

WEST SENECA CENTRAL SCHOOLS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS



Handbook for Student-Athletes & Parents

WEST SENECA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Interscholastic Athletics Handbook for Student-Athletes and Parents

WELCOME

Dear West Seneca Central School District,

Welcome to West Seneca Central School District Athletics!

It is an exciting time to be a part of the West Seneca Athletic community. Our interscholastic athletic program serves as an extension of the classroom, providing students with meaningful educational experiences that foster personal growth, leadership, and lifelong skills.

Participation in athletics offers student-athletes opportunities to develop values that extend far beyond the playing field, court, track, or pool. Through competition and teamwork, our students learn the importance of integrity, responsibility, accountability, perseverance, sportsmanship, respect, and commitment. These experiences help prepare them to become productive citizens and leaders within their schools and communities.

At West Seneca, we believe athletics play a vital role in the educational process. Our coaches and staff are committed to creating a positive and supportive environment that challenges student-athletes to reach their full potential academically, athletically, and personally. We strive to promote excellence while emphasizing character, teamwork, and the pursuit of continuous improvement.

The success of our athletic program is reflected not only in championships and accomplishments but also in the dedication, resilience, and sportsmanship demonstrated by our student-athletes. We take great pride in the way our teams represent West Seneca and encourage all participants to serve as positive role models for their peers and our community.

Thank you for your continued support of West Seneca Central School District Athletics. We look forward to another outstanding year of competition, growth, and West Seneca pride. 

We are West Seneca,

Marisa Fallacaro-Dougherty

Director of PE, Health, and Athletics

2026 – 2027 Team Offerings

FALL

EAST	WEST	DISTRICT
Football – Var./JV/Modified	Football – Var./JV/Modified	Cross Country – Var./Mod.
Boys Volleyball – Var./JV/Mod.	Boys Volleyball – Var./JV/Mod.	Boys Soccer – Var./JV/Mod.
Girls Volleyball – Var./JV/Mod.	Girls Volleyball – Var./JV/Mod.	Girls Soccer – Var.&JV
Girls Soccer – Modified	Girls Soccer – Modified	Field Hockey– Var./JV/Mod.
Sideline Cheer – Var. & JV	Sideline Cheer – Var. & JV	Girls Swim – Varsity
		Girls Tennis – Varsity
		Boys Golf – Varsity
		Cheerleading – Modified

WINTER

EAST	WEST	DISTRICT
Boys Basketball – Var./JV/Mod.	Boys Basketball– Var./JV/Mod.	Girls Basketball – Varsity
Girls Basketball – JV & Mod.	Girls Basketball– JV & Mod.	Wrestling – Var. & Mod.
G & B Indoor Track – Varsity	G & B Indoor Track – Varsity	Field Hockey– Var./JV/Mod.
Competitive Cheer – Var. & JV	Competitive Cheer – Var. & JV	Boys Swim – Varsity
Boys Ice Hockey – Varsity	Boys Ice Hockey – Varsity	Girls Ice Hockey – Varsity
		Coed Swim – Modified
		Cheerleading – Modified
		Girls Bowling – Varsity
		Boys Bowling – Varsity
		Unified Bowling – Varsity

SPRING

EAST	WEST	DISTRICT
Baseball – Var./JV/Modified	Baseball – Var./JV/Modified	Girls Flag Football– Var. & Mod.
Softball – Var./JV/Modified	Softball – Var./JV/Modified	Boys Tennis – Varsity
Boys Lacrosse – Var./JV/Mod.	Boys Lacrosse – Var./JV/Mod.	Unified Basketball – Varsity
Girls Lacrosse – Var. & Mod.	Girls Lacrosse– Var./JV/Mod.	
G & B Track – Var. & Mod.	G & B Track – Var. & Mod	

PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETICS

The West Seneca Central School District (WSCSD) interscholastic athletic program is built upon the positive qualities of pride, commitment and performance with an emphasis on academics, sportsmanship, safety and chemical-free participation. The expectation is for excellence both on and off the playing areas. The district has a high rate of participation in a well-rounded program of team and individual sports.

