

**STUDENT-ATHLETE
HANDBOOK
WILMINGTON CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
2024-2025**



**WILMINGTON CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
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WILMINGTON, OHIO 45177**



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Purpose

The primary purpose of the Wilmington Christian Academy Athletic Handbook is to inform the athlete and their families of the operational procedures within the athletic department. This handbook contains the majority of policies and procedures that govern extracurricular activities at Wilmington Christian Academy. The secondary purpose is to provide effective communication that will serve as a foundation of information for coaches, athletes and parents.

***This handbook will undergo an annual review and revisions will be made as deemed necessary. The annual review will be conducted by the Administrator, Athletic Director and approved through the School Board.

Statement of Philosophy

At Wilmington Christian Academy, we believe athletics play an integral role in the total education and growth of the students. We wish to provide an atmosphere where student-athletes can develop their physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual gifts through the avenue of competition. It is our mission to provide an environment that brings glory to God through our participation in sport, by giving our best effort in school, during practices and games while upholding our faith and strong testimony in our community.

Interscholastic athletics provides an avenue for our student-athletes to learn and develop their gifts and talents. It provides an opportunity for our athletes to praise Christ while uplifting themselves and witnessing to others. The interscholastic athletic program at WCA is an integral part of the entire school program. It is never to be thought of as being separate from, above, or beneath any program of our school. The athletic program supports and reinforces the mission and purpose of Wilmington Christian Academy.



We are 'LIONS'

As members of Wilmington Christian Athletics, the athletes, coaches and administration realize that our program extends far from our local community. As our top responsibility is to represent our Lord and Savior, we aim to create a program that shares who we are. We are LIONS.

It is our goal to instill values in our student-athletes in such a way that they ultimately learn from their athletic experiences that there is depth to life and sport beyond merely winning and losing. It is with these truths in mind that our program will strive to maintain the following virtues:

- **L=Leadership**
- **I=Integrity**
- **O=Obedience**
- **N=Nobility**
- **S=Service**

Leadership “Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers as an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.” *1 Timothy 4:12* ESV

Integrity - “Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity.” *Titus 2:7* ESV

Obedience - “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” *John 14:15* ESV

Nobility - “But he who is noble plans noble things, and on noble things he stands.” *Isaiah 32:8* ESV

Service - “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” *Mark 10:45* ESV



Athletic Rules and Regulations

Effective Time Period

The following rules and regulations will be in continuous effect from the date of the first practice session of the student's first sport at Wilmington Christian Academy until he/she graduates from high school. These policies are in effect year around, which includes all holidays and vacations. There is no "off season" and the policy will be enforced 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Definition of an Athlete

"Athlete" for the purpose of these rules and regulations will be defined as any student enrolled at Wilmington Christian Academy or "Homeschooled student" who participates in WCA sponsored interscholastic athletic activities in grades 7-12.

Expectations of Athletes

Participation in athletics is a privilege. Accordingly, students must meet certain standards in order to earn the privilege of participation. The following standards are required at a minimum of all athletes.

1. Maintain academic eligibility.
2. Demonstrate good citizenship and serve as a positive role model.
3. Exhibit public behavior that will reflect positively on the team, school and community.
4. Display responsible, respectful and trustworthy behavior to teammates and coaches.
5. Comply with all team and school rules and regulations and policies.
6. Attend all team functions unless ill or given prior permission to be absent by the coach.
7. Respect and comply with decisions made by the coach and athletic department.
8. Respect calls and decisions made by game officials.
9. Display good sportsmanship at all times.
10. Does not use alcohol, tobacco, drugs or attend parties that would have these items present.
11. Report to the coach any issues or developments that may affect eligibility status.

These expectations are set as minimum standards for the athletic department of Wilmington Christian Academy. Coaches may set higher standards for their team beyond those set by this department. Student athletes need to be aware that violations may carry consequences that extend into the following school year.

