

GRADES 7-12 INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

Parents/Guardians & Student Athletes:

Welcome to the Westhill Athletic Program. This handbook has been prepared to be used as a reference by our student-athletes and parents/guardians in an effort to explain responsibilities pertaining to rules and regulations. This handbook also serves as a guideline for participation in our interscholastic athletics program.

Beginning in 7th grade, our students are provided an opportunity to try-out and participate in a number of interscholastic opportunities which we consider to be an important part of the overall educational experience. We believe it is a privilege to represent the school community and develop important life skills that can be used in everyday situations. When students choose to participate in athletics at Westhill, they have committed themselves to certain responsibilities and obligations. This handbook will introduce/reinforce some of the specific policies, rules and regulations within our athletic program.

The Westhill Central School District Athletic Program is governed by the regulations of the New York State Education Department and the Westhill Board of Education. We are also members of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association [NYSPHSAA], Section III and compete in the Onondaga High School League [OHSL].

Jennie Smarrelli

Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics



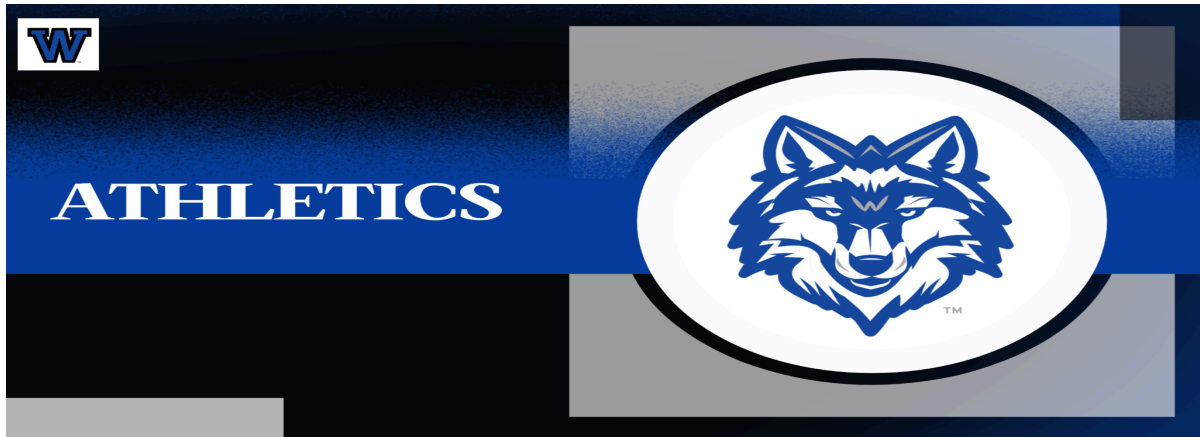
ATHLETICS



INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The athletic program at Westhill is conducted under the following principles as set forth by the New York State Education and New York State Public High School Athletic Association:

1. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
2. To stress values derived from playing the game fairly.
3. To show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
4. To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
5. To encourage leadership, use of initiative, and good judgment by the players of the team.
6. To recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well being of the individual players.
7. To ensure that coaches' conduct reflects integrity and fair play.



PYRAMID AND PHILOSOPHY OF ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT

Membership on a school Athletic team in the Westhill School District is regarded as an honor and a privilege that is open to our student athletes upon entering 7th grade and continue through the senior year of high school.

Representing the school community, the team, playing time and the emphasis on competition are all held in high regard. The degree of importance for each of these concepts shifts as a student athlete progresses from the modified level to the varsity level.

MODIFIED: The emphasis on competition and winning is balanced with the importance of playing time, sportsmanship, and enjoyment of participation. All team members will gain playing time in every contest but it is not guaranteed to be equal.

- Designed for students in 7th and 8th grade.
- Pending numbers, team selection is necessary at times.
- The focus is on fundamentals, learning new skills and rules of the game.
- Exposure to healthy competition; participation, sportsmanship, character
- The focus is not on wins and losses.

JUNIOR VARSITY:

- Participation and competition share equal value.
- Team selection becomes more competitive.
- Designed for those that display the potential of continued development into productive Varsity level performers.
- Overall team preparation and continued skill development are stressed and the values of competition and winning receive a greater emphasis.
- Playing time is dependent on a number of factors outlined by each coach.



