Watson Chapel Wildcats



Athletic Handbook 26-27

FOREWORD

The Watson Chapel Athletic Handbook is presented to you because you have indicated a desire to participate in the athletic program at the Watson Chapel School District. This guidebook also serves as a consent for parents who have expressed a willingness to permit your child to participate. Participation in interscholastic sports provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences which assist students in personal growth and maturation.

Vision Statement: We envision an athletic system that offers programs for its student-athletes that is considered premier in Arkansas. Our expectations for the athletic department are that it will match the high standards the District has for its academic programs. Our vision is that athletics will be considered an asset to the academic mission of the schools and will enhance the school life experience. We envision a program that offers quality facilities that provide our student-athletes and coaches a place to excel mentally and physically. Most importantly, we envision an athletic department that all of its participants: student-athletes, coaches, administrators, and parents can be proud of and one that promotes lifelong personal and community wellness as well as positive and productive citizens.

PHILOSOPHY AND COMMITMENT

At Watson Chapel School District, we believe athletics are an essential part of the total educational experience. Our athletic programs are designed to foster growth in character, leadership, discipline, and teamwork while promoting school spirit and pride in the community.

PILLARS OF OUR PHILOSOPHY

Developing Student-Athletes – Athletics serve as a platform to teach lifelong values such as accountability, perseverance, respect, and responsibility. We emphasize the growth of each student academically, socially, and emotionally.

Pursuing Excellence – We strive for competitive success, but value the journey of improvement and effort over outcomes. Winning is a goal, but integrity and sportsmanship is never compromised.

Building Community – Our programs unite students, staff, families, and the greater community. We aim to be a source of pride and a reflection of our community's values.

Supporting All Athletes – We provide opportunities for every student-athlete to reach their full potential in a positive, safe, and inclusive environment.
Through athletics, we prepare our students not just for the next game, but for the challenges of life. At Watson Chapel School District, we don't just build better athletes—we build better people.

Our District is committed to providing:
1. An opportunity to earn a roster position through a tryout process of at least 2 days.
2. Top notch apparel, equipment, and facilities.
3. Well trained coaches who will be required to attend yearly professional development
4. Access to a certified athletic trainer
5. Equalized competition.
6. An atmosphere of fairness and sportsmanship through competition.
7. Transportation to all events
8. Due process when applicable

Likewise, as a student-athlete or parent, you must commit to a standard of conduct and effort that exemplifies the fulfillment of certain responsibilities and expectations of the proud tradition of the Watson Chapel Wildcats Athletic Program. While this guidebook merely serves as an overview and does not attempt to cover every situation that could arise, it is our hope that through this Information Guide, our students and parents will have a better understanding of these responsibilities. Many other policies and procedures are covered in the Watson Chapel School District Student Handbook and are applicable to all students.

WATSON CHAPEL SCHOOL DISTRICT COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

As representatives of our athletic program, all coaches and sponsors are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct. This Code of Conduct serves as a guideline for ethical behavior, ensuring a positive environment for athletes, staff, and the broader community. By participating in our program, you agree to adhere to the following principles:

1. Professionalism
- Maintain a high level of professionalism in all interactions.
- Represent the program positively both on and off the field.

2. Respect for All
- Treat athletes, colleagues, officials, and opponents with respect.
- Foster an inclusive environment that values diversity and promotes equality.

3. Integrity and Fair Play
- Uphold the principles of fair play and sportsmanship.
- Avoid any actions that could be perceived as dishonest or unethical.

4. Safety and Welfare
- Prioritize the health and safety of all athletes.
- Follow all safety protocols and guidelines established by the program.

5. Commitment to Development
- Focus on the overall development of athletes, emphasizing skill, teamwork, and character.
- Encourage effort and improvement rather than solely focusing on winning.

6. Compliance with Rules
- Adhere to all local, state, and national regulations governing the sport.
- Stay informed about changes to the rules and regulations.

7. Open Communication
- Foster transparent communication with athletes, parents, and fellow coaches.
- Address conflicts professionally and constructively.

8. Continuous Improvement
- Engage in ongoing professional development to enhance coaching skills and knowledge.
- Be open to feedback and strive for improvement in practices.

9. Conflict of Interest
- Avoid situations that may create a conflict of interest.
- Make decisions based solely on the best interests of the athletes and the program.

10. Disciplinary Actions
- Understand that any violations of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension or termination from coaching duties.

WATSON CHAPEL SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

The conduct of an athlete is closely observed by many. It is important that an athlete's behavior be above reproach. Appearance, expression, and actions always influence people's opinions of the athlete as well as the sport itself. Once you have volunteered to be a member of a squad, you have made the choice to uphold certain standards expected of all athletes in this community. Be proud to be an athlete, for it is a privilege, not a right!

