

WHA Coaching Handbook



Mission:

The WHA Activities Department's mission is to teach the life skills needed to produce strong, independent people and empower them to be the future leaders of tomorrow.

Vision:

The WHA Activities Department aspires to be an exceptional program that provides a meaningful experience for all student-athletes.



ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK FOR WHA COACHES AND ADVISORS

Affiliations

Walker-Hackensack-Akeley High School is a member of the Northland Conference and the Minnesota State High School League.

WHA is represented by the MSHSL 8A administrative region. In football, WHA is a member of the Northwest Football District.

Current MSHSL Competitive Section Assignments

5A - Baseball
5A - Boys Basketball
5A - Girls Basketball
5A - Softball
5A - Volleyball
6A - Football
7A - Golf (boys/girls)
7A - One Act Play
7A - Wrestling
8A - Music
8A - Soccer
8A - Speech
8A - Track and Field

Activities Offered

Fall Activities

Junior High

9-12

Football	Single JH team	JV and varsity teams
Volleyball	7th and 8th teams	C-squad, JV and varsity
Soccer	7th-12th participation (Co-Op with Laporte)	
One Act Play	7th-12th participation	

Winter Activities

Junior High

9-12

Boys Basketball	7th and 8th teams	JV and varsity
Girls Basketball	7th and 8th teams	JV and varsity
Boys Hockey	JV and varsity teams (Co-Op with Park Rapids)	
Girls Hockey	JV and varsity teams (Co-Op with Pequot Lakes)	
Wrestling	7th-12th participation	
One Act Play	7th-12th participation	
Speech	7th-12th participation	

Spring Activities**Junior High****9-12**

Baseball	single JH team	JV and varsity teams
Softball	single JH team	JV and varsity teams
Boys Track	single JH team	varsity only team
Girls Track	single JH team	varsity only team

Category II Activities**Junior High****9-12**

(Organizations, Clubs and Fine Arts)

Band	JH/HS separate/combined depending on event
Choir	JH/HS separate/combined depending on event
Visual Arts	JH/HS separate/combined depending on event

BELIEF STATEMENT

WHA encourages multi-sport, multi-activity participation and provides challenge for students in a competitive learning environment that includes rigor and commitment, requires fair play and good sportsmanship, and enhances pride in self, team, and school.

We believe interscholastic activities are an integral part of the school's total educational program. The Wolves Activities Department is an extension of our basic educational philosophy of preparing students to become productive, contributing citizens of their community.

We believe a sound activities program teaches the participants the values of cooperation as well as the spirit of competition. The individual learns how to work with others for the achievement of group goals.

We believe a sound activities program stimulates its participants to win and excel, but we are always mindful of the value of our program to the development of health, happiness, physical skills, maturity, sportsmanship, decision-making skills, self-confidence, and self-discipline of each participant. We believe we must be intentional about teaching these concepts to our student athletes.

We believe a sound activities program contributes to, and enhances, the environment and climate of our school and the communities we serve.

WHA WOLVES ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY:

1. Participation by students in activities and on athletic teams of ISD #113 is a privilege, not a right. Similarly, coaching at WHA is a privilege, too. Please read over this booklet, digest it, and make it a part of your successful habits of life.
2. Such teams constitute an integral part of the total secondary program and are primarily designed to serve the needs of only the students of that school.

OBJECTIVES OF PARTICIPATION AND PROGRAMS:

To win at the varsity level, within the guidelines of the overall philosophy.

To prepare our JV for varsity competition

To develop skills, knowledge of the rules of the game, positive habits, and good sportsmanship in introducing junior high teams to structured team athletics.

To provide elementary teams with all of the basic fundamentals with great emphasis on building interest, excitement, and appreciation for competition.

I. RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS

Coaches, directors, and advisors will collectively keep the welfare of the student in mind at all times. As a result of numerous litigations over the years, several obligations have been identified as absolute requirements for coaches and athletic program administrators. The fourteen duties are as follows:

1. **DUTY TO PLAN:** This duty transcends all others. Be intentional about promoting the welfare of each student-athlete. Write it, teach it, communicate it often!
2. **DUTY TO SUPERVISE:** Athletes must be supervised at all times!
3. **DUTY TO ASSESS ATHLETES' READINESS FOR PRACTICE AND COMPETITION:** Proper health, physical condition, and emotional readiness must be taken into consideration for each student-athlete. (i.e. MSHSL physical requirements, physician clearance to return to play, chronic medical issues, etc.)
4. **DUTY TO MAINTAIN SAFE PLAYING CONDITIONS:** Fields, courts, playing surfaces, equipment, etc. may pose injury risks. You are the expert in your field and can identify foreseeable causes of injury specific to sport. Let the Activities Director know immediately if there are any concerns.
5. **DUTY TO PROVIDE PROPER EQUIPMENT:** Equipment must be age appropriate and properly fitted.
6. **DUTY TO INSTRUCT PROPERLY:** Teach a logical sequence of simple to complex, and include safe techniques and warnings about unsafe techniques.
7. **DUTY TO MATCH ATHLETES:** Athletes should be matched with consideration for maturity, skill, age, size and speed. To the degree possible, mismatches should be avoided.
8. **DUTY TO CONDITION PROPERLY:** Practices must account for a progression of cardiovascular and musculoskeletal conditioning regimens that prepare athletes for more challenging practices and competitions. Consideration must be given to individual student readiness.
9. **DUTY TO WARN:** Coaches are required to warn parents and athletes of any risks specific to the sport. In addition, parents and athletes should be informed of unsafe practices and techniques. Warning should come in many forms: verbal, writing, practice plans, etc.
10. **DUTY TO DISCLOSE AND INFORM INSURANCE COVERAGE:** Students must carry insurance to cover any injury related to sport participation. Families provide this information to WHA Activities Office during registration. Low-cost, term insurance can be obtained by contacting the Activities Department.