VARSITY:

- Team selection is highly competitive, rewarding superior work ethic and skill.
- The emphasis is on competition and winning while upholding the value of sportsmanship.

NYS ATHLETIC PLACEMENT PROCESS

The New York State Athletic Placement Process (APP) is a program that allows exceptionally talented and gifted middle school athletes to try out for high school teams. This process is designed to ensure that these athletes are physically, emotionally, and academically ready for the higher level of competition.

The APP process typically involves the following steps:

1. **Coach Recommendation:** The varsity coach must recommend the middle school athlete for the APP process.
 2. **Parental Consent:** Parents or guardians must sign a consent form.
 3. **Physical Evaluation:** A physician evaluates the athlete's physical maturity using their Tanner score, height, and weight.
 4. **Fitness Test:** The athlete must pass a fitness test that assesses their physical fitness level.
 5. **Tryout:** If the athlete passes the physical evaluation and fitness test, they are eligible to try out for the high school team.
- Student athletes must take responsibility to remain academically eligible and follow the code of student conduct as outlined in the Student Handbook. As representatives of the school, student-athletes should conduct themselves in a sportsmanship like manner before, during and after practice and game situations.
 - The coach has the authority and responsibility for all aspects of his/her team. These include selection of players, use of players in practice and game situations and other aspects of the team and the game.
 - Parents and other fans have the responsibility to act in a supportive and appropriate manner, remembering that fans must demonstrate good sportsmanship.



The middle school student-athletes who compete at the JV or Varsity level are exceptions and must demonstrate their exceptional skill through the NYS Athletic Placement Process as previously mentioned.

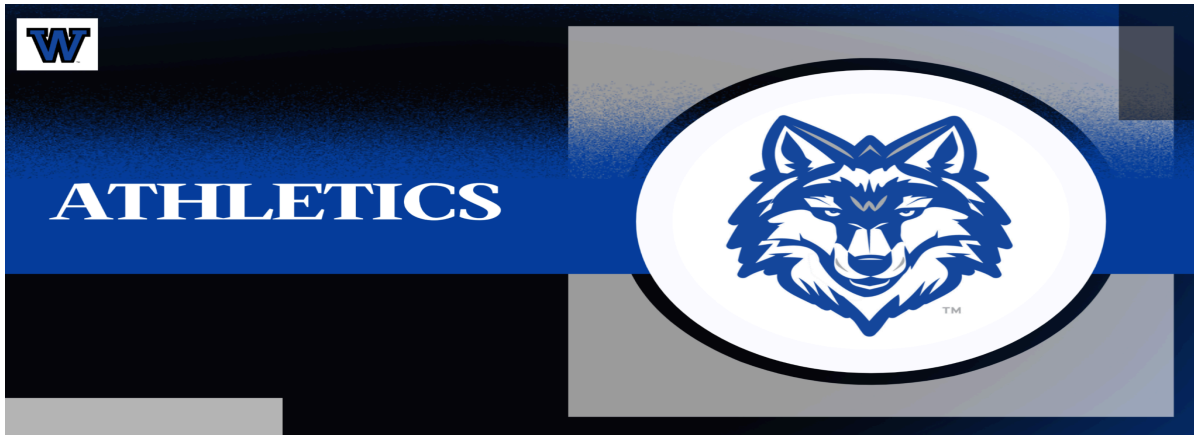
GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- The middle school student-athlete who tests via NYS APP may compete at the JV or Varsity level if their skills are such that they become an immediate contributor to the team. **The recommendation is for a specific program. It does not carry over into other sports seasons. Student athletes must be recommended by a JV or Varsity coach.**
- The expectation for the middle school student-athlete who tests via NYS APP and makes the JV or Varsity roster will have considerable playing time consistent with the skill level and physical abilities that lead to their promotion to the “higher” team.



ELIGIBILITY (as determined by the NYSPHSAA)

1. Registration - An athlete is eligible for competition only when they are a bona fide student enrolled during the first fifteen school days of a semester and registered in a complete schedule of courses as governed by school policy.
2. Duration of Competition - A student is eligible for competition during any eight semesters after his or her entry into the ninth grade and prior to graduation. A student shall be eligible for interschool competition in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 until their nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen years is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports. A student who attains the age of fifteen years while enrolled in a grade below the ninth grade may take part in inter-high school sports, provided he or she meets all other requirements. Younger students may qualify under the New York State Selection Classification program.
3. Physical Examinations - Before a student may participate in the interscholastic athletic program, he/she must have completed the following:
 - A physical examination by the appointed school physician and/or the student's personal physician. Medical examinations may be scheduled at any time during the school year and shall be valid for a period of twelve continuous months.
 - A health update questionnaire completed within 30 days of the start of the sport season. All paperwork pertaining to the student's physical examination must be turned in to the school nurse for verification and approval prior to any athletic participation.



