



*Player Handbook*

## **Welcome to the Waconia High School Football Family!**

Enclosed in this handbook is the information that will help you prepare for your involvement with the WHS football program. While it would be very challenging to cover every situation, we have tried to create a reference for you in preparation for the season. We are excited about the future and direction of our program.

This handbook is divided into two sections, the first being coach-directed information for both players and parents and the second is WHS TD Club events that are tied directly to the football program. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Coach Shea (cshea@isd110.org) or Marie Bolton & Nicole Meyer (waconiadclub@gmail.com), TD Club President.

**SportsYou: Download the App now.** Stay up to date timely reminders and alerts regarding practice times, delays or rescheduled events

**HS Athletes: Waconia Football, code VVFG-X4ZF**

**HS Parents: Football Parents, code G47M-BHHN**

## Dear Parents/Guardian,

Welcome to what should serve as a positive and exciting experience for your son. We, the coaching staff of the WHS Football Program in conjunction with the Touchdown Club, have put together an expectations package for you in the hopes of helping you to better understand the program with which your child is involved. Our goal is to produce fine people first and good football players second, as football is an excellent tool for teaching fundamental and important life skills.

This handbook is a look into what the Waconia football coaching staff deems to be the important facets of our football program. High school football should be a positive, memorable experience for all involved. Coaches' goals are to provide players the opportunity to be the best football player they can be. We intend to teach the game of football, instill discipline, encourage classroom success, prepare players through weight training and off-season conditioning, and build UNITY through hard work and commitment to a common goal of a successful football season. In order to be successful, everyone involved should realize that a positive attitude is a must. Very few things in life worthwhile come easily. Hard times require a positive outlook and attitude to continue striving to improve. Our motto revolves around everyone making a great effort to get better every day for the good of the TEAM. A player's level of improvement is directly related to the amount of effort put forth in each activity the team undertakes. We, as coaches, expect players to give great effort in everything we instruct players to do. While expecting great effort from players, coaches expect great effort from each other as well. It would be unfair for the coaches to expect more of a player than the coach is willing to give himself. In order for all to understand their role, everyone involved should realize the concept of "Team Before Self". Coaches will show a genuine interest in the well being and concerns of each player as an individual, however; coaches, players, parents and administrators cannot put their interests before the teams' best interest. As coaches, we will emphasize the importance of player accountability. It is expected that players will be individually responsible for their actions and day-to-day choices. Everyone should remember, "Playing football is a privilege, not a right". There is no room for special privileges on a team. Everyone is expected to abide by the same standards and serve the same punishment when they do not. In the event an individual player becomes a hindrance to the teams' goals, that player will be removed.

The WHS Football Program demands a lot of time from our student athletes and we do not tolerate absences or lateness for our practices, games or other scheduled events. There is a lot to learn in a relatively short amount of time so good attendance helps both the player and the team. We need you to support us in this effort and make sure that your son is available for the scheduled practices, games and other events such as teambuilding and fundraising.

Thank you for allowing your son to be a part of our program. Together we will have a lot of fun while working hard towards our goals.

Coach Shea

## **Program Philosophy**

Football is demanding. It is a sport of discipline and will, requiring commitment and hard work. It takes a dedicated athlete. Football is not for everyone. However, playing football will give back to you far more than it will demand.

Football provides a tremendous sense of accomplishment and pride. It fosters confidence, courage, and cultivates lifelong friendships. Being a football player is a state of mind, and it is an honor that only a few share. Although winning is always an objective and is important, we believe in, and work toward, what Vince Lombardi said, “The harder you work, the harder it is to surrender”. At the beginning of each season, players should make a commitment to strive for victory. “How can I make the team better?” should be the question regularly asked throughout the season. Hard work, discipline, commitment, and sportsmanship are imperative. They are how we define a successful season and football program.

Being a committed member of the Waconia High School football team translates directly to behaving as a responsible member of Waconia High School and the community. We must always remember whom we represent.

## **Waconia Wildcat Pride**

It is a privilege to be a member of this football squad and to be a Waconia Wildcat. The time, effort, and energy we all spend in making our program a success is based on a strong conviction that football and an education will provide some of your greatest values and most rewarding moments. Take pride in everything you do as part of our program, for in football as in life, the success you enjoy will result from the effort you are willing to give to be a winner. Waconia High School Football has committed to PRIDE and EXCELLENCE. Remember the players who came before you every time you walk into the locker room, weight room, step on the field, or wear a Waconia Wildcat Football uniform. Remember you are setting the example for those who will follow in your footsteps. You are a Waconia Wildcat all the time and forever.

