



**WESTPORT
MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL
ATHLETICS**

**STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT
HANDBOOK**

2024-2025



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WELCOME TO WESTPORT MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

I would like to welcome all returning and incoming student-athletes and all parents or guardians to Westport Middle High Athletics. This past school year was a tremendous year for our athletic teams, and we are looking forward to another year of success for all of our teams. Sports provide our student-athletes the opportunity to grow and learn outside of the classroom. Our coaches look to enrich their athletic experience, build character, and empower each student-athlete to become leaders of this community.

This Student-Athlete/Parent Athletic Handbook serves as tool to guide you through this experience. It is designed to inform you about the policies and regulations governing interscholastic competition, as well as information about the athletic programs here at Westport Middle High School.

Our mission is to ensure that each student-athlete is provided a positive environment to succeed in, as well as to support the goals of Westport Community Schools “TO PROVIDE STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FAMILIES WITH A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WHERE STUDENTS CAN RECEIVE THE BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND DEVELOP BOTH THE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING SKILLS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE, CAREER, AND LIFE.”

Being a student athlete requires commitment, dedication and sacrifice. Participating in sports can equip you with the tools you need to balance the demands of playing the sports you love, while finding success in the classroom. We have state of the art facilities, a decorated coaching staff, and a tremendous amount of pride in this community. Myself and our dedicated coaches are here to provide you with the resources to enhance your skills and support the needs of each athlete. I am excited to begin cultivating



relationships with all of you, to help grow and sustain all of our programs and continue to enhance the Wildcat culture each year.

If questions or concerns, please contact the athletic office or a member of our coaching staff. For further information concerning Westport Middle-High School Athletics, including schedules, athletic forms, and valuable links to related organizations, please visit the Westport Athletics Department page of the Westport Community Schools website.

Wishing you great success!
Shelly Morris

Go Wildcats!

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

- (1)** The Interscholastic Athletic Program at Westport is committed to the overall development of its student-athletes: the physical, emotional, social, and mental development of its participants. Athletics are an extension of the academic day where students learn values and life-skills: discipline, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, work ethic, teamwork, taking instruction, sacrificing for the common good and physical well-being and chemical health. The athletic department believes that these are necessary traits to possess and incorporate to experience personal success in their adult life.
- (2)** Building self-esteem and self-confidence is an ongoing process, used both in games and practices. Through this process Westport coaches challenge and develop players through both instruction and personal accountability. In a positive manner, the coach will use both praise and constructive criticism, motivated to make praise personal, and criticism impersonal.
- (3)** Westport expects all athletes to **“play with class and poise.”** As members of the Westport Athletic Program, athletes and coaches are expected to demonstrate proper respect for each other, opposing teams and coaches, teammates, officials, spectators and equipment. Actions or behaviors unbecoming of a Westport Student-Athlete can be grounds for suspension or dismissal from the team.
- (4)** Student-athletes and coaches are expected to exhibit the highest level of conduct, both on and off the playing field, as they are at all times representatives of their team, school, and community. Student-athletes are expected to set positive examples to their respective peers and classmates, endeavoring to be leaders regarding all school policies governing student behavior.



- (5) Westport Middle-High School offers multiple sports that play at both the varsity, sub-varsity and middle school levels. Middle School participation is intended to be for general learning and skills development. For junior varsity and freshmen levels the emphasis is on participation and individual development in the sports, time may not always be equal at the JV level. Emphasis at the varsity level shifts towards fielding competitive teams with the goal of achieving the highest level of competitiveness. Coaches on the varsity level have the discretion to utilize players how they see fit based on skill level, opponent etc. There are no guarantees that a student-athlete will receive a satisfactory amount of playing time during a game, or throughout the course of a season. **Seniors may only play at the varsity level, unless agreed upon by the Athletic Director, coaching staff, student-athlete, and parents.**
- (6) The Westport Athletic Program strives to be fully compliant with the mandates of Title IX and Chapter 622, which have established standards of equality for female and male student-athletes, and to assure female athletic programs are equally funded as male athletic programs.
- (7) First and foremost, Westport Middle-High School is an academic institution. Satisfactory academic and citizenship performance must be maintained throughout the course of the academic year to exercise the privilege of athletic participation. Student-athletes are strongly encouraged to be proactive in their academic progress, seeking extra-help from teachers, if necessary. **Remember, athletics are a privilege and not a right, with one earning the right to play!**

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT OFFERINGS & LEVELS

Fall Sports (*Tryouts may start as early as second Monday preceding Labor Day. Middle School Tryouts start once school begins.*)

	Varsity / Junior Varsity / Freshman / Middle School			
Field Hockey	x			x
Golf	x			
Soccer - Boys	x	x		x
Soccer - Girls	x			x
Volleyball	x	x	x	
Football (Co-Op w/Atlantis Charter-Guest)	x			

Winter Sports (*Tryouts start Monday after Thanksgiving*)

