Wayland-Cohocton Central School



Home of the Eagles

Athletic & Extracurricular Handbook

WAYLAND-COHOCTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

Excellence Starts Here

MISSION: ***To ensure high levels of learning for all students***

VISION: ***To continuously develop our capacity to function as a collaborative culture.***

Board of Education

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Ms. Wendi Snyder, Middle School Principal
Mr. Jeremy Clark, Middle School Assistant Principal
Ms. Jennifer Billotte, High School Principal
Mr. Robert Toland, High School Dean of Students

Athletics, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator

Mr. Royce Flickner

Philosophy

Wayland-Cohocton Central School District provides all eligible students the opportunity to partake in interscholastic activities. Wayland-Cohocton's programs offer key components to engage, teach and direct each student towards the complete educational program. The school district recognizes the value of the individual student through participation in our many programs and athletic teams. Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege with many responsibilities to the student, their team/group, the school and the community.

In addition to academic success, the Wayland-Cohocton extracurricular and athletic programs help to develop our students with cooperative teamwork, sportsmanship, dedication, school pride, leadership and hard work. Our students are held to the highest standard to represent our school and community by following the school's code of conduct and our mission statement as well as their leaders' and coaches' rules and expectations.

I. Expectations for All Participants

Student Eligibility

Students participating in athletics or extracurricular activities must meet all applicable District, Board of Education, NYSPHSAA, and activity-specific eligibility requirements.

Eligibility may be affected by:

- Academic performance
- Attendance
- Behavior and conduct
- Compliance with school and activity expectations
- Other requirements established by District policy or applicable governing organizations

Participation may be limited, suspended, or discontinued when a student's actions or circumstances interfere with these expectations.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes in order to participate in an athletic contest, practice, meeting, performance, or other extracurricular activity that day.

A student who is illegally absent, truant, suspended, or dismissed from school due to illness may not participate that day. Legitimate appointments, including medical, court, or college visits, may be permitted when appropriately documented. In order for a student to be able to participate in activities for that day without a legal excuse, must be in school by 9:30am.

Students are expected to attend school regularly following activities and events. Patterns of absences connected to participation may result in a review of eligibility.

Academic Eligibility for Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

Participation in athletics and extracurricular activities is a privilege. Students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress while participating. Academic eligibility will be reviewed every five weeks using interim reports and report cards.

At the beginning of each school year, all students are eligible to participate.

Students failing one course:

- May participate in practices and events.
- Must attend 13th period for academic assistance.
- Failure to attend 13th period will result in loss of participation privileges until the requirement is met.

Students failing two courses:

- May attend practices and activity meetings but may not participate in games, competitions, performances, or other events.
- After a minimum one-week ineligibility period, the classroom teacher may recommend reinstatement based on the student's effort, attitude, and progress.
- Final approval will be determined by the appropriate building administrator.

Students failing three or more courses:

- Are ineligible to participate in athletics or extracurricular activities for two weeks, including practices and events.

Incomplete Grades:
Students with an incomplete must attend 13th period until the incomplete is satisfactorily resolved.

A student becomes officially ineligible when the eligibility list is published and communicated to staff.

For purposes of this policy, **athletics and extracurricular activities** include all school-sponsored athletic teams, clubs, organizations, performances, competitions, and activities.

Behavior & Citizenship

Students are expected to:

- Follow the District Code of Conduct and Board policies.
- Follow applicable laws and school rules.
- Follow reasonable directions from coaches, advisors, and administrators.
- Treat teammates, classmates, advisors, coaches, opponents, officials, staff, and spectators with respect.
- Represent themselves, their activity, and Wayland-Cohocton positively.

Behavior that violates District expectations may result in consequences for participation in addition to any consequences imposed under the Code of Conduct or District policy.

Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Prohibited Substances

Students participating in extracurricular activities are subject to the District's expectations regarding drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, and other prohibited substances.

