



Westlake Christian Academy

Athletic Handbook

2011 – 2012

ATHLETIC CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTRODUCTION

The athletic program at Westlake Christian Academy provides opportunity for students in grades 5 – 12 to use and develop their God-given talents in the form of physical competition. Athletics is just one aspect of a student's total educational experience. It is an extension of the school's mission "to disciple students to honor Jesus Christ in thought, word, and deed". The goal of athletics at Westlake is to pursue excellence with character by honoring God, and developing athletic potential.

This handbook is designed to help students and parents understand the role and function of athletics at Westlake Christian Academy. It should serve as a reference to assist anyone in seeking information about the function of athletics at the school.

WCA ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

The foundation for the athletic program at Westlake Christian Academy is God's Word. Biblical principles should be reflected throughout the athletic program at Westlake. Athletic teams at Westlake are led by coaches who view athletics as a ministry and are intent on making sure athletes are applying Biblical principles on a daily basis throughout their athletic experience.

The overall purpose of athletics at Westlake is to honor God in everything that is done. A God-honoring program does not happen by accident. It is the result of purposeful and intentional actions including the following:

- Athletes must learn the value of sportsmanship while developing the attitude of Christ. They should remember that they represent Christ at all times and seek to be like him in the words and actions.
- Athletes must learn the value of physical activity and hard work, realizing that their bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and should be treated accordingly.
- Athletes must learn to pursue excellence. Excellence does not mean that they win every game they compete in, but they are striving to do everything with their entire effort to maximize the ability that God has given them.

These building blocks are the foundation for succeeding in athletics as well as in life. Winning from a Christian perspective is not measured by the scoreboard. The results of a successful sports season at Westlake Christian Academy will be measured years from now as athletes put into practice the lessons they have learned on the court and field.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Elementary Level

The purpose of elementary sports is for students to develop an appreciation and enjoyment of the sport. Priorities at this level are to encourage participation and to build basic individual and team skills. Every athlete will be given equal opportunity to play minutes that will impact the game. Everyone should get an equal amount of participation time. The goal is to get as many elementary students involved as possible. Encouraging participation and building basic skills will strengthen the athletic program in the future.

Junior High Level

The purpose of junior high sports is for students to continue to develop enjoyment of the sport and improving basic individual and team skills. Every athlete should get the opportunity to play minutes that will impact the game. However, playing time will not be equal. Athletes should be introduced to the concept that each player has a specific role on the team. The emphasis at this level should shift toward developing the most competitive team possible.

High School Level

The purpose of high school sports is for students to enjoy the sport by playing a competitive, high level. Athletes should be pushed to attain the highest level possible. Varsity level players are expected to have a solid grasp of the fundamentals, have excellent skills related to their sport, and be in good physical condition necessary to compete appropriately at the varsity level. The concept of teamwork and playing a specific role on a team should be mastered at this level. Playing time decisions for each player at the varsity level are left totally to the coach's discretion. Playing time is not guaranteed and each athlete should understand that God has gifted everyone in different ways. Their goal should be to become the best athlete they can be with those abilities that God has given them.

ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS:

1. Make your commitment to the team a priority and keep priorities in order by having God first, family second, school third, and athletics fourth.
2. Strive for excellence.
3. Treat teammates and others as more important than yourself.
4. Be an example in regards to upholding the rules of the school and your team.
5. Devote yourself to good sportsmanship.
6. Attend all practices, games, and team activities.
7. Be diligent and consistent with schoolwork to maintain eligibility during the season.
8. Be responsible for the proper care of uniforms and equipment
9. Represent Westlake Christian Academy with the highest level of respect, integrity, and Christian character both on and off the field.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS:

1. Understand your role as a spectator. Encourage and uplift your athlete and the team. Officials and opponents should be treated with respect.
2. Support your athlete's commitment by requiring their attendance at all team practices, events, and games.
3. As much as possible, eliminate scheduling conflicts with practices and games.
4. Follow the Biblical method for conflict resolution when a problem arises. Go first to the person involved.
5. Support the athletic program by volunteering when possible to assist with concessions, admission, transportation, or other areas.
6. Pray for and encourage your athlete daily.

SPORTS SNAPSHOT

Westlake Christian Academy is affiliated with the following organizations:

IHSA (approved school)

ACSI (state tournaments)

Independent (no conference affiliation)

Westlake Christian Academy is pleased to offer the following sports:

Fall

JH Soccer (5th – 8th)

Varsity Soccer

Elementary Volleyball (5th – 6th)

JH Volleyball

Varsity Volleyball

Winter

Girls Basketball (5th – 6th)

Boys Basketball (5th – 6th)

Girls JH Basketball

Boys JH Basketball

Girls Varsity Basketball

Boys Varsity Basketball

Cheerleading

Spring

Varsity Baseball

Varsity Softball

***All sports teams subject to cancellation if there are not enough athletes to comprise a team.*

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

Students will not be allowed to practice when the season begins if they have not turned in the following:

1. IHSA Physical Form
 - Each athlete must have a current IHSA physical exam on file.
 - The form must be properly completed, signed by a parent and doctor, and dated within one year spanning the entire season for that sport.
 - Athletes entering sixth grade and ninth grade may submit their State of Illinois required school physical in place of the IHSA athletic physical.
2. Emergency Contact Information
3. Athletic Permission Form
4. Sports Fee

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY:

Those who participate in sports are students first and athletes second. These guidelines support Westlake Christian Academy's philosophy that all students' academics take precedence over athletics.