Basketball - Boys	x	x	x	x
Basketball - Girls	x	x		x
Cheerleading	x			x
Ice Hockey (Co-Op w/Diman-Guest)	x			
Swimming & Dive (Co-op w/Bishop Stang)	x			



Spring Sports (*Tryouts start the third Monday in March*)

Baseball	x	x	x
Boys Lacrosse	x		
Softball	x	x	x
Boys Tennis	x		
Girls Tennis	x		

COOPERATIVE ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

When certain sports do not have sufficient participation among our own students to support a program, Westport has established cooperative agreements with Atlantis Charter School, Bishop Stang and Diman. The cooperative sports Westport participates in include football, ice hockey, and boys & girls swimming & diving. We provide transportation to Atlantis Charter, but students are responsible for their own transportation to and from Bishop Stang, and the Ice rink in Fall River, based on practice and game times. All cooperative teams have been approved by the Westport School Committee, Mayflower Athletic Conference, and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

GOVERNING BODIES

Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association:

Westport Middle-High School is an official member of the MIAA, which is responsible for administration and governance of interscholastic athletics throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. With membership, the Principal agrees to abide by all rules and regulations set forth by the MIAA. When varsity teams qualify for and enter MIAA sponsored post-season tournaments to determine sectional and state champions, we are subject to specific rules and regulations that govern each sanctioned tournament. The MIAA does not sponsor or sanction any sub-varsity tournament competition. For further information concerning the MIAA, please visit www.miaa.net.

The Mayflower Athletic Conference:

The Mayflower Athletic Conference is governed by the MIAA, as well as its own by-laws and constitution. The principal agrees that their school will abide by all league rules and regulations, for respective sport.

Westport Middle-High School:

Additional Policies, regulations, and rules are set forth by the Westport School Committee and Principal to help better guide the Athletic Program and those who participate in it. Under MIAA guidelines, local communities are allowed to set forth additional rules and regulations so long as they don't contradict policies established by the MIAA, and are more restrictive than those previously stipulated.

REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION AT WESTPORT



Pre-Tryout Requirements:

A student must be declared eligible by the Principal according to the standards listed in this section before a student-athlete is allowed to try out for a team. All forms may be downloaded from the Westport Athletics Department page of the Westport Community Schools website.

1. Physical Examination/Form

All students must pass a physical examination within 13 months of the start of each season. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner. Proof of a valid physical exam must be submitted to the Athletics Office prior to the start of the respective athletic season. Physicals expire 13 months from the date last performed.

2. Medical Authorization & Emergency Treatment Form

Parent/guardian must give authorization for student-athlete to be evaluated or treated by a duly licensed physician or hospital facility, and to be transported by medical staff, in case of illness or injury. The form allows the parent/guardian to provide emergency contact information, medical history to illnesses or physical conditions, and insurance information. Every coach will carry copies of forms for each individual on team, to take with them for all away games in case of emergency.

3. Concussion History Reporting Form

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that all schools subject to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) rules adhere to the following; Student-Athletes and Parents or Guardians learn about the consequences of head injuries and concussions through training programs and written materials. Thus, all Student-Athletes and Parents or Guardians must read the Center for Disease and Control Concussion Fact Sheet, authorize they have read the information, and report to athletic department any prior history of head-related or concussion injury. This form must be updated every season.

4. Athletic Participation Authorization Form

A student must submit a completed, signed parent or guardian permission form prior to his/her first practice session. This form must be completed on a yearly basis. This form verifies that both student-athlete and parent/guardian have read and will comply with the Student-Athlete/Parent Handbook.

5. Athletic User Fee

The Westport School Committee has authorized the Athletic Department to collect an Athletic Fee from each student-athlete. The fee for all sports is **\$175**, per participant, per season. Cheerleading is **\$125**.

User Fee Guidelines:

- Check or Money Order, written out to Town of Westport with the students' name and sport they are participating in written in the memo portion of the check.
- User Fee does not guarantee playing time, or satisfactory playing time for student-athlete.
- User Fees do not allow student-athlete to randomly miss practices and games.
- Refunds will be granted only if an individual has been cut, or quits during the first week of tryouts. There will be no refund once athlete is placed on roster.
- Refunds will not be granted for season ending injuries.



- Refunds will not be granted if an individual quits or is dismissed from the team by his/her coach, regardless of the time of season.
- User Fee is only accepted for respective athletic season, user fee cannot not be rolled into subsequent season to meet participation requirement.
- Parent or Guardian can apply for User Fee Waiver if experiencing financial hardship.

User Fee Waiver Guidelines:

- Parent or Guardian must complete User Fee Waiver Form offered through athletic department.
- Parent or guardian must include most recent copy of tax return with their waiver form.
- If parent or guardian does not report taxes, they must provide legal proof and documentation, to Westport Middle-High School, for not submitting tax return.
- Parent or guardian must include all dependents on tax return to be considered for waiver.
- Please note, the free/reduced lunch program is completely separate from athletics, thus one may not qualify for athletic waiver, even though they qualify for free/reduced lunch.