Violations may result in consequences under the District Code of Conduct and may also affect a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities in accordance with District

procedures. Consequences may be cumulative and may carry over from one school year or activity to another, as permitted by District policy and procedure.

Hazing, Harassment, Bullying & Discrimination

Hazing, harassment, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, and other prohibited conduct are not permitted in any athletic or extracurricular activity. Any such conduct will be addressed in accordance with the District's Code of Conduct and applicable Board policies and procedures. Participants and families are encouraged to report concerns to a coach, advisor, administrator, or other appropriate school employee.

Social Media & Digital Conduct

Students are expected to use social media and other digital platforms responsibly.

Students should not post or share content that:

- Threatens, harasses, bullies, or humiliates others;
- Contains discriminatory, hateful, or degrading language;
- Promotes or depicts prohibited substances or illegal activity;
- Targets teammates, opponents, coaches, advisors, officials, or school staff;
- Violates school policies or substantially disrupts the school or activity.

Students should remember that online content can be shared beyond its intended audience and may affect their reputation, relationships, and future opportunities.

School-sponsored social media accounts must be managed in accordance with District expectations and applicable privacy requirements.

School Property & Equipment

Students are responsible for the proper care and timely return of District property, including uniforms, equipment, costumes, materials, and other items.

Lost or damaged property may result in financial responsibility for replacement or repair in accordance with District procedures and may affect participation until the matter is resolved.

Consequences, Suspension & Dismissal

Participation may be suspended or discontinued when a student violates:

- The District Code of Conduct;
- Board policy;
- This handbook;
- Applicable laws or regulations; or

- Reasonable expectations established by the coach or advisor.

Consequences will be determined based on the nature, severity, and circumstances of the concern, including relevant prior incidents.

Students and parents/guardians will be notified of significant participation consequences.

General Safety

The District will take reasonable steps to provide safe environments for students participating in athletics and extracurricular activities. Students are expected to follow all safety procedures and immediately report injuries, unsafe conditions, or safety concerns to the appropriate adult.

II. Athletics

Levels of Competition

Athletic Levels

Modified: The primary philosophy of this level is to maximize participation, emphasize safety, and teach fundamental skills rather than focusing heavily on winning. This is to teach the student-athlete the rules of the game and foster sportsmanship and team skills. The Coaches reserve the right to petition the Athletic, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator to hold tryouts and/or dismiss Student Athletes throughout the season. These teams include 7th and 8th grade students

Junior Varsity (JV): The Junior Varsity or JV level focuses on preparation and player progression. This time is used to further develop skills in student athletes who show the potential to play at the Varsity level. Playing time is still encouraged **but** not guaranteed at this level. Playing time can be at the discretion of the coaching staff. The coaches reserve the right to petition the Athletic, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator to hold tryouts and/or dismiss Student Athletes throughout the season. These teams predominantly include 9th and 10th grade student athletes. 11th grade students can also be included for further development or management of excessive athletes at the Varsity level but coaches reserve the right for this decision. 7th and 8th grade athletes can be advanced to the Junior Varsity level by coach invitation only and must pass the Athletic Placement Process (APP).

Varsity: This is the culmination of our athletic program. Varsity sports are defined as performance-driven, high level athletic competition. Playing time is strictly at the discretion of the coaching staff. Unlike lower levels, there is no expectation or requirement that every student on the roster will get playing time in a contest. The Coaches reserve the right to petition the Athletic, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator to hold tryouts and/or dismiss Student Athletes throughout the season. Varsity athletes face a rigorous schedule, typically committing to

practices with higher expectation of physical conditioning and mental preparation. Our Varsity program is typically composed of 11th and 12th grade students but can include exceptionally talented students from 7th grade to 12th. 7th and 8th grade athletes can be advanced to the Varsity level by coach invitation only and must pass the Athletic Placement Process (APP).

Students may be moved between levels when permitted by District and NYSPHSAA rules and when determined appropriate by the coaching staff and athletic administration.

