

Middle School Athletic Handbook

2025-2026



MSD Warren Township

Creston Cyclones ■ Raymond Park Rangers ■ Stonybrook Red Storm

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Athletic Coordinators

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ATHLETIC STATEMENT

The Athletic Handbook exists for athletes, their parents or guardians, and coaches to better understand athletes' responsibilities and rights when participating in the Warren Township Middle School Athletic Program.

Participation in middle school athletics is a privilege that carries varying degrees of honor, responsibility, and sacrifice. Since competition is a privilege and not a right, those who choose to participate will be expected to follow the established guidelines contained in this handbook as well as specific coaches' rules for their sports. Athletes are ambassadors to the community. Athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for athletes, their families, and Warren Township Middle Schools.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The goal of the Warren Township Middle School Athletic Department is to provide the best opportunity for their athletes to excel in teamwork, sportsmanship, self-discipline and moral character. The purpose is to provide participants with experiences that will be positive, memorable, and those that will help them to develop the capacity for commitment to a cause, acceptance of responsibility, and loyalty toward any chosen endeavor. It is hoped that these traits will be carried with the athletes to the Warren Central High School Athletic Program.

ATHLETIC COUNCIL

1. The Athletic Council will consist of the principal, grade level assistant principals, and the athletic coordinator.
2. The principal will make the final decision on council recommendations.
3. The Athletic Council will meet as often as necessary to conduct athletic business, handle problems a coach deems necessary, determine eligibility, recommend awards, etc.
4. The Athletic Council should provide a well-planned and well-balanced program of interscholastic athletics for as many middle school students as possible, consistent with available facilities, personnel, and financial support. It shall cooperate and manage these athletic activities in harmony with the basic policy of the Warren School Board and the State High School Athletic Association.
5. The Athletic Council should develop the desire for improvement among athletes in terms of team play, fair play, sportsmanship, and character development; it should encourage competition, not only for the tangible rewards, but also for the intrinsic values that make athletic competition valuable and worthwhile.
6. Chairman of the committee will be the athletic coordinator.

WARREN TOWNSHIP MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS PROFILE

Fall Sports	Grades	First Practice
Cheerleading	7-8	July/August
Cross Country	5-6-7-8	July/August
Football	7-8	July/August
Girls Golf	5-6-7-8	July/August
Boys Tennis	5-6-7-8	July/August
Volleyball	7-8	July/August
Soccer (township team)	6-7-8	July/August
Winter Sports		
Cheerleading – continued	7-8	October
Basketball (boys)	7-8	October
Basketball (girls)	7-8	November
Wrestling	5-6-7-8	December
Swimming and Diving (township team)	5-6-7-8	January
Spring Sports		
Baseball (township team)	6-7-8	March
Softball (township team)	6-7-8	March
Track	5-6-7-8	March
Girls Tennis	5-6-7-8	March
Boys Golf	5-6-7-8	March

BASIC ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES

The principal of the school in accordance with the suggested guidelines must certify the eligibility of all contestants according to the following:

AGE REQUIREMENTS

Students participating in sixth grade, seventh grade and/or eighth grade athletic contests should be eligible within the following guidelines:

5th-6th Grade—A student who is or shall be 14 years old prior to or on the scheduled date of the first contest in a sport should be ineligible for athletic competition in that sport.

7th Grade—A student who is or shall be 15 years old prior to or on the scheduled date of the first contest in a sport should be ineligible for athletic competition in that sport.

8th Grade—A student who is or shall be 16 years old prior to or on the scheduled date of the first contest in a sport should be ineligible for athletic competition in that sport.

SCHOLASTIC AND CITIZENSHIP ELIGIBILITY (Middle School Athletic Eligibility Guidelines)

The Warren Township Middle School Athletic Department believes students are scholars first and athletes second. Consistent with this belief, athletes are expected to perform in the classroom before they perform on the athletic field. School administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of athletes is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

Every 4 ½ weeks, the athletic coordinator will determine eligibility of a student athlete through the use of school wide midterm reports and report cards.