11. **DUTY TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY CARE:** Red Cross First Aid is the basic standard of care. Use an athletic trainer if available!
12. **DUTY TO DEVELOP AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN:** Coaches must develop an Emergency Response Plan with their team. The MSHSL provides the Anyone Can Save A Life platform/template for us to use. This is due to the Activities Director at the end of the first week of practice.
13. **DUTY TO PROVIDE PROPER TRANSPORTATION:** School transportation will be used for all out of town transportation. Students, in extenuating circumstances, may travel with THEIR parents upon written advance notice.
14. **DUTY TO SELECT, TRAIN AND SUPERVISE COACHES:** Athletics administrators and head coaches will be expected to ensure coaches are capable of providing safe conditions as outlined above.

II. COACHES/ADVISORS/DIRECTORS RESPONSIBILITIES

PRE-SEASON

- Ensure that all assistants, jr. high coaches, and others involved in the program are advised of starting dates and times for the season. Be specific in advising assistants and other advisors/coaches in the program of their responsibilities.
- Turn into the Activities Office starting date, time and location of your activity so it may be publicized.
- Team or Activity Meeting: Preseason team meetings are required ***including a mandatory parent meeting.*** (Philosophies, eligibility, lettering criteria, playing time decisions, etc. must be addressed.)
- Meet with the Activities Director to discuss issues regarding your program. Concerns can include scheduling, equipment, participants, coaches, eligibility issues, and any other items pertaining to the program.
- **Continuing Education Requirements:** Varsity head and all assistant coaches are required by the MSHSL to complete online rules interpretation meetings prior to each season. In addition, online CER modules must be completed by new coaches and every three years thereafter. You can access these modules through your Coaches Dashboard at www.mshsl.org.
- During the year coaches, directors, and advisors are required to attend any meetings requested by the Activities Director.
- Review MSHSL Rules and Regulations (be familiar with these rules before you explain them to your participants). Understand all School District 113 policies, rules, and regulations regarding attendance and academic progress that pertain to student-athletes.
- Fill out Transportation Request Forms, including times, dates, and vehicle requests. Submit to the Activities Director by deadline before the season begins. (The time of departure shall be arranged to miss a minimum of class time with dismissal time to be no more than 15 minutes prior to departure.)
- For coaches who are also teachers, inform the building principal prior to the start of the season of any dates that have an early departure for an event to help ensure all classrooms are covered with a sub.

IN-SEASON

- **Team or Activity Roster:** All rosters must be certified and submitted to the MSHSL through the activities office. Complete and accurate rosters should be reviewed with the Activities Assistant and given to the attendance personnel at the respective buildings. These rosters will be used to check on participants attendance and eligibility, game programs, travel rosters for early dismissals, and for Section/State roster certification. This must be completed prior to the first competition of the season and updated throughout the season as personnel changes occur. Report students who quit to the activities office.
- **Junior High Sports Participation:** In the event that we have low numbers at the junior high level, we may invite 6th graders to participate in some sports so that we are able to field a junior high team. This would not happen when we have enough 7th-8th graders to complete a team. We want to ensure that the sixth graders do not take playing time away from 7th-8th graders. Coaches need approval from the Activities Director each season to invite sixth graders up to the junior high level teams. In such situations, invitations to participate must be extended to all sixth grade students.
- **Equipment Care:** Head Coaches/Advisors are responsible for the care, control, inventory, and storage of all equipment and supplies within their program.
- **Special Needs:** During the season, emergencies or unexpected needs may arise in various activities. This may involve supplies, equipment or travel and may require money not in the budget. On these occasions, do not order or approve any order of supplies and equipment. This must be done through the Activities Director after a discussion of the matter.
- **Assessing/Evaluating Student-Participants:** Coaches, directors, and advisors should be fair in their evaluation of student-participants so the most capable participants perform at the appropriate level of competition. Varsity participants will be expected to perform at a higher level of excellence than JV, and other levels of competition. Playing time for high school athletes will be based on a number of factors such as the ability of the individual, blending of his/her skills into the team play, sportsmanship, competitiveness, performance, and attitude in practice and games, and the quality of competition. Junior high participants should expect relatively similar playing time, as the primary focus at this level is in development. Each participant can play a vital role in the success of the program. The role may be providing starters with tough competition in practice, moral support, and being prepared to play when called upon. *We must be intentional about communicating the important role every team member offers our program!*
- **Student Conduct:** Coaches, Advisors, and Directors should impress upon the student-athlete the importance of good conduct not only at practice, but at all contests home and away, and also during the school day. Please take an interest in their behavior throughout the year. You have a great deal of influence on these young people. Ensure that your participants are properly supervised during away events. DO NOT allow them to be running through the halls, repeating trips to locker rooms, lobbies, or leaving the school premises.
- **Discipline:** Maintaining discipline should be a major concern for all programs. Rules and regulations should be realistic and fair. Enforcement of these rules and regulations should be consistent.
- **Transportation:** ISD 113 policy provides transportation for all of its student athletes to and from all contests. All activity members will be transported in this manner. Under no circumstances should a coach permit a student participant to go to or come home from a contest with other students or

driving themselves. If alternate transportation is requested by the parents with prior approval by the Activities Director, the student participant may be released to the parent with visual and written contact with the coach on site. Upon returning from an out-of-town contest, coaches, advisors, and directors will be expected to inspect the buses/cars/vans for equipment and debris. Ask students to help clean vehicles.

