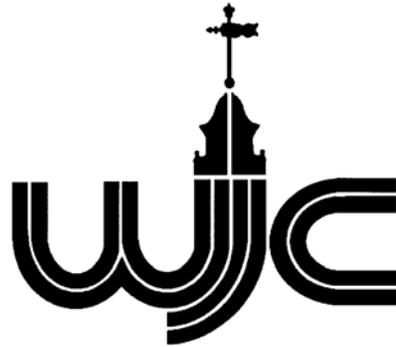


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Athletic Handbook for Middle & High Schools

**Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools
P.O. Box 8783
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Superintendent**

Athletic Administration



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Williamsburg, VA 23185
(757) 259-3600

Athletic Director
(757) 259-3622



Lafayette High School
4460 Longhill Road
Williamsburg, VA 23188
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Athletic Director
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Warhill



LIONS

Warhill High School
4615 Opportunity Way
Williamsburg, VA 23188
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Athletic Director
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Berkeley Middle School
1118 Ironbound Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185
(757) 229-8051

Athletic Director
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Lois S. Hornsby Middle School
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Williamsburg, VA 23188
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Athletic Director
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Toano Middle School
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Toano, VA 23168
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WJCC School Board Policy KFAA

Participation in athletics is a privilege—not a right—that provides student-athletes with the opportunity to grow athletically, academically, emotionally, physically, and socially. All stakeholders must view athletic participation and competition as a lifelong learning experience. Good sportsmanship not only is required of the division's student-athletes and coaches, but also of all persons who support and attend athletic-related events. Spectators, including parents, are expected to support the events through courteous behavior at all times toward all participants, coaches, officials, staff, and fellow spectators. Persons who engage in inappropriate behavior are subject to immediate removal from the event and the event premises, and possible additional attendance restrictions. The School Board empowers principals, athletic directors, and coaches to enforce the good sportsmanship code at all times.

The Athletics Mission

The overall objective of athletics programs within Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools is to provide an opportunity for student participation in properly supervised and controlled activities under the guidelines established by the Virginia High School League and the Williamsburg-James City County School Board. The school division's athletics programs will encourage and support broad participation from as many boys and girls as possible, with teams competing on an equitable basis with other schools without sacrificing sportsmanship, scholarship, general welfare, and the health of the school and student.

Our Beliefs

The Williamsburg-James City County School Division believes that:

- athletics is a partnership among students, parents, and school personnel;
- athletics help foster success in an honest and sportsmanlike manner;
- athletics provide experiences that mirror events students will face in the real world, and helps students prepare for adulthood;
- student athletes should represent the highest ideals of any school;
- student athletes should balance athletic participation and academic responsibility.

Requirements and Responsibilities

High School Academic Requirements

All athletes must earn 2.5 passing credits from the preceding semester. Credit for summer school academic work will be applied to the immediately preceding semester or year. Audit classes in any courses in which the athlete originally received a grade of D or higher are not counted as one of the 2.5 credits needed

for eligibility. Only repeats of classes failed, if passed the second time, will count as credit toward eligibility. All athletes must earn a 1.25 Grade Point Average or higher for the previous semester and must have passed seven credits for the previous two semesters. Exceptions to this rule may include special education and modified diploma athletes.

Athletic academic eligibility/ineligibility is determined on the date each semester ends in accordance with the School Board's annual academic calendar. Athletes must be academically eligible at the time VHSL sheets are sent to the state.

A player must attend school for at least three blocks of the school day to be eligible to practice or participate in a VHSL event. Extenuating circumstances may be presented to the athletic director or principal.

A student has four years of eligibility. All students entering the ninth grade are automatically eligible for their fall semester. An athlete's eligibility begins upon entry into the ninth grade and continues for four consecutive years.

The principal will determine the specific eligibility of students with disabilities, and those enrolled in special programs such as New Horizons and The Governor's School.

An "athletic monitor" form for athletes not meeting academic or behavior expectations may be given to all teachers regularly for student progress updates. The monitor form will include a checklist for academics and behavior. Coaches may place players with negative comments on an individual monitor sheet on suspension until improvement is made.

Middle School Academic Requirements

Athletic eligibility is determined by quarter grades. Students earning more than one failing grade are ineligible. Summer school grades and courses do not replace fourth quarter grades and courses for fall athletic eligibility purposes.

To participate in athletics, middle school students must be eligible at the time of try outs. Students have two years of consecutive eligibility beginning the first day of grade seven. A student who is 15 years old before August 1st is not eligible to participate in athletics.