West Seneca offers over 100 teams in 26 different sports (including varsity, JV and modified teams). Our teams and students participate in the Erie Country Interscholastic Conference, Section VI, and New York State competitions. Many teams have been recognized for their team grade point average in the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Team Scholar-Athlete program.

The philosophy of athletics in the WSCSD consider athletics to be an integral part of the school's educational program. We believe that athletics provide experiences that will affect the student athlete physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. We believe that by promoting sportsmanship at all levels, the athletics program instills pride, reinforces a sound value system, and enhances the individuals' self-image, as well as the image of the school district and the community.

CODE OF ETHICS

Participation in athletics is a privilege that provides opportunities to develop character, leadership, teamwork, and lifelong values. Every student-athlete, coach, parent, administrator, official, and spectator shares the responsibility of promoting a positive athletic environment.

As members of the West Seneca Athletics community, we are committed to the following principles:

1. **Demonstrate sportsmanship** by competing with integrity, respect, honesty, and fairness at all times.
2. **Honor the game** by following both the letter and the spirit of the rules while discouraging any behavior that compromises fair competition.
3. **Compete with character**, recognizing that how we play is just as important as the outcome of the contest.
4. **Treat opponents, teammates, coaches, officials, and spectators with dignity and respect**, before, during, and after every contest.
5. **Welcome visiting teams and guests** with courtesy and professionalism, fostering positive relationships and mutual respect.
6. **Respect the authority and decisions of contest officials**, understanding that they play an essential role in maintaining a fair and safe competitive environment.
7. **Understand and uphold all eligibility requirements, team expectations, and governing rules** established by the school district, league, Section VI, NYSPHSAA, and state regulations.
8. **Promote leadership, accountability, teamwork, and personal responsibility**, encouraging all participants to make positive choices both on and off the field of play.
9. **Support the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of every student-athlete**, recognizing that education, personal growth, and wellness are the primary goals of interscholastic athletics.
10. **Compete with perspective**, remembering that athletics are an extension of the educational experience. Winning is valued, but learning, improving, building relationships, and representing our school community with pride are the true measures of success.

Together, we strive to create an athletic program that reflects the highest standards of sportsmanship, respect, inclusion, and excellence, making every contest a positive experience for all involved.

GOAL/OBJECTIVES

Our Goal

The West Seneca Athletics Program is an integral part of the educational experience. Our goal is to provide every student-athlete with opportunities to develop character, leadership, sportsmanship, resilience, and lifelong healthy habits through participation in educational-based athletics. We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and competitive environment where students are challenged to reach their full potential both on and off the field of play.

Our Objectives

The West Seneca Athletics Program strives to:

1. Promote Educational Athletics by helping students understand and appreciate the important role interscholastic athletics play in supporting academic success, personal growth, and lifelong learning.
2. Develop Character and Sportsmanship by fostering integrity, respect, responsibility, citizenship, and ethical behavior while teaching students to compete with honor and dignity.
3. Build School Pride and Community by providing opportunities that unite students, families, staff, alumni, and the community through shared experiences, school spirit, and positive traditions.
4. Support the Whole Student by promoting the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of every student-athlete while encouraging healthy lifestyles and personal wellness.
5. Develop Athletic Skills and Competitive Excellence by providing quality coaching and meaningful experiences that encourage continuous improvement, teamwork, discipline, perseverance, and a commitment to excellence.
6. Foster Leadership and Accountability by empowering student-athletes to demonstrate initiative, make responsible decisions, serve as positive role models, and contribute to their teams and school community.
7. Build Confidence Through Commitment by teaching that success is achieved through preparation, hard work, resilience, and dedication, helping students develop self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to overcome challenges.
8. Prepare Students for Life Beyond Athletics by emphasizing transferable skills such as communication, collaboration, time management, leadership, and perseverance that will benefit students throughout their education, careers, and communities. The experience of participation in athletic contests and activities should reflect the total educational goals of our district.