- Only coaches, advisors, and district employees are permitted to drive school district vehicles.

If a coach needs to drive a district vehicle to transport athletes, they must get Type III vehicle training from the Transportation Department.

- **Injuries:** Coaches should familiarize themselves with first aid procedures and CPR. Coaches should plan for emergencies and have established procedures with which they, their staff, and team members are familiar. Any injury of a serious nature, or one that requires service by a physician, should be written up on an Accident Form and filed with the Activities Director and School Nurse.

- **Practice Schedules:** Coaches must be organized and efficient in using practice time. Our facilities are used by many activities and by different groups from the community. Space for practice is at a premium. Be sure your practices are well designed to follow time guidelines. We cannot expect to use more than our allotted time because of our failure to plan. Create a season practice schedule and make copies available to the students and their parents.

- **Wednesday Evenings:** Wednesday evenings are regarded as church activity nights. Coaches should be sure that student-athletes are released from practice early enough to allow them to get to their respective activities at church.

- **Severe Weather:** In regard to outside activities in the spring and fall, any time there is threatening weather (tornado, lightning, etc.), coaches should instruct their squads to move inside the building and remain there until the danger has passed. In the winter season, anytime school is dismissed because of the weather, ISD 113 activities will also be canceled. Exceptions may be made for teams in postseason competition with approval from the Superintendent and Activities Director.

- **Regular Season/PostSeason Tournaments:** Coaches should be aware of what their responsibilities are in regards to tournaments. Squad rosters, team pictures, team records and officials' ratings must be completed on time. Please contact the Activities Director if you are not sure of your obligations.

- Advise participants of event times, site location, and directions to away event sites and remind participants to inform their parents.

- **Overnight Trips:** All overnight trips must be preapproved by the School Board and Superintendent. Head coaches must submit an itinerary, expense request, and plan for supervision to the Activities Director at least one month in advance of the trip for regular season events or as soon as possible after section championships for teams reaching the state tournament/contest.

- For overnight trips during the regular season, the district will cover normal bus transportation expenses. Additional costs including lodging, meals, coach bus upgrades, etc. will be the responsibility of the individual program's fundraising and/or booster club budgets.

- When WHA teams qualify for the MSHSL state tournament, the district will cover school bus transportation, lodging, and meal per diem expenses. All other expenses will be paid for by the individual program and/or its booster club.

- Head coaches must plan for adequate supervision of students at all times. At no time should a student ever charge expenses to their hotel room.

POST-SEASON

- **Final Report:** Each head coach should prepare a final report for the Activities Office. This report should contain the following: a complete roster, list of letterwinners, captains, MVP winners, Conference honors and other special awards.
- **Collecting Equipment and Inventory Forms:** When your season has been completed, coaches are to collect all school-issued equipment from athletes. Completed inventory sheets and budget request forms should also be given to the Activities Director at the end of the season to prepare for future seasons.
- **Season Wrap Up:** The Activities Director will schedule a time to meet with the head coach within two weeks of the season's conclusion to evaluate and review the season and assistant coaches, discuss recommendations for the future, evaluate possible professional growth areas, evaluate potential staff or equipment needs, and communicate your intent to continue with the assignment.

OFF-SEASON

The district is highly supportive of WHA staff providing our students opportunities to grow and improve their skills during the offseason, including the summer break period. In an effort to help facilitate these efforts, the district will allow use of district vehicles for transportation to summer tournaments and similar events at booster club expense. Coaches will need to provide the district with the following in advance in order to reserve a school vehicle:

- Copy of valid driver's license with clean driving record
- Proof of current insurance
- Type III certification through the transportation department
- Transportation request form
- Signed transportation waiver form for all student participants
- Coaches will confirm vehicle pick up time and location with the transportation department.

III. SUPERVISION

- Coaches are directly responsible for the supervision of students in their program at away events. Coaches should develop a system of procedures specific to their activity for away events to ensure student accountability and safety. Coaches are also responsible for ensuring that facilities are left clean prior to departure.
- Coaches are responsible for student supervision before and after scheduled practices, offseason camps, workouts and events. Coaches may not leave students unattended after practices, camps, workouts and events and make sure that each student has a confirmed ride home with parents or legal guardians via written sign out sheet before leaving school grounds. Coaches are also responsible for ensuring that facilities are left clean prior to departing the building.

IV. PERSONNEL PROCEDURES

- Positions will be posted through the ISD 113 District Office.
- Salaries determined by teacher negotiations between EMWHA and ISD 113 and the approved Collective Bargaining Agreement.