5th, 6th, 7th & 8th Grade Eligibility

If a student's grade average falls below a C, or if a student is failing one of his/her classes, the student will still be eligible, but will be required to participate in a one-hour per week minimum tutoring session after school. The head coach of the sport will provide opportunities for tutoring.

If a student athlete has two or more F's on a school wide grade report (midterm or report card), he/she will be considered ineligible and will not participate in games/meets and must attend tutoring in order to continue to practice.

After ten school days of ineligibility, the student will complete a grade check, if grade check reveals less than two F's, student will regain eligibility. If a grade check reveals two or more F's, then the student will have to wait until the next school wide grade report (midterm/report card) to regain eligibility.

Behavior Standards

1. Athletes earning detention will not practice or participate in an event on the day detention is served.
2. Athletes earning an all day placement in in-school suspension may not practice or participate in an event during the term of the suspension.
3. Students who are suspended from school or earn an F in citizenship will lose after school privileges for the remainder of the season. This includes attendance at extra curricular events and practices. For an athlete to regain eligibility within the same sport season, a parent or guardian meeting with the school principal or principal's designee is required. Additionally, a student will be required to demonstrate significant improvement in citizenship as determined by the athletic council.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION/ CONCUSSION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PARENT CONSENT

Prior to their first practice, athletes must have a physical examination by a physician holding an unlimited license to practice medicine and written consent of parent or guardian for such participation. Evidence of both, included on an IHSA Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation Form, should be on file in the athletic coordinator's office prior to the student's first practice. Physical examination is valid for the next school year if a physician signs it on or after April 1st. Additionally, at both the middle school and high school levels in Warren Township, parents must read, sign, and return to the Athletic Office of their school the Concussion Acknowledgement and Signature Form for the 2019-2020 school year and beyond. Such certification will suffice for the entire school year. This policy will not be waived. Physical forms and concussion management forms may be obtained through the main office or the athletic office.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

Each athlete's parents/guardians shall complete an Emergency Medical Card for the use of obtaining treatment by a physician or hospital when the parents/guardians are not available. The cards will be kept in the team medical kit for availability at all practices and contests.

INSURANCE

Parents will need to indicate on the athletic physical form the name of the insurance company under which the athlete is covered. The school district does not provide insurance coverage for student athletic injuries.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS AND EQUIPMENT

Students participating in extra-curricular activities that require travel in district-owned vehicles are required to pay a \$20 transportation fee. The fee is a requirement for each sport or activity and becomes non-refundable after the first contest of the season.

In meeting financial obligations to the athletic department, cash or check is the preferred method of payment. Please have checks made out to Creston Middle School, Raymond Park Middle School, or Stonybrook Middle School, and place the athlete's first and last name on the memo portion of the check. This check must be separate from any other checks written to the school.

Uniforms—All uniforms furnished by the school not returned in good condition at the end of the season will be subject to financial penalty for replacement. Uniforms provided by the school are to be worn for games only unless authorization is given by the coach. Uniforms are not to be worn during the school day. In several sports, athletes may be required to purchase a portion of the practice and game uniforms, which will become their property.

Equipment—All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. Equipment furnished by the school is to be worn only for contests and practices. All equipment not returned in good condition at the end of the season will be subject to financial penalty for replacement.

Uniform/Equipment Approximate Cost of Replacement

SCHOOL CONTACT

General questions and concerns dealing with athletics should be addressed to the athletic coordinator or principal (phone #'s are provided on page 10). Questions and concerns regarding specific sports should first be addressed to the team coach followed by the athletic coordinator and the principal. Suggestions for effective communication in dealing with athletic matters can be found in the Middle School Athletics "Parent/Coach Communication" section on page 11 of this handbook.