PHILOSOPHY BY SPORT LEVEL

GRADE 7/8 or 7/8/9 (MODIFIED)

The WSCSD believes that the primary purpose of the modified program is to provide the student athletes with an opportunity to learn the game, rules, and strategies; teach basic skills; allow the student athletes to participate and compete and to train the students for future competition. The main focus is not winning, but to develop student athletes accordingly to the philosophy of the district.

JUNIOR VARSITY (JV)

The junior varsity level of competition places an increased emphasis upon team play, physical conditioning and refinement of basic skills. Winning at the junior varsity level is considered important and participants should be taught how to cope with game situations and how to win and lose properly. An attempt will be made to play all participants. It is recognized, however, that they may not all play equally in each game.

VARSITY

The varsity level of athletic competition is the culmination of the high school athletic program. Team play, sportsmanship, individual physical ability, motivation and mental attitude are very important aspects of competition at the varsity level. The team plays to win the contest but varsity contestants should accept the fact that important lessons are to be learned from losing. There continues to be very strong emphasis on academics, sportsmanship, and chemical-free lifestyle and community service. It is recognized that not all participants may play in every contest. All members of the team that complete the season in good standing will receive an equal award.

Advance Placement Process (APP)

Advance Placement Process is a NYS Department of Education process for screening Grades 7 and 8 student-athletes to determine their readiness to compete at a higher level of competition (Freshmen, JV or Varsity) than their current grade level. It is based on readiness rather than grade level. This program has been designed to assess a student-athlete's personal and social responsibility, sport-specific skill development, knowledge of the game, and physical fitness. In addition, West Seneca carefully assesses the socio-emotional maturity of each student-athlete. This program is intended for the exceptional student-athlete only.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Participation in interscholastic athletics is voluntary and involves inherent risks. Injuries can occur in any sport, whether contact or non-contact, and may range from minor injuries to serious injuries, including fractures, concussions, permanent disability, paralysis, or, in rare cases, death. By participating, student-athletes and their parents/guardians acknowledge and accept these risks.

West Seneca Central will not provide insurance for interscholastic athletics. It should be clearly understood that in the event of an injury the school district does not assume any responsibility in paying for the costs incurred by the injury.

An Emergency Information Card must be completed and on file before the first practice. All injuries must be reported immediately to the coach and/or certified athletic trainer. Any student-athlete who is absent for five (5) or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, or who receives medical treatment for an injury, must provide written medical clearance from a licensed healthcare provider before returning to practice or competition.

ATHLETIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

Participation in the West Seneca Athletics Program is a privilege, not a right. Student-athletes are ambassadors of their families, their teams, their schools, and the West Seneca community. With this privilege comes the responsibility to uphold the highest standards of character, sportsmanship, citizenship, and personal conduct.

The West Seneca Athletics Program is committed to developing well-rounded student-athletes who demonstrate integrity, accountability, respect, and leadership both on and off the playing field. Athletics are an extension of the educational experience, and every student-athlete is expected to represent themselves, their teammates, and their school with pride.

As a West Seneca student-athlete, I understand that I am expected to:

Demonstrate Character

- Conduct myself with honesty, integrity, and respect at all times.
- Make responsible decisions that reflect positively on myself, my team, and the school community.
- Accept responsibility for my actions and understand that my choices have consequences.
- Serve as a positive role model for younger students and my peers.

Show Respect

- Treat teammates, coaches, opponents, officials, spectators, faculty, staff, and volunteers with courtesy and respect.
- Display good sportsmanship in both victory and defeat.
- Accept the decisions of officials and coaches with maturity and professionalism.
- Refrain from the use of profanity, inappropriate language, bullying, harassment, hazing, intimidation, or unsportsmanlike conduct.

Commit to Team Responsibilities

- Attend practices, contests, meetings, and team functions consistently and punctually.
- Demonstrate a strong work ethic through preparation, dedication, and perseverance.
- Support teammates by encouraging a positive, inclusive, and respectful team culture.
- Follow all team, school district, league, Section VI, and NYSPHSAA rules and expectations.