Academic Requirement Appeals Process

A student lacking in one required academic area may appeal once during his/her middle school experience and one time during their high school experience. Appeals must be submitted in writing, to the school division's Coordinator of Health and Physical Education. The coordinator will convene a committee of school administrators to consider the circumstances surrounding the appeal. Seasonal appeal deadlines are as follows:

- Fall Season – August 25th – high schools
- September 10th – middle schools
- Winter Season – November 20th – both high schools and middle schools

Spring Season – March 10th – both high schools and middle schools

Attendance Expectations

School attendance is critical to learning. Because athletes have great demands on their time, attendance will be monitored to facilitate success. The attendance office will notify the athletic director when an athlete has had excessive absences during the school year. The principal (or his/her designee), athletic director, coach/sponsor, and counselor may decide on a course of intervention to help improve an athlete's absenteeism.

Student athletes who are tardy the day after an athletic contest (excused or unexcused) more than two times will be suspended from the next game.

Behavior Requirements

Student athletes are required to follow the behavior requirements established for all students in Williamsburg-James City County Schools in accordance with School Board Policy JGC. Because of the leadership status afforded athletes by their peers, coaches/sponsors require higher behavior standards. Participation in practices and games, and continued membership on a team depends largely on the athlete's behavior. Principals, athletic directors and coaches have to decide appropriate disciplinary actions for their athletes.

From the time a student becomes a WJCC athlete, he/she is an athlete 365 days per year. Any athlete who self-reports an inappropriate behavior that may include a legal charge or complaint, conviction, or deferred disposition or any other student handbook violation to the school Athletic Director before the school's knowledge or notification of the offense will be granted favorable consideration in determining any imposed athletic consequence.

The WJCC Discipline Policy and consequences issued by principals may have additional impact on a student's participation in athletics or any other co-curricular activity.

Consequences of Misbehavior

Student athletes who violate the WJCC Student Code of Conduct in the student handbook, the Sportsmanship policy KFAA, this Behavior and Responsibility Pledge, or violations of law may, at the discretion of the principal, incur penalties that impact athletic participation.

Any athlete identified through the legal system who has been arrested and/or charged of a crime either in or out of school shall be suspended from the next competitive event, current sports team and/or the next sport season in which the athlete would participate for a period of time to be determined by the principal.

Any athlete convicted of a crime and/or penalized through the court system shall be suspended from the next scheduled competitive event, the current sports team, and/or the next sports season in which the athlete would participate for a

period of time to be determined by the principal. A competitive event does not include scrimmages or benefit games.

Whether in or out of school, athletes shall not smoke, chew, use, or have in their possession, tobacco or alcohol products. The penalty for such use or behavior may be suspension from athletic participation for a time to be determined by the principal. Any athlete suspended for violating the WJCC Schools' drug and alcohol policy (Policy and Procedure Code: JFCF), or who is suspended for any serious disciplinary violation, shall be suspended from the next competitive event, current sports team, and/or the next sports season in which the athlete would participate for a period of time to be determined by the principal.

Any athlete who receives ISS or OSS will be suspended from the next competitive event. Any athlete who receives a second ISS suspension during his/her sports season may be dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season. Any athlete who receives a second OSS suspension during the season will be dismissed from the team.

Any athlete who, out-of-season, receives an OSS for more than three days shall miss the next scheduled competitive event in which the athlete was to participate. This is a minimum penalty and may be increased by the principal.

Any athlete who is referred to the School Board for the purpose of a disciplinary hearing will be immediately suspended from participation in any school sponsored athletic activity until after the hearing. Following the hearing additional disciplinary measures may be taken by the Principal and/or Athletic Director.

Hazing occurs when an act is committed against a student or a student is coerced into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to the student or to any third party in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with any group, club, athletics team, grade level, activity or organization. Participation in any hazing shall result in consequences.

Abuse of any portion of the Behavior and Responsibility Pledge herein and all student-eligibility requirements may result in one or more of the following actions by the coach and/or principal;

- Suspension of the athlete from the team for one or more games,
- removal of the athlete from the team for the remainder of the sports season,
- forfeiture of award(s) for the particular sport,
- restriction or prohibition from any further interscholastic competition,
- other appropriate disciplinary action deemed necessary and appropriate by the athletic director or school principal.

Coaches are granted broad discretion and autonomy over general team matters, including team rules, roster selection, participation, playing time, selection of starting athletes, recognition of athletes, and recommendations for award recipients.

Administrators will notify the athletic director of any behavior concerns during an athlete's off-season. An administrator, athletic director, the coach/sponsor, and the counselor may require intervention for a student who demonstrates a need for increased supervision.

