WESTMINSTER SCHOOL AT OAK MOUNTAIN



ATHLETICS HANDBOOK
2026-2027

Families and Student-Athletes:

Welcome to Westminster Athletics! I am excited to introduce you and your student to a program that includes over 30 different teams across 10 sports in grades 7-12. In this letter, I would like to introduce to you our athletics program as well as explain what opportunities are available for your child.

Ultimately, the goal of Westminster Athletics is to invest in the spiritual and character development of our athletes as we focus on their athletic ability and growth. As believers, we know that our purpose is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. Athletics presents a unique opportunity to do just that in a variety of ways – whether we are as coaches, players, or parents. Therefore, at Westminster, **our mission is to fulfill man's chief end through sports.**

In short, our student-athletes will be spiritually-strengthened and athletically-prepared. Technique and training will prepare our athletes for their next athletic level (Middle School to JV, JV to Varsity, Varsity to Collegiate); however, that concept will come secondary to the strengthening of their identities in Christ. We do not simply want to *insert* the Gospel into our Athletics program, we want to *integrate* it so that our influence as a program will draw everyone, whether they are at Westminster or part of an opposing team, closer to Jesus. This is how we can *Redeem Sports for Christ*.

As you read this handbook, I hope you will be encouraged and equipped. Please reach out at any time if you have questions. I am looking forward to another great year!

Go Knights!



Cody Baxter
Athletic Director
Westminster School at Oak Mountain

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WESTMINSTER SCHOOL AT OAK MOUNTAIN ATHLETICS PROFILE

Mascot: **Knights**
School Colors: **Black and Vegas Gold**
First year to compete in AHSAA: **2008-09**
Classification: **A-Private**

AHSAA Section/Area Championships: **86**
AHSAA Final 4 Finishes at State: **88**
AHSAA Individual State Champions: **112**
AHSAA Individual Medal Winners: **344**
AHSAA State Track Records: **16**
AHSAA All-Stars/MVPs: **23**
Gatorade Player of the Year: **1**

AHSAA State Championships: **17**
Cross Country: **3 girls; 1 boys**
Outdoor Track and Field: **4 girls; 3 boys**
Soccer: **2 girls; 4 boys**

AHSAA State Runners-Up: **27**
Cross Country: **4 girls; 2 boys**
Indoor Track and Field: **4 girls; 1 boys**
Outdoor Track and Field: **7 girls; 4 boys**
Soccer: **2 boys**
Tennis: **2 boys**
Volleyball: **1 girls**

SPORTS OFFERED

BOYS

Fall
Cross Country – Varsity, JV, MS, LS
Swim & Dive – Varsity

Winter
Basketball – Varsity, JV, MS, LS
Indoor Track & Field – Varsity, JV

Spring
Golf – Varsity, MS
Outdoor Track & Field- Varsity, MS
Soccer – Varsity, JV
Tennis – Varsity, MS
Baseball – Varsity, JV

GIRLS

Fall
Cross Country – Varsity, JV, MS, LS
Swim & Dive – Varsity
Volleyball – Varsity, JV, MS, LS (Spring)

Winter
Basketball – Varsity, JV, MS, LS
Indoor Track & Field – Varsity, JV

Spring
Golf – Varsity, MS
Outdoor Track & Field – Varsity, MS
Soccer – Varsity, JV
Tennis – Varsity, MS

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PROGRAM PURPOSE & PHILOSOPHY

PURPOSE: THE WHY.

The Westminster Athletic Department exists to fulfill the chief end of man through sports. This is in conjunction with the mission of Westminster School, which is to build Christ's Kingdom by equipping students with wisdom, virtue, and eloquence.

Athletics can provide brief glimpses of the Gospel, or even the struggles that the Christian life can entail. Ultimately, though, they provide an opportunity to worship our Creator and grow His Kingdom through the influence of our abilities and actions. Due to the powerful and influential nature of sports, Westminster treats athletics as a ministry tool that we should utilize regularly and consistently. This can be as student-athletes, parents, fans, coaches, officials, or in any other way we might be involved.