## **Program Alignment**

### **B-Team and Freshman Football**

**Purpose:** Teach players the intermediate rules of high school football and the strategies of WHS football.

**Emphasis:** Prepare the players, both mentally and physically, for varsity football. Winning our Sub Varsity games are a byproduct of this goal.

**Weight room:** Develop strength, agility, quickness, and endurance through a structured lifting, agility, and conditioning program designed to make the players bigger, faster, and stronger. This will allow players to meet the physical demands of playing high school football. Increasing the strength, speed, and agility of the JV players will improve their ability to prepare for varsity.

### **Varsity Football**

**Purpose:** Teach players the advanced rules of high school football and the strategies of WHS football.

**Emphasis:** Win games by fielding the best team of players possible, who are both mentally and physically prepared to play football at the varsity level. Prepare potential college athletes for the collegiate level.

**Weight room:** Continue to improve strength, agility, quickness, and endurance to physically dominate opponents.

## **Leadership Council**

A leadership council was voted on by our players this past winter. And, much like its collegiate and professional counterparts, this council will help Waconia High's football program grow from

within by putting the student-athletes at the forefront of many team decisions. It gives the players a chance to lead by example and help shape the overall culture of the program. Their feedback is truly valued by the coaching staff. Students will be taught how to deal with issues concerning their fellow teammates while also developing a strong working relationship with their coaches. This dual investment, made by the coaches and the players, creates greater trust and accountability on both ends, and fosters a better working environment overall. The leadership council will consist of players regardless of position or location on the depth chart.

## **Expectations of Our Coaching Staff**

**Be a positive role model.** Carry yourself in a professional manner at all times, on the field and in the community. Players and community members are always watching, as a representative of the program your actions will reflect on everyone, not just yourself. Make sure your interactions on the field reflect how you would want your own child to be treated.

**Coach every player.** They won't care how much you know until they know how much you care. We will coach players to help prepare them to achieve their greatest potential. Each player is putting in the time and effort to make the team better and it is the responsibility of the coach to help him improve his skills.

**Communicate.** A football program consists of many parts, it is important that everyone works hard to stay on the same page. All coaches should make sure to work together to stay informed of what is going on with players, scheme, and the program in general. Coaches should also strive to ensure the players understand the material being presented in practice and be approachable if a player wants to talk.

**Commitment.** We ask our players to invest a lot of time into our program and therefore the same commitment is needed from each coach. In turn, the program will try to place a priority on using time wisely during meetings, practices, and team activities.

The WHS coaching staff in conjunction with the TD Club will make every attempt to keep our players and their parents/guardians up to date on football program issues and events. We have four ways of communicating with parents and players. They are email, website, Facebook, and Twitter.

## Player Expectations

We will operate the Waconia Football Program in accordance with the rules, regulations, and policies as outlined by the MSHSL, and the administrative policies of WHS. Within that framework we will provide a football program of the highest quality that meets the needs of our students, alumni, school and community.

As Head Coach, I believe that our football program provides a vital link between the school and the community. Student, parental, alumni, and community involvement in our program helps to enhance school spirit, develop sound minds and bodies, and develop skills and qualities which endure for life.

As a general rule, all players are to conduct themselves with class and dignity, both on and off the field. Your behavior is a direct reflection of our school and football program. Any actions that will embarrass you, your team, school, or parents is an action that should not be taken.

All players in this program will recognize and respect the authority of all coaches, teachers,

administrators, and support staff members or they will not be a part of the team.

Any violation of one or more of the rules covered in this handbook is an indication that this football program, and being a part of it, is not important to you. Any violation will be dealt with accordingly, ranging from Pride Reminders (PR) to dismissal from the team. Those who work hard and adhere to these policies are showing that being part of this team is important and will be rewarded with success, satisfaction, and wins.

## **Attendance**

All players are expected to be present and on time to practice.