Registration & Medical Clearance

Students must complete the District's required athletic registration process **each** season. Registration must be completed by a parent/guardian, including all required electronic forms and signatures. Registration instructions and the registration link can be found under the “Athletics” tab on our school website wccsk12.org.

Students must have:

- A current physical on file with the school nurse*
- A valid IMPACT exam to complete the registration process
- Any additional health or participation requirements required by the District

***Physicals:** The student must have a current physical on file with the school nurse to finish their registration. This physical is good for one year. It is recommended that the student’s parent/guardian check with the school nurse before registering to check the student’s physical status.

ImPACT Testing

Wayland-Cohocton High and Middle Schools utilize an innovative program for our student athletes. The program is called ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). It is a computerized exam that the athlete takes prior to the season. If the athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury, they re-take the exam to help determine the extent of the injury, the location of the injury and when the injury has healed. This system is utilized throughout professional sports, has been mandated in the NHL and is fast becoming the “Gold Standard” in recognizing and better managing concussion type injuries. The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center’s Sports Concussion Program is the founding group of this software. It is used by 18 NFL teams, US Soccer and countless colleges and high schools across the country. The exam has gained recognition around the world. Additional information can be found at www.impacttest.com.

The exam takes about 30 minutes, and is non-invasive. The program is basically set-up as a “video game” type format. For example, in one part of the exam, a dozen common words appear at one time on the screen for about one second each. The athlete is then later asked what words were displayed. What it is doing is giving the brain a preseason physical of its cognitive abilities. It tracks information such as memory, reaction time, processing speed and concentration. It is simple, and actually, most that take it enjoy the challenge of the test.

If a concussion is suspected, the test is re-taken. If the information can be used to better determine recovery from concussion, it is given to the neuropsychologists at the UPMC to help interpret the data. The information may be shared with your regular doctor, at your request, and a sound decision can be made as to when return-to-play is appropriate and safe. At WCCS, we understand the competitive nature of sports, but we always hold the athlete's health and safety as our top priority.

I wish to stress that there is no invasive work being done with this program. This gives us the best available information in preventing brain damage that can occur with multiple concussions. The WCCS administration and coaching staff are trying to keep your child's health and safety at the forefront of the High School athletic experience.

Athletic Placement Process (APP)

Purpose. APP is a limited process for determining whether an eligible student may safely compete outside the student's usual grade level classification. An invitation permits a tryout only and does not guarantee placement, playing time, or a particular team role.

Eligibility and Limits

APP may be used for a student in grade 7 or 8 seeking to compete on a senior high school team, or for a student in grades 9 through 12 seeking to compete on a team no lower than grade 7. **APP may not be used to fill roster vacancies, provide extra playing opportunities, replace a Modified program, or reward a student.**

Step 1: Coach Recommendation & Athletic Coordinator Review:

The Athletic Placement Process is coach-driven and must be initiated by the head coach. A student may be recommended for APP consideration based on demonstrated potential in personal and social responsibility, sport-specific skill development, knowledge of the game, and physical fitness. Recommendations should reflect the student's readiness and potential benefit from participating at an advanced level, rather than team needs.

Following the recommendation, the Athletics Coordinator, Superintendent and Building Principal will review the student's suitability for the process, including academic standing, personal and social responsibility, ability to participate appropriately with older or younger students, and the likelihood of meaningful participation. As a local screening guideline, students should generally be expected to participate in at least 50 percent of contests when that measure is appropriate for the sport.

The head coach will complete the Coaches Recommendation Form and meet with the Athletics, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator to discuss and review the circumstances and ensure the recommendation is appropriate before the process moves forward. This *meeting must occur before any conversation with the student or parent/guardian and prior to any participation in in-season practice or play.*

Step 2 Parent/Guardian Informed Consent: Before the student participates in APP tryouts, the parent or guardian must review the process and provide written informed consent. The consent confirms that the family understands the student's proposed participation outside the usual grade-level classification, the health requirements, the tryout standards, and that APP does not guarantee team placement.