- Coaches and advisors being paid by ISD 113 must be approved by the Activities Director and have a complete background check on file.
- **Volunteer Coaches/Advisors:** must be under the supervision of a certified coach, and approved by the Activities Director. **These coaches must have current background checks on file with the District.** Extreme care should be used in determining what they are required to do. If they are negligent, we are negligent. Our insurance policy will not cover anyone who is not approved.
- **Coaches Evaluation:** The sole purpose of the coaches evaluation system is to improve the quality of our activity programs by recognizing and encouraging the use of successful coaching practices and techniques. The evaluation will be based upon observations made at practices and contests during the season, compliance with ISD 113 policies, and personal relationships with student-athletes, colleagues, and parents. The original evaluation will be kept on file in the Activities Office and copies will be distributed to each head coach upon completing a post-season meeting.
- **Hiring**
 - All open coaching positions will be posted on the district website. A hiring committee will select the best candidate based on the interview process and recommend the hiring of that candidate to the school board for approval.
 - Head coaches have the right to appoint coaches already involved within their program to open positions, foregoing the interview process (i.e. Junior high basketball coach to open JV basketball coaching position).
- **Contracts**
 - Coaches/advisors will be given a contract prior to the start of each season which will include specific assignment and total stipend amount. The contract must be signed and returned to the Activities Director prior to the start of practice.
 - Coaches/advisors will have two options to receive their payments: spread over the payroll periods throughout the duration of the activity's season or one lump sum payment at the conclusion of the season and completion of duties.
 - Coaches/advisors' contracts are reviewed on an annual basis with no guaranteed continuing contract rights.
- **Termination**
 - Coaches found to be engaged in unethical behavior, illegal activity, or gross misconduct of school and MSHSL bylaws will be subject to termination of their coaching position. If termination is deemed to be the best course of action by school officials, coaches may be notified during a formal meeting with school officials or by written notice.
 - Coaches may also be subject to termination based on recommendation by the activities director. Any such recommendation would be based on evaluations performed by the activities director during the coach's tenure and directly related to their ability and responsibilities as a coach. Recommendations for termination by the activities director are subject to review and approval by the school board.
- **Intent To Return/Resignations**
 - Coaches that intend to return to their current position the next year should declare their intentions at the conclusion of their respective season. Assistant coaches to head coach, head coaches to the activities director.

○Coaches wishing to resign from their current positions should do so in a written statement to the activities director. If possible letters of resignation should be submitted to the activities director to allow ample time to hire a replacement before the start of a new season.

V. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

● Coaches Leave for Clinics, State Tournament, Etc.

○Head Coaches may use professional leave time for one statewide event (coaches clinics or state tournament) each year. The district will cover expenses for registration or admission fees, lodging and meal expenses, and transportation for these occasions and must be approved by the Activities Director and Superintendent. Additional charges to a hotel room and miscellaneous expenses are the individual coach's responsibility. Head coaches wishing to attend additional conferences or tournaments may do so using personal leave time and paying expenses on their own.

○Assistant Coaches may also use professional leave time for one clinic, conference, or tournament as described above provided that the District is able to find sufficient substitutes to cover time out of the classroom. In the event that there are not enough substitutes, assistant coaches may still attend the event but will have to do so outside of their regular classroom hours. Additional events will fall under personal leave and expenses covered by the coach as listed above.

● **Coaches Association:** Coaches are encouraged to join the state associations, as well as individual sport associations, as well as being active members. This provides opportunities for your students to earn postseason awards and gives coaches additional insurance coverage.

VI. OFFICIALS

- Activities Director or designee will hire all officials for all athletic events.
- Coaches may give the Activities Director recommendations for officials.
- Coaches' relationships and attitudes towards officials are critical. We encourage all coaches to maintain the highest professionalism with our athletic officials and consider how their behavior and conduct towards game officials will affect the student-athletes in their charge and how it will affect their respective activity.
- Any concerns regarding conduct of officials should be brought to the attention of the Activities Director.
- Fine Arts Directors are responsible for hiring and evaluating officials in their activities.

VII. FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

- A budget will be established that is fair to all programs. Long range rotation of large purchases (uniforms, etc.) will be planned so that major requests may be accomplished over several years.
- All purchasing of athletic equipment and supplies will be done with Athletic Director approval after evaluation of requests and price quotes across all programs.
- All Fundraisers for the benefit of a Wolves' sport or activity must have prior approval from the Activities Director. The Activities Director may seek approval from the appropriate building principal and/or district administrator. All cash or checks received from the fundraiser must be deposited in the appropriate activity account before any purchases or expenses are paid.

- Donations to the activity from various clubs, organizations, and private sources must be reported to the Activities Director.
- ALL FORMS AND REQUESTS must be given to the Activities Director in a timely fashion. Please complete all necessary forms and return any receipts. Purchase Order forms must be used for all equipment and supplies prior to placement of the order by the Activities Director. Expense Requests forms are only to be used for reimbursement purposes and must be approved by the Activities Director.

VII. GENERAL POLICIES

- **Building/Facility Keys:** Key Requests are to be made to the Activities Director. Coaches/Advisors are to be extremely conscientious about building keys. They should not be given to student participants. Keys are to be turned in at the request of the Activities Office at the conclusion of your sport's season.
- **School Closures:** In the event that school is closed due to weather or other extenuating circumstances, all district facilities are also closed for use per district policy and liability issues. This includes all indoor areas including but not limited to classrooms, gyms, weight rooms, and so forth. All extracurricular practices, events, and classes are canceled. (Exceptions may be made for activities that are currently involved in section or state competition dependent upon safety conditions and approval by the Superintendent.) Staff are also not permitted to have students, family members, or community members in the building to use facilities during these situations. Custodians have been advised to ask people to leave the building under these circumstances.
- **Supervision and Security:** Lock all doors when leaving the area. If you return after custodians are off duty (11:00 p.m.), check all doors (interior and exterior) in your area to ensure they have been secured.
 - Before leaving the locker room, be sure the doors are locked.
 - Discourage your participants from bringing large amounts of money, expensive jewelry, or other valuables to school and/or away events.
 - Ensure that all participants in your program have a ride home following your event. Arrange for you or one of your assistants to stay until all students in your program have left the building.
- **Locker Rooms:** All coaches are expected to help supervise locker rooms.
 - Locker rooms are expected to be locked at all times unless under the supervision of a coach.
 - At least one coach from a respective activity must be present to supervise their student-athletes in locker rooms or lobby areas where student-athletes are gathered or are waiting for rides, etc.
 - Under no circumstances should student-athletes be left unsupervised in locker rooms or lobby waiting areas. This includes times when arriving from out of town contests.
 - A rotation may be agreed upon by your coaching staff during a particular season.
 - ***Locker room floors are expected to be free of debris and personal belongings, and all lockers are to be closed and securely locked at all times.***
- **Weight Room:** The use of our weight room should be incorporated into all programs; however, these must be adequately supervised at all times. Student-athletes are not allowed to use our facility without an approved adult supervisor present. All weights and equipment are expected to be neatly organized in their correct locations at the conclusion of each workout session.
- **Conference Nights:** Coaches who are also teachers are expected to attend conferences during the hours set by the building principal. On practice days, coaches must either arrange for a non-teaching coach to run the practice or move the practice to an alternate time outside of the duty day. For conflicts with

games, meets, etc., coaches must reschedule their conferences to another time and have those changes approved by the building principal and communicated to families prior to the beginning of the season.