Student Athletic Participation Requirements

- No student may participate in a scheduled game/practice unless he/she has submitted a physical exam form.
- No student may participate in a game until a participation fee has been paid. No student may participate in a practice unless all required paperwork has been completed on Final Forms.
- Students must maintain a 2.5 for the final grading periods during the season.
- The Athletic Director will run a grade report for all students participating in school-sponsored sports at the beginning of a season, and every two weeks thereafter, along with quarter grades. If a student has less than a 70 in any subject guided study will be required of that student.
- Students must make every effort to attend school the day after contests. Any student showing a pattern of absence following game days will be subject to discipline.

Athletic Eligibility

Athletes enrolled at Wilmington Christian Academy must meet the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) requirements to take and pass at least five (5) one credit classes (or the equivalency) during the grading period immediately preceding the beginning of the sport season. Athletes must have at least a 2.5 quarterly cumulative grade point average.

Athletes that are homeschooled and participating in Wilmington Christian Academy sponsored sports must also meet the OHSAA requirements to take and pass at least five (5) one credit classes during the grading period immediately preceding the beginning of the specific sport season. Homeschool athletes will also be required to provide quarterly grade updates to the Athletic Director in the classes in which they are taking as a part of their home school curriculum.

Participation Registration

- All WCA Athletes must register online thru Final Forms.
- OHSAA Physical Form (pages 1-6 completed) uploaded to the registration. Physicals are good for one year.
- An athlete will NOT be permitted to practice until registration is completed.
- Home School Athletes will NOT be permitted to practice until all documents are completed and uploaded.
- Participation fees are due by the end of the first week of practice.
 - Each sport offered by WCA carries a \$150 participation fee. Any additional athletes from the same family will be \$125. Paying a fee does not guarantee a minimum playing time.

Transportation

Families and students are responsible for all travel to and from activities, practices and games.

Attendance

An athlete must be in attendance at school before the end of the 1st class period of the day and remain at school the entire day to participate in any school sponsored activity. Pre-approved, documented absences (college visits, doctor or dental appointments, funerals, etc.) are exceptions to the attendance participation policy. Athletes must bring a note from a professional if they are arriving late on the day of an athletic event. ***Parental notes are not sufficient to create an exception to this policy.*** Emergencies and other extenuating circumstances must be handled through the Administrator and/or Athletic Director.

In Season Vacations

Vacations by athletic team members during a sports season are **STRONGLY** discouraged. In the event where absence due to vacation is unavoidable, the athlete must:

- Notify the Head Coach prior to the beginning of the sports season.
- Be willing to assume the consequences related to his/her status on that team as a starter, second team, and so forth.
- If the vacation is during the tryout practices, it is the athlete's responsibility to arrange an alternative tryout opportunity with the coach or potentially risking not making the team.

Practice

Practice is considered mandatory for all sports. Junior High typically will practice following school 4-5 times a week. High school teams will practice 4-5 times per week. Practices are closed to parents unless the coach provides an exception.

Snow Days

If a "snow day" or emergency day is called on the day of an athletic contest or practice, a decision on practice or a contest will be decided by 1:00pm by the Athletic Director and Administrator. This decision will be communicated by email or text.

Tryouts/Cuts

Tryouts may be necessary for team sports for 7-12 grade athletes. Our junior and high school athletes participate in interscholastic competition and each program has as its goal to be competitive while teaching our athletes about the sport in which they are participating.

The maximum number of players will be decided on by the coach and the Athletic Director for each season as well as each sport. Cuts for teams will be determined by the coaching staff and Athletic Director as needed.

Every sport will hold tryouts on the first day allotted to practice. No tryouts will be held before this day so that each student has the opportunity to participate. Tryouts will be administered by the coaching staff and the Athletic Director.

Athlete Appearance

Student athletes are representatives of Wilmington Christian Academy and therefore must reflect its standards. Athletes are expected to have a well-groomed appearance. The athlete's hairstyle must be appropriate for each sport. Personal style is not to interfere with the individual's performance nor present a situation which could cause a hazardous condition for the athlete or for other athletes. The coach may require other appearance guidelines at their discretion and with approval.