Step 3 Health Examination and Clearance Verification: Before tryouts, the school nurse verifies that the required annual health examination is on file and explicitly clears the student for athletic participation. An updated health history is also required when the examination is completed more than 30 days before the start of the season or will expire during the season. Follow-up checks may be required during the sports season if concerns arise.

Important: The revised APP does not include a Tanner Sexual Maturity Rating or other physiological maturity assessment. The nurse verifies required athletic health documentation and does not make the APP level-placement decision.

Step 4 Team-Selection Criteria Established/Tryout Period: Before the tryout period, the coach identifies the sport-specific skills, knowledge, fitness measures, responsibility standards, and other criteria that will be used to select the team. After the formal invitation, informed consent, and health requirements are complete, the student may participate in the regular tryout period for the requested team and level. The coach evaluates the student through the same team-selection process and against the same required criteria used for all other candidates.

Important: The student either earns a place through the regular team-selection process or returns to the appropriate usual grade-level team, subject to district and sport rules.

Step 5 Athlete Readiness and Team-Selection Determination: Using tryout evidence and relevant prior observations, the coach determines whether the student demonstrates sufficient personal and social responsibility, sport-specific skill development, knowledge of the game, and physical fitness. The coach records the evidence, certifies that the same criteria were used for all candidates, and makes a post-tryout recommendation to the Athletics Coordinator.

Step 6 Athletic Coordinator Final APP Determination: The Athletics Coordinator reviews the completed process, required documentation, coach recommendation, health-record verification, and team-selection results. The Athletic Coordinator records the final district decision to approve the requested placement, approve a different eligible level, deny the placement, or return the packet for additional information.

Step 7 Records: The Athletics Coordinator maintains the completed APP packet and supporting records in accordance with district record-keeping procedures. The record should identify the student, sport, level, season, school year, criteria used, final decision, and required signatures.

Step 8 Notifications: After the tryout period, the coach communicates the final decision to the student and parent or guardian. For approved placements, the Athletics Coordinator also sends any required notification list to the athletic director of competitor schools and completes other league, Section V, or NYSPHSAA notifications that apply.

Dual-Sport Participation

In New York State, a student-athlete participating in two school sports during the exact same athletic season (such as running Cross Country while playing Soccer in the fall) is known as a **dual-sport** or **dual-participation** athlete.

Dual Participation is only for 9th-12th grade students playing at the Varsity level. A student first has to have parental/guardian permission to participate. Then both coaches must mutually agree to the student joining both teams and the scheduling of practices and events for that student. If either coach vetoes the request, the application is denied with no path for appeal.
If both the parents and the coaches approve, the Athletic, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator has finally administrative sign-off.
The student must maintain a 80% grade or above, a positive behavioral record and regular attendance while participating in dual sports.

Program Safety:

The District will take reasonable steps to see that physical risks to students participating in the interscholastic athletic program shall be kept at a minimum by:

a. Requiring timely medical examinations of participants;
b. Employing certified or licensed staff to coach all varsity, junior varsity, and modified practices and games;
c. Providing or requiring certified or licensed officials to officiate all competitions;
d. Ensuring that its players' equipment is safe and operates within the applicable manufacturer's guidelines;
e. Ensuring that all home fields, courts, pools, tracks, and other areas where athletes practice, warm-up, or compete are safe and appropriate for use; and
f. Providing professional development and training opportunities for all coaching staff.

Transfers & Quitting

A student can choose to apply for a transfer to another sport after completing one practice at the start of the season. To transfer the student must get permission from the both coaches to be transferred to the new team. Both coaches have to accept the transfer request. The new coach reserves the right to have the student try out for a spot on the new team.

When a student resigns/quits from the team at any point before the season ends, they will not be able to join another team that season and they forfeit the credit for the season. They will not be eligible for any connected awards and will not be included in the final roster. Resignation/Quitting is not the same as a transfer.