Watson Chapel Schools Athletes should comply with the policies stated in the Athletic Handbook:

1. Meet all Watson Chapel School District/ADE and AAA requirements.
2. Watson Chapel Schools Athletes must meet eligibility requirements set forth by the Arkansas Activities Association in order to compete in AAA sanctioned activities.
○ These requirements are posted on the AAA Website http://ahsaa.org/.
○ Please refer to the AAA Handbook regarding these eligibility rules.
○ The Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) is the primary sanctioning body for high school sports in the state of Arkansas.
○ AAA is a member association of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFSHSA).

3. Maintain Good discipline in the classroom, on and off campus, and at school sponsored events to remain in athletics.
4.Comply with all policies stated in the Watson Chapel School District handbook and Athletic Handbook.

DISCIPLINE

The Watson Chapel School District Athletic Department will use a discipline process that implements different levels of consequences determined by the incident and circumstances.

The range of consequences are as follows:

Minimum - Conference with Student
Maximum - Removal from Athletic Program

Level 1 Infractions result in a conference between the coach and athlete. Coaches will determine consequences for Level 1 Infractions.

Examples of Level 1 Infractions (but not limited to)

- Violation of individual team rules set by the coach
- Unexcused absences from practice and/or school
- Failure to bring practice gear/game gear
- Violation of team dress code
- Disrespectful attitude/behavior toward coaches or teammates
- Violation of social media acceptable use practice
- Disruptive behavior during school, practice, games, or other activities
- Minor academic eligibility concerns

Level 2 Infractions result in a conference with parent, athlete, and coach. Coaches will determine consequences of Level 2 Infractions.

Examples of Level 2 Infractions (but not limited to)

- Repeated violations of Level 1 Infractions
- Repeated violations of Level 1 social media infractions*
- Academic issues that could affect eligibility
- harassment/slander of teammates or coaching staff
- In-school suspension

Repeated Level 1-2 violations will be considered a demonstration of lack of desire of the student athlete to be a member of the Athletic Program. These repeated violations will result in consequences set by the coach, with the maximum consequence being removal from the Athletic Program.

Level 3 Infractions result in a conference between parent, athlete, coach, and athletic director (if the student is a junior high student, the head coach of the high school program may also be involved in the conference). Consequences of Level 3 Infractions may include temporary removal from the team, as determined by the athletic director. Before an athlete can be reinstated they may be required to complete one or more of the following:

1. A minimum of 2 hours or up to 24 hours of community service.
2. Participate in a conference with a school counselor, administrator, or with the coach and athletic director.

3. Complete additional team/athletic consequences, such as extra-conditioning, as determined by the coach.

Examples of Level 3 Infractions (but not limited to)

- Out of school suspension
- Violation of tobacco/vaping policy as identified by the WCSD student handbook
- Serious violation of the social media acceptable use practice
- Bullying/Hazing of teammates or coaching staff.

Level 4 Infractions result in a conference between parent, athlete, coach, and athletic director (if the student is a junior high student, the head coach of the high school program may also be involved in the conference). Athletes will be removed from the Watson Chapel Public Schools Athletic Program for up to 365 days at the athletic director's discretion.

Examples of Level 4 Infractions (but not limited to)

- Repeated violations of Levels 1-3 Infractions
- Use and/or distribution of drugs or alcohol at AAA sanctioned events including practice, travel,and games
- Violet/Physical Hazing of teammates
- Stealing from teammates
- Convicted of a felony
- Athletes who are placed in ALE will not be allowed to practice, dress out, or play in any contest during the ALE placement. After the athlete returns from the ALE placement, he/she may practice, dress out, and play in any contest.

APPEALS PROCESS

The Watson Chapel School District Athlete Code of Conduct is a School Board adopted policy. The procedure for student/parent/guardian appeal shall be in the following order:

1. Coach
2. Athletic Director
3. Principal
4. Superintendent

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCEPTABLE USE PRACTICE

An Acceptable Use Practice (AUP) must be maintained when using social media to post pictures, blogs, emails, text messages, or videos. The purpose of the Watson Chapel School District Athletic Department Social Media AUP is to encourage student athletes to bring honor to the team, the athletic program, the school, and the community and to prevent any form of harassment of any student or faculty/staff member that causes a distraction to the school or athletic program. The unacceptable use of online social networks such as derogatory language about any member of the Watson Chapel Schools community and/or its stakeholders, threats that are demeaning to third parties, any incriminating photos or statements and inappropriate behavior will be subject to disciplinary action by the coach, athletic director, building administrator and/or district administrator if they gain knowledge of such actions.

