

WILLIAM TENNENT HIGH SCHOOL

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



Dear Panther Athlete,

Thank you for participating in William Tennent High School Athletics! We applaud you for making a commitment to your team, William Tennent High School, the Centennial School District, and to yourself. Sports can teach us valuable life lessons such as how to be a teammate, how to be a leader, how to overcome adversity, and how to prepare for success.

However, in order to obtain success in all of these areas, we must **RESPECT** and fulfill our responsibilities as members of WTHS athletics.

The fundamental responsibilities that accompany your choice to be a student athlete at William Tennent are listed and explained in this Athletic Handbook. The first assignment for every student athlete is to understand and agree to **RESPECT** the policies set forth in this handbook. Student athletes are also encouraged to develop a support team that can/will help them fulfill their responsibilities. Please share this handbook with your family as well as support your teammates in understanding and abiding by these policies.

Regardless of skill level, each student athlete and team can (and will) experience success on the field, in the classroom, and in the community as long as **RESPECT** is given to these fundamentals. As in the words of Jesse Owens,

*"In the end, it's extra effort that separates a winner from second place. But winning takes a lot more than that, too. **It starts with complete command of the fundamentals.** Then it takes desire, determination, discipline, and self-sacrifice. And finally, it takes a great deal of love, fairness and **respect** for your fellow man. Put all these together, and even if you don't win, how can you lose?"*

Again, we commend you on your decision to become part of the athletic tradition at William Tennent High School. We wish you much enjoyment and success in your endeavors. If we can be of any assistance on your path to success, please contact us.

Panther Pride!

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WILLIAM TENNENT HIGH SCHOOL

Athletic Program Offerings: (updated 7/25/2013)

FALL

Cheerleading - Grade 9
Cheerleading - Grades 10-12
Cross Country (B) - Grades 9-12
Cross Country (G) - Grades 9-12
Football (B) - Grade 9
Football (B) - Grades 10-12
Golf (B & G) - Grades 9-12
Field Hockey (G) - Grade 9-12
Soccer (B & G) - Grade 9
Soccer (B) - Grade 10-12
Soccer (G) - Grades 10-12
Tennis (G) - Grades 9-12
Volleyball (G) - Grades 9-12

WINTER

Basketball (B) - Grade 9
Basketball (B) - Grades 10-12
Basketball (G) - Grade 9
Basketball (G) - Grades 10-12
Bowling (B) - Grades 9-12
Bowling (G) - Grades 9-12
Cheerleading - Grade 9
Cheerleading - Grades 10-12
Swimming (B) - Grades 9-12
Swimming (G) - Grades 9-12
Track (B) - Grades 9-12
Track (G) - Grades 9-12
Wrestling (B&G) - Grade 9-12

SPRING

Baseball (B) - Grade 9
Baseball (B) - Grades 10-12
Softball (G) - Grade 9
Softball (G) - Grades 10-12
Tennis (B) - Grades 9-12
Track & Field (B)-Grades 9-12
Track & Field (G)-Grades 9-12
Volleyball (B) - Grades 9-12

JOINING A TEAM

Prior to the start of each season orientation meetings are held for those interested in participating on a sports team. Information about try-outs, physicals, and your coach's expectations are distributed at these meetings. Please listen closely to the announcements for meeting dates and make arrangements to attend. If you miss a preseason orientation meeting and still desire information about a team, you may leave a message in the coach's mailbox in the main office. If you have any additional questions please see the Athletic Director or the Athletic Secretary.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Participation on an athletic team requires:

1. Submit a signed Parent Permission form
2. Submit a complete PIAA CIPPE Physical form
3. Submit Sign-Off sheet of Athletic Handbook
4. Satisfy all Eligibility Requirements

Parent Permission, Physical Forms (PIAA CIPPE), and WTHS Athletic Handbooks are available in the Athletic Office - D101. A physical examination is required to be completed prior to the first sport season you are competing in. The physical examination cannot occur earlier than **June 1st** of the upcoming school year. These completed forms are required at the start of **EACH** season. No athlete may participate in any practice or game until these Parent Permission and Physician Forms have been submitted.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATING IN ATHLETICS