As you consider Westminster Athletics, think of aligning your own athletic purpose to that of a higher Kingdom calling. Namely, use sports as a way to shine the light of Jesus into a realm of culture that is fallen. Through this type of Christ-centered partnership, Westminster Athletics can be an impact for the Gospel in the lives of not only our own children, but also others around the community, the state, and the country.

Westminster Athletics Mission: To fulfill man's chief end through sports.

So… whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31

STRATEGY: THE HOW.

Coram Deo. Coram Deo refers to something that takes place "before the face of God." To live Coram Deo is to live one's entire life in the presence of God, under the authority of God, and to the glory of God. Living *Coram Deo* enhances our mission by reminding our athletes, fans, students, and parents that everything we do is ultimately for an audience of One.

When we ignore the outside noise and focus only on Him, we can concentrate on giving our best for the highest of observers. Whether that be working at practices or in games, leading a team through coaching instruction, or even supporting our student-athletes as they compete, *Coram Deo* compels our actions to be God-honoring and based in the fruits of the Spirit. This is why the strategy of Westminster athletics is to move forward together C*oram Deo,* knowing that we are coaching, competing, and cheering in the presence of God.

Salt & Light. Westminster seeks to teach the Christian way of competing, coaching, and supporting/cheering as being salt and light to the world around us. This develops through prioritizing *relationships over results*. These relationships can be coach to player, player to opponent, parent to official, fan to fan, or any combination of these. As the face of Westminster most often presented to the community, we want to exemplify Christ-like behavior in everything we do.

You are the salt of the earth…You are the light of the world.
Matthew 5:13-14

GOALS: SPIRITUALLY STRENGTHENED, ATHLETICALLY PREPARED.

The overarching goal of Westminster Athletics is to deepen the faith of student-athletes while preparing them for their next athletic level. We plan to achieve this by creating student-athletes who are:

Disciples. Ultimately, we want to create leaders who will go into the world and positively influence others for the sake of the Kingdom. While winning is important, it does not come close to our higher purpose of disciple-making for the advancement of the Kingdom.

Servant-Leaders. Jesus was the ultimate servant-leader. Student-athletes should define leadership as choosing to serve and uplift while positively influencing those around them to be the best version of themselves. This is humility.

Fierce-Competitors. Mental toughness, fortitude, perseverance, and grit. These are all attributes that can describe an athlete who competes with desire and passion, all while keeping their emotions in-check.

Diligent-Workers. We are called to work as if we are working for the Lord, not man. If this is the case, we should compete with everything we have including tenacity, mental toughness, and courage. Westminster athletes should be prepared to put in hard work and full effort into everything they do.

PILLARS: The Key Principles - ARMOR

Westminster Athletics will focus on three key pillars in the development of student-athletes:

Balance. We encourage a balanced approach to sports and life. Sports are good and can be a great vehicle for developing character, but we should be intentional about not letting sports become our highest priority. We push athletes to be "whole-hearted" in their approach without drifting to "tired-hearted" or "half-hearted" mindsets.

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of time, because the days are evil.
Ephesians 5:15-16

Grit. We work as if we are working unto the Lord, not unto men. If we are going to compete Coram Deo, we are going to do everything we can to glorify our King through our efforts. This means hard work, determination, and resiliency, even when it is challenging.

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.
Colossians 3:23

Wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom. We keep the Word of the Lord at the forefront of our minds, whether we be competing, coaching, or cheering.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.
Proverbs 9:10

Joy. The joy of the Lord is our strength. When young athletes are often asked why they play sports, the normal response is "fun." It should be no different as we grow older. We should take advantage of the opportunities to enjoy God through the talents and abilities he has entrusted us with, all while giving it back to him through worship.

And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.
Nehemiah 8:10b

For His Own Glory. God made us and all things for His own glory. His plan ultimately prevails because He is our sovereign King. All glory, whether we win or lose, belongs to Him.

For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever.
Romans 11:36

TEAM LEVEL PHILOSOPHY

Junior Knights (3rd-6th Grade). Lower School athletic programs exist to introduce young athletes to new sports while giving Westminster students the opportunity for athletic community. Junior Knights is meant to encourage participation, fun, and equal playing time.