A level 1 or 2 INFRACTION: Athletes should not post negative or slanderous comments about peers, teammates, opponents, the school district, or their teachers/coaches that cause a disruption to a teammate, the team, or the athletic program.

A level 3 or 4 INFRACTION: Members of the athletic program should not be associated with posts involving bullying, tobacco/vaping, drugs, alcohol, or sexual content.

In addition, all social media infractions that cause a disruption to the educational setting shall fall under student handbook policy.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO / VAPING

It is the overwhelming opinion of health educators and coaches that athletes perform best when they follow intelligent training rules which include restrictions on the use of tobacco/vaping, alcohol, and drugs. Medical research clearly substantiates the fact that the use of tobacco/vaping, alcohol and any type of mood modifying substances produces harmful effects.

The coaches of the Watson Chapel School District, concerned with the health habits of student athletes, are convinced that athletes and the use of these substances are not compatible. It is also a fact that when students have a strong interest to participate in athletics, their desire to use these substances is greatly reduced.

There will be NO tolerance for the use of tobacco/vaping, alcohol, or other drugs. Violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action as outlined in the WCSD student handbook. Coaches may take additional disciplinary action that could result in dismissal from the team.

DRESS POLICY

The way an athlete acts and looks is of great importance, thus proper dress, appearance, grooming and personal cleanliness are expected. Athletes should be leaders and role models for fellow students. Proper dress and appearance will be established by the coach and is an ongoing process. Game day dress code will be neat in appearance on game days whether at school or traveling with the team.

ATTENDING SCHOOL AND PRACTICE

Practice- To maintain status as a team member, students are required to regularly attend and participate in practice sessions. Failure to attend practices may result in temporary benching or being dropped from the team.

Absences- Athletes should not participate in athletics on a day they have been absent from school without prior approval from the head coach and athletic director/building principal.

Compliance- Specific programs within the Watson Chapel Athletic Program will set rules, regulations, and expectations in addition to items stated in this information guidebook and the Athlete Code of Conduct. Athletes that participate in these sports are expected to comply. By signing the consent forms in this guidebook, you are agreeing to the rules, regulations and expectations set forth by the district. These rules may or may not be in writing but will be clearly communicated.

Violations- The importance of enforcement of all regulations in this book and the Athlete Code of Conduct should be apparent. A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the program. The school, administrators, coaching staff, alumni, and community feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential to maintaining a sound program of athletics. It is our intent to preserve these rules which reasonably pertain to the health and safety of the players. The welfare of players is our main consideration.

In the event an athlete fails to comply with these necessary standards, it will be interpreted by the coaching staff as an indication that the athlete does not have sufficient desire to participate in the interscholastic athletic program; therefore, the athlete will be denied the privilege of participating until such time he or she can prove this desire.

ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

● The philosophy of the Watson Chapel Athletic Program is to provide a broad-based program that will allow students with athletic interest an opportunity to participate in the sports of their choice.

● The head coach in each sport has complete discretion as to who plays, how long they play, and under what circumstances they play or do not play.

● Head coaches have complete discretion as to setting the tryout period (a minimum of 2 days of tryouts is required) and the parameters in which the team selection is made. This includes the number of players selected and the evaluation criteria. Coaches of certain sports may require players to complete the previous off-season period in order to qualify for a tryout opportunity. Coaches shall set closed tryout sessions in which only students who are trying out, coaches, and administrators are permitted entry into the venue. Coaches are not required to grant additional tryout opportunities for missed dates. Coaches may consider extenuating circumstances and allow a tryout make-up opportunity. If a tryout make-up opportunity is granted, the coach will use the same evaluation criteria as other athletes; however, the coach is not required to grant 2 days of evaluation.

● Students will be encouraged by the coaching staff to participate in any sport they desire. Multi-sport athletes may begin attending practice in the upcoming sport season upon the completion of the previous sport final event of the season.

DROPPING AND TRANSFERRING SPORTS

● A student who drops a sport may not rejoin the team until the next tryout period. Exceptions will be granted for reasons deemed worthy of appeal.

● An athlete who quits a sport is not allowed to participate in another sport without the consent of both coaches involved or until the season of the sport he/she quit has ended.

EQUIPMENT

● School equipment issued to a student athlete is the athlete's responsibility. Each athlete is expected to keep it clean and in good condition. Loss of any equipment is the athlete's financial obligation. Remittance will be determined by replacement costs.