Homeschool/Alternative Schools

Wayland-Cohocton only provides athletic/extracurricular activities to students registered within the Wayland-Cohocton district. This does not include students that are homeschooled locally or neighboring school districts. Student-athletes must be considered a "bona fide student".

BONA FIDE STUDENT: A bona fide student is a regularly enrolled boy or girl whose name is on the official attendance register of the secondary school represented and who is in good standing. (NYSPHSAA, pg. 31)

Injuries & Concussion Management

Athletes and Parents/Guardians are responsible for reporting any injury sustained through a practice or game to their coach and the health office. The coach should ensure that any student athlete under their care receives prompt and proper medical treatment for their injury and that any medical professional's treatment instructions are adhered to. No student will be allowed to participate if there is a question whether they are in adequate physical condition. A physician's note may be required before an athlete is allowed to return to practice or competition.

A student who has sustained or is believed to have sustained a mild traumatic brain injury (concussion) must be immediately removed from athletic activities. If there is any doubt, it shall be presumed that the student is so injured until proven otherwise. Before being permitted to return to athletic activity, a student must follow all provisions prescribed in Policy #7522 - Concussion Management before returning to participation.

Concussions can impact a student's academics as well as their athletic pursuits. As such, the District supports the proper evaluation and management of concussion injuries. A concussion is a type of mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Recovery from a concussion and its symptoms will vary. Avoiding re-injury and over-exertion until fully recovered are the cornerstones of proper concussion management.

Transportation

Wayland-Cohocton provides transportation for students to and from games. We also provide a sports run after school to provide safe transportation home for students, the sports run typically leaves campus at 5:45. If a student chooses to go home with another student or family, they must provide written permission from their parent/guardian in which the Principal, Assistant Principal or the Athletics, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator must sign off on before the event. In the event that there is not a bus transport, the coach will make the players aware ahead of time so that the athletes can make safe arrangements.

Uniforms & Equipment

Students are responsible for the care and return of uniforms and equipment issued by the District.

Lost or damaged equipment may result in a charge for replacement or repair in accordance with District procedures.

Weather & Lightning

The District follows current NYSPHSAA, Section V, and District weather and lightning procedures.

When thunder or lightning is present, athletic activity will be suspended and participants will move to an appropriate shelter. Activity may resume only after the required waiting period has passed and conditions are determined to be safe.

Athletic Sportsmanship

In New York State, high school athletic contests are treated as an extension of the classroom. Under the governing authority of the **New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA)** and the **Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)**, the state enforces a strict, zero-tolerance policy toward unsportsmanlike behavior.

These sportsmanship expectations apply equally to three distinct groups: **athletes, coaches, and spectators**.

1. Expectations for Athletes: The "No Warning" Rule

At the start of every high school athletic contest in New York, officials read a mandatory state-wide **Sportsmanship Pledge**.

The expectations for student-athletes are direct:

- **No Trash-Talking or Taunting:** NYSPHSAA strictly prohibits negative statements, baiting, or gestures directed toward opposing players.
- **Immediate Penalties:** Officials are instructed **not to issue warnings**. If an official witnesses baiting, taunting, or trash-talking, an immediate penalty (such as a yellow card in soccer, a technical foul in basketball, or an unsportsmanlike conduct flag in football) is assessed.
- **Ejection Consequences:** If an athlete is ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct, they are automatically suspended from participating in the next scheduled contest. A second ejection in the same season results in a multi-game suspension or potential season-long ban.

3. Expectations for Spectators: "Be Loud, Be Proud, Be Positive"

To combat a rise in unruly fan behavior, NYSPHSAA implemented an aggressive **Spectator Sportsmanship Policy**. The official mandate for fans in the stands is simple: **“Be Loud, Be Proud, and Be Positive.”**

If a spectator uses vulgar, offensive, or racially/culturally insensitive language, school administrators and site supervisors are legally and associationally required to intervene using a standardized three-step protocol:

4. Expectations for Coaches: Modeling Behavior

Coaches are held to the highest standard of professional ethics. They are expected to model self-control and respect for officials, opponents, and fans.