Middle School (7th-8th Grade). Middle School athletic programs seek to further a love for the game, continue to develop fundamental skills, and help prepare the athletes for the high school level. Evaluations in Middle School are for the purpose of team placement based on skill and ability. There will be no cuts at the Middle School level in order to give the most opportunity to student-athletes. Playing time is at the discretion of the coach but coaches will make best efforts to give all players game time (if that playing time has been earned in practice).

Varsity/JV (9th-12th but may include 7th-8th). Upper School teams strive to be the best they can be with a focus on excellence in execution. Each head coach will put the collective efforts of the team ahead of individual achievement and will take knowledge, ability to execute, attitude, conduct, and safety into consideration when it comes to positions and playing time. Cuts are discouraged but permissible if based on facility, resource issues, or team/player development. Athletes should not assume they are guaranteed a spot on a varsity team simply because they participated on the same team in previous years, nor should they assume that because they played a certain position in prior seasons that they will play the same position moving forward.

Team Creation. Creation and size of teams is determined by many factors including but not limited to the number of participants interested in a sport, facility availability, safety, and coaching resources. Whatever we do, we want to do it well. Decisions will be made on a season-by-season, team-by-team basis.

MULTI-SPORT/ACTIVITY ATHLETES

We encourage athletes to be well-rounded, trying different sports, especially early in their athletic careers. However, certain guidelines will be set in place to benefit teams and student-athletes while teaching balance and commitment.

Overlapping Sports (includes Off-Season). Athletes are encouraged to finish their in-season sport before starting another sport, especially during postseason competition. However, athletes may limitedly participate in the overlapping sport as long as they have approval from the in-season coach and overlapping season coach.

Two Sports During the Same Season. There are some cases where athletes may participate in two sports during the same season or overlapping seasons but must first meet with both coaches for approval. If approval is granted, a plan will be established between coaches that allows the athlete to participate in both but tries to avoid practices/competitions on the same day (exceptions may include postseason or Athletic Director approval).

School Plays & Musicals for Athletes. Any athlete may participate in a school play or musical (or other similar activity (i.e., mock trial, etc.) if they have permission from their coach and Fine Arts Director. Leadership from both activities will work closely together to minimize conflict and establish any times there may need to be sole commitment to either the activity or the sport (i.e., dress rehearsal, week before show, etc.).

Coach Communication for Multi-Sport Athletes. Open communication between the student-athlete, parents and the two head coaches are critical for multi-sport athlete success. Coaches will be encouraged to remain in constant communication but will begin dialogue in the pre-season.

GENERAL POLICIES

SPORTSMANSHIP

During home competitions, we are serving as the host to the visiting team. They are our guests and should be treated accordingly. At away competitions, we are expected to act as invited guests and treat the opponents and their facilities with respect.

As participants, we compete with the other team, not against. As fans, we want to cheer and encourage our own team, not cheer against the opponent. In addition, we will treat all officials with respect and courteousness. Officials, just like our opponents, are our brothers and sisters in Christ and an opportunity to grow the Kingdom.

Any member of the Westminster community who is a participant or spectator at an event who uses foul language or profanity, engages in inappropriate behaviors such as fighting or similar, or berates an official through yelling or insults, will be dismissed from the event and is subject to disciplinary action by the school, regardless of location.

Ejections or Dismissals. Should a Westminster athlete, fan, or parent be ejected or dismissed from a contest, they will be required to pay any associated fines that may be administered by the AHSAA.

ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

All Westminster student-athletes must create a Dragonfly account. Dragonfly is the online database utilized by Westminster and the AHSAA to electronically store all requisites for participation. On there, you should include:

- Current physical exam
- Completed AHSAA Concussion Form
- Completed AHSAA Participant Consent, Venue
- Completed Westminster Liability Waiver Form
- Completed Westminster Driver's Permission Form
- Birth Certificate (New Athletes Only)

- Completed Sportsmanship Online Course (New Athletes Only)
- Completed Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Form

Physical Day at Westminster. Each year in May, the Athletics department will host a physical day for rising 7th-12th graders. Doctors will be on-hand to allow student-athletes to conveniently obtain their annual physical which will cover them for the following year. Cost is approximately $25 per athlete.