MISSING PRACTICE

● Athletes should always communicate with their coach prior to missing any practice or team activity. Practice attendance is an expectation and requirement for continued participation in the program. Emergencies will occur from time to time that prevent notification of absence prior to occurrence but every effort should be made to notify the coaching staff. Some sports require practices or contests that take place during school breaks. If such events should occur, coaches will give advanced prior notice so families have ample time to plan.

TRAVEL

● All athletes must travel to and from athletic contests in transportation provided by the athletic department. If a parent/guardian would like to provide transportation from an athletic contest for his/her athlete, he/she may sign out the athlete with the coach at the event. If an athlete needs to ride home with another family, a STUDENT ATHLETE TRAVEL RELEASE FORM must be signed by the athlete's parent/guardian and witnessed by the head coach, a building administrator, or their designee. Preferably, this form should be completed a minimum of 24 hours in advance of the departure time for travel to the contest. However, in extenuating circumstances, a parent/guardian may contact the head coach to explain the situation and the head coach may sign the form on behalf of the athlete's parent/guardian after receiving verbal authorization.

● Athletes will remain with their squad and under the supervision of their coach when attending away games and events.

● All regular school bus rules will be followed, including those pertaining to food, noise, remaining in seats, and care and respect for equipment

COLLEGE RECRUITMENT POLICY

● The Watson Chapel Athletic Department and our coaches will work with college coaches to provide them the information and material needed for a complete evaluation. Our staff does not make decisions regarding who gets recruited or offered scholarships.

COLLEGE SIGNINGS

● College signings are a proud moment for the Watson Chapel Athletic Department, the Watson Chapel School District, and the community. If your child is committing to playing sports for a college, please contact your child's Head Coach or Athletic Administration.

INJURIES/ILLNESS/NOTIFICATIONS

● In effort to provide safe participation in all athletic activities, it is of the utmost importance that our coaches and athletic training staff be informed of all injuries or illnesses, no matter how minor. Please provide timely notices of any doctor's orders or recommendations pertaining to participation.

CONFLICTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

● School-sponsored events, practices, and activities will have priority over non-school activities.

● During school practices and competitions, only school district coaching staff members shall be on the field/court providing feedback/evaluations on your performance. All parents, spectators, and other "league" coaches will be asked to exit the playing area.

● An individual student who attempts to participate in too many extra-curricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of conflict of obligations.

● Coaches recognize that each student should have the opportunity for a broad based range of experiences in the area of extra-curricular activities; and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner so as to minimize conflicts.

● Students have the responsibility to do everything they can to avoid continuous conflicts. This would include being cautious about participating in too many activities.

● When conflicts do arise, coaches will do their best to work out a solution. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, the student should withdraw from that activity

SPORTSMANSHIP

● Sportsmanship is a conduct exhibited toward opponents, officials, coaches, and fans that shows fairness, courteousness and graceful acceptance of results. It is characterized by a genuine concern for others. Sportsmanship is a cornerstone for the continuation of school based sports. It is our goal that Watson Chapel teams, parents, and fans lead the way by displaying good sportsmanship at all times.

DEALING WITH ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The following procedures should be followed in reporting an issue or concern:

1. Contact the Coach who had direct supervision of the athlete at the time. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not made, then

2. Contact the Head Coach of the sport in which the athlete was participating. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not made, then

3. Contact the Athletic Director of the Watson Chapel Public School District. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not made, then

4. Contact the Building Principal of the school. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not made, then

5. Contact the Superintendent of the Watson Chapel Public School District

STUDENT SPECTATOR POLICY

Students will be required to adhere to all rules and regulations of each facility at all times. Failure to do so will result in removal from the venue. Each incident will be investigated by WCSD Administration and could result in suspension, or permanently ban for all athletic events.

EVENT RULES & REGULATIONS FOR SPECTATORS

The ideals of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and integrity should permeate all interscholastic athletics in our community. In perception and practice, good sportsmanship shall be defined as those qualities of behavior which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Our athletic fields should be the

laboratory to produce good citizens reflecting fair play in every area of life.

The Case for Sportsmanship - Arkansas High School Sports & Activities Association
Sportsmanship is a conduct exhibited toward opponents, officials, coaches, and fans that shows fairness, courteousness and graceful acceptance of results. It is characterized by a genuine concern for others. Sportsmanship is a cornerstone for the continuation of school based sports. It is our goal that Watson Chapel teams, parents, and fans lead the way by displaying good sportsmanship at all times.