6. Uniform Purchase Requirement

The Athletic Department, depending on the sport, will not recycle certain uniform pieces at the end of the respective season, i.e. spandex, warm-up or practice jersey, socks, hats or visors. Subsequently, student-athlete may be responsible for making purchases prior to the start of a season. The Athletic Department has set a ceiling for cost of any of these purchases to be no more than **\$50**. Purchases will be mandatory, in order to play sport for respective season, with amounts varying by specific program. No uniform purchase will exceed the **\$50** limit. In addition, the Athletic Department will work with area sporting good vendors to provide student-athletes with opportunities to purchase apparel, and/or athletic equipment at a discount, to offset cost.

7. Health Insurance

All student-athletes must be enrolled in a health insurance plan. **In addition, school insurance is offered, at a nominal yearly fee, if family chooses to do so.** Please contact the Superintendent’s Office for enrollment information. All injuries must be reported immediately to the athletic trainer and your coach, with an injury report placed on file with the school nurse. It is the family’s responsibility to file all claims under its own plan, or supplemental policy. Filing forms are available from the school nurse. The trainer or nurse will assist in filing these claims if needed.

CONCUSSION POLICY

Concussion Law (Chapter 166 of the Acts of 2010):

- Requires Athletes and their parents or guardians to inform their coaches, trainer, and administration about prior head injuries at the beginning of the season.
- If a student-athlete becomes unconscious or suffers a known or suspected concussion during a game or practice, the law mandates removing the student from play or practice, and requires written certification from a licensed medical professional stating individual is symptom-free and can “return to play.”
- The law prohibits coaches, trainers, and others from encouraging or permitting a student-athlete to use sports equipment as a weapon or to engage in sports techniques that unreasonably endanger the health and safety of him/her or other players, i.e. helmet to helmet hits.



- The law makes sure that all schools, subject to sanctioning by the MIAA, makes sure that student-athletes and their parents, coaches, school nurses and physicians learn about the consequences of head injuries and concussions through training programs and written materials.

School Protocol:

- All stakeholders, including parents, must report concussion or suspected concussion to coach, trainer, school nurse, or Principal.
- Trainer, who has the ability to clear a student-athlete, will examine individual to determine what signs of concussion are being exhibited.
- Trainer will re-assess student-athlete, daily, to determine if symptoms have gone away.
- Student-athlete must be symptom-free for 24 hours, before they can begin a gradual re-entry to participating in respective sport.
- As part of the gradual re-entry, student-athlete will go through a series of athletic functions, building up to maximum intensity over a five to seven-day period. The emphasis is a gradual return to participation. Any return of symptoms, during process, requires student-athlete to begin graded return to play at initial phase.
- Any student-athlete exhibiting symptoms from initial concussion for more than three days, or has a return of symptoms after initial clearance to play, will be referred to a medical physician (primary care or a specialist in concussion management).
- Student-athlete's Primary Care Physician should be knowledgeable of concussion management and aware of current concussion and head-injury legislation.

Education:

- Both, parent or guardian must read the Center for Disease and Control's *Concussion Fact Sheet for Parents* before they authorize their son or daughter to play respective sport; fact-sheet will be available on athletic web-page.
- All Student-Athletes must read the Center for Disease and Control's *Concussion Fact Sheet for Student-Athletes* before they register to play, fact-sheet will be available on athletic web-page.
- On-line education courses are offered through, both, *NFHS Concussion In Sports-What You Need to Know*, www.nfhslearn.com, and Center for Disease Control & Prevention, www.cdc.gov/concussion.
- All coaches will take the on-line Concussion Course, mandated by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, and offered through the National Federation of High Schools, course available via miaa.net, or www.nfhslearn.org.

To satisfy participation requirements, prior to start of respective season, both parent and student-athlete must sign and complete the Concussion History Reporting Form. Through authorization of form, both student-athletes & parent/guardians acknowledge they have read the Center for Disease & Control's *Concussion Fact Sheet*, as approved by the Department of Public Health, and will be responsible and accurate in reporting concussion history of the student-athlete. Parents and students also recognize they have become aware of concussion and head-related injury and their inherent responsibility in concussion management.

PARTICIPATION AND TRYOUTS



Students try out voluntarily and for some programs there is a risk of not making the team. It is the judgment of the coaches which dictates the selection and number of participants for teams. That number is based on several factors; including the nature of the sport, availability of time and facility, an exceptional large number of students trying out for a sport, or safety factors. Cutting students is a difficult process, and all coaches realize that sensitivity and communication are essential.

All students are given fair and ample opportunity to demonstrate their abilities during pre-season tryouts. During the tryout period the coach will provide an explanation of his or her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate if he/she can meet those expectations. Students who do not make the team will be informed as to the reasons by the coach. If a student is cut from a team, they are encouraged to try out for another team if there is space and if final cuts have not been made. After tryouts begin, no athlete may voluntarily leave a team and try out for another without the consent of both coaches and the Athletic Director.