Grades will be checked every two weeks to determine a student's eligibility for athletics. The first check will be three weeks into the quarter. Eligibility checks will be completed on Fridays and the ineligible period will begin the following Monday. Students will be declared ineligible for participation in games if they have either two D's or one F at the end of that two-week period. The student will then have the next two week period to bring his or her grades up. The consequences for ineligibility are as follows:

- 1st offense: The student will be declared ineligible for a two week period and will be allowed to participate in practices but not games for the entire two week period.
- 2nd offense: The student will be declared ineligible for another two week period and will be allowed to participate in practice but not games for the entire two week period.
- 3rd offense: The student will not be allowed to participate in the rest of that sports season.

In order to focus on academics, ineligible athletes may meet with coaches to determine if it is more profitable for them to attend practice or take that time to focus on bringing up their grades.

***The Westlake athletic department is preparing for becoming an IHSA member in the future. The IHSA requires all member schools to check eligibility on a weekly basis. At some point in the future, the eligibility policy will change to a weekly check, followed by a one calendar week ineligibility period.*

HOMESCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Homeschool students are welcome to participate in Westlake's athletic program provided they follow the guidelines contained in the student handbook. This includes being registered for one class throughout the course of the semester in which their sport is taking place.

GAME PARTICIPATION

1. A student-athlete must be in attendance for a minimum of four class periods (1/2 day) the day of the contest.
2. If the contest falls on a non-school day, Saturday, or on a day off of school the coach will make the decision regarding participation, keeping in mind the circumstances regarding the absence.
3. If an athlete has been injured and obtained medical treatment, they may not participate in any practices or contests until given a medical release by the athlete's doctor.

PRACTICE PARTICIPATION

Practice is one of the most important parts of an athletic season. It is in practice that individual skills are learned and developed, and teams learn to cooperate and accomplish goals that are bigger than each individual player. These goals do not happen if all players are not committed fully to the team and their teammates. Because of this, all teams follow these guidelines regarding practice attendance:

1. If an athlete anticipates missing a practice for any reason, prior notice should be given to their coach.
2. A student must be present at school for a minimum of four class periods (1/2 day) in order to participate in practice.
3. An absence from practice that is considered excused would be for the following reasons (but not limited to these reasons):
 - Sickness
 - Death in the family
 - College visit
 - Necessary school work (such as tutoring in a difficult class)

Athletes should still communicate with their coach when they anticipate missing practice.

TRANSPORTATION:

Unless stated otherwise by the coach, all athletes, statisticians and managers will travel to and from games in the school vans or parent driven vehicles, which will be driven by either the coach or another adult with the proper license. Transportation to and from practices are the responsibility of the parents.

Should there be a need for an athlete to return home after a game in a vehicle other than the team vehicle or with his/her parent (e.g. with friend), **a written note signed by the athlete's parent is needed to excuse the athlete.** Since a coach is legally responsible for all the athletes and students involved in their program it is essential that parents and athletes follow this guideline.

Please try to pick up your athlete from school as soon as possible after the finish of practice or games. We greatly appreciate your help and promptness in this area, *as coaches must remain at school until all athletes have been picked up.*

Parents needing directions to the games may obtain them from www.highschoolsports.net.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

If school is cancelled or closed on the day of a game or practice due to weather conditions, that day's game or practice will be cancelled as well and will be rescheduled if possible. The administration may make exceptions to this rule if it is considered safe to travel. In this case, athletes will be contacted by their coach.

UNIFORMS

1. Each athlete is completely responsible for the proper care of any uniform or equipment issued by the school. Any lost, stolen, or damaged items will be charged to the athlete to whom they were issued.
2. Uniforms provided by the school should not be worn for any other purpose other than games.
3. Uniforms and equipment must be turned in two weeks after the last game of the season to their coach.
4. If a uniform is not turned in by the appropriate time, the student will be charged for the total uniform cost and will be responsible for that amount unless the uniform is returned.
5. If the uniform is not turned in or paid for by the end of the semester, the students grades will not be released until the uniform is turned in or the total amount of the uniform cost is received.

COMMUNICATION/ CONFLICT RESOLUTION

There are times during a sports season when a parent or athlete may have questions and concerns regarding a variety of topics. As with anything at Westlake, parents and students are encouraged to follow Biblical principles regarding conflicts. Practically, these are steps that should be taken to solve conflicts:

1. Athletes should first seek out his coach and discuss their concerns.
2. If further clarification is required, parents should go with the athlete to discuss the matter with the coach.
3. If the issue is still not resolved, the parents and athlete should meet to discuss the issue with the athletic director.

It is best if these conversations do not take place immediately before or after practices or games. An appointment may be scheduled at a different time to discuss the incident/event.

LETTERING POLICY

To receive a Varsity letter in any sport the athlete must meet these criteria.

1. Must dress for every Varsity Game.
2. Must be academically eligible for the whole season.
3. Must attend all practices or have an excused absence.
4. Must follow the WCA's Athlete's Code of Conduct.

Letters and other awards will be given at the end of year athletic awards banquet.

*For Westlake Christian game schedules,
directions, and results:*

www.HighSchoolSports.net

SPORT FEES:

In an effort to offset some of the athletic budget, the administration has instituted a fee assessed to each athlete to participate in an interscholastic sport at each level. **This fee is due before the first day of practice.** Athletes will not be able to practice without this fee paid.

Fall

Soccer	Varsity	\$130
	Junior High	\$90
Volleyball	Varsity	\$130
	Junior High	\$95
	Elementary	\$75

Winter

Basketball	Varsity Boys	\$180
	Varsity Girls	\$180
	Junior High Boys	\$150
	Junior High Girls	\$130
	5 th /6 th Grade	\$95
Cheerleading	Varsity Girls	\$90
	Junior High	\$60

Spring

Softball	Varsity	\$150
Baseball	Varsity	\$150