The opportunity to try out for athletic teams is open to all students if they meet applicable Pennsylvania State Interscholastic Association (PIAA) requirements. Eligibility to play on a team is governed by the PIAA eligibility standards and those of William Tennent High School, as follows:

General

A pupil cannot represent his school (per PIAA regulations) in interscholastic athletics if he/she has:

- a. been in attendance more than eight semesters beyond the eighth grade
- b. played four seasons beyond the eighth grade in any one form of interscholastic athletics
- c. completed the work of grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 inclusive

Satisfactory Academic Progress

- a. As per PIAA regulations a pupil must pursue a full-time curriculum defined and approved by your principal.
- b. A student athlete must maintain satisfactory progress in all courses of study. Satisfactory progress is defined as passing all courses during the marking period.
- c. If, in any week of a sport's season a student athlete has a failing grade in two or more courses, he/she will be placed on probation for two weeks. The two-week probation begins at 7:35 a.m. on Monday and ends at 7:35 a.m. on Monday at the end of the two weeks. While on probation the student athlete may continue to practice and play with the team. However, the student athlete must arrange his/her priorities so that course work in the subjects being failed is first. The student athlete should seek academic assistance from his/her teachers in accordance with the school's After School Academic Assistance Program.
- d. If after a two-week probation the student athlete has a passing grade in the courses which he/she was failing and from which he/she was placed on probation and, if the student athlete is achieving a failing grade in no more than one other course, the student will be reinstated to full status with the team.
- e. If, after a student athlete has served at least one two-week probation during a sport's season and he/she has a failing grade in two or more courses at any time during the remainder of the sport's season, the student will immediately be placed on a two-week suspension.
 - (1) During the suspension, the student athlete may not practice with any school team or play in any contest of any sport.

- (2) He/she is also expected to seek academic assistance from his/her teachers in accordance with the school's After School Academic Assistance Program.
- f. If, after a two-week suspension the student athlete has a passing grade in the courses which he/she was failing and for which he/she was placed on suspension and, if the student athlete has a failing grade in no more than one other course, the student will be reinstated to full status with the team.
- g. If, at the end of the two-week suspension the student athlete has a failing grade in two or more courses or, if he/she has a failing grade in two or more courses at any time during the remainder of the sport's season, the student will be removed from the team for the remainder of the sport's season.
- h. If a student athlete is on probation at the end of a sport's season, he/she may not try out for or join another sport until the end of the two-week period until he/she has a passing grade in all of his/her courses. If a student-athlete is declared ineligible at the end of a marking period or semester, he/she is ineligible for a period of **FIFTEEN (15) SCHOOL DAYS**.

Satisfactory Attendance

- a. A student-athlete must maintain a satisfactory attendance record.
- b. If the absences of the student athlete become excessive, as determined by the Athletic Director or School Administrator, probation and/or suspension procedures may be instituted.
- c. In addition, PIAA regulations state that, "A student who has been absent from school during a semester for a total of twenty or more days shall not be eligible to participate in any athletic contest until he/she has been in attendance for a total of forty five (45) school days following his/her twentieth day of absence."
- d. A student-athlete must attend school for at least one-half of a school day (**10:40 AM**), in order to practice or play in any interscholastic athletic contest on that day. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Athletic Director and will be given for emergency reasons only.

Satisfactory Behavior and Citizenship

- a. Student-athletes must maintain a satisfactory record of school behavior and citizenship.
- b. A student-athlete who is suspended from school is suspended automatically from all activities for the duration of the suspension.
- c. If a student's behavior and citizenship record indicate that the student is bringing discredit to himself/herself, his/her team, and/or school, the student may be suspended

from any athletic activity of the school.

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES

Team Selection

Every coach has the responsibility and authority for selecting his/her team. The criteria for selecting the team are developed by the coach. Each student athletic will be granted the minimum of five (5) days from the first day of tryouts for a Respective team prior to being cut. It is also important to remember that there are no guarantees. Players from previous year's JV team, for example, do not automatically make either the JV or Varsity Team the following year. Having been a member of a team during the previous year or even being a senior does not ensure that a student-athlete will make the team. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should expect that every candidate is treated fairly and given consideration. Coaches are sensitive to feeling of disappointment, will handle the task as positively as possible, and will be available to answer student-athletes' questions.