PARTICIPATION IN MULTIPLE SPORTS

It shall be the philosophy of the Warren Township Middle School Athletic Department that athletes shall enjoy as many sport seasons as athletes and parents wish for them to participate in without influence from any coach to specialize in one sport. All coaches should encourage participation in other sports. Although athletes may choose the sport they wish to enjoy, once the season has started, no one shall change sports without consent of the athletic coordinator and the coaches involved. Athletes wishing to participate in more than one sport in a season must have the approval of the athletic coordinator and all coaches involved with the sports.

Athletes cut from one sport may tryout for another sport, providing they were not cut from the first sport for academic or disciplinary reasons. No athlete who is dropped from one squad for disciplinary reasons or who quits shall be eligible to compete in another sport for that season. No athlete may start another sport until the previous one has been completed, and all of the equipment has been returned to the coach.

DROPPING SPORTS

Athletes are expected to remain committed to their athletic teams for the entire season. Athletes who quit a team will not be eligible to participate in athletics for the remainder of that season and may lose their privilege of participating in athletics for the rest of the year. An athlete who drops a sport must still meet all financial obligations for uniforms and/or equipment ordered. On occasion, an athlete may find it necessary to drop from a team for a good reason. If this is the case, the following procedure must be followed:

- a. Consult with the head coach.
- b. Report the situation to the athletic coordinator.
- c. Immediately return the issued school equipment to the head coach.

PRACTICE

Athletic teams will conduct regular weekday practice from 3:55 PM (immediately after school) to 6:00 PM as facilities allow. Friday and Saturday practices may be held at the discretion of coaches and athletic coordinator. There will be no practice or contests on Sunday. Holiday practice must be cleared through the athletic office.

Upon completion of afternoon classes, athletes are to take all needed items (books, coats, boots, etc.) to their athletic lockers in order to avoid re-entering academic hall areas after 4:00 PM. After 4:00 PM, athletes will be restricted to the athletic area of the school.

ATTENDANCE ON DAY OF PRACTICE OR CONTEST

Student-Athletes must have attended classes all day the day of a practice or contest in order to participate in the event. All day attendance is required on Friday in order to compete on Saturday. Approved field trips or school activities constitute attending school. Any exemptions (funeral, dental, doctor, etc.) must be approved through the principal's office and/or the athletic office.

MISSING PRACTICE OR CONTEST

An athlete should always consult his/her coach BEFORE missing practice or contest. Vacations by athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged. In the event of an absence due to an approved vacation, athletes must:

1. Contact the coach prior to the vacation.
2. Be willing to assume the consequences related to their status on that squad as a starter, 2nd string, 3rd string, etc.

SUPERVISION/TRANSPORTATION

The Warren Township Middle School Athletic Departments have supervision plans in place for all athletic teams. These plans are designed to prevent misconduct of students along with providing a safe environment before, during, and after the extracurricular event. Coaches will not leave students unattended to wait for a ride home. Due to the varied amount of time of an athletic competition, pick up time after events can be hard to determine. Coaches will provide an estimated pick up time and allow students to contact parents when it will be later or earlier than estimated.

Due to liability purposes, school personnel are discouraged from transporting students to their homes. Please be prompt when picking up your child after the extra-curricular practice or event. Failure to pick up a student in a timely manner may result in suspension or removal from the extracurricular activity.

ATHLETIC TRAVEL

All athletes must travel to and from athletic contests in transportation provided by MSD Warren Township unless the parents make previous arrangements for exceptional situations.

1. Athletes will remain with their squads and under the supervision of the coach when attending "away" contests.
2. Athletes who miss the bus will not be allowed to participate in the contest unless there are extenuating circumstances.
3. All regular school bus rules will be followed.
4. Dress appropriately and in good taste. Athletes should always remember that they represent Warren Middle Schools.

CONFLICTS WITH NON-ATHLETIC EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities will undoubtedly be in a position of conflict of obligations. The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities, and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts.

Students have a responsibility to do everything they can to avoid conflicts. This would include being cautious about belonging to too many activities with which conflicts may occur. It also means notifying the faculty sponsors/coaches involved immediately when a conflict does arise.