Outstanding Fees or Missing Uniforms. Another requirement for eligibility includes the full fee paid for the previous season's sport along with the return of any equipment or uniforms.

Academic Eligibility. To be eligible for athletics, students entering grades 7th-12th must have passed all courses during the preceding nine weeks. This will provide a composite numerical average of at least 70 in all courses. Westminster will follow all athletic eligibility guidelines established by the AHSAA, but will also hold to a higher standard of the following:

- Student-athletes who receive one or more failing grades on a progress report (every 4.5 weeks) will be monitored by the administration, Athletic Director, and the coach to ensure progress is made. The student-athlete may be held out of competition if deemed necessary by those monitoring.
- Student-athletes who receive one or more failing grades on a report card (every 9 weeks) or semester (half the academic year) will not be eligible to participate in competition until the subsequent progress report shows passing grades for all classes OR the Head of Upper School, teacher, and Athletic Director agree that progress is shown.
- Exam grades do not affect the quarter grades, but they do apply to the semester grade.

Pre-Season Parent Meeting. At least one parent is required to attend the pre-season parent meeting for the sport their child will be playing. The pre-season parent meeting will include critical information for the season from the head coach and the Athletic Director.

SCHEDULING

The Athletic Department, in partnership with program directors, does its best to schedule games and practices well in-advance of the season. However, due to limited facilities, opponent changes, or league changes, it is inevitable that modifications will happen. Our goal is to create the most consistent schedule for all involved, including our coaches who may need to schedule around their work schedule (most of our coaches do not work at the school).

Conflicting School and Athletic Events. Westminster will always attempt to spread out different events so there is minimal to zero conflict. Communication between the Athletic Department and Administration is tantamount to scheduling success. However, this is not always possible and some events may need to overlap or directly conflict. If this happens, it is after all other options have been exhausted.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS & EVENTS

Fall/Spring Break. Practices and competitions may be held across fall and spring break at the discretion of the coach for Varsity and JV teams. MS teams may hold optional practices on the final day of fall break.

Christmas Break. No practices or competitions may be held December 22nd-27th for any level. However, exceptions may be granted for December 22nd or 27th with Athletic Director approval (i.e., Christmas tournaments).

Easter Break. Competition should be avoided on Maundy Thursday, although this is not always possible (practices are allowed). No practices or competitions may be held Good Friday-Easter Sunday for any level. The following Monday does allow for practices and competition.

School Events. The Athletic Department will avoid scheduling practices and competition during large school events such as Grand Fete, Knightfall, Graduation, etc., and large Oak Mountain Presbyterian Church events. However, postseason conflicts may be unavoidable due to AHSAA scheduling. Student-athletes are expected to be present for competition that may conflict with other events.

Other School Holidays. Practices and competitions may be held across other school holidays and breaks at the discretion of the coach for Varsity and JV teams. MS will avoid practicing and competing during these times.

SUNDAYS

No events will be held on Sundays.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL

Student-athletes are responsible for getting to and from practices and competitions. However, the Athletic Department, with help from the parents and coaches, will consistently create opportunities for carpooling, bus transportation, and ride-sharing. Student-athletes are allowed to drive themselves but must sign a transportation waiver if they plan to drive other student-athletes. Student-athletes who are riding with others must also file a transportation waiver.

Carpool. Carpooling will be the main form of transportation. Coaches are encouraged to set up carpooling opportunities with either student-athlete drivers or parents.

Buses. Westminster currently has two (2) fourteen-passenger buses that may be used by coaches or parents to transport student-athletes. Buses are reserved on a first come, first serve basis by communicating with the Athletic Director. However, the Athletic Director reserves the right to prioritize bus usage for teams with the greatest need.

Any person wanting to drive the bus must be cleared by the Athletic Director by submitting a copy of their drivers license and filling out a transportation waiver. All drivers must be insured by their own personal insurance.