Athletic Equipment/Uniforms

As an athlete at Wilmington Christian Academy, you have the following responsibilities concerning school issued uniform and equipment items:

- Your equipment and uniform are issued to you alone.
- Do not loan your equipment or uniform to others.
- It is your responsibility to examine your equipment for damage.
- Damaged equipment must be repaired BEFORE you compete or practice. Bring your equipment problems immediately to the attention of your coach for resolution.
- You are responsible for the security of these items.
- Equipment/uniform items that are lost or stolen are your financial responsibility.

Injured Athlete

Any athlete who has been denied participation by a physician will not be permitted to practice or play in a game until a release has been granted. A coach, parent, or athlete cannot override a physicians' or trainers' denial of participation for injury. Injured athletes are still expected to attend all practices, games and other team functions unless the injury or rehabilitation absolutely prevents this.

Any athlete injuring the head in practice or a competition will be immediately removed and will not be allowed to participate until they have been cleared by a health care professional.

Weight Room

- No horseplay at any time. No food, drinks, or gum in the fitness room (with the exception of water in a closed bottle).
- Shoes must be worn at all times (no sandals or open toed shoes).
- Students are never allowed to be in the weight room without supervision by a coach, teacher, or athletic director.
- Never interfere with someone who is lifting.
- Students must be 12 years of age or older in order to use the equipment.
- Proper and appropriate clothing must be worn to use the facility.
- Do not alter or abuse the machines with reckless techniques or improper use.

Concessions

School and community service is highly encouraged for WCA sports teams. All sports teams will be required to serve in the concession stand throughout the year.

Family Sport Passes

Family passes for athletic competitions will be evaluated yearly. The criteria for the current passes are as follows:

- WCA students K-12 and Staff are admitted to any home contest at no charge.
- Anyone may purchase a pass for our sports contests as outlined.
- Passes include all direct family members living in a home.
- The cost of a pass is \$150.00 for the 2024-25 school year.
- Family members will give their name to be admitted to the contest.
- VALID ONLY during JH/HS home sports contests.

Special Team Rules

Coaches may have team rules in addition to the Athletic Policy. These additional expectations are submitted to the Athletic Director for approval. These will be distributed to the team members by the coach. The head coach has the authority to suspend a player for violation of these team guidelines.

Sportsmanship

Wilmington Christian Academy places the highest priority on good sportsmanship and integrity. Parents, spectators and student-athletes each play a fundamental role. We ask you to take that responsibility seriously and lead by example. Please attend our athletic contests with spirit and enthusiasm, but also with courtesy to the officials, our opponents and their fans. Together, we can build a positive image of Wilmington Christian Academy. We need to remember who we are: We are LIONS!



Lettering/Award Criteria

Awards are presented to students/athletes to represent an accomplishment. Awards are earned. The following criteria should be observed.

- Attends 80% of scheduled practices to the satisfaction of the coach.
- Participates in 50% of the required number of quarters, halves, games, etc., or have earned a certain level of points in applicable varsity sports.
- Meet all the requirements of the Athletic Policy.
- Completes the season as member of the team.

The coach, with the approval of the Athletic Director, has the authority to change letter requirements for individual athletes for disciplinary reasons.

Awards

- *Varsity Letter* - successful completion of above criteria.
- *Varsity Bar Pin* - 2nd year of participation in a varsity sport.
- *Varsity Bar and 3rd year patch* - 3rd year of participation in a varsity sport.
- *Varsity 4-year Recognition Plaque* - 4th year of participation in a varsity sport.
- *Patches* - also given for team and individual accomplishments.

Special Awards- Each Sport Season

- *Coaches Awards* - Given by a coach to recognize the athletes that they feel need to be individually honored.
- *Most Inspirational Player* - Voted on by the team. Teammates will vote on who they feel inspires them as a team member.
- *The Heart of a Lion Award* - Voted on by the coaching staff and team. Viewed as the best example of what a teammate should be.



Bullying/Harassment Policy

Wilmington Christian Academy believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy environment. Our goal is to foster relationships and a Christ-centered learning community.

Wilmington Christian Academy's policy states, "Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems."