●**Custodial Staff:** The need for cooperation between the custodial and the coaching staff is obvious. Coaches should follow established procedures in facility use and maintenance schedules. Give custodians ample time when requesting work from them. Inform them of any special needs, such as Saturday practices, use of building during vacation times, after hours departure or return, ahead of time. This can be done through the Activities Director. Most importantly, ensure that your students have cleaned up all areas that they use whether here at WHA or on the road at other facilities.

●**News Media:** Promoting your sport should be a priority for all coaches/advisors. Take advantage of every opportunity whether it is through the newspaper, radio, or television. Coaches are encouraged to cooperate with the news media personnel, even though on some occasions this can be considered difficult. Make an effort to always be positive in your conversations with media people when you are talking about student athletes, opponents, officials, or your program in general. This helps to create a better atmosphere for everyone involved. The reporting of news items and game results to newspapers, radio, and TV stations rests with the head coach and his/her staff.

●**Support of Entire Co-Curricular Program:** All coaches/advisors are urged to support all student-athletes in their respective activities. We can do this by attending athletic contests in areas other than our own, and also by attending non-athletic events. *Encourage students to involve themselves in more than one activity.*

As an athletic department, we can play an important role in the decisions our kids make in regards to which sports they participate in here at WHA. By working together to share our student-athletes, we can create an environment where our kids can thrive in several different activities throughout the year. Please communicate with each other when there may be offseason opportunities for your shared players that conflict with the inseason sport. We all should allow our kids to focus on their inseason sport without pressure to participate in extra offseason training or competition for a different out-of-season sport. MSHSL bylaws also prohibit undue influence to participate in any activity out of season. Our kids are still developing physically, emotionally, and mentally at this age, so work together to support them as students in the classroom first, inseason athletes next, and teenagers in general trying to figure life out throughout the whole process. Without our kids in good health in body, mind, and spirit, they are not going to enjoy their experiences nor will they be positive contributors to our individual programs. Each coach here at WHA is striving to make their own programs as successful as possible which is what we would expect from any coach. Remember we are also part of a bigger team that is WHA and that we need to be supportive of our other programs even if that means doing less with our players at times in the offseason. This is important not only during the school year but also during the summer waiver period in June and July. Let's not stretch our kids too thin and remember to give them the chance to be kids along with all of the other activities they have going on.

●**Relationships with Parents/Fans/Media:** On occasion a coach may become involved in a conversation with parent(s), fans, or media personnel concerning coaching philosophy, playing time for individuals, or some item within the coach's discretion. If this develops into more than just casual conversation and becomes a negative situation, the Activities Director should be informed immediately.

●**Appropriate Language:** Swearing or vulgar language by students and coaches is prohibited. We cannot expect our student-athletes to speak intelligently if we cannot model the same behavior.

●**Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Hazing:** These behaviors are prohibited and, in some cases, illegal. Have knowledge of and follow the ISD 113 policy on sexual harassment and hazing. If you need copies, inquire in the Activities Office. Also, know what your players are up to and stop any inappropriate behavior immediately.

●**State Tournament Participation:** Lodging, meals and other costs will only be paid for days when a team or individuals are actually competing, unless it is necessary to travel the night before due to early participation times and/or other tournament functions and schedules.

Upon qualification for a State Tournament, schedule a meeting with the Activities Director immediately to plan necessary details.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

ELIGIBILITY:

The WHA Activities Department strongly believes in the Student First-Athlete Second concept. It is the student's responsibility to attend class, be attentive and cooperative during instruction, and to provide assignments to teachers **on time** in order for the teachers to grade assignments and make any resulting changes to the student's grade. Exceptions will be made, as appropriate, for students with disabilities who are on IEPs or 504 Plans through communication with administration and teaching staff involved. For students with excused absences, every excused day of absence, students will be allowed one day for formative and summative assessment completion as described in the student handbook.

1. **Probation:** Students failing at the regular grade checks will be given an academic probation sheet by their coach/advisor. They have one week to get their grade above passing. After a one week probation period, the student cannot participate until all grades are passing and the probation sheet is completed with signatures from all current teachers. These slips must be turned in by 8:15 AM in order to participate in activities that same day. Students at risk for failing grades will be checked more often in an effort to maintain or restore eligibility.
2. Any student with a grade of an 'F' or an 'I' in a single course at the end of **1st, 2nd, or 3rd quarter** is ineligible for one event or one week whichever is greater.
3. Any student with a grade of an 'F' or an 'I' in two or more courses at the end of **1st, 2nd, or 3rd quarter** is ineligible for two events or two weeks whichever is greater.
4. In the case of a student who earns a course grade of an 'F' or 'I' at the end of the **4th quarter**, he/she is ineligible as described above. Students may gain immediate eligibility if he/she successfully attends and passes summer school for that specific content area/subject he/she received the 'F' in. The student will be eligible to start the fall season upon confirmation of passing summer school.
5. Out-of-town events: Students who have any failing grades or incompletes are NOT allowed to travel 'on the team bus' to any away events if departure occurs prior to the end of the normal school day.
6. Concert eligibility: Students in band and/or choir will be eligible to perform in concerts even though they may have received an 'F' or an 'I' in any class. They will not be eligible for MSHSL-sponsored contests or pep band if they are extra-curricular in nature.