When a conflict arises, the sponsors/coaches will work out a solution so that the student does not feel caught in the middle. Once the decision has been made, and the student has followed that decision, he or she will not be penalized by either faculty sponsor or coach. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, he/she should withdraw from that activity.

REPORTING OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

All injuries that occur while participating in athletics should be reported to the coach. It is then the coach's responsibility to complete an Accident Report Form that will be given to the athletic coordinator. Athletes treated by a physician as the result of an athletic injury must obtain medical permission before returning to athletic activity. Athlete's who are physically unable to practice for five consecutive days due to illness or injury should present to their athletic coordinator a statement from a physician licensed to practice medicine that they are again physically fit to participate in athletics. Athletes must then participate in five practices before being allowed to participate in a competitive event.

GROOMING AND DRESS

Athletes are expected to be well groomed. Appearance, expression, and action always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team, and the school. Athletes volunteering to be members of a squad have made a choice to uphold certain standards expected of athletes in the school and community.

Athletes will adhere to the following grooming and dress rules:

1. Hairstyles are to be maintained in a neat and clean manner so as to present a positive image for both the team and the school.
2. Athletes shall dress appropriately at all times, including on trips or at assemblies.
3. Only uniforms issued or sold by the department of athletics will be worn for contests.
4. Athletes will not be permitted to participate until violations of the above rules are satisfactorily corrected.

SQUAD SELECTION AND CUTTING

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program, coaches are encouraged to keep as many students as they can while maintaining the integrity of their sport. Time, space, facilities, equipment, and other factors can place limitations on squad size.

Choosing the members of athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the coaches of the squads. Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

1. extent of tryout period
2. criteria used to select the team
3. number to be selected
4. practice commitment and game commitment if athletes make the team

LOCKER ROOM REGULATIONS

Locker rooms are provided for the benefit of athletes. Locker rooms are to be used for preparation for practices or games. The following regulations are meant to maintain a safe environment and may, if not followed, lead to suspension of participation:

1. Athletic locks are required by all student athletes. Students will have a separate athletic locker.
2. Rough housing, horseplay, and throwing towels or other objects is not allowed in the locker room.
3. Only coaches, managers, and in-season athletes are allowed in the locker rooms after school.
4. Hazing of other players is not allowed. (see below for anti-hazing and bullying policy)
5. All showers must be turned off. The last person to leave the shower room is expected to check all showers.
6. No glass containers are allowed in the locker rooms.
7. All spiked or shoes with cleats must be put on and taken off outside of the school. No metal or hard plastic spikes/cleats are allowed in the locker rooms or in any other part of the building.

POSTPONING CONTESTS

The following factors will be considered with regard to the postponement of athletic events:

1. cancellation or early release of school
2. safe travel for the athletes, officials, parents, and fans
3. playing conditions of the field, court, and/or course, and pending weather conditions
4. risk of injury to athletes, officials, parents, and fans
5. risk of damage to equipment

After considering the above factors, the status of the game will then be up to the principal and athletic director. In case of postponement of either home or away events, students will be notified immediately.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Athletic awards are given in recognition of athletic achievement and service to the school. Athletes will receive a certificate of participation or varsity certificate may also be given at the discretion of the coach.

General criteria used for the determination of athletic awards are listed below.

All sports general requirements for awards:

1. The athlete must be enrolled and be a student in good standing. The athlete must meet all academic eligibility and good citizenship criteria as provided in the Warren Middle School Athletic Handbook, as well as the school student handbook.
2. The athlete must have completed the entire season and finish in good standing. The season is defined as that period of time from the first practice to the athletic awards reception.
3. The athlete must attend all practices and contests unless excused by the head coach for illness or emergency beyond the athlete's control.
4. The athlete must have returned or paid for all lost or damaged school-loaned equipment and uniforms to the head coach.
5. Team manager awards are awarded at the discretion of the head coach.
6. An athlete who quits during the season shall forfeit any chance of earning an award in that sport for that season.
7. An athlete who becomes ineligible for any reason during the season may forfeit any chance of earning awards in that sport. The head coach issuing the awards will make the decision.