FINANCIAL

Athletic fees are collected to help fund the athletic program and create better opportunities for Westminster student-athletes. Other revenue includes ticket sales, concessions, donations, and AHSAA revenue-sharing.

Player Fees. Player fees vary by sport. Player fees are collected according to a fee schedule published by the Athletic Director at the pre-season parent meeting. Player fees typically cover

things like equipment, coaching stipends, tournament entry fees, transportation expenses, AHSAA dues and compliance fees, etc.

Average Player Fees:

- Varsity Level: $450
- Junior Varsity Level: $400
- Middle School Level: $350

Uniform Fees. The uniform fee allows the player to purchase their full uniform or jersey at-cost and keep them either through our partnered vendors directly or via the school. Uniforms will be renewed every year, but there will be opportunity to reuse previous year's uniforms if players remain on the team and do not need changes (number change, size change, etc.). Fees for the uniforms will vary per team.

Convenience Expenses. Some expenses are not covered by the player fees. These may include state championship rings, hotel stays, food on team trips/away competition, required equipment, and others. Convenience fees will be disclosed at the pre-season parent meeting but may originate later in the season.

Tickets. Tickets are required for all those entering Westminster home competitions except: Westminster students, Westminster Alumni, Westminster Faculty/Staff plus immediate family, Westminster coaches plus immediate family, Westminster Board Members plus immediate family, 1st Responders, and all children 12 years and younger.

- Ticket regulation will vary for away competition as those are controlled by the host school, facility, or AHSAA.
- Tickets for playoff competition will vary per sport and are subject to regulation by AHSAA. This typically means that all persons, regardless of school affiliation or age, will be required to purchase a playoff ticket.
- Season tickets will be sold for most competitions hosted by Westminster.
- All tickets will be sold via GoFan.co, or at the facility entrance.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Any changes to published schedules due to weather will be communicated as soon as a final decision is made. Coaches or the Athletic Director will remain in constant communication with the facility and opponent(s) in order to make a timely decision. If school has been cancelled due to weather, this means all practices and competitions are cancelled as well.

Lightning. Lightning is monitored closely by coaches and officials. If a lightning strike is seen within the vicinity of an outdoor sport, the event is paused and may not be resumed until at least 30 minutes after the last strike.

Heat. Temperature and heat index are monitored closely by coaches and officials. If temperature exceeds a heat index of 110, practices will not be held.

Ice. Practices and competitions will be cancelled if roads are deemed too dangerous because of icy conditions.

SOCIAL MEDIA
Social media can be a great way to advertise and celebrate Westminster and its student-athletes. However, to maintain consistent messaging and appropriate content, all Westminster related social media pages will be controlled by Westminster administration or at the approval of Westminster administration.

Westminster Athletics Advisory Committee
The Westminster Athletics Advisory Committee (WAAC) will meet once per semester to provide insight and opinion to the Athletic Director to help further the mission of Westminster Athletics. The WAAC will be a non-voting committee comprised of 6-7 parents of current Westminster athletes, the Assistant Athletic Director, and the Athletic Director.

Executive Leadership Team
The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) of Westminster will continuously be involved in discussions, considerations, and suggestions pertaining to Westminster Athletics. This will help to ensure that major decisions made within Westminster Athletics are properly aligned with the mission of Westminster School at Oak Mountain.

AHSAA
Westminster School at Oak Mountain competes within the Alabama High School Athletic Association for all sports. The AHSAA is a blend of public and private schools. All rules set forth by the AHSAA are to be upheld by the school, parents, and student-athletes. You can access the AHSAA's General Policies and sport-specific rules on their website, AHSAA.com.

STUDENT-ATHLETES

CODE OF CONDUCT
Being a Westminster athlete is a student's choice and therefore a privilege. Student-athletes will strive to conduct themselves in a way that reflects the light of Jesus Christ while portraying a positive image of Westminster, their team, and themselves, no matter where they are. Student-athletes are expected to be salt and light to those around them, including opponents, teammates, or neutrals. This also includes following all of Westminster's school rules.