The emphasis at each level of competition is:

- Varsity: **Very Competitive/Instructional**
- Junior Varsity: **Competitive/Instructional**
- Freshmen: **Instructional**
- Middle School: **Instructional**
- **Seniors may only play at the varsity level, unless agreed upon by the Athletic Director, coaching staff, student-athlete, and parents.**

Commitment to the Team

Once selected to a team, Westport student-athletes are expected to attend all team sessions, including practices and games. Weekend practices or games vary by sport and should be expected. In addition, student-athletes should expect to attend practices and games during school vacations. Because of inclement weather it is not uncommon for games to be rescheduled during weekend and vacation time periods. In an effort to field competitive teams, while building team chemistry and continuity, it is essential for student-athletes to have outstanding attendance.

Guidelines for student-athletes working jobs during season:

- Work 10 hours or less during season
- Work hours must revolve around practices and games, during respective season
- Student-athlete should inform employer prior to season or prior to accepting job that you are participating in respective sport. Be proactive in your communication!
- Student-athlete should inform employer that games and practices could be rescheduled on very short notice, 24-48 hours in advance, due to inclement weather or tournament scheduling; Prior to taking job, student-athlete should confirm if employer can be flexible with your hours, especially if there is sudden change in athletic schedule.
- If employer is unwilling to be flexible with your hours or schedule, student-athlete will need to make decision if they want to continue with sport or find new employer.
- Remember, work is not considered an excused absence, thus student-athlete would be subject to being held accountable under the policies of the coach and athletic department

School/Family Vacations



There is no penalty for any athlete who misses a practice/game during the April school vacation week. Athletes must notify their coach of family vacation planned for the April school vacation week at the onset of the spring sport season.

Playing Time

Perhaps the most emotional part of a student athlete's involvement in high school athletics, centers around playing time. Factors such as practice attendance, attitude, "coachability", commitment and athletic skill enter into the decision making process of a coach. A coach has a responsibility to make personnel decisions that are in the best interest of the team. Thus, a coach will decide which athletes should start a contest, what position, and how long each athlete should play. However, a coach has a responsibility to inform an individual of their playing status for a game, and what their overall standing is on the team. A player should also be encouraged to be proactive in communicating with the coach concerning his/her team role. Communication should be proactive from both sides, with it being conducted during practice or school hours, not on Facebook or other Social Media Networking sites.

Team Captains

It's a coaching decision or program philosophy as to how team captains are selected. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game by game basis. It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and should be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach, team, AD and Principal in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Athletic Director or the Principal during the school year to discuss the Athletic Program. Captains of teams may be relieved of their position for violation of team, athletic department, or school rules.

PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION GUIDE

The following section is designed for parents of athletes participating in the Westport Athletic Program. 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 children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication You Should Expect from Your Child's Coach

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad
- Locations and times of all practices and contests

Communication Coaches Expect from Parents

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any schedule conflicts, well in advance
- Specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your child becomes involved in the programs at Westport, 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



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

Coaches make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues that are *not* appropriate to discuss with Coaches

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach, athlete, and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have 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.

If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, the following procedures should be used:

- Student-athlete should first discuss concerns directly with the coach
- If parents/guardians still have concerns, they should contact the coach to make an appointment.
- ***DO NOT confront a coach before, during, or after a practice or game. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.***
- If the conversation/meeting did not provide a satisfactory resolution, call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation with the coach.
- Never hesitate to follow the above procedures to make your concerns known.

Retribution

Students and parents must be confident that the voicing of an opinion or a concern, using the proper forum and method, is not only free from penalty or retribution, but also is strongly encouraged. The Principal and coaches are committed to insuring that after a student or parent raises an issue or concern, there shall be no "retribution" in any form within the athletic department at Westport Jr./Sr. High School. If at any time, a student or his/her parent suspects that some form of retribution is surfacing as a result of the voicing of a concern, opinion, or issue, using the proper forum and method, he or she should contact the Principal immediately.

MIAA RULES AND REGULATIONS

All Westport athletic teams will follow the rules set down in the current MIAA Handbook, which is available on the MIAA website at: www.miaa.net. The entire handbook is also available in the athletic office. Student-athletes are responsible for adhering to all MIAA rules and regulations. Below are some key rules:

45. Loyalty to the High School Team: Bona Fide Team Members



A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g., practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Students cannot be given special treatment (late arrival, early dismissal, etc.) for non-school athletic programs. ***Saturday and Sunday practices ONLY may be excluded from this rule and no waiver is required.***

45.3 MIAA Bona Fide waivers are only allowed during the pre-season or regular season. Bona Fide Team Member Waivers (for missing any practice or game) are not permitted during MIAA post-season play. The postseason officially begins the day after the cut-off date.

45.4 Unattached athletes are not eligible for tournament participation (see Rule 30). **PENALTIES:** First Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for one (1) contest and shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule or in tournament play. Second Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation. Penalty Carry Over: An unserved portion of the penalty for a violation toward the end of a season will carry over to the very next high school season in which the student is a legitimate participant. For example, a soccer player who violates the rule by missing the last high school match (regular season or tournament) would serve the required suspension (1 game if first offense) at the start of basketball season, if that student is a legitimate basketball participant.