- **Control of the Bench:** Head coaches are legally responsible for the behavior of their assistant coaches, substitute players, and team managers.
- **Yellow Card Accumulation:** NYSPHSAA tracks unsportsmanlike conduct cards accumulated by coaches throughout the season. For example, in soccer, accumulating 5 yellow cards (or a single red card ejection) results in suspensions and mandatory sportsmanship courses.

Parent | Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are very difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each person's role, we will be better able to accept the actions of the other and provide great benefits to children participating in Interscholastic Athletics. When your child(ren) becomes involved in our sports program, you should have an understanding of what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coaches of your child's program.

Communication you may expect from your child's coach

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations that the coach has for your child as well as for the participants on the team
3. Location and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements (i.e., fees, special equipment, attendance, etc.)
5. Procedure should your child be injured during a practice/contest
6. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation

Communications coaches expect from parents

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach **after 24 hours**
2. Notifications of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Specific concerns in regard to coach's philosophy and/or expectations
4. Health related issues that may impact a child's ability to participate.

As your child becomes involved in programs at Wayland-Cohocton School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments in their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not necessarily go the way that you or your child may wish. At these times, discussion with the coach is encouraged, again after a 24 hour waiting period.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with the coach

1. The treatment of your child mentally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve (i.e., attendance at camps, summer leagues, etc.)

3. Concerns about your child's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you and your child may hope. Coaches are professionals. As such, they make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all athletes involved as well as the team as a whole. There are bound to be areas where you as a parent disagree with a coach's decision. While the issues above are appropriate to be discussed with the coaches, certain things must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Procedure to follow to discuss an issue with a coach

1. Contact the coach through their school email address or through the ROOMS APP. Calling and texting coaches personal lines is **not** acceptable.
2. If the coach cannot be reached through these avenues, call the Athletics, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator, Mr. Flickner, to arrange an appointment to discuss or meet with the coach.
3. **Do not attempt to confront a coach before, during or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution of issues.**

What can a parent do if the meeting with a coach did not provide a resolution?

1. Call the Athletics, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator, Mr. Flickner, to discuss the issue and possibly arrange a meeting with the parent, coach and Athletic, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator.
2. If this step does not provide a solution, then a meeting with the secondary principal, Athletic, Fitness and Aquatics Coordinator, parent and coach may be arranged.

Athletic Awards

Athletic awards and recognition will be provided in accordance with District and athletic department criteria. Specific award qualifications will be communicated to students and families as appropriate.

III. Extracurricular Activities

Definition

An extracurricular activity is a non-credit-bearing activity sponsored, recognized, or approved by the District that occurs outside the regular academic program.

Examples may include clubs, organizations, performances, student leadership activities, and other school-sponsored activities.

Activity-Specific Expectations

Advisors may establish reasonable expectations related to:

- Attendance and punctuality;
- Participation;
- Preparation;
- Conduct;
- Responsibilities and assignments;
- Events, performances, or competitions; and
- Respect for others.

Activity-specific expectations may not conflict with Board policy, the Code of Conduct, District procedures, or this handbook.

Clubs & Organizations

School clubs and organizations must be approved and operated in accordance with District and Board of Education procedures.

The District reserves the right to review, suspend, or discontinue an activity when necessary to maintain a safe, appropriate, and orderly educational environment.

School-Sponsored Publications & Activities

Students participating in school-sponsored publications and activities are expected to follow District policies and applicable law regarding student expression, content, and conduct.

Extracurricular Recognition

Advisors may establish appropriate recognition or awards for student participation and achievement within their activity.

Final Authority

Nothing in this handbook supersedes Board of Education policy, the District Code of Conduct, NYSED regulations, NYSPHSAA rules, Section V requirements, or applicable law.

The District reserves the right to address circumstances not specifically covered in this handbook in accordance with applicable policies, procedures, and regulations.