STEWARDSHIP
All student-athletes are expected to be good stewards of all equipment, facilities, and uniforms entrusted to them. All rooms utilized by student-athletes, including rooms at other locations besides Westminster, are expected to be kept clean and orderly. Student-athletes may use locker rooms at the Upper School to store their equipment during school hours only. Personal items should always be stored in lockers. The Athletic Department is not responsible for stolen or missing personal items from school facilities or rented facilities.

DRESS CODE
Student-athletes are always expected to uphold appropriate dress code standards. This includes during practices and competition, while traveling, and while on other school's campuses. For practices, athletes should uphold modesty standards and train in gear similar to, but not exactly like, competition uniforms. In some cases, teams will be issued practice jerseys or other practice apparel. Those items should be utilized at every practice when possible.

Uniforms. Student-athletes are issued/purchase team uniforms and are expected to care for them appropriately. If an athlete is missing a uniform or uniform-piece the day of competition, it is at the coaches' discretion to temporarily give another uniform to that athlete. Lost uniforms may be repurchased.

Spirit Wear. All student-athletes will receive at least one piece of spirit wear or equipment (shooting shirt, game hat, practice jersey, etc.) as part of their player fee. Optional spirit wear will be offered via online stores. These stores will be opened per sport sporadically throughout the school year and advertised in the Knightly News and Friday Athletic News. Spirit wear is not permissible for school wear except on specially designated spirit wear dress days.

Travel Wear. Each coach will determine team dress code when traveling to an away game. All practice gear should be Westminster athletic apparel, or as appointed by the Head Coach.

PRACTICE AND COMPETITION ATTENDANCE

Athletes are expected to attend all practices and competitions as long as they are complying with the Westminster multi-sport athlete rules. While there are certainly things that should take priority over sports at times, there are also sacrifices that must be made to be a part of Westminster Athletics.

In-season athletes should not miss any practices or games. Missing practices or games may result in loss of playing time, suspension from the team, or expulsion from the team based on the coach's discretion. Any student-athlete requesting absence from practice or competition must get prior approval from their coach, preferably at least two weeks in advance. Necessary appointments and other similar scheduling needs should be made around practices and competitions, not during.

School Attendance. Student-athletes are required to attend at least half the school day to be eligible for practice or competition on the same day. This does not include school time missed for other school related events or trips, college tours, family emergencies, medical appointments, funerals, or similar excused absences.

Practice Players. Practice players are athletes who are not eligible usually because of transfer reasons. A transfer practice player may join a team and practice with a team, but may not compete in games, if all AHSAA transfer rules are not met. Practice players are asked to still follow the same procedures and policies as fully eligible players but may work out a plan with the head coach if complete practice participation is not feasible. Practice players are not obligated to attend competition.

TIME COMMITMENTS

Junior Knights (3rd-6th Grade). Junior Knights athletes are encouraged to attend all practices and competitions but are given higher levels of flexibility.

Middle School (7th-8th Grade). Middle School athletes will have a four day per week commitment, although there may be some weeks of five days (only to make up loss of practice time from previous weeks due to lack of facility space). The commitment will typically consist of two practices and two games or three practices and one game. Average practice lengths for all Middle School sports will not exceed 1 hour and 30 minutes per session. Practices and games may be held

on Saturdays. Competition will be avoided on school holidays but optional practices can be scheduled, with Athletic Director approval.

Varsity/JV (9th-12th Grade). Varsity and JV athletes will have a five to six day per week commitment. Average practice length for all sports will not exceed two (2) hours per session. Practices and games may be held on Saturdays. Competition is likely during some school holidays depending on the sport and season. During mid-year or final exams, competition will be avoided, but is not always possible.

Off-Season and Summer Expectations. Off-season practices are considered optional. However, all student-athletes are expected to work on and develop their athletic abilities. Understanding that family, jobs, and personal time take priority during the summer, there are various opportunities (at school and outside of school) for student-athletes to train when they can. For our teams to compete at their best, especially in Fall sports such as volleyball and cross country, it is important to begin training for those seasons during the summer months.