1. Any player who is late to practice will be held after practice to make up for the time they missed – PR (Pride Reminders).
2. Any player who misses practice without notifying Coach Shea in person or by SportsYou ahead of time will be dealt with accordingly.
  - a. 1st Unexcused absence = miss game time at Coach's discretion (i.e. miss 1st half of the game)
  - b. 2nd Unexcused absence = 1 game suspension
  - c. 3rd Unexcused absence = possible removal from team
3. In the case of an unforeseen emergency, parent must contact Coach Shea.
4. All illness and sickness absences need to have a prior approval or doctor's excuse upon returning to practice to determine excused or unexcused. This does not mean that any time a player is sick or ill they need to go to the doctor, but any major illness and sickness that causes players to miss practice should seek treatment. Not feeling good is not an excused absence.
5. Any absence, regardless of excused or unexcused, will require conditioning to be made up upon returning to practice. (This does not include players injured, determined by the trainer or medical professional, but are in attendance for practice)
6. The WHS Athletic Dept. policy states that an athlete must be at school for the entirety of 5 class periods to be eligible for practice or games on that day.
7. Any circumstances (Dr. visit, Dentist, etc.) that would be excused may ONLY be excused through the WHS administration.

## **Inclement Weather**

When a practice is scheduled we will do something as a team regardless of the weather (obviously, extreme occurrences such as a lightning provide exceptions) so practice will always

be on. When a situation arises where we have inclement weather (i.e. lightning) we will do one of the following:

1. Move practice to the gymnasium
2. Watch film and wait out the weather for an opportunity to go back outside
3. Go to weight room and wait out the weather

In a situation where we go inside to wait out the weather practice will end at the scheduled time.

## **Academics**

One of our team goals every year is to earn **Academic All-State** as a team. You are expected to be a student first and an athlete second. Treat yourself with proper respect. To be a member of this team, you must attend class regularly, and achieve a minimum GPA of 2.0. Poor behavior and low achievement make all of us look bad. The academic progress of all team members will be monitored throughout the school year.

## **Hazing**

No player will ever be ridiculed by another player either in the locker room, training rooms or on the field. All players will be respected by their teammates.

## **Locker Room**

The expectation is that all players wear “issued” Wildcat football practice attire every day.

Game pants and jersey will be issued at the beginning of the season. Players are responsible for cleaning practice attire to ensure proper hygiene. **No cell phones are allowed to be on in the locker room.**

Every player is solely responsible for all equipment lost or stolen. **Locks for lockers will need to be purchased by players and are expected to be used at all times.**

As soon as a piece of your equipment is noticed to be missing you should notify the coach and make arrangements to replace the items.

Do not wear football shoes in any part of the school outside the locker room. Latrines and toilets are to be flushed; showers and faucets are to be turned off after use. Put all trash in the trash cans. Take pride in what we have and keep it clean. Remember - Don't leave anything out! **The locker room floor will be free of trash and equipment that does not belong there.**

## Equipment Care

All players must have regard for the equipment. Equipment care is very essential in maintaining good quality equipment for you and others to use while participating with the WHS football team. The average cost of outfitting you with essential and proper fitting safety gear is around \$750.00 per student/athlete. The costs continue to rise each and every year, so it is necessary for you, as the borrower, to take full responsibility for your equipment care. We require players to purchase their own cleats, girdles, and mouth guards. Everything else will be loaned to the athletes so we need to follow some simple maintenance steps for your borrowed equipment throughout the year:

- **Helmet:** Cost \$300.00 and up  
This is not a device made to use as a weapon. The use of the helmet other than a safety device is strictly prohibited:
  - ✓ Inspect & tighten facemask screws weekly.
  - ✓ Inspect & tighten chinstrap screws weekly.
  - ✓ Inspect chinstrap buckles weekly.
  - ✓ Wipe down your helmet weekly (inside & out) with a damp cloth.
  
- **Shoulder Pads:** Cost \$200.00 and up
  - ✓ Inspect all straps, strings, & clips weekly.
  - ✓ Tape all your straps after proper clip adjustment has been received.
  - ✓ Wash the molded plastic with a damp cloth.
  - ✓ Clean Shoulder Pads on a regular basis with water and a disinfectant
  
- **Pants, Girdle, Belt, & Practice Jersey**

- ✓ Wash them regularly to keep them from stinking, staining and housing bacteria.
- **LOCKS on Lockers**
  - ✓ All players are required to have a lock on their locker in the locker room in order to maintain the safety of their equipment
  - ✓ If a player loses any piece of equipment, then they are responsible for the cost of replacing it new

## **Weight Room Requirement**

All Football players will be required to participate in a weight-training program during the season. The purpose of this strength training is to prevent injury, maintain strength level, and to improve strength. Since one of the purposes in strength training for football is to help avoid injuries, the need to maintain all such development actually increases as the season goes on. The loss of this strength could increase the chance of injury. All players who plan to play football next year are expected to be working out with the team in the off-season.