SPORTSMANSHIP

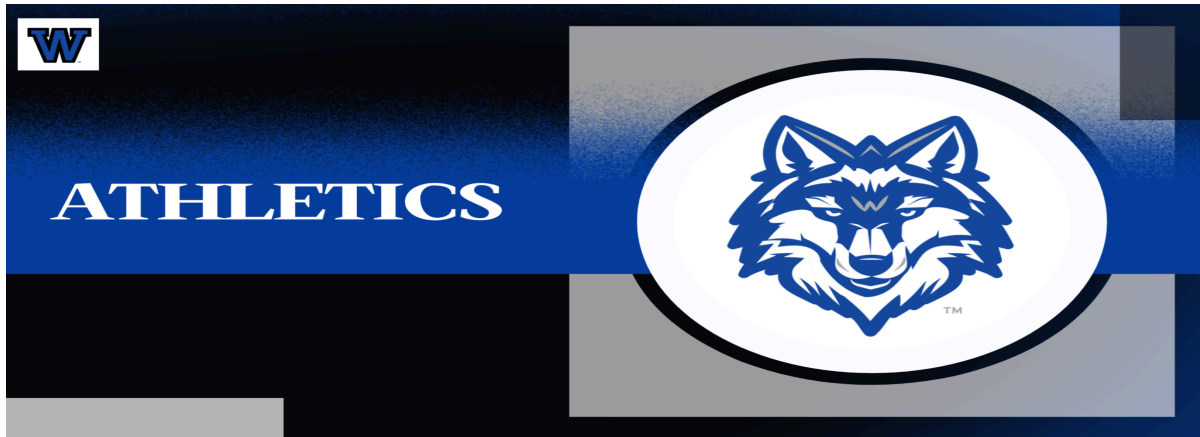
At all levels good sportsmanship is held in the highest regard, for student-athletes, coaches, parents and fans. Good sportsmanship requires a strong commitment to both fair play and respect for all involved. Our expectations for all spectators is to demonstrate good sportsmanship by cheering passionately for your team, but always show respect for the players, coaches, officials and fellow spectators. Our student-athletes should demonstrate both good sportsmanship and a high regard for the importance of teamwork.

OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES

- Improve skills.
- Promote physical fitness and healthy habits.
- Develop and demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Learn that individual and team excellence in performance is a primary goal for all athletes.
- Cultivate meaningful friendships and experiences through competition with other schools and communities.
- Understand that winning is important but not at the expense of our total program or the welfare of other athletes.

OBJECTIVES FOR COACHES

- Realize their responsibility to the total school program. Adhering to the philosophies and objectives as outlined in this handbook.
- Recognize that coaching is teaching in its truest form.
- Be a positive role model for student athletes.
- Understand that winning is important but not at the expense of our total program or the welfare of other athletes.
- Remember the goal is continuous improvement for all members of the team.
- Conduct oneself in the highest professional manner.
- Prioritize the physical well-being of our student-athletes, including injury follow-up, and address individual needs fairly and responsibly.
- Strong athletic programs are built on loyalty to coaches, teachers, school, and community.



SPECTATOR AND FAN CONDUCT AT ATHLETIC CONTESTS

During the school year, parents and community members often attend activities and sporting events. Consistent with district philosophy, policies and code of conduct, all members are an audience of a school sponsored event and are expected to demonstrate appropriate conduct. Accordingly, they must conduct themselves in a manner that encourages a positive and enjoyable experience for all. We ask that everyone is treated with respect [coaches, opposing community spectators, officials, students, staff, police]. Verbal and physical abuse will not be tolerated.

CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION

24-Hour Rule: We acknowledge that sports can evoke strong emotions for athletes, coaches, and parents. It is essential to create an atmosphere that prioritizes emotional well-being and respectful communication. To ensure that concerns are addressed thoughtfully and effectively, please adhere to the “**24-Hour Rule**”.