While we understand that being cut is disappointing for many student-athletes and even for their parent(s)/guardian(s), we unfortunately cannot keep everyone. Any athlete cut from a team is welcome to try out again next season or to try another sport. When parents and student-athletes understand and support the coach's decision, this difficult process becomes a less painful experience for all.

The Purpose of a Junior Varsity Team

JV teams exist to provide those student-athletes unable to participate on the Varsity level, an opportunity to develop skills, and gain experience. While the student-athletes' age, size, or skill level may be the limiting factor for not making the varsity team, participation on a JV team may enhance the student-athlete's potential to make the varsity team in the future. A caution, however, must also be given. Being a member of a JV team does not guarantee that a student-athlete will automatically move up the following year to the varsity team. The student-athletes best suited for varsity competition will make the squad each year. Striving to win is important in athletics; however, compiling a great record or winning a championship should not be the primary objective of a JV team. The development of student-athletes should be the ultimate purpose of a JV squad while at the same time acknowledging the value of winning, learning, and enjoying being a member of a team.

Equipment

Student-athletes are responsible for any and all equipment (including uniforms and practice clothing) and will be expected to pay for any items not returned or which are returned showing excessive wear and/or abuse. Issued equipment is not to be used for any activity outside of the practices and competitions of the school sport for which the equipment was issued. Except for the day of a game, athletic equipment/clothing should not be worn at school (never in gym class), at home, or for participation outside of school.

If any equipment is not returned at the conclusion of the season, an obligation will be issued to the student-athlete for the fair cost of a replacement. The student-athlete will not be permitted further athletic or activity participation until the obligation is cleared.

Practice Session and Games

Practice sessions are typically closed to spectators. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher's classroom. Interruptions and interference to a student-athletes concentration and focus in practice cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic setting. A student-athlete must consistently attend practice sessions. They may start and end at different times due to the schedule of the coach or our facilities. Check with the coach for specific times.

Sports Medicine

Injuries are inevitable. WTHS provides a certified athletic trainer to assist coaches and student-athletes in their athletic endeavors. The certified athletic trainer also has direct access to the team physician and/or physical therapy provider if further care is needed. It is the responsibility of all student-athletes to immediately report any injury, independent of nature, to their Respective coach and the athletic trainer. We want to promote open lines of communication to ensure the highest level of athletic health care.

Traveling with the Team

All student-athletes are expected to travel to and from all athletic contests in transportation provided by the school district. As a general rule students will not be permitted to drive themselves to games nor will they be permitted to drive with their parents. Being part of a team involves traveling with the team.

It is understood that on rare occasions circumstances may require an athlete to leave a contest (s) with their parent. **THESE EXCEPTIONS REQUIRE PRIOR APPROVAL FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR.**

Absence from Team Activities

Joining a team is a commitment. Your absence from a meeting, practice, or game affects not only you, but your teammates as well. Should some circumstances (other than absence from school) compel you to miss a team meeting, practice, or game you should notify your coach in advance.

Participation in Multiple Sports

It is the practice of our school to encourage our students to be multi-sport athletes. We offer a variety of athletic opportunities in each of the three sports seasons. Ideally, we would wish for every one of our students to be three-sport athletes.

Participating on more than one squad in a given season is extremely difficult and most often not in the best interests of the student or the teams. The physical demands upon the athlete's body and the time demands of the team's schedule typically would preclude effective participation in more than one sport in a season. There are, however, some occasions when it is possible for a student to

participate in two sports in a season. Such situations require the approval of the Athletic Director.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

These three substance (drugs [unless used under the care of a physician], tobacco and alcohol) have no place in an athlete's life. Any violations of school policies outlined in the Student Handbook may be subject to disciplinary action.

Ninth Grade Participation

With the inclusion of ninth grade students at WTHS, our athletic program began offering a series of athletic squads exclusively for freshmen. If a freshmen student is interested in playing a sport for which we have a ninth grade team, generally speaking, the freshman student is restricted to the ninth grade squad.