TRYOUTS

Tryouts allow coaches to place similarly skilled players together which aids in player development. Tryouts can be one to five days, depending on the sport and grade level. If a student-athlete misses tryouts, they will not be considered for selection to a team unless they are a new student. A student-athlete that attends one day of tryouts has officially started the season and the No-Quit Policy (see *Departing from Team* in next section) is in effect. If a student-athlete wants to attend a day of tryouts to evaluate whether or not they want to play (specifically for sports such as Cross Country and Track), they must communicate in advance to the head coach responsible for tryouts.

Middle School Evaluations. Middle school level sports will hold evaluations instead of tryouts. Student-athletes being evaluated for Middle School level teams will not be cut, as stated above in our Team Level Philosophy. However, evaluations will still occur at the Middle School level to place players in the case of multiple teams.

Tryouts While In-Season. Athletes may fully participate in tryouts for any sport while in-season for another but must notify their in-season coach of their plan to tryout. A plan may be established between coaches for the player to attend a limited number of tryout days but not be disadvantaged for not attending the full amount.

DEPARTING FROM TEAM

There are three types of departures from a team:

a) *Leaving a team* – season ending injury, poor health status, family emergency, or academic performance all may lead to permissible departure from the team only after being discussed by parents, the head coach and/or the Athletic Director. A student-athlete may still be eligible for a Varsity letter in this circumstance, and they will still be eligible for other future sports.

b) *Quitting a team* – any player quitting a team after the season begins (as defined by attending the first day of practice, or grace period sometimes extended by Track or Cross Country) will not be eligible to participate in another sport that same season. Student-athletes competing for Varsity will not earn a letter in that sport. Athletic participation fees and any other convenience fees will not be refunded.

c) *Dismissal from a team* – any player who is dismissed from a team for conduct, rules infractions, or disciplinary reasons will not earn a letter (if Varsity) or be eligible to play in another sport that same season. Athletic participation fees and any other convenience fees will not be refunded.

INJURIES

Student-athletes are expected to seek outside treatment and rehabilitation if injured. However, the Athletic Department will provide licensed physical trainers from TherapySouth at as many home competitions as possible. Injured athletes must be seen and cleared by a certified athletic trainer or doctor before being released for participation.

Injured athletes, regardless of grade, are still expected to attend practice unless treating or rehabilitating an injury, or as approved by the head coach. Athletes missing a practice or game for physical therapy must first notify the head coach.

OUTSIDE LEAGUES

Westminster does not control outside sport organizations. However, the AHSAA does require that no athlete participate in the same sport for an outside organization during the same season (i.e. you cannot play club soccer in the spring and also play high school soccer in the spring at the same time).

Westminster Athletes are expected to give priority to the school sports team over the outside league sports team if there is a time conflict. However, coaches may allow athletes to finish their outside league sport season if there is a case of overlap (i.e. club soccer is ending and school basketball is beginning). Any outside league participation should be communicated to the in-season coach as early as possible so that there can be ongoing dialogue between all players and all coaches.

HONORS AND AWARDS

VARSITY LETTERS

Varsity lettering is determined by the head coach of each individual sport. Factors in determining letter eligibility will include leadership, commitment, completion of season, playing time, and representation of Westminster. An athlete who quits a team or is released for disciplinary action will not be awarded a letter. The administration can review individual cases involving extenuating circumstances.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Head coaches may give individual awards at the end of their team's season based on their judgment. Head coaches will determine the names and criteria of the awards.

AREA, COUNTY, AND STATE HONORS

Head coaches will make best efforts to submit Westminster student-athlete nominees for any available honors such as All-Area, All-Tournament, All-County, All-State, AHSAA All-Star (via the AD), and any other similar opportunities. Head coaches reserve the right to nominate/select candidates from their team. Depending on the sport, most student-athletes are selected by a vote from coaches in the area, county, or state.

GRADUATION ATHLETIC CORDS
In order to receive an athletic cord at graduation, athletes must have received at least three (3) Varsity letters, or two (2) Varsity letters AND one season of participation on JV, or one Varsity letter and two (2) seasons of participation on JV.