This means:

- **Waiting Period:** Parents are encouraged to refrain from discussing any concerns or frustrations related to the game or coaching within 24 hours of a competition or practice. This period allows for emotions to settle and for perspectives to be evaluated more clearly.
- **Constructive Communication:** After the 24-hour period, parents may reach out to coaches or relevant personnel to discuss any legitimate concerns. Communication should focus on constructive feedback and solutions.
- **Respectful Dialogue:** All discussions should be conducted in a respectful manner, prioritizing the well-being of the athletes involved. Personal attacks or confrontational behavior will not be tolerated.
- **Supportive Environment:** We encourage parents to support their athletes, coaches, and fellow parents, fostering a culture of positivity and encouragement.



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WESTHILL ATHLETIC TRAINING

Westhill Central School District employs a full time Certified Athletic Trainer. Athletic trainers (ATs) are highly qualified, multi-skilled health care professionals who render service or treatment, under the direction of or in collaboration with a physician, in accordance with their education, training and the state's statutes, rules and regulations. As a part of the health care team, services provided by athletic trainers include primary care, injury and illness prevention, wellness promotion and education, emergent care, examination and clinical diagnosis, therapeutic intervention and rehabilitation of injuries and medical conditions. Athletic training encompasses the prevention, examination, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of emergent, acute or chronic injuries and medical conditions. Athletic training is recognized by the American Medical Association (AMA), Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as an allied health care profession

Contact our athletic trainer:

Tracey Collett, MA, ATC
(315) 426-3100 x3186
tcollett@westhillschools.org



STUDENT EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

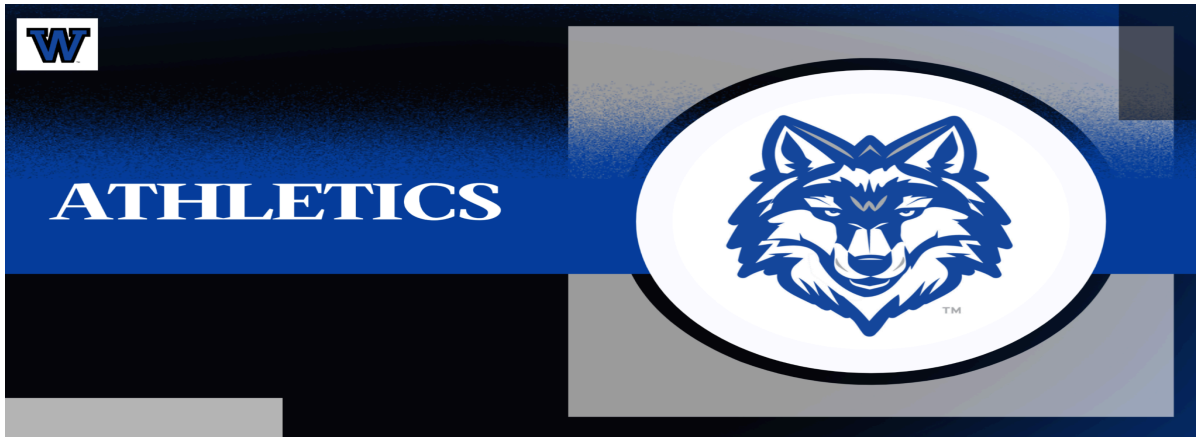
The establishment of this code is an outgrowth and reflection of the school district's concern for the safety, well-being, and conduct of all students including those participating in athletics and other extracurricular activities. The rules and regulations that are contained in the code are developed with the students' best interests.

The creation of such rules and regulations necessitates the need for the responsibility for enforcement. Adherence to the Student Extracurricular Code requires the cooperation and support of the family, the student, and the school district. Together we can work toward mutual goals of healthy sportsmanship, keen competition, and the personal and physical development of our students. Additionally, we can work together in preventing and reducing the risks of possible penalties that occur if the provisions of the code were not followed. Please read the code and discuss its contents with your son/daughter. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact any coach, the athletic director, or a school administrator.

Philosophy and Expectations for students participating in athletics and other extracurricular activities

Interscholastic athletics and other extracurricular activities are an integral part of the educational experience. They serve as a unifying force for the student body, the faculty, and the entire community. Interscholastic athletic activities and extracurricular activities provide realistic opportunities to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of all the students at Westhill.