There are, however, some circumstances, where the skill level of the student and the nature of the team/sport, which compels a ninth grade student to participate on a JV or Varsity team. These exceptions need to be approved by the Athletic Director. Approval must be granted prior to the first Non-league or league competition. Once a ninth grade student-athlete has competed on a JV or Varsity squad, he/she is committed to that level of competition for the remainder of the season.

Ninth grade students are able to participate fully on any JV or varsity team for those sports where we do not offer a separate ninth grade team. No special approval is required.

Hazing/Harassment

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, positive environment for students and staff that are free from hazing and/or harassment. Hazing or harassment of any type is inconsistent with the educational goals of the district and are **prohibited at all times**. Hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any organizations. Harassment can be defined, but not limited to, unwanted words or actions that hurt or humiliate people. It does not matter how these words or actions are intended. Students who engage in behavior that could be considered hazing and/or harassment will be referred to their House Principal for discipline as per school board policy and possibly excluded from further participation in their Respective sport.

Sportsmanship

William Tennent High School places the highest value on good sportsmanship. As a member of an athletic team you must display the highest virtues of good sportsmanship at all times. This includes, but is not restricted to, the following expectations:

Playing within the letter and spirit of the rules governing your sport.

*RESPECTING and accepting the decisions of your coaches and officials.
Not using profanity.
RESPECTING and cooperating with your teammates.
RESPECTING your opponent.
Playing to the best of your ability.*

In conjunction with our long standing tradition, the Suburban One League has adopted a common position toward athletes or coaches ejected from athletic contests for unsportsmanlike conduct (or similar reasons).....

Such ejections will result in a MINIMUM ONE GAME SUSPENSION for the offending individual.

ATHLETIC AWARDS

In recognition of the commitment and effort required to participate in interscholastic sports, the athletic department offers the following athletic awards:

- 9th Grade Award:** Our Ninth Grade Award is a Certificate of Participation which recognizes your involvement in athletics during this your first year at Tennent (presented in sports where we have a ninth grade team).
- JV Award:** A special JV Certificate presented to you after your first season of Junior Varsity competition.
- 1st Year Varsity Award:** Upon completion of your first year of varsity play, it is the school's honor to present you with your William Tennent Varsity Letter. An athlete will receive one varsity letter in his/her high school career. If you have already received a varsity letter in another sport you will receive a Sport Pin as a first year's varsity award.
- 2nd Year Varsity Award:** The second year varsity award consists of a sport-specific metal pin, which can be affixed to your varsity letter, as well as a handsome multi-color certificate.
- 3rd Year Varsity Award:** Participating for three years on a varsity team is quite an accomplishment, requiring a high degree of skill and commitment. Your achievement is commemorated by an engraved wooden plaque complete with a center medallion for your sport.
- 4th Year Varsity Award:** The Fourth Year Varsity Award is one of the highest honors awarded by the Department. To participate at the varsity level for four years is a rare achievement, one deserving of special recognition. To celebrate your success in athletics the department issues a handsome trophy with a sports figurine for your sport and your name engraved across the bottom.

To satisfy the basic requirements for receiving an athletic award the athlete must:

1. Participate in 50% of the contests, quarters, halves, or innings.
2. Remain active or eligible to complete the entire sport's season, unless excused by the coach or Athletic Director.
3. Return to the coach all supplies and equipment issued to them.
4. Abide by the rules and regulations of the team and department as established by the coach and the athletic director.
5. Receive special endorsement from the head coach.

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

To encourage and assist you with participating in college athletics, the Athletic Department in conjunction with the Guidance Department offers some specialized services:

College Application and Counseling Sessions for Athletes

During your junior year special counseling sessions will be held for athletes to advise you of the processes involved in applying to colleges and securing athletic scholarships. These sessions will cover such questions as the recruiting process, college eligibility, sources of scholarship assistance, selecting the school for you, as well as "marketing" yourself to colleges.