Represent West Seneca with Pride

Whether at school, athletic contests, community events, while traveling, or through social media, I recognize that I represent the West Seneca Central School District. My behavior should reflect positively on my team, coaches, family, and school community.

Student-athletes are expected to:

- Demonstrate respectful and appropriate behavior at all school-sponsored activities.
- Wear appropriate attire and maintain standards of appearance consistent with team and school expectations.
- Use social media responsibly, understanding that online behavior can impact teammates, coaches, and the reputation of the athletic program.
- Avoid conduct that is disruptive, disrespectful, unlawful, or detrimental to the team or school community.

Make Healthy Choices

Student-athletes are expected to make choices that promote their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Participation in athletics requires self-discipline, sound judgment, and a commitment to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Student-athletes should avoid behaviors that jeopardize their health, safety, eligibility, or the reputation of the athletic program.

Accept Accountability

Student-athletes are expected to follow the West Seneca CSD Code of Conduct, West Seneca Academic Eligibility Rules, team rules established by their coaches, and all applicable district, league, Section VI, and NYSPHSAA regulations. Failure to meet these expectations may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or removal from athletic participation, consistent with district policies and due process.

SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY

The West Seneca Central School Interscholastic Athletic program is committed to promoting the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play at all sports activities.

We will expect acceptable standards of good citizenship and propriety with proper regard for the rights of others. We are further committed to the belief that schools participating in interscholastic athletic activities should be held responsible for the conduct of their players, coaches, faculty members and spectators.

Inappropriate conduct may be deemed just cause for the school's reprimand, probation, suspension from a particular sport, or suspension from interscholastic athletic activities.

Let the players play, let the coaches coach, let the officials officiate, and let's be positive.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT/COACH

The West Seneca Central School District believes that open, respectful, and timely communication among student-athletes, parents/guardians, and coaches is essential to creating a positive athletic experience. We encourage all parties to work together to resolve concerns in a professional and respectful manner.

Participation in athletics provides students with opportunities to develop leadership, responsibility, teamwork, perseverance, and resilience. Along with these opportunities may come challenges or disappointments. When concerns arise, they should be addressed through open communication while maintaining mutual respect for everyone involved.

Communication Process

We encourage concerns to be addressed at the lowest appropriate level whenever possible.

Step 1 – Student-Athlete and Coach

Whenever appropriate, student-athletes are encouraged to speak directly with their coach regarding any concern. Learning to communicate respectfully and advocate for oneself is an important life skill.

Step 2 – Parent/Guardian and Coach

If the concern remains unresolved, the parent/guardian should:

- * Contact the coach by phone or email to schedule a meeting.
- * Avoid discussing concerns before, during, or immediately after practices or contests.
- * 24-Hour Rule:: Parents/guardians are expected to wait at least 24 hours following a contest before contacting a coach regarding athletic concerns. Conversations immediately before, during, or after contests are not appropriate and will not occur.

If you are unable to reach the coach, please contact the Athletic Office for assistance.

Step 3 – Athletic Director

If a satisfactory resolution is not reached after meeting with the coach, parents/guardians may contact the Athletic Director to request a meeting.

When appropriate, the meeting may include:

- * Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
- * Student-Athlete
- * Coach
- * Athletic Director

The purpose of this meeting is to clarify concerns, review information, and determine appropriate next steps.

Parents are encouraged to contact the Athletic Director only after communicating with the coach. Concerns involving student safety, harassment, discrimination, misconduct, or violations of district policy should be brought directly to the Athletic Director.

Our Commitment

The West Seneca Athletics Program believes that success is measured by more than wins and losses. The lessons learned through athletics—including teamwork, resilience, leadership, discipline, accountability, and respect—prepare students for success in school, in their communities, and throughout life.

Every student-athlete is expected to embrace these values and contribute to a positive, safe, and respectful athletic environment that reflects the pride and tradition of West Seneca Athletics.