The coach has the prerogative to issue or withhold an award for extenuating circumstances not covered above. In such a case, the coach must provide documentation of the circumstances to the principal and athletic coordinator.

Injury Rule. An athlete who suffers an injury during the course of the season, may be awarded a certificate, if in the head coach's judgment, he/she would have met the requirements. The athlete must complete the season as a manager or member of the team, and must attend all practices and contests.

ANTI-HAZING POLICY

MSD Warren Township Athletic Departments are committed to providing the best learning atmosphere for our students. Hazing activities are inconsistent with our educational mission and will not be tolerated in the athletic department. The Indiana Code defines hazing as "forcing or requiring another person (1) with or without the consent of the other person and (2) as a condition of association with a group or organization; to perform an act that creates a substantial risk of bodily injury." The *American Heritage Dictionary, Fourth Edition*, defines hazing as: "To persecute or harass with meaningless, difficult, or humiliating tasks. To initiate by exacting humiliating performances from or playing rough practical jokes upon." MSD Warren Township Athletic Departments will not tolerate actions by athletes that recklessly or intentionally endanger the mental or physical health or safety of a student. This includes, but is not limited to, paddling, beating, branding, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of food or drink, "swirlies", forced conduct resulting in extreme embarrassment, or any other conduct which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of another individual. Disciplinary action will be taken against students who plan, encourage, or engage in hazing activities. Athletic department employees who permit, encourage, condone or tolerate hazing will be subject to discipline.

Bullying

- a. **Bullying is prohibited by the MSD of Warren Township. Students who commit any acts of bullying are subject to discipline including but not limited to suspension, expulsion, arrest, and/or prosecution.**
- b. **Definition: Bullying is defined as overt, repeated acts or gestures, including:**
 1. **Verbal or written communication transmitted;**
 2. **Physical acts committed; or**
 3. **Any other behaviors committed; by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, or harm the other student. Cyber-bullying is defined as repeated misuse of technology to harass, intimidate, bully, or terrorize another person.**
- c. **Applicability: This rule applies when the bullying student is:**
 1. **On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;**
 2. **Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;**
 3. **Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or**
 4. **Using property or equipment provided by the school.**

Contacts for Athletic Directors

Creston Middle School.....Matt Apple 317-532-6808 mapple@warren.k12.in.us

Raymond Park Middle School....Nick Grayson 317-532-6513 ngrayson@warren.k12.in.us

Stonybrook Middle School.....Corey Murray 317-532-8826 cmurray1@warren.k12.in.us

Parent/Coach Communication

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to students. As parents, when your child becomes 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 of your child's team.

Communication You Should Expect from Your Child's Coach

1. philosophy of the coach
2. expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the team
3. location and times of all practices and contests
4. team requirements, i.e. fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning...
5. procedures should your child be injured during practice or a contest
6. discipline that results in the denial of your child's participation
7. coaches will notify parents if a child has been removed from team within 24 hrs

Communication Coaches Expect from Parents

1. concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. advance notification of any schedule conflicts
3. specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

As your child becomes involved in the programs offered by Warren Township, 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 you or your child wishes. At these times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

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 difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things 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

If You Have a Concern to Discuss with a Coach...

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These conferences are encouraged in order to achieve a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

1. Call the coach to set-up an appointment.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call your school's athletic coordinator.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach immediately before or after a practice or contest. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature usually do not promote resolution.

What Can a Parent Do if the Meeting with the Coach Did Not Provide a Satisfactory Resolution?

If satisfactory results are not obtained through meeting with the coach, call and set-up an appointment with the athletic coordinator. The next appropriate step can be determined at this meeting.

Research indicates that a student involved in co-curricular activities has a greater chance of success during adulthood. It is for this benefit that these co-curricular programs have been established. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant in these programs are the traits that will promote a successful life after high school. It is hoped that the information provided in this section makes both your child's and your experience with the middle school athletic program less stressful and more enjoyable.