows signs or symptoms of SCA must be removed from athletic activity and referred to a licensed health care professional trained specifically in the treatment of cardiac care. The symptoms can happen before, during or after activity.

RETURN TO PLAY

Before returning to play, the athlete must be evaluated. Clearance to return to play must be in writing. The evaluation must be performed and written clearance be provided by a licensed medical provider.

To summarize:

- SCA is, by definition, sudden and unexpected.
- SCA can happen in individuals who appear healthy and have no known heart disease.
- Most people who have SCA die from it, usually within minutes.
- Rapid treatment of SCA with a defibrillator can be lifesaving.
- Training in recognition of signs of cardiac arrest and SCA, and the availability of AEDs and personnel who possess the skills to use one, may save the life of someone who has had an SCA.

(National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute)

Sources:

Simons Fund - <http://www.simonsfund.org/>

Pennsylvania Department of Health - <http://www.simonsfund.org/vp-content/uploads/2012/06/Parent-Handout-SCA.pdf>

APPENDIX C – Statement on COVID-19

COVID-19 IS A HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS VIRUS AND IT IS POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP AND CONTRACT EVEN WHEN ALL OF THE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS OUTLINED BY THE STATE, THE WETHERSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND THE CIAC ARE BEING FOLLOWED.

IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD THAT NO PERSON CAN EVER BE COMPLETELY SHIELDED FROM THE RISK OF ILLNESS CAUSED BY COVID-19 AND OTHER INFECTIONS.

When registering online for a sport all participants and their parents/guardians are acknowledging these risks through electronically signing that they have read, understood, and agreed to the contents in this handbook. Furthermore, the school or school district, or anyone acting on its behalf, is not responsible for the contraction of COVID-19 or any virus/illness in the course of participating in an interscholastic activity.

For more information regarding COVID-19 you can visit the State of Connecticut's website at <https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus>

Updates from the CIAC regarding COVID-19 will be shared with the student body and parents\guardians as we receive it.

You are acknowledging these risks as stated above by electronically signing the handbook during the online registration process.

FAQ's

What forms do I need to register for tryouts?

All sport registrations are done online. However, per CIAC guidelines, your child **must** have a current physical on file in order to register for any sport (Part II Blue Medical Form).

Do I need a physical? Yes. The CIAC requires that a physical be on file with the school for participation in athletics. A physical will be valid for 13 months after which the athlete becomes ineligible for both practices and games.

Is there a fee to play a sport? Yes, there is a pay-to-participate fee associated with WHS Athletics. Please consult the handbook or website for fees.

When are fall try-outs? Start times and locations will be posted on the athletic webpage. Please check the website for updates.

When are registrations for fall sports? Registration dates and times will be posted on the athletic webpage. Visit our website for registration times.

What are the academic requirements for participation? To be eligible to participate in the fall students must have earned 4.0 credits towards graduation in the previous school year. As report cards are issued during the remainder of the year, a student must be passing 4 classes and not have failed more than one course to remain eligible. All first year Grade 9 students are eligible to participate in the fall season during marking period one.

Are there any required Parent Meetings? Each pre-season the athletic department holds an informational meeting for parents, students, and coaches. Parents and athletes are required to attend.