WESTMINSTER RECORDS
Westminster records and high achievements will be showcased on plaques near the trophy cabinet. Records can only be broken during AHSAA sanctioned events or competition.

PARENTS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

FRIDAY ATHLETIC NEWS
Parents are encouraged to sign up for the Friday Athletics News, a weekly email that is sent every Friday that includes practice schedules, game schedules, and other important athletics information.

COMMUNICATION
If an issue arises then the following communication chain should be followed:

a) Player speaks to coach;

b) Parent speaks to coach;

c) Parent speaks to Athletic Director.

This chain will help our athletics program communicate efficiently while also encouraging our athletes to approach their coach in any given situation.

24-Hour Rule. Inevitably, there will be times when a meeting between a parent and coach is necessary. If so, parents should wait at least 24 hours after competition to approach the coach about a particular issue. Giving time after competition allows emotions to subside, leaving room for more logical discussion. Before or after competition is not an appropriate time to approach a coach – please set up a time with the coach by sending an email 24-hours later.

Meeting With a Coach. A meeting with a coach is an opportunity to respectfully discuss any concerns you may have. The meeting should not be viewed as a chance to convince the coach of a different strategy or more playing time for your child. If the meeting does not lead to a resolution, then the Athletic Director can meet with the coach and parent together.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION
Parents should not contact opposing schools, officials or the AHSAA to voice complaints. All ideas and concerns should go directly through the Westminster Athletic Director.

Any contact with the media and/or press releases should be approved by the Athletic Director. Please do not contact media outlets regarding a lack of press coverage for our athletic events.

VOLUNTEERING AT HOME COMPETITIONS

Home competitions are a chance to welcome guests and show them the light of Christ. To do this most effectively, we may need help from families. When an athlete joins a team, parents will be assigned a minimum number of home competitions to either work the front gate, concessions, scoreboard, statistics, or other various small jobs. If a parent cannot work the assigned shift, it will be the parent's responsibility to find a replacement.

NOTE: Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, off-season athletes, coaches, and parents will serve in-season teams at ticket gates and concession stands. Head Coaches will be assigned dates and will distribute those dates to the team. Each concession shift should include at least one parent/adult and one athlete, with a preference of one parent/adult and three (3) athletes. The gate shift should consist of two (2) athletes.

PRESENCE AT GAMES, PRACTICES, OR TRYOUTS

The coach's classroom is the court, field, or track, usually with undefined walls, making it easy for parents to naturally move close to the action. We want parents to be interested and supported observers from a distance. The coach should be able to instruct, and the player to perform, without distraction from the stands. Parents coaching from the sidelines will distract and almost always negatively affect individual and/or team performance. Instead, parents should look only to encourage, support, and cheer.

At Competitions. It is important that parents be physically present at as much competition as possible, including home and away. A parent's attendance is something that will have invaluable benefits on a student-athlete's well-being, demeanor, and overall character. It is a wonderful thing for parents to be able to share the joys and frustrations of sports with their children.

The Car Ride Home. At the end of any competition, parents are encouraged to "Remember the Car Ride Home." When polled, many student-athletes reported that the worst part of their game day experience was the car ride home. We encourage parents to listen to their children if they want to vent without offering much correction. Or, if their child wants to sit in silence, that is okay, too. Players will be emotional after competition, especially losses, and an overload of correction during this time will likely not benefit the player or the team.

At Practices. Practices are closed to parents. However, Head Coaches may invite parents or guests at times. When this happens, guests at practice are expected to refrain from interacting with players and/or coaches.

At Tryouts. Tryouts are closed to parents. No exceptions.

PARTNERING WITH COACHES

Westminster seeks a true partnership between parents and coaches. However, since each coach is prayerfully and thoughtfully considered, recruited, interviewed, and hired, they are given authority over the student-athletes in each given sport. Coaches will make the best decision for the team while keeping with Westminster athletics philosophy. Playing time, positions, and strategy will be left to the discretion of the coach. Parents should help their child understand that being a team member means accepting the coach's decisions even when they do not agree with them. Ultimately, this will depend on the level and makeup of the team.

CONTACTS

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