NCAA Recruiting Guidelines/Freshman Eligibility for College Athletics

If you are planning to enroll in college as a freshman, and you wish to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, you must be certified by the N.C.A.A. Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Initial Clearinghouse form may be obtained from the Guidance Office. If this form is not completed, you will not be able to participate in collegiate athletics in your freshman year.

If you have any questions about these items, please see your guidance counselor or the Athletic Director.

INTERSCHOLASTIC STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE INFORMATION

The Centennial School District provides a form of accident insurance for all William Tennent Athletes. This coverage is applicable only when a student-athlete is practicing for or participating in an interscholastic sports activity sponsored by and under the supervision of William Tennent High School. It does not provide coverage for the student at any other time of the day or after the athletic season.

The insurance coverage provided is called "primary excess" in which the District's insurance carrier pays the first \$100 of covered medical expenses and any excess of covered charges after

the student's or parent/guardian's personal medical coverage has been exhausted. Within these conditions, the coverage provides payment of covered medically necessary expenses incurred for treatment of injury caused by a covered accident up to \$1,000,000. The first expense must be incurred within 90 days following the injury. To be payable, other expenses must be incurred within 365 days after the injury.

In summary, the District insurance plan is designated to cover, in most instances, in whole or in part, what would normally be deductible expenses in a personal Plan providing Medical Expense Benefits and additional coverage if the parent/guardian's plan is inadequate. It will cover expenses beyond \$100 only when they are in excess of benefits payable under another Plan providing Medical Expense Benefits. A "Plan Providing Medical Expense Benefits" means any group or individual policy, contract, or other arrangement for benefits or services for medical or dental care or treatment.

If an injury is sustained during an activity and at a time covered, the student and his/her parent/guardian are responsible for:

1. Reporting the injury immediately to the head coach or the coach designated to receive such information.
2. Giving complete details of the injury and how it was sustained.
3. Obtaining from the school nurse an accident claim form for the athletic accident insurance coverage.
4. Completing and forwarding the completed claim form to the insurance carrier in accordance with the directions on the form.

It is the responsibility of the student and his/her parent/guardian to obtain, complete and forward to the insurance carrier a completed claim form.

The school does provide a certified athletic trainer for assistance with athletic injuries. However, the decision to seek medical care and where such care will be obtained is the sole prerogative and responsibility of the student and his/her parent/guardian.

PARENT/ATHLETE/COACH COMMUNICATION GUIDE

We must have a sincere commitment from all athletes, parents, coaches and administrators. To be successful, effective communication must occur. The WTHS Athletic Department and administration believe strongly in being accessible to parents and supportive of the coaching staff. We must continually attempt to improve communication with students and parents.

Parent Expectations:

Head coaches have the responsibility to inform you of:

1. When and where practices are being held.

2. About his/her coaching philosophy.
3. The expectations that he/she has for the team.
4. What is required to be part of the team.
5. If your child is injured in a game or practice.
6. Whenever, any disciplinary problems are impacting your athlete's opportunity to participate on the team.

APPROPRIATE concerns that a parent may discuss with a coach:

1. Any unhealthy mental or physical strain you detect at home.
2. How you can contribute to our child's skill improvement and development.
3. Any dramatic changes you detect in your athlete's behavior.

It is **INAPPROPRIATE** to discuss with a coach:

1. Playing time.
2. Team strategy or play calling
3. Other student-athletes.

Our Expectations:

Coaches need parents to tell them:

1. Any specific health concerns.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Your commitment to the program and how you can make a contribution to the program's success. An example is that you will make sure that your child is at practice on time and that he/she eats properly and gets enough rest. Also, that you will not criticize the coaches or teammates of your child.

If you have a concern, the following communication procedures need to be followed:

1. Make an appointment with the head coach. Do not approach the coach before or after a game or a practice.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director to set up a meeting.
3. Please do not attempt to confront the coach before, during, or after a game or a practice. This can be a busy and emotional time for both parties. This may not promote objective analysis of the situation.

If the meeting with the coach does not result in a resolution to the problem, you should:

1. Call and set up a meeting with the Athletic Director.
2. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.

Sign-Off Sheet

I (we) _____, Parents of _____

Has received, read and understand the terms and conditions outlined in the Centennial School District Athletic Handbook.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