It is a privilege for a student to represent his or her school through participation in interscholastic teams and extracurricular activities. With this privilege comes responsibilities that include the following expectations: adherence to all rules of the sport/club and to the school's code of conduct; cooperation and sportsmanship among all individuals involved; respect for officials and authority; an obligation to give one's best effort in the pursuit of individual, team and club goals.



Students participating in extracurricular activities represent the school in a special and unique way. Students must maintain a high standard of conduct, both in and out of school, on or off the playing field, as a host or guest, and in all activities in the community.

Because the use of alcohol and other drugs prevents the normal development of a healthy mind and body, the “Student Extracurricular Code of Conduct” has been established for those participating in Westhill athletics and other extracurricular activities. The use, possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs or the unauthorized use of prescription or nonprescription drugs is strictly prohibited on and off school grounds. This Code of Conduct will be instituted over the entire school year. A school year is defined as the start of the fall sport season (including practices in the summer) through the last day of the school year.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY

The faculty and administration of Westhill Central Schools are committed to providing every one of our students with the finest academic opportunities possible. Academic achievement is, indeed, our primary goal as an institution, and should be the primary goal of all students.

It cannot be forgotten, however, that participation in interscholastic and extracurricular activities is also an integral part of becoming a well-rounded young adult. To that end, academics and extracurricular activities work hand-in-hand as each of our students strives for excellence in their own personal way.

The following policy is set forth in order to serve as the determinant as to whether or not each student has demonstrated sufficient academic achievement to be considered eligible to participate in interscholastic or extracurricular activities

- A student who is failing two or more courses at the end of the first, second, or third ten-week marking period (as indicated by a grade of less than 70%) will be ineligible to participate in interscholastic or co-curricular activities for the next five weeks. In such a case, a student and parent may request entry into the “two week protocol” to continue participation in interscholastic and co-curricular activities and attempt to raise grades to passing. If, at the end of the protocol the student is still failing two or



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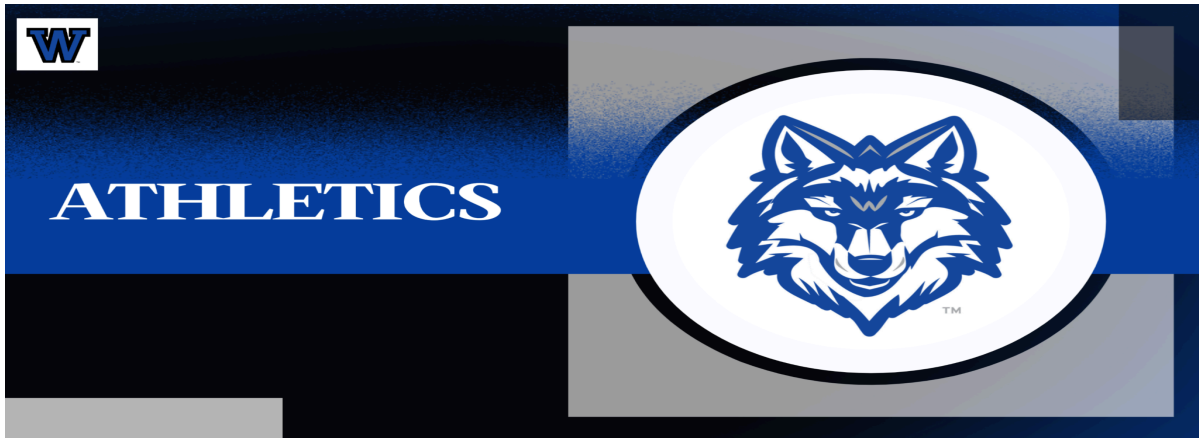


more subjects (any subjects), or, at any time the conditions of the protocol are not met, the student will be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the marking period.

- The “two week protocol” is a signed agreement which allows the student to continue participation in interscholastic or co-curricular activities for an additional two weeks as long as the following criteria are met **each week for each class the student is failing**. Parents, students, and administration all sign the agreement.
 1. The student must attend all classes and arrive on time.
 2. The student must be actively engaged in all learning activities.
 3. The student must complete and hand in all assignments including homework.
 4. The student must attend at least one Instructional Assistance period with the teacher of the class.
 5. The student must have each teacher sign off that the above criteria were met.