- **49. Sportsmanship: Athlete and Coach Contest Disqualifications/Suspensions**

(49.3) Any student-athlete, who is disqualified from a competition, including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc., shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule, or in tournament play. The disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest at any level of play (e.g., junior varsity, varsity, etc.) in that sport until the suspension has been completed and the NFHS Sportsmanship online course has been completed (Rule 49.3.2). • If a scrimmage or an all-star game is being played during the penalty period, the student is ineligible for that event and the event does MIAA Handbook July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025 39 not count as game(s) served towards a suspension. For example, an ice hockey student ruled out of the game on Friday, with their next regularly scheduled game on Tuesday, would be ineligible for the Sunday all-star game/scrimmage, as well as the Tuesday regular season game.

(49.3) Any student-athlete, who is disqualified from a competition, including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc., shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule, or in tournament play. The disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest at the same level of play in that sport until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, have been completed. (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition). Disqualifications in the following sports per specific sport rules: field hockey-Rule 68.3; basketball-five (5) personal fouls; girls' lacrosse (2) yellow cards; ice hockey - six (6) minutes in



penalties and game misconduct (Rule 72.16); wrestling-technical disqualification, do not apply to the above prescribed penalties. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and his/her attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal.

(49.3.1) A two (2) game suspension will be given to any student-athlete who is ejected from any contest for the following reasons:

- o Fighting
- o Punching or kicking an opposing player
- o Spitting at someone

(49.5) A student or coach ruled out of a contest (pre-season, scrimmage, jamboree/play-day, regular season or MIAA Tournament) twice in the same season shall be suspended from further participation in that sport and in all sports during that season for a year from the date of his/her second disqualification. A senior and/or a student in his/her last year of eligibility, who has a second disqualification at any point in the season, will be penalized during the next season in which he/she is a participant.

(Exception: See soccer rule 78.2.6 and 78.2.7).

(49.6) A student or coach who physically assaults an official shall be expelled from the activity immediately and banned from further participation or coaching in all sports for one year from the date of the offense.

(49.7) Any student in any sport who willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent shall be removed from the contest immediately and shall be ineligible in all sports for one year from the date of the incident. ("Fighting" does not apply to this section unless warranted in the judgment of the game official.)

(49.8) Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will be within the authority of the official at all times at the contest site. The official's authority extends to pre and post-game oversight.

(49.9) Some of the reasons that an official may disqualify a student or coach from a contest that would lead to a game disqualification are:

(49.9.1) Fighting

(49.9.2) Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct which is defined but not limited to violent action toward a player, official, or spectator, the use of foul or abusive language, taunting, trash talk, and the like.

(49.10) If a coach or student is ruled out of the last contest, or the next to last (in some sports) contest, of the season, the penalty carries over to the following year in that same sport season. However, if a team is playing in tournament competition, it is considered an extension of the sport season. A senior and/or a student in his/her last year of eligibility who is disqualified from the last contest, or the next to last contest, of the season will be penalized at the start of the next season in which he/she is a participant.



(49.13) Any student-athlete who is disqualified (see Rule 49.3) from any interscholastic contest must complete the National Federation Sportsmanship on-line course – “Sportsmanship”, before reestablishing eligibility. This course is free.

- **51. Student Eligibility: Baseline Eligibility Requirements**

For a student to practice with, or to represent a MIAA member school in athletic competition, the student must be duly enrolled in that school. Additionally, the student must be a candidate for that school’s diploma, subject to the jurisdiction of that school’s principal (i.e. the principal must have the authority to suspend the student from classes), and under the supervision of that school principal (i.e. the principal must have control and knowledge of the student’s daily attendance and achievement).

(51.1) An ineligible student who is duly enrolled in your school, may practice with his/her team if approved by your school administration.

- **Rule 57 Student Eligibility: Transfer Students**

Rules 57.1 through 57.5 deal with school transfers that were not required due to the move of parents or transfers without the move of parents.

(57.1) A student who transfers from any school to an MIAA member high school is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which that student participated at the varsity level or its equivalent during the one-year period immediately preceding the transfer. For the purpose of this rule, no transfer will be deemed to have taken place if a student returns to his/her former school on or before the eleventh school day from the date of last attendance there providing he/she did not try-out for any athletic teams at the new school. However, Form 200 must always be satisfactorily executed upon the students return.

(57.2) "Varsity participation" is defined as any appearance, as a competitor, in a varsity inter-school contest other than a scrimmage. The "equivalent" will be judged by the MIAA executive staff on the basis of the quality of non-school sport program participation.

(57.3) Before a transfer student can be certified as eligible in a specific sport within the year of his/her transfer, the sending school principal and athletic director must certify on Form 200 by signature what the student participated in – sport & level (sub varsity, varsity or non-school team) during the year prior to the actual transfer.