The WJCC Discipline Policy and consequences issued by administration may also impact a student's participation in athletics or any other extracurricular activity.

Any athlete who does not abide by established team rules communicated by the coaching staff may be suspended or dismissed from the team.

Game and Practice Attendance

Athletes must be present for all school competitive events, regular season, post-season, and make-up games. Exceptions are not made for vacations, Saturdays, or other sports activities.

There are no consequences for athletes who miss a practice or game for absences due to school-sponsored trips or other academic activities required by the school. For optional school trips, the coach may determine if any consequence is required.

For all other missed games or practices, the consequence is at the discretion of the coach; in such cases, consequences may include dismissal from the team.

Sportsmanship

WJCC athletes are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship during practices and competitive events. Technical ejections are addressed by VHSL regulations.

Consequences for poor sportsmanship:

1. When an athlete is removed by a coach, ejected by a referee, or the unsportsmanlike act is witnessed by the athletic director or principal, the athlete will be suspended for the next two competitive events.
2. Repeated offenses of unsportsmanlike behavior may result in suspension from the team at the discretion of the principal.
3. Gross unsportsmanlike conduct, such as fighting:

First Offense – the student will be declared ineligible for the next three games (two games in sports with ten or fewer games).

Second Offense – the student will be declared ineligible for the remainder of the sports season.

Profanity and other forms of inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated. Students who exhibit this type of behavior during a game will be removed immediately from the game and will not be allowed to re-enter. The coach and athletic director will discipline athletes who exhibit this type of behavior during practice.

Transfer Eligibility

Any athlete who transfers within the WJCC boundaries or to another school division may not be immediately eligible for participation at the new school. For more information, please see the school's Athletic Director.

Transportation

All athletes must ride in school division vehicles to and from athletic events that are held off school grounds when transportation is provided by the school division. In an emergency, which includes injury, illness, family problems, and an unusual academic situation, only a parent/guardian may secure permission from the coach to transport his/her student. Identification will be required by the coach. Under no circumstances will an athlete be allowed to leave with another student.

Head coaches may require all athletes to ride the bus with the team as part of team expectations. Failure to comply with this policy will result in immediate suspension of the athlete from the team pending a meeting with the athletic director. On special occasions parents/guardians may request in writing, to the principal at least 48 hours before the activity, permission to transport their own child to or from an athletic event. Parents/guardians may only transport their child to an event.

Athletes may drive a vehicle owned or leased by their family or self to practice or game sites within the boundaries of WJCC Schools and Bruton High School. The athlete may transport his/her siblings, but is not permitted to transport any other athletes.

Athletic Uniforms

Sports uniforms are selected by the Athletic Director and coach with the approval of the principal. Any change of style must be approved by the Athletic Committee.

Other Rules and Regulations

For teams making roster cuts, athletes are required to attend tryouts. Exceptions to this rule include new students who were not enrolled during try-outs, specific medical conditions, and athletes who have not completed their school sports season that precedes the try-out period. (Medical documentation may be required by the athletic director.)

Athletes must pass a physical examination and submit a completed VHSL physician's certificate and parental consent form as required by the Virginia High School League before trying out for an athletic team. Providing or offering false information regarding an athlete's physical condition shall result in suspension from VHSL activities for that school year. Physicals must be dated after May 1st.

Students must have satisfactory medical insurance before participation will be allowed. WJCC Schools provides information about supplemental and/or student accident insurance. For more information, contact the athletic director or principal.

Parents must consent to allow the physician(s), athletic trainers, and other health care provider(s) selected by the school to perform a pre-participation examination and to provide treatment for any injury or condition resulting from participating in school athletics/activities during the school year. Parental permission is expected for the team physician(s) or health care provider(s) to share appropriate information concerning their child. Shared information is relevant to participation in athletics and activities with coaches and other school personnel as deemed necessary for the safety of the student.

All uniforms and equipment issued to athletes must be returned within a week after the conclusion of the season. Students assume financial responsibility for missing, lost, or damaged equipment or uniforms, and students may not participate in other sports and activities until equipment obligations are met. Students will not be permitted to participate in any other sport until all fees are paid.

Athletes may not participate in more than one sport during a sports season unless the athlete has approval of the two coaches, and the two coaches have met with and received approval from the athletic director. Athletes who are given permission will be monitored academically on a more frequent basis to assess their success maintaining dual participation status.

Any athlete who quits or is dismissed from a team after tryouts may not play for another team or participate in any preseason conditioning until the end of the current season.

A sports night event will be held at the conclusion of each sports season to honor the students who have participated in a VHSL activity. All athletes are encouraged to attend and celebrate with teammates.