## **Offseason Workouts**

It is cliché, but championships are won during the off-season. Your football team is built December through July, not August through November. We will have off-season workouts during the school year after our regular season. These workout schedules will be posted by Coach Anderson. They will include weight training, flexibility training and speed work. Participation is very strongly encouraged. Attendance will be taken for the team's records. Football is a contact sport and therefore it is very physical. Physical conditioning is very important to help prevent injuries and enable the WHS football team to compete at the High School level. It also provides players the opportunity to develop and maintain friendships with their teammates and build team spirit and camaraderie.

## **Summer Workouts**

The summer is a time to get a jumpstart on our season. The amount of work you put in during the summer will largely determine the amount of success you have in the fall. Summer workouts are strongly recommended; they are a necessity for a successful season. Summer conditioning and practice sessions are put together in order to provide for a better season. It is your goal to make 90% of summer workouts. Our objective this summer is to get better each day and enjoy ourselves. When you are going out of town or on vacation, let coach Anderson know BEFORE you leave. Be responsible and communicate with him. BE COMMITTED to your team and its goals.

**You are now a member of the team, and you are now willing to make individual sacrifices for the good of the whole.**

## **Injuries and Health Concerns**

**If you have an injury or health concern, please see the WHS Athletic Trainer, Mr. Chrest.** If a player is taken to the hospital, then either Coach Shea or the Athletic Trainer will notify a parent.

Players should report any updates in medical conditions or medications being taken to both Coach Shea and Mr. Chrest. Players should also report health conditions such as skin rashes or mononucleosis to Coach Shea so appropriate action can be taken to prevent spreading to teammates.

**Any player who is injured and not participating in practice will spend part of practice (as determined by coaches and trainer) performing physical activity and part of practice either getting ‘mental reps’ by analyzing practice or assisting our team managers with film, water, equipment, etc.**

## **Parent Expectations**

**Be positive with your athlete.** Let them know you are proud they are part of the team. Focus on the benefits of teamwork and personal discipline.

**Encourage your athlete to follow all training rules.** Help the coaches build a commitment to the team. Set a good example in your personal lifestyle.

**Allow your athlete to perform and progress at a level consistent with his ability.** Athletes mature at different ages; some are more gifted than others.

**Always support the coaching staff when controversial decisions are made.** The coaches need your backing to keep good morale on the team.

**Insist on positive behavior in school and a high level of performance in the classroom.** Numerous studies indicate extracurricular involvement helps enhance academic performance.

**Stay calm in injury situations.** Parents can help minimize the trauma by being in control and offering comfort. Allow the medical staff to perform their assessment of your son's injury. No parent is allowed on the field unless the training staff requests it.

**Cheer for our team and players. Opponents and referees deserve respect.** Realize that high school players will make mistakes. Your support is needed during tough times.

**Promote having fun and being a team player.** Very few high school athletes receive scholarships. Concentrate on what is best for the team. Preoccupation with statistics can be very distracting.

**An athlete's self-confidence and self-image will be improved by support at home.** Comparison to others are discouraged. Encourage the athlete to do their best regardless of family or friends who may have been outstanding players.

**Winning is fun, but building positive team values is most important.** The concept of working together to perform a task will have lasting benefits. Winning takes place when all the little things are done correctly.

**Help students keep jobs and cars in proper perspective.** Materialistic values can detract from the commitment to the team. Teenagers should have the opportunity to take advantage of extracurricular activities.

**Athletes must attend all practices, games and team events.** Stress the necessity to make a commitment to the team.

**Emphasize the importance of well-balanced meals and regular sleep patterns.** An athlete functions best when care is taken to consume nutritious food and obtain sufficient rest.

**Persistence and being able to accept a role is extremely important for the team to be successful.** Not everyone will be a starter, but everyone is important to the team. Some players may not develop until their senior season. Encourage them to be persistent.

## Parent Code of Conduct

I will enjoy my child's opportunity to experience the benefits of playing high school football.  
I will trust in my child's ability to have fun and to perform and achieve excellence on his own.  
I will help my child learn the right lessons from winning, losing, individual achievement, and mistakes.

I will respect my child's teammates as well as fellow parents and fans.

I will give encouragement and applaud only positive accomplishments whether from my child or his teammates.

I will support the efforts of the coaching staff.

I will not instruct from the sidelines unless asked to by the coach.

I will ensure that my child will attend all practices and games and will inform the coach in advance if unable to attend.