At the end of the protocol, if a student is still failing two or more subjects (any subjects), they are ineligible for the remainder of the 5 week period.

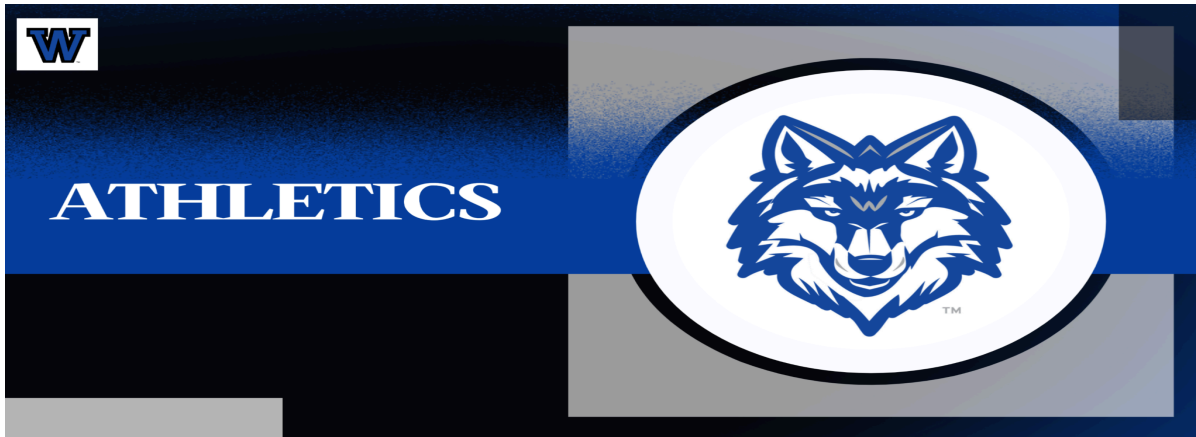
- At the end of the semester, final averages for semester courses only will be used in conjunction with second quarter averages (for yearlong courses) to determine eligibility for the 3rd quarter.
- For the fourth quarter only, final averages will be used instead of quarter grades to determine eligibility for the next school year. Summer school grades may be substituted for such averages in order to improve a student’s eligibility status. The same eligibility standards as outlined above will be applied to final averages and/or summer school grades.
- Students may not drop courses they are failing to escape becoming ineligible. Grades of drop/fail and incompletes, which are assigned due to lack of academic effort, count as failures. When such incompletes are changed to passing grades, a student’s status will be re-evaluated.
- Ineligible students may not attend rehearsals or practices, nor are they to sit on the bench during athletic contests.
- The activities to which this policy pertains are interscholastic and co-curricular activities which meet or occur outside of the instructional day (7:30 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.) .



- A student's ineligibility period will begin the day report cards are posted. **For the 2023-2024 academic year, eligibility periods will begin on November 15, January 31, April 17, and June 28.**
- Academic eligibility will not be based on disciplinary considerations. Such cases will be evaluated on an individual basis by the school administration.