ACADEMIC CONTESTS

Activity Supervisors for all out-of-school academic contests (i.e. math, science) will determine criteria for participation by students.

ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

In the event that a student wishes to appeal a ruling based on the academic eligibility policy, or any other academic policy, he/she should attempt to do so through discussion with the involved teacher to solve the situation.

If this discussion fails, the following steps should be taken:

1. The student will present their appeal to the High School Principal and then the Principal, the teacher involved, and the student will meet.
2. If the appeal is not resolved in Step 1, the student may appeal to the academic Appeals Committee, composed of teachers, the High School Principal, the High School Counselor, and the President of the Student Council.
3. If the appeal is not resolved in Step 2, the student may appeal to the School Board and the Superintendent of Schools.

If the appeal is not resolved through any of the three steps, the appeal is denied and the student has no further recourse within the school system.

The decision being appealed will remain in effect until the appeal process is completed. This process should move as swiftly as possible.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. A student may not participate in any activity or program if he or she has an unexcused absence from any class during the day. This includes unexcused tardiness coming into school late in the morning. Students are expected to be on time to school the day after games or contests that result in late arrivals home.
2. If a student is absent from school due to medical reasons, he or she must present a physician's statement clearing the student for participation that day. The note must be presented to the Activities Director before the student participates in the activity or program. Appointments that must happen during the school day require advance approval via phone or email contact between the parent/guardian and the Activities Director.
3. Any student who skips a class will automatically be ineligible for his or her next game, event, or practice, whichever comes first.
4. If a student is suspended by administration (or their designee) from any class (in-school or out-of-school), he or she may not participate in any activity or program that day.
5. School-initiated absences (field trips, etc.) will be accepted and participation permitted.
6. If an athlete has missed part or all of the school day, and later it is found the athlete participated:
 - A. (If the student participated in practice) He/She will miss the next practice or event, whichever comes first.
 - B. (If the student participated in an event) He/She will miss the next event.

The following are exceptions to the attendance policy:

1. Prior approval from the Principal, Assistant Principal or Activities Director; or
2. Extenuating/Emergency absences. The Principal, Assistant Principal, or Activities Director will determine whether or not the athlete is excused (NOT the coach).

All student-athletes are expected to be in attendance at the beginning of a school day that follows an away event. Students who are absent or arrive late will have their attendance recorded according to regular school policy.

MSHSL ELIGIBILITY

●**Chemicals:** Students who are found in possession or use of prohibited chemicals (Alcohol, Vape, Tobacco, Other Drugs) are deemed ineligible for participation in contests immediately upon confirmation of the violation as follows:

- 1st violation—ineligible for participation in two contests or 14 calendar days of competition, whichever is greater.
- 2nd violation—ineligible for participation in six contests or 21 calendar days of competition, whichever is greater.
- 3rd violation—ineligible for participation in twelve contests or 28 calendar days of competition, whichever is greater.

○Head coaches in each activity reserve the right to impose stricter sanctions than those listed above with approval from the Activities Director and listed in the team handbook given to participants prior to the beginning of each season.

○Violations are cumulative over the course of a student's career from the first season of participation through the remainder of their eligibility through graduation.

●**Student Conduct:** Students are expected to follow all rules and policies of WHA ISD #113 in addition to all local, state, and federal laws.

○A student may not participate in any activity or program if he or she demonstrates poor behavior that may result in disciplinary action. Head coaches may impose stricter requirements.

○ Any student who skips a class will automatically be ineligible for his or her next game, event, or practice, whichever comes first.

○ If a student is suspended by administration (or their designee) from any class (in-school or out-of-school), he or she may not participate in any activity or program that day.

○School-initiated absences (field trips, etc.) will be accepted and participation permitted.

○If an athlete has missed part or all of the school day, and later it is found the athlete participated:

A. (If the student participated in practice) he/she will miss the next practice or event, whichever comes first.

B. (If the student participated in an event) he/she will miss the next event.

C. The coach may be subject to disciplinary action.

○The following are exceptions to the attendance policy:

A. Prior approval for medical-related appointments from the Activities Director (see above).

B. Extenuating/Emergency absences. The Principal, Assistant Principal, or Activities Director will determine whether or not the athlete is excused (NOT the coach).

○All student-athletes are expected to be in attendance at the beginning of a school day that follows an away event. Students who are absent or arrive late will have their attendance recorded according to regular school policy.

PLAYING TIME

While winning games is important to many people, WHA recognizes an even greater value must be placed on developing skills that students can use forever. As a result, we have tried to help define expectations at WHA student-athletes who participate in extracurricular activities:

●**Junior High:** all athletes who regularly come to practice with a positive attitude while giving his/her best effort and are fully eligible should expect a relatively equal amount of playing time in all contests.

●**9th Grade and JV Levels:** all athletes who regularly come to practice with a positive attitude while giving his/her best effort and are fully eligible should receive some playing time in all contests. While this is still a developmental level, student-athletes should recognize that playing time will not always be equal depending on coaches' discretion based on individual situations.

●**Varsity:** all athletes who regularly come to practice with a positive attitude while giving his/her best effort and are fully eligible should expect that starters will play a significant amount of playing time, but the coaches will also work to develop skills for all other athletes on game days if opportunities present themselves. Coaches only will determine playing time based on the needs for the team's success.