Vacation Breaks:

Our athletes need time to take a short vacation with their families during the Winter and/or Spring Break. Athletes who have no travel plans during the break should attend practice.

1. Winter Break: Starting with the last day of school before the start of the Winter Break and extending until December 27th at 4:00 p.m. athletes will

- not be required to attend any practices or non-district games if they provide the coach a written notice from their parents stating they will be out of town or involved in family activities.
2. Spring Break: Starting with the last day of school before the Spring Break and extending until the Thursday of the break at 4:00 pm athletes will not be required to attend any practices or non-district games if they provide the coach a written notice from their parents stating they will be out of town or involved in family activities.
 3. Summer Break: The last day of school until the day before the first day of the official start of fall practice is defined as summer break. Once practice starts in the fall, all athletes are required to attend all practices and games.

Note: During the Winter and Spring Breaks, coaches are permitted to hold voluntary practices. Athletes who are not leaving town for a vacation should make every effort to attend these practices. Also, if the district schedules games over the break, the rule will not be in effect and athletes will be required during the break to attend those games, and all practices deemed necessary by the coach.

Williamsburg-James City County School Division is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination based upon race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability and age in the administration of any of its educational programs, activities, or with respect to employment. Inquiries regarding this policy should be directed to Title IX/Section 504 Compliance Coordinator, Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools, and P.O. Box 8783, Williamsburg, VA 23187. (Phone: (757) 253-6777.) Persons with disabilities, who require accommodation in the application, testing and/or interview process should contact the Human Resources Department.

WJCC SCHOOLS ATHLETIC CONCUSSION PROCEEDURES

Concussions sometimes occur among athletes in competitive sports programs. At WJCC Schools, careful protocols are utilized, including the use of ImPACT software, to guide management of head injuries. The following will provide background information on concussions and describe the protocols followed at WJCC Schools.

PLEASE NOTE: If a student athlete is suffering from any signs and/or symptoms of concussion resulting from a blow to the head, the athlete MUST report to the school's athletic trainer or a physician as soon as possible. The sooner a proper diagnosis can be made, the sooner healing can begin.

Definition of a Concussion

A concussion is the disruption of normal brain function due to either a direct blow to the head, face and neck or an indirect blow or jolt to another part of the body That transmits an "impulsive" force to the brain. Some concussions may result in a loss of consciousness. However, loss of consciousness is not the defining characteristic of a concussion.

It is imperative that the brain have enough time to heal in order to prevent any further trauma or permanent damage. Rest must always come in the form of ceasing all physical activity, but may also involve a break from challenging cognitive activity as well.

Signs (observable behaviors) That May Be Present With Concussions

- Appears to be dazed or stunned
- Is confused about time, date, location
- Is unable to remember where he/she did prior to or after the injury
- Has altered balance
- Is slow to answer questions
- Displays a personality change
- Has altered sleep patterns: is unable to fall asleep or feels like he/she always wants to sleep
- Is vomiting
- Experiences loss of consciousness (not present in all concussions)

Symptoms (experienced and reported by the athlete) That May Be Present With Concussions

- Headache
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision or any other visual alteration

- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slow
- Feeling “foggy” or in a funk
- Difficulty in concentrating when reading, listening or speaking
- Extreme fatigue

Management of a Concussion

Proper management of concussions is the best form of prevention of serious injury. Most important is prevention of Second Impact Syndrome- a catastrophic increase in intracranial pressure leading to massive brain swelling, herniation and death. This syndrome occurs in athletes up to 14 days post-concussion and when an athlete returns to competition prior to the complete resolution of symptoms. Therefore the following concussion protocols are utilized at WJCC Schools:

1. Any student athlete diagnosed with concussion is removed from competition.
2. No student with concussion is allowed to return to play in the current game.
3. Consideration should be given to addressing the academic needs and gradual reintroduction of cognitive demands to students who have been diagnosed to have a concussion. Modification to the academic workload may be needed during recovery.
4. All concussions are referred for medical evaluation following the injury by an appropriate licensed health care provider designated by the State of Virginia.
5. Stepwise return to play:
 - a. No physical activity; rest until asymptomatic
 - b. Light aerobic exercise is supervised by the athletic trainer
 - c. Non-contact drills until 1 week post injury
 - d. Return to contact sports after a minimum of 1 week post-injury and completely asymptomatic (neurocognitive testing will now be used to assess return-to-play)
 - e. Any recurrence of concussive symptoms should lead to the athlete dropping back to the previous level.
6. An athlete with 2 concussions per season will be removed from contact sports for the remainder of that season. Return to play will require neurocognitive testing and the approval by an appropriate licensed health care provider as designated by the State of Virginia.