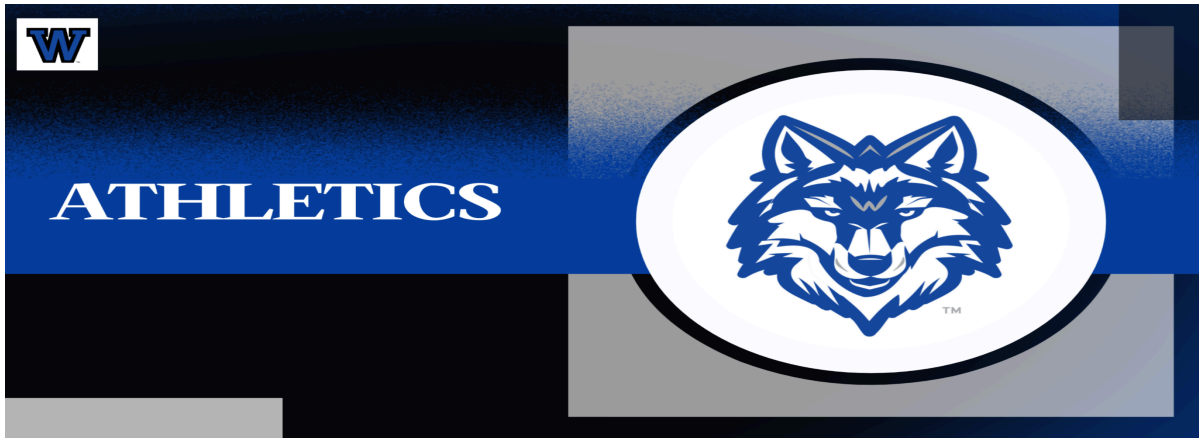
PROCEDURES

- A list of all participants in each interscholastic or extracurricular activity should be submitted to the Assistant Principal by the Athletic Director or activity advisor within one week after such a roster may be determined.
- In return, the Athletic Director or advisor will receive from the Assistant Principal at the end of each five-week period a list of students who are ineligible. It will be the primary responsibility of the coach or advisor to notify any such student of their status, and provide an explanation of the implications of such status.

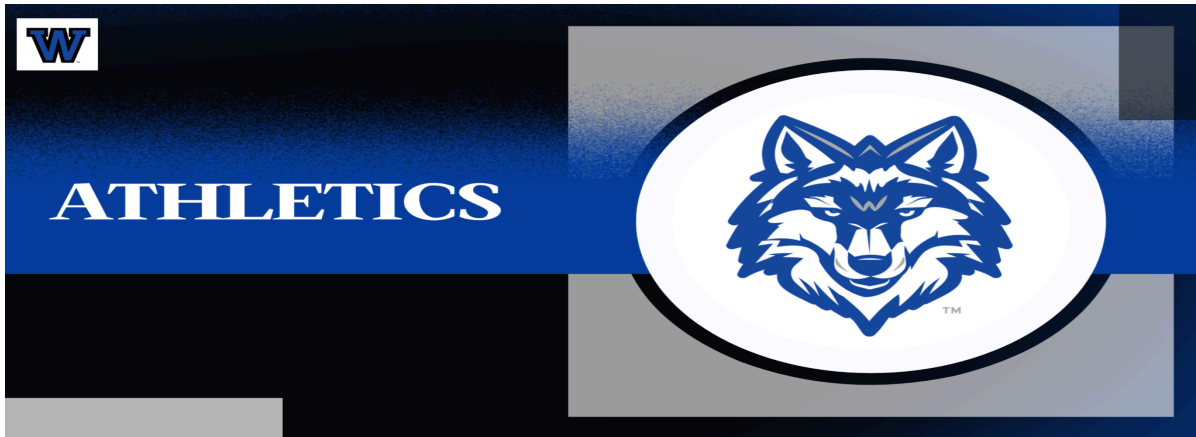


EXPECTATIONS FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

- **Attendance/Routine Practice** - Regular attendance at practice is mandatory. If an athlete misses more than two practices without permission, he or she shall be suspended from the team for the amount of time to be determined by the coach.
- **General Attendance** - A student is expected to attend all classes on his or her schedule on the day of a contest and the next school day following the contest. Habitual absence before and after a contest may result in suspension from the team. To be eligible to participate in daily practices or a contest, **the athlete must be present in school by 11:00 AM unless the student has been excused from school attendance for such reasons as a doctor appointment, field trip, college visitation, driver test, or such reasons other than illness.** The purpose of this clause is to keep a student from participating when he or she is ill.
- **Injuries and Illness** - An athlete must report any injury immediately to the coach. If an athlete sustains a significant injury, they must have a written release from the attending physician. Should there be any question concerning the decision about an athlete's participation due to illness or injury, the final decision will be made by the school physician. Any student who has been absent from school for five or more consecutive days due to illness or injury must be released for participation by the athlete's attending physician and again qualified for participation by the school physician.
- **Transportation To and From Athletic Contests** - All team members will travel to and from "away" contests by means of school-provided transportation. After the conclusion of an away contest, athletes may be released to their parent/guardian only with full knowledge and approval of the coach. Any other exceptions to this must be made in writing to the building principal [alternate transportation form].
- **Care of School Equipment** - The athlete is responsible for all equipment issued to him or her. All lost, stolen or damaged equipment must be paid for by the athlete. All equipment issued to an athlete must be returned at the end of the sport season. Failure to return lost, stolen or damaged equipment may jeopardize further participation in the interscholastic athletic program.