●**Playing Time Related Complaints:** Coaches who receive complaints about playing time should focus discussions with students and families on what areas the individual needs to improve on in practice in order to lead to possible increases in playing time. At no time should a coach guarantee any playing time.

PLAYER RECOGNITION

- Head coaches are responsible for creating criteria for lettering specific to their sport or activity.
- Head coaches will determine at the end of each season which athletes/participants have achieved or not achieved this criteria. Head coaches will notify the Activities Director of letter winners via the end of season activity report.
- Head coaches are strongly encouraged to join the Minnesota High School Coaches Association parent organization as well as the sport specific association. This provides the opportunity for students and coaches to receive postseason recognition at the end of the season.
- Head coaches should actively promote their programs by recognizing team and individual achievements. Including such information in school wide announcements, publications, sharing information with local media outlets and posting to social media.
- Head coaches are required to hold, and are responsible for planning, end of season banquets for their teams. Team banquets may be planned with other teams (i.e. girls and boys basketball). Team banquets should be held within a reasonable amount of time from the end of the teams season. Head coaches are to notify the Activities Director of the date, time, and location of any such events.

FACILITY USE

- While in season, all regular daily practices and scheduled game facility use needs are assumed, and no pre-approval is required. It is the responsibility of the Activities Director to ensure all practice and game facility use needs are met for each level of each activity.
- All facility use needs for events outside of regular daily practices and scheduled games, offseason events (i.e. elementary events, camps or workouts) must be pre-approved by the Activities Director to ensure facilities are available at requested times. These must then be submitted to the Community Education Assistant for reservation purposes and may incur additional expenses.
- Coaches are responsible for the appropriate use and care of school facilities during their time of use by their team/group. Improper use, damages and normal wear and tear should be reported immediately to the Activities Director and/or custodial staff.
- Coaches are not to hold practices or workouts when the school building is closed due to holiday or weather cancellations.
- Coaches are not permitted to use facilities for their private use due to liability concerns.

FUNDRAISING/ACTIVITY ACCOUNT

- Head coaches, in partnership with the Activities Director and Business Manager, are responsible for the finances of their respective activity account.
- Head coaches should be active in the organization of fundraisers as well as seeking other opportunities to raise money for their programs.
- Head coaches are responsible for serving as the liaison between the school district and any booster club.

FIRST AID/INJURIES

- All head coaches must complete an emergency action plan for their programs by the end of the first week of practice each season. Emergency action plan templates are available on the coaches clipboard through the MSHSL or from the Activities Office.
- Coaches are required to provide information to all participants and parents/guardians prior to the beginning of practice regarding concussion symptoms, care, and return to play protocols.
- In the event that a student is injured during practice, training, or a game, coaches are expected to provide initial basic first aid and evaluations of the injury if a certified trainer or medical professional is not present.
- Parents or legal guardians of the injured student must be notified of injury as soon as possible.
- Coaches are required to complete an injury report of all major occurrences of injuries with student-athletes under their supervision. Injury reports should be submitted to the Activities Director within 48 hours of the injury date.
- Students who visit a doctor for illness or injury concern must give the Activities Director a written statement from the attending physician clearing the student for play prior to coaches allowing a return to participation.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

This procedure has been developed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining communication between the school, parent/guardians, and students for the resolution of concerns related to extracurricular activities and programs. This procedure is a means by which concerns/problems with extra-curricular activities at Walker-Hackensack-Akeley School can be resolved.

In order to maintain a positive atmosphere and assure that the proper channels of communication will not be circumvented, a procedure has been outlined for the use of the participants, parents/guardians, advisors/coaches/directors, administration and school board.

In order to maintain compliance with this procedure, anonymous complaints, either in verbal or written form, will not be considered except as mandated by state and federal regulations. All concerns or complaints about extra-curricular activities/programs or the advisors/coaches/directors of those programs should be addressed through Step I, II and III of the Extra-curricular Complaint Resolution Procedure.

STEP I

If a student has a concern about an extra-curricular program, decision, and/or the advisor/coach/director of the program, they shall:

- Schedule a meeting to speak individually with the advisor/coach/director regarding the incident, decision or action that is under question at that time. It is recommended that this meeting occur at least 24 hours from the situation in question. This should not be done immediately before or after a contest or event.
- The advisor/coach/director will keep record of the discussion which will include any resolution/decisions reached in the conference.

STEP II

If a student and/or parent/guardian has a concern about an extra-curricular program, decision, and/or the advisor/coach/director of the program, they shall:

- Schedule a meeting to speak personally with the advisor/coach/director with the student present regarding the incident, decision, or action that is under question at that time. This meeting shall be

scheduled at a mutually convenient time within two (2) school days from the date that the complaint has been officially submitted to the advisor/coach/director. This should not be done immediately before or after a contest, event, and/or practice.

- Those participating in the conference are to address themselves to the problems/concerns related to themselves only. In order to be in compliance with the “Privacy in Information Act”, issues related to other participants are not to be discussed.
- The advisor/coach/director will complete a written summary of the conference which will include any resolution/decisions reached in the conference. The advisor/coach/director will give or mail a copy of the summary to the participants in the conference and the Athletic Director within five (5) school days.

STEP III

If any party believes there is a further need for discussion of issues mentioned in Step I, they may request a continuation of the process in Step II.