(57.4) The receiving High School Principal may utilize Form 200 to declare a transfer student eligible, providing it is prior to the start of the season and if the sending school Principal certifies the following (3a through 3e on Form 200):

- a. Recruitment was not involved in any way.
- b. At the time of transfer, the student was in good standing.
- c. The student would be academically eligible at the sending school.
- d. The transfer was in no way motivated by athletics.
- e. The student would have been eligible by MIAA and local rules at the sending school.



(57.5) A student who transfers after the start of the practice season is ineligible in all sports during that sport season.

- **Rule 58 Student Eligibility: Academic Requirements**

(58.1) A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g. second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade, and full credit, in the equivalent of four traditional year-long major English courses. A transfer student may not gain academic eligibility if he/she was not, or would not be, eligible at the sending school, unless transfer was necessitated by a move of parents and then eligibility would be determined by receiving schools' eligibility standards.

(58.2) A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses which would provide Carnegie Units equivalent to four traditional year-long major English courses.

(58.3) To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed and received full credits for the previous academic year the equivalent of four traditional year-long major English courses.

(58.4) Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents of all students within a particular class.

Note: The MIAA academic eligibility standards are designed to ensure that a student is fully enrolled in school and actively engaged in his/her academic life on a consistent basis throughout the school year. When utilizing a 4 x 4 block schedule, a student must pass at least two of the four required 'major' courses (or equivalent) in each academic marking period.

The questions you must ask in determining equivalency are:

*How many minutes per day/week/semester does this course meet?

*How many credits toward graduation as approved in advance by school committee policy will be offered for this course?

*Is this equivalent to past academic requirements?

(If further clarification is necessary, principals and athletic directors are encouraged to contact a member of the MIAA executive staff.)

(58.5) Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility until they are made up following school policy.

(58.6) A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.

(58.7) A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject was pursued and failed during the immediately preceding academic year.

(58.8) All co-operative team athletes must meet the eligibility standards of their own school as well as the host school.



- **59. Student Eligibility: Time Allowed for Participation After First Entering Grade Nine**

(59.1) A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than four consecutive years after initially entering Grade 9. This limitation shall apply without regard to actual participation or attempt to participate.

(59.2) In no case may a student be eligible to participate in more than four of each of the three annual athletic seasons. In special cases where a student has been absent from school because of an accident or illness, the executive director, or his/her designee, shall have the authority to extend the student's eligibility upon presentation of a doctor's certificate on the student's behalf, a letter from the principal attesting to the inability of the student to attend school during a specific period because of an accident or illness, **and waiver application for Rule 59.** In instances where an extended eligibility is granted, the student may be declared eligible only for the season(s) that the student's accident/illness prevented participation.

- **60. Student Eligibility: Age**

A student shall be under 19 years of age, but may compete during the remainder of the school year, provided that his/her 19th birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. For Freshman competition only, a student shall be under 16 years of age but may compete during the remainder of the school year provided that the sixteenth birthday occurs on or after September 1 of that year. Principals must exercise great care in determining age of contestants, and in all doubtful cases, must secure birth certificates from the town clerk of the pupil's place of birth.

- **62. Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco**

(62.1) From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes, VAP pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer," ***inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one's mental state.*** It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render "guilt by association", e.g. many student-athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

Minimum PENALTIES: (also see Rule 32.8 – Ineligible Students)



First violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and his/her attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and subsequent violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season. If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If student does not complete program, penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year (e.g. A student plays only football: he violates the rule in winter and/or the spring of same academic year: he would serve the penalty [ies] during the fall season of the next academic year).

If a student is not an athletic participant for one full year after affirmation of a violation, then the penalty period would close and the student would face no consequence.

Prior to any chemical health violation, a student's request for and enrollment in a substance abuse treatment shall not in and of itself constitute a violation of the chemical health/alcohol/drugs/tobacco Rule 62.

- **63. Good Citizen Rule**

(63.1) Student-athletes may not represent their school if they are on in-house or out-of-house disciplinary suspension. A suspended student is ineligible for practice or competition for at least the number of days (or partial days) equal to the number of days of the suspension. Local policies will determine the actual days of ineligibility.

WESTPORT MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL REGULATIONS

At Westport, student-athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of scholastic achievement possible. They are also expected to maintain the highest level of citizenship. To promote these goals, the following are in effect:



PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Annually, every candidate for a school athletic team will present the signed consent of a parent/guardian in order to participate and will, with the signed consent of a parent/guardian, be thoroughly examined to determine physical fitness. The school physician will examine athletes, except when a family wishes to have the examination done by their own doctor at their own expense. A written report stating the fitness of the student to participate, signed by the physician, must be submitted at the time of registration.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

All student-athletes must have school insurance or proof of insurance before they are allowed to participate in interscholastic athletics. Westport Middle-High School maintains a group accident insurance policy which, is available to all members of the student body at a minimal cost and is offered each fall from Lefebvre Insurance Company of Wrentham, MA. Please note that this coverage offers an extended benefits option. It is the parent's responsibility to decide whether or not to procure this insurance. Parents/Guardian is further reminded that the Westport Community Schools insurance policy does not cover student injuries.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