The Watson Chapel School District Athletic Program is governed by rules and regulations set forth by the Arkansas Activities Association, as well as policies and procedures set forth by the Watson Chapel School District. The Watson Chapel Athletic Department strives to provide a safe environment in which students, coaches, and game officials can participate in interscholastic sports competition in a positive and supportive manner. Any student, student athlete, employee, parent, or spectator may be asked to leave a Watson Chapel Athletic Program event if the event administrator or security personnel have a reason to believe the person's behavior is causing a substantial disruption to the athletic contest or to those attending the contest.

To ensure that all rules, regulations, procedures, and policies for safe and orderly athletic event administration:

● Outside FOOD or BEVERAGES may NOT be brought into event venues

● No pets are permitted inside event venues. Service animals specifically trained to aid a person with a disability are permitted.

● All spectators must remain in the designated Home/Visitor areas. Non-participants will not be allowed on the playing surface/area/court/field.

● Noisemakers of any kind are prohibited.

● Face paint that inhibits the ability to identify a person.

● No re-entry into events

● The use of tobacco/vaping products on any district campus is prohibited. This includes all district parking lot areas.

FORMS

I. Watson Chapel Public School District Athletic Department- Athletic Consent Form

II. Student Acknowledgment and Consent to, Watson Chapel Public School District Athlete Code of Conduct AND Parent Acknowledgment and Consent to, Watson Chapel Public School District Athlete Code of Conduct

III. Infraction Form

Watson Chapel Public School District Athletic Department Athletic Consent Form

I hereby give my consent for _____ (student name) to compete in interscholastic sports, participate in related practice sessions and to travel with the team/coach for such functions. I acknowledge that even with proper instruction and supervision, proper use of equipment and strict observance of the rules, injuries and accidents are still a possibility. I understand that the Watson Chapel Public School District or its employees will not be liable if an injury or accident occurs. I also acknowledge and I understand the inherent risks of injuries, impairment, and/or death associated with participation in school athletic activity.

I give my consent for treatment at the best medical facility available in case of injury, accident or illness. I understand that I am required to have Primary Insurance coverage. The Watson Chapel Public School District has purchased secondary Insurance coverage for all participants. This policy provides secondary or supplemental coverage to students actively engaged in the play or practice of activities sponsored by the Arkansas Activities Association. Claims must be made within 30 days of the accident. I understand that the Watson Chapel Public School District will not be responsible for payment of any medical bill that the family's personal policy or the district's athletic insurance does not pay. I also agree to be responsible for the return of any athletic equipment issued to the above named student in quality condition.

I have read the Watson Chapel Athletic Handbook and do hereby agree to comply and follow the guidelines set forth in order to participate in Watson Chapel School District Athletics.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE STATEMENTS AND HAVE ANSWERED THE ABOVE QUESTIONS TRUTHFULLY.

_____

Signature of Parent/Guardian Date:

_____

Signature of Student Athlete Date:

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF, AND CONSENT TO, THE WATSON CHAPEL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

I_____ (student-athlete), on the date of_____ have read the Watson Chapel Public School District Athlete Code of Conduct, including the Social Media AUP statement. I understand that my participation in Watson Chapel Athletics is contingent upon fulfilling the expectations set forth by my coach and this Code of Conduct. I also understand that violations of any of the Level 1-4 Infractions of the Code of Conduct or any violation of the Social Media AUP may result in consequences that could be detrimental to my participation in athletics.

Minimum consequence: Conference with coach
Maximum consequence: Removal from athletic program for 365 days

_____
Student Signature

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF, AND CONSENT TO,THE WATSON CHAPEL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

I_____ (parent/guardian), on the date of_____ have read the Watson Chapel Public School District Athlete Code of Conduct, including the Social Media AUP statement. I understand that my child's participation in Watson Chapel Athletics is contingent upon fulfilling the expectations set forth by his/her coach and this Code of Conduct. I also understand that violations of any of the Level 1-4 Infractions of the Code of Conduct, or any violation of the Social Media AUP may result in consequences that could be detrimental to my child's participation in athletics.

Minimum consequence: Student conference with coach
Maximum consequence: Removal from athletic program for 365 days

_____
Parent/Guardian signature

This form must be signed and returned to the Watson Chapel Public School District Athletic Department

WATSON CHAPEL ATHLETIC INFRACTION FORM

This form must be completed by the staff member responsible for addressing every Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4 Infraction and submitted to the Athletic Director's office as soon as possible.

Date: _____

Printed Name of Staff Member Completing Form:_____

Printed Name of Athlete: _____

Infraction Level (circle one): 2 3 4

Description of behavior/infraction:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Consequence(s) given:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Signature of Coach / Athletic Director _____

Signature of Athlete _____

Method Used to Communicate with Parent/Guardian (in person, email, phone, app):

_____

Date received in Athletic Director's Office: _____