- The participant, parent/guardian or advisor/coach/director should, within three (3) school days after receipt of the written summary of the meeting in Step I, submit a written request to initiate Step II. The form for this step will be obtained from the Activities Office and shall be returned to the Athletic Director within two (2) school days in order to resolve the issue as soon as possible.
- After submitting the written form to the Athletic Director, a conference will be arranged within two (2) school days between the student participant and/or the parent/guardian to meet with the advisor/coach/director, Athletic Director and a Building Principal with the intent to resolve the issue.
- Those participating in the conference are to address themselves to the problems/concerns related to them only. In order to be in compliance with the “Privacy in Information Act”, issues related to other parties are not to be discussed. Concerns or issues not raised in Step I will not be considered for discussion.
- The Athletic Director will complete a written summary of the conference which will include the concerns stated by those individuals in attendance and any resolution/decisions reached in the conference.
- The Athletic Director will give or mail a copy of the summary to the participants in the conference within five (5) school days and forward a copy of the summary, along with the Extra-Curricular Complaint Resolution Form to the Superintendent of Schools.

STEP IV

If any party believes there is a further need for discussion of issues mentioned in Step II, they may request a continuation of the process in Step III.

- An appointment may be requested within five (5) school days after receipt of the written summary of the meeting in Step II, with the Superintendent of Schools.
- Those participating in the conference are to address themselves to the problems/concerns they stated in Step II and related to themselves only. In order to be in compliance with the “Privacy in Information Act”, issues related to other parties are not to be discussed. Concerns or issues not raised in Step II will not be considered for discussion.
- After securing information from the student participant and/or the parent/guardian, advisor/coach/director, and Athletic Director, the Superintendent will complete a written summary of the conference which will include concerns stated by those individuals in attendance and any resolutions/decisions he/she has reached. The Superintendent will give or mail a copy of his/her final decision to all the parties within five (5) school days. The Superintendent’s decision shall conclude the resolution process.

COACHES CERTIFICATION

- All head coaches must be qualified to coach in the state of Minnesota. This can be in the form of a coaching license or minor listed on their Minnesota teaching certificate or completion of the Minnesota Head Coaches Education Course (MNHCC) requirements on the MSHSL coaches clipboard, including one in-person class.
- All coaches are required to complete the online rules meeting each year on their Coaches Dashboard of the MSHSL website, both the general rules meeting as well as any specific to their activity.

APPENDIX A

WHA High School Guidelines for Preseason Parent Meetings

All Coaches are required to distribute copies of Team Handbook and address the following:

- Team rules
- Criteria for squad placement
- Criteria for earning a letter
- Sportsmanship expectations for athletes and parents
- Academic requirements for eligibility
- Chemical and behavioral requirements for eligibility
- Contract to be signed by every participant and parent/guardian prior to season participation

Other topics which you may want to address:

- Your coaching philosophy
- How practice sessions are conducted, including:
 - Their length
 - When they normally start and end
 - Practice performance will reflect game performance
 - An athlete's expectation for attending practice sessions; including Saturday's and/or holiday periods
- The responsibility for issued uniforms and equipment
- Determinants for an athlete to start and playing time
- Procedures for reporting and attending to injuries
- Use of Athletic Trainer
- How and when to contact you (the coach) with a concern or question (24 hour rule)
- Commonly misunderstood or new rules of your sport
- The risk (injury?) involved in playing your sport

Helpful hints:

- Try to make your presentation as positive as possible
- Don't let one parent take over the program with a "hidden agenda" or "personal vendetta". Invite them to make an appointment to speak with you individually.
- Be prepared. Plan what you want to say and how you want to approach the various topics.
- Allow assistant coaches to speak as well.

APPENDIX C

DAILY MAX MEAL FORM

ISD 113 reimburses a maximum of \$10.00 for breakfast, \$15.00 for lunch, and \$25.00 for dinner for state tournament qualifying coaches. If you are staying overnight and wish to combine these meals for a daily total of \$50.00, you must provide enough information via itemized receipts to the Business Office so we can calculate this. (Under no circumstance will alcohol and/or tobacco purchases be reimbursed.

Pre-Season Coaches' Checklist

1. Parent/Player Meeting

- ☐ Must be scheduled at least seven calendar days prior to the first day of practice
- ☐ Program handbooks (including practice and game schedules for upcoming season) printed and distributed to all families
- ☐ Player/Parent/Coach Contract must be signed and returned prior to 1st practice
- ☐ Attendance, Behavior, and Grades expectations, including MSHSL chemical violation policy, must be discussed at meeting
- ☐ Concussion symptoms, care, and return to play protocol must be presented
- ☐ Expectations for practices, competitions, locker rooms, travel, etc. must be presented
- ☐ Clearly describe playing time expectations for each level in your program
- ☐ Outline proper chain of communication should concerns arise from families
- ☐ Encourage families to register and use Team Reach for communication

2. AD Office

- ☐ Practice schedule (entire season) due one week before the 1st day of practice
- ☐ Signed up for *NotifyMe* via **rSchoolToday**
- ☐ Check game schedules online at **rSchoolToday** (make sure it looks right)
- ☐ Check daily for updated list of registered athletes, their paperwork, and eligibility—do not allow participation by athletes who are not fully cleared!
- ☐ Submit all Transportation Requests as early as possible to allow for Transportation department to find drivers
- ☐ Provide AD office with contact information for all coaches on your staff

3. MSHSL Activity Page—Submit to Activities Assistant Prior to First Contest

- ☐ Roster
- ☐ Game Schedule
- ☐ Coaching staff, managers listed
- ☐ Head coach and AD certify all HS players on website

4. Coaches Dashboard on MSHSL.org

- ☐ Check to see that Concussion Training is up to date
- ☐ Check to see that CER's are up to date
- ☐ Online rules meetings (all coaches at each level)

5. Read & know the WHA handbook rules and policies regarding extra-curricular activities.

6. Absences from coaching duties need to be documented to the AD by email ahead of time if known or next day if sick or emergency. (for all paid coaches)