I will respect all facilities made available to my child.

I will respect the equipment and uniform loaned to my child for practice and play.

I will respect the officials and their authority during games.

I will never demonstrate threatening or abusive behavior.

## Football: More Than Just a Game

**Teamwork** The ability to work with others is extremely important in today's world.

**Commitment** Players must be at all practices and follow team rules.

**Work Ethic** Peak physical condition can only be attained through hard work.

**Pride in Performance** A feeling of accomplishment is realized through persistent application of

	effort.
<b>Friendships</b>	Lifetime relationships are developed through participation in sports.
<b>Achievement</b>	Players represent their communities, schools, and families. A feeling of togetherness is experienced.
<b>Enthusiasm</b>	In order to be successful, both football and life must be approached with enthusiasm.
<b>Persistence</b>	One learns to get up and go again after being knocked down.
<b>Confidence</b>	Self-esteem is enhanced through a series of achievements.
<b>Athletic Ability</b>	The skills essential for football are valuable in other sports.
<b>Have Fun!</b>	Football is fun to play and exciting to watch.
<b>Identity</b>	The team provides all participants with a sense of belonging.
<b>Courage</b>	Performance under pressure helps conquer fear.
<b>Challenges</b>	Participants learn how to overcome obstacles to success.
<b>Better Grades</b>	Numerous studies indicate students active in school activities perform better in the classroom.
<b>Responsibility</b>	The game of football holds individuals accountable for their actions.
<b>Success in Life</b>	According to the American College Testing Service, participating in high school activities is a major indicator of success later in life.

## **WHS Touchdown Club**

### **Mission Statement**

The Waconia Football Touchdown Club was established to promote a fun and exciting football experience for Waconia football players, coaches, and fans.

Our goals are to provide support to the coaches, promote the football program within the community and enrich the football experience of our student-athletes.

**Purpose**

To provide a valuable and rewarding football experience for Waconia football players, coaches, and fans

To give back to the community by providing support to community programs and events

- **Carb Feeds**
- **Team Meals**
- **Post Game Meals**
- **End of the Year Banquets**
- **Yard Signs**
- **Service Opportunities**
- **Parent Functions**

## **Fundraising**

With the high cost of outfitting a player in quality football equipment (~\$750), it is essential that we perform various fundraisers to supplement what is provided by the school's football fund allotment. In addition to the basic expenses, some other major expenses are field equipment,

technology equipment, team building events and travel. We are also currently trying to raise funds for some long-term major improvements to the program. We have several fundraisers planned and the dates will be posted on the website's calendar of events.

Fundraising is a Team Function!

## **Community Service**

We continually ask ourselves, "What is the mission of our high school athletic programs?" For some members of our community or for some parents, the answer would center on how well the team does in terms of wins and losses. This viewpoint would evaluate the season based upon winning the district title or how far a team advances in the playoffs.

We associate educational athletics as being the intentional efforts of our coaches to teach skills, behaviors, actions and attitudes that extend far beyond the X's and O's of our sports. Some of these positive character traits are: hard work, discipline, teamwork, perseverance, sportsmanship, respect and learning how to win and lose with dignity.

In addition to these we will add community service as another character trait that can be used in our pursuit of educational athletics. We define community service as giving back to the school and surrounding community through volunteerism. Service is doing something for somebody else without any expectation of getting anything in return. It is a selfless way for our team to give back to their community.

Throughout the year, the team will participate in several community service activities. These activities will have the secondary benefit of being team building events as well as allowing the players to claim hours for required service.

Community Service is a Team Function!

## **Team Building**

Team building has many key elements; the most important elements are earning trust, communication, and teamwork. These elements can be built in many different ways. Through team camps, recreational events, community service, fundraising events and standard team preparation. Throughout the year (on and off season) the team will participate in several

team-building events. The team will attend at least one full contact football camp during the summer. All the team building events will be posted on the website's calendar of events.

**Team Building Events are Mandatory!**

We hope this handbook answers your questions and motivates you to become a superior student-athlete. This handbook is not intended to substitute for coach-player communication. Problems most often arise from misunderstandings, and/or lack of communication. We must be willing to search for answers and solutions properly if we are to progress as coaches, students, individuals, and as a team.

As the season progresses, you may at one time or another have questions in regards to a variety of different issues. Please feel free to contact Coach Shea and every effort will be made to provide you with the information you need.

“Individually we have responsibilities that when executed together, will allow us to succeed as a team!”