To participate in athletics and extracurricular activities, students must be in good standing in the school, which means academically passing 67% of their classes. This means failing no more than two out of six classes. The eligibility shall be determined by the quarter grades in November, February and April. The final grade of the overall course will determine eligibility for the following Fall season. Students who receive two or more unsatisfactory citizenship marks (U) may be conditionally eligible for Athletics or Activities through the next marking period and must adhere to the parameters in their personalized conditional eligibility contract. Any student who is ineligible at the start of a season shall remain ineligible for the duration of that season. If a student becomes ineligible during the season, they will be removed from participating and attending all team activities.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation (either office or teacher detention) is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or cancelled for any athletic reason. The athletic department reserves the right to remove or suspend a student-athlete from a team for disciplinary problems. It is expected that our athletes be model citizens both in and out of school; they will be held to high standards and should set a positive example for all students.

ATHLETIC TRAINER/TRAINING ROOM

Westport contracts a full-time, licensed Athletic Trainer (ATC) to evaluate and treat injuries as they occur. The trainer provides medical coverage for athletic contests and practices on school days. The trainer is available from 2:15 PM until duties and responsibilities are completed. On weekends and school vacations, the trainer will be on site for home contests and scrimmages. In the event of injury, the trainer will evaluate and recommend the direction of care. Athletes may see the athletic trainer for evaluation / treatment whenever he or she is available.

ATHLETIC INJURIES

All injuries must be reported to the Athletic Trainer or the coach immediately and an injury report placed on file. Subsequent to any serious injury and prior to further participation in a sport, students must



provide a signed medical release from a physician if a game or day of practice has been missed due to injury. All school related head injuries or serious injuries that occur outside of the school day will be reported by the athletic trainer or coach, to the school nurse, the next day school is in session.

TRANSPORTATION

All participants are required to travel to and return from all athletic events in transportation provided by the school district. In certain situations, students may be excused from using school-authorized transportation provided they receive prior approval from the Principal. A copy of the approved request will be given to the athlete's coach. At no time will an athlete be permitted to leave an away event with anyone other than their own parent/guardian unless prior notification is requested from Principal.

ATTENDANCE/SCHOOL

Any student-athlete who has been absent from school is not eligible to take part in any practice session or game which is scheduled for the same day. Students absent from school on Friday may not participate on that day or during the weekend. A student-athlete who leaves prior to 10:30am, or arrives after 9:00am will be considered absent and will not be allowed to participate in athletics on this day. Students dismissed from school due to illness, may not return to school for participation in practices or athletic contests. All student-athletes must provide official documentation of an appointment for an early dismissal or late arrival.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/WELLNESS

All athletes are required to participate in regularly scheduled Physical Education/Wellness classes. Students being medically excused from Physical Education will not be allowed to participate in team practices or games on that day. All class attendance rules apply to Physical Education classes. A note to the Principal/Coach from the class instructor is requested whenever a student athlete is absent or late for class.

ATTENDANCE/TEAM

It is extremely important that a coach be notified in advance if a student is not going to be present at a practice or a game. Student-athletes are expected to be present at all team related activities. Suspension or dismissal from the team may take place because of such absences. Students are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic help sessions, family emergencies or religious reasons. Prior notification is strongly recommended and expected of the student-athlete. Please note that work and detention are not considered excused absences.

Due to the limited availability of Dual Enrollment classes, athletes enrolled in afternoon or evening Dual Enrollment classes will be granted an excused absence for missing practice and games scheduled during class time. Athletes must notify their coach at the onset of the sport season of their Dual Enrollment status.

OUT OF SEASON ACTIVITY

A coach may not directly or indirectly require a student-athlete in a sport or a training program outside of the MIAA defined sports season. "Captains Practices" are not in any way sanctioned, encouraged, recognized, or condoned in any sport by the MIAA or Westport Middle-High School.

TEAM RULES & REGULATIONS

At the start of each season a coach may issue a set of team rules and regulations. It is recommended that these be in written form and distributed to all team members. These rules, which are not to be in conflict with any regulations of the high school or MIAA, may vary to reflect the program philosophy, the nature



of the sport and the practice/competition schedule. Violations of these rules may result in temporary or permanent suspension from the team.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The Athletic Department (Head Coach, Principal or designee) may impose appropriate disciplinary action for violations established in this Student-Athlete/Parent Handbook. Sanctions may vary depending on the type and circumstances of a violation, but may include suspension and/or loss of student-athlete eligibility.

A coach and/or Principal shall determine if a violation of the athletic rules and regulations has occurred. In all cases, infractions of any type must be reported to the Principal, whether action is taken or not. If disciplinary action is taken, (including temporary or permanent suspension, censure, or reprimand) an athlete may have his or her case reviewed upon request.

Review procedure:

1. The student/parents may meet with the Coach/Principal. This request must occur within two school days of the disciplinary decision by the Coach.
2. Final decision on these matters rests with the Principal.

EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

Student-athletes are responsible for all equipment and uniforms issued to them. Student-athletes who lose or damage equipment will be required to pay replacement costs for comparable equipment. Failure to return equipment, uniforms, or the replacement cost can result in losing eligibility to play ensuing season, receive athletic awards, or receiving diploma at graduation.

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to lock all personal items within their lockers. Experience has shown that most losses are due to carelessness in securing or locking lockers. Westport cannot be responsible for the personal belongings of student-athletes. Items which are too large for lockers should be placed in coaches or equipment room, based on arrangement with coach or Principal.

APPEARANCE/PROPER DRESS

Student-Athletes must abide by the dress code as listed in the student-handbook. Student-athletes must not wear any kind of jewelry while practicing or during an athletic event, nor, will taping of jewelry be allowed. Appearance, while representing the school, shall at all times be reasonable and neat. Coaches may refuse to take a player to a game if his/her appearance would not reflect well on the school.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Westport Middle-High School expects **all** parties at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship before, during and after the competition. Players, coaches and spectators are to treat opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with the respect and "class," we speak about in our philosophy.

The **MIAA (Rule 48)** reserves the right to "warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, coach, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship." Westport Middle-High School reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests, home or away.



GENERAL INFORMATION

ATHLETIC AWARDS

Prior to the beginning of the season, coaches will clearly define and communicate criteria for earning a varsity letter. The criteria are that a student-athlete must complete a full season of participation as a member in good standing to be eligible for a varsity letter. Other individual awards may be given at the discretion of the head coach.

ATHLETIC AWARDS EVENING

In June, the Athletic Department will conduct an Athletic Awards Evening to honor all athletic participants during the academic year. Recognition will be given in the areas of participation, tournament and league champions, individual post-season honors, and chenille's and pins. All athletic participants and their parents or guardians are encouraged to attend the evening to be honored for efforts and achievements put forth during their respective seasons. In addition, individual athletic awards will be honored to a female and male senior athlete during the Senior Awards Night, also held in June.

AWARDS

- MIAA Fall, Winter, and Spring Sportsmanship Awards
- John T. Hickey Memorial Scholar-Athlete Award
- Christopher Cariglia and Joanne Charest Memorial Sportsmanship Award
- Best All Around Athlete

TICKET SALES

Presently, girls and boys basketball are the only revenue generating sports at Westport Middle-High School. Ticket prices for the upcoming basketball season are \$5 for adults and \$3 for students, faculty & staff, and senior citizens. Contact Athletic Office for further information.

COLLEGE/CAREER GUIDANCE

One of the most important decisions facing the high school athlete is what to do with their lives after high school. The members of the Westport Athletic Staff are willing to assist all of their students with this extremely difficult decision. Staff members fully understand the importance of this assistance. They may be able to answer questions, contact schools or coaches, send video tapes, if available and write letters of recommendation. If a student's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing NCAA regulations. The High School Guidance Department has a wealth of information on the NCAA regulations. They also have copies of the NCAA Clearinghouse registration.

BULLYING & HAZING POLICY

Bullying Law (Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010)

Definitions – Bullying Prohibited



Bullying may take a variety of forms. It is unacceptable in a school or work environment. As a result, no student or employee shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber bullying in any public educational institute:

1. "Bullying" means repeated unwelcome written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage the victim's property; student or employee, (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The behavior must interfere with an employee's ability to perform his or her duties or with a student's academic performance or ability to learn, or interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from services activities or privileges

- a) That are being offered through the school district; or
- b) During any education program or activity; or
- c) While in school, on school equipment or property, in school vehicles, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, at school-sanctioned events.

2. "Cyber-bullying" means, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communication. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creator or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or persons.

- a) Cyber-bullying may occur through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute.
- b) As used in this Section, "electronic communication" also means any communication through an electronic device including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.
- c) "Hostile environment" means, a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Hazing Law (Chapter 269: Section 17 & 18)

(Section 17) The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of



sleep or rest or extended isolation.

(Section 18) Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Policy

- Bullying & Hazing, of any kind, will not be tolerated as it is an attack on human dignity and integrity. Bullying & Hazing is a deterrent to healthy educational, social, and emotional growth.
- Consequences will be administered to perpetrators without regard to status, role, or relationship
- Bullying & Hazing can only be stopped or prevented through a coordinated effort among students, teachers, and parents.

Protocol

- All coaches will be informed to bullying & hazing laws and school guidelines and will be responsible for informing respective teams concerning issues of bullying & hazing
- Any school stakeholder should report incident to coach, Principal or Assistant Principal.
- School District forms are available on-line, school web page, or in the athletic office
- Once report has been submitted, a prompt investigation will begin with all efforts made to preserve the confidentiality of alleged victims & offenders
- Consequences will be fairly applied where warranted after an investigation
- Referrals to law enforcement will be made where appropriate
- Remember, the stakeholder's job is to report not investigate, if unsure report the incident!!!