Bullying and Harassment are considered major infractions and are prohibited on the school grounds or at school sponsored activities. Students found responsible for harassment, intimidation or bullying may be suspended or expelled.

Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal Bullying - saying or writing mean things.
 - Teasing
 - Name-calling
 - Inappropriate sexual comments
 - Taunting
 - Threatening to cause harm
 - Spreading rumors
 - Attacking someone verbally
- Social Bullying - hurting someone's reputation or relationships.
 - Leaving someone out of a group on purpose
 - Telling other children not to be friends with someone
 - Spreading rumors about someone
 - Embarrassing someone in public, etc.
 - Posting slurs on websites, social networking sites or blogs
 - Using camera phone to take embarrassing photos or videos and distributing or posting online
 - Sending threatening emails, website postings or texts
- Physical Bullying - hurting a person's body or possessions.
 - Hitting/kicking/pinching
 - Spitting
 - Tripping/pushing
 - Taking or breaking someone's things
 - Making mean, rude, or inappropriate hand gestures



Athlete/Parent/Coach Communication

Expectations

Communication and clarity between athletes, parents and coaches are vital to the success of our programs.

Communication to expect from your coach:

- School Athletic and Spiritual philosophy.
- Spiritual focus throughout the season.
- Expectations the coach may have for your child and the team.
- Locations and times of all practices and contests.
- Team requirements such as fees, special equipment, attendance, eligibility, off-season conditioning, etc.
- Procedure to follow should your child become injured during participation.
- Athletic Code of Behavior policy and any additional rules that may affect your child's participation.
- Requirements to earn a letter.
- Disposition of lost/outstanding equipment at the end of the season.

Communication a coach expects from parents and athletes:

- Open line of communication between the athlete and the coach.
- Parents encouraging their child to communicate with his or her coach when there is a problem.
- When a child believes that cannot effectively communicate with the coach regarding a problem, a parent expresses their concerns in a private setting.
- Notification of schedule conflicts well in advance of the conflict.
- Special needs of the athlete regarding physical limitations or other concerns.

Areas of Discussion

As your child becomes involved in the various athletic programs of WCA, it is our desire that they will experience spiritual, physical, and academic growth. We would like this to be a rewarding experience for them which will help shape the rest of their life.

It is also important to understand that things may not always go as you or your child wishes. At these times, discussion with the coach may be recommended to understand any unresolved issues and to avoid further misunderstandings.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss With a Coach

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

Not Appropriate Areas to Discuss With a Coach

- Playing time.
- Team strategy/play calling.
- Matters concerning other student athletes.

There are many aspects of the highly emotional and dynamic setting of interscholastic athletics that are often questioned. These may include decisions by the coaches, administration, officials, athletes, parents, and fans. Many concerns (listed above) can and should be addressed with your child's coach. The coaches make judgment decisions based upon what they believe to be best for all the students involved in the situation.

Procedure to Follow

There are certain situations that may require a meeting between the coach and a parent, and this is encouraged when necessary. It is important that both parties have a clear understanding of the other's position. The following procedures should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue.

- Have your child try to resolve the issue with the coach first.
- If your child cannot resolve the issue, contact the coach and arrange an appointment.
- If the coach cannot be reached, contact the athletic director and an appointment will be arranged.
- **Please do not confront a coach before or after a game.** These are emotional times for players, coaches, and parents.
- **Please do not confront a coach during practice.** Coaches have specific plans for each practice and should not be interrupted. The coach may be able to meet with you following the practice.

The Next Step

Total agreement may not always be reached, but most often such a meeting does afford the opportunity for productive discussion and a better understanding. If the parents desire further communication, please call the athletic director to discuss the situation. The appropriate next step will be determined.

Chain of Command

The Department of Athletics of Wilmington Christian Academy follows the chain of command as listed below. We ask that you observe the order of this line of communication if you pursue any concern you may have with the athletic program.

Head Coach—Athletic Director—Administrator

At every level, you will be asked if you have followed the sequence of communication as listed in this guide. Please help us to make each season a rewarding and valuable time for everyone involved.