- **Equipment is intended for use in practices and contests only** - General use of school equipment outside of the normal practice and contest needs is not permitted.
- **Quitting a Team** - If an athlete quits or is suspended from a sport, he or she will not be eligible to participate in another sport during the same season. A student who is not successful in making a team after participating in a tryout program is eligible to try out for, and participate in, another sport during that season. Students will not be allowed to quit a sports team to avoid a penalty for a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.



Interscholastic Sports Offerings at Westhill

FALL

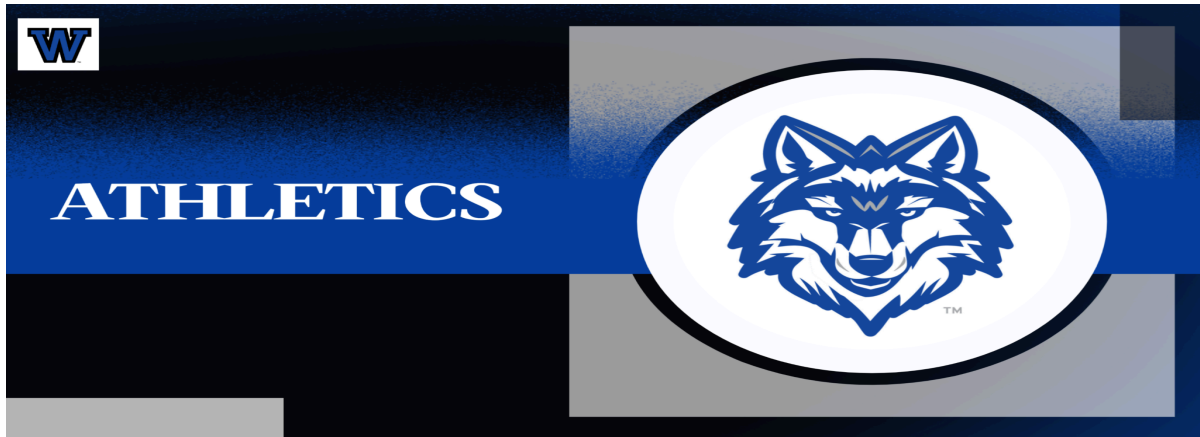
7/8/9 & Varsity Football
7/8, JV & Varsity Boys Soccer
7/8, JV & Varsity Girls Soccer
Varsity Boys & Girls Cross Country
7/8 Boys & Girls Cross Country
JV & Varsity Girls Volleyball
Varsity Girls Tennis
7/8/9 Girls Tennis
Varsity Boys Golf

WINTER

7th/8th Grade Girls Volleyball [Winter 1 Season Oct - Dec]
7th/8th Grade Boys Volleyball [Winter 2 Season Jan-March]
7th/8th Grade, JV & Varsity Girls Basketball
7th/8th Grade, JV & Varsity Boys Basketball
Varsity Boys & Girls Indoor Track
Ice Hockey (Host school: Syracuse City)

SPRING

7/8, JV & Varsity Baseball
7/8, JV & Varsity Softball
Varsity Boys & Girls Track and Field
7/8 Boys & Girls Track and Field
Varsity Girls Golf
Varsity Boys Tennis
7/8, JV & Varsity Boys Lacrosse
7/8, JV & Varsity Girls Lacrosse



USEFUL LINKS:

Westhill Athletics website: <https://www.westhillschools.org/athletics>

Schedule Galaxy/Aktivate [sport schedules]: <https://www.schedulegalaxy.com/>

Arbiter Sports/Family ID [Student Sport Registration]:
<https://students.arbitersports.com/organizations/westhill-central-school-district>

Hudl Fan [Livestream Stadium/HS gym]:
<https://fan.hudl.com/usa/ny/syracuse/organization/15027/westhill-high-school>

NFHS Network [HS Gym/Stadium/HS Baseball & Softball]: <https://www.nfhsnetwork.com/>

Section 3 Athletics: <https://section3.org/>

Section 3 Athletics Digital Ticketing [SECTIONALS]:
<https://section3.org/news/2021/10/8/section-iii-athletics-digital-tickets.aspx>

NYS PHSA: <https://nysphsaa.org/>

NYS PHSA Digital Ticketing [STATES]:
<https://nysphsaa.org/sports/2021/9/27/ChampionshipFAQ.aspx>



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