7. An Athlete with a history of 3 or more concussions is highly recommended to avoid contact sports. Participation will require neurocognitive testing and be at the discretion of the school medical inspector.

Use of ImPACT Software

In order to assess the severity of concussions and promote safe return to play, WJCC Schools uses the ImPACT Software Program.

Some Additional Facts About Concussions

- Mild concussions (“bell ringers”) do not require loss of consciousness. Presenting symptoms may include headache, nausea, balance problems, photosensitivity, fatigue, foggy or sluggish feeling, change in sleep patterns and cognitive changes.
- Cutting edge research suggests that a concussion produces metabolic, rather than anatomic, injury to the brain, making CT scanning and MRI insensitive to the physiological changes in the concussed brain.
- An athlete who sustains a concussion is 4-6 times more likely to sustain a second concussion.
- Effects of a concussion are cumulative in athletes who return to play prior to complete recovery.
- High school athletes with a history of 3 or more concussions are up to 9 times more likely to have more severe symptoms following subsequent concussions.
- Post-concussion syndrome can involve decreased processing speed, short term memory impairment, concentration deficit, depression/irritability, fatigue/sleep disturbance, and academic difficulties.

More information on concussions can be obtained from the following website: www.sportsconcussion.com or contact one of the WJCC school’s athletic trainers.

WJCC SCHOOL ATHLETIC PLEDGE:

By signing this Pledge, the WJCC student-athlete and parent or guardian affirm each has read and understands all the rules, regulations, and expectations listed in the Philosophy of WJCC Athletics. Further, it is agreed that all athletes must abide by the rules. It also is understood that all parents must attend a mandatory policy meeting to help insure a mutual understanding of the philosophy, conduct, and eligibility expectations.

By signing below, the student-athlete and parent are advised that participation in interscholastic practice and competition is dangerous! Furthermore, it is understood that no amount of protective equipment will eliminate potential injury. Even under the safest and most secure conditions, some athletic activity may result in serious, and possibly fatal, injuries. If a student-athlete exhibits unusual symptoms, he or she should immediately stop playing and report the conditions to the coach, athletic trainer, and his or her parents. The student-athlete will not return to a game or practice until all symptoms are eliminated and the athlete has received medical clearance. Ignoring this warning may lead to more serious or fatal injury. Remember: anyone deciding to compete in the WJCC Schools Athletic Program does so with a clear understanding of this risk of injury. Additional questions about such risks should be directed to the coach or athletic director prior to participation in practice or competition.

Parents and supporters of WJCC athletics interfering with a game or participants of the game (athletes, coaches, and officials) may result in disciplinary action taken by the WJCC Schools, the Bay Rivers District League, and/or the Virginia High School League. Such actions may be taken against our athletes, our teams, and parent-spectators. Acceptable and appropriate sportsmanship is a fundamental component of our athletic program. Parents are advised to direct questions and concerns about their student-athlete to the following individuals: (1) Team Coach; (2) Athletic Director (A.D.); (3) Principal. Please start with the coach before speaking with the A.D. or principal.

Parents are not to approach coaches during or after any practice or team competition. If there is a concern to discuss with the coach:

- The athlete should talk to the coach
- The parent should set up a meeting with the coach
- The parent communication form should be completed and a telephone call should be made to set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss your concerns.

Our signatures on the sign-off sheet indicate that we have read and agree to comply with the contents of WJCC conduct, philosophy, and eligibility expectations herein. We agree that the athlete will attend all practices and games in which his or her high school athletic team participates. This implies that the high school team's activities take precedent over any club, recreational or non-school events.

Virginia High School League Regulations

VHSL regulations state the following: "Final authority and the ultimate responsibility in all matters pertaining to interscholastic activities of each school, both athletic and non-athletic, shall be vested in the principal who acts under the authority granted by the division superintendent of schools."

Athletic Pledge

Your signature below indicates that you (student/athlete) and your parent/guardian fully understand, and agree to comply with all regulations as stated in the Handbook for High Schools and Middle Schools and the WJCC Athletics Communications, Conduct and Procedures Brochure.

(Please print clearly)

Athlete: _____
(Print name)

Athlete: _____
(Signature)

Parent/Guardian: _____
(Print name)

Parent/Guardian: _____
(Signature)

Parent Telephone: _____ Parent Cell Phone: _____

Student E-mail Address: _____
Please print

Parent E-mail Address: _____
Please print

Parent E-mail Address: _____
Please print

Date: _____

Please return this form signed before the first contest of the season.
Failure to do so will result in the inability of the athlete to participate.