

**WATKINS MILL HIGH SCHOOL**  
*Wolverines*

**ED ROSS, ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AND ECA ADMINISTRATOR**

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**Parent/Student Handbook**

**Section Two,  
The Triangle of Success:**

- The Triangle of Success
- Sportsmanship Policy
- Sport Related Concussions
- Booster Club Membership and Support

## **PARENT, COACH, PLAYER RELATIONSHIPS**

### **“THE TRIANGLE OF SUCCESS”**

There is nothing more challenging than being the parent in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This effort and responsibility is frequently complicated by being the parent of a student-athlete. The following guidelines and suggestions, will give you some insight into how, when communicating effectively, the parent, coach and student-athlete can form a “Triangle of Success.”

Unfortunately, as a result of an abundant resource of media coverage, many sport fans have become accustomed to the critical commentary that leads people to believe that they understand more about “coaching” the sport than do our coaches. Thus, it is too easy for people become “snap-shot experts” and uniformed critical judgments are quick to be made instead of enjoying the nature of the sport it’s self. While this exposure may heighten your appreciation of a sport, as a parent, you must remain in your valuable role as the parent, and leave coaching decisions to those who have been selected to make them.

There are many relationships which are involved in being the parent of an athlete:

#### **The Player-Coach Relationship:**

The player-coach relationship is perhaps the most critical relationship in athletics. Unfortunately, too many parents have a pronounced effect on this very important and delicate relationship. While there are times when you may not agree with decisions of a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a decided effect upon your child.

If you choose to express a negative opinion in the presence of your child, please be aware that he or she will return to practice the next day with your convictions. This places the player in the difficult position of having to interact with the coach while carrying unnecessary baggage. As the parent, please feel free to express your thoughts and feeling by following the suggested chain of communication.

In addition, since there are many ways to teach athletic skills and techniques, but usually only one way to do so in a given system, please try to be consistent in supporting the skills and techniques used by the coach. Otherwise, this may ultimately impede the player’s development by causing confusion that effects preparation and eventually, playing time.

#### **The Parent-Coach Relationship:**

In your loving role as a parent, you are obviously concerned about your child’s welfare, and you want the best for him or her. However, the role of the coach is also a very important relationship in the “Triangle of Success” that can not be allowed to weaken. Therefore, it is always best to allow the coach to instruct and guide players in their roles as team members.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not approach the coach immediately at the conclusion of a contest. At this time, coaches have other responsibilities and it is always best to share your concerns when you can have a coach’s full attention. Please feel free to call the coach and make an appointment when you can meet to discuss your important concerns in a calm, logical and mutually respectful manner.

One of the responsibilities a coach has at the conclusion of a contest is to have a brief meeting with his or her players. Athletes should not pause to talk to parents or friends immediately after games. These brief meetings are essential to the learning process involved in athletics.

### **A Time for the Player:**

It is natural for parents to be close to their children but parents must allow players to have their own experiences as this is their time to participate in the chosen activity. Being positive and supportive of these experiences is important, but parents must be cautious as to not add undue pressure and unrealistic expectations which can be extremely harmful. A good suggestion is to always allow your son or daughter to enjoy and grow from their experiences, whether good or bad. In numerous national studies, it has been determined that most athletes participate for enjoyment or fun. Excessive parental pressure or expectations can alter this most fundamental reason for playing. Parents must work hard to maintain a proper perspective.

When you do speak with your child after a contest, please allow them to tell you how they played and what they enjoyed; and how the team played and what was learned. Please do not dwell on mistakes made or how many points they scored; or how it was when you played. As well, please support them in encouraging continued hard work and giving maximum effort, and helping teammates to be successful (leadership).

### **Relationship with Officials:**

Without a doubt, spectators will always question officiating calls that do not go their way. It's part of the nature of healthy competition. However, there are some very important considerations to be made before criticisms become uncontrollable. First off, officials agree to and follow a code of ethics and, although their judgments aren't always perfect, they are the most informed professionals available to conduct the game by the agreed upon rules. As well, it should be noted that referees and umpires are always looking for new officials, so before expressing undue criticisms, please be sure to have your application completed and your schedule freed up to work as an official.

It is also important to understand that officials rarely have an interest in who wins the game, so their judgments and rule interpretations are what they are. Something else to know is that officials are rated, observed periodically and scrutinized by professionals, so please do not allow your emotions to cause you or us any embarrassment. As well, it is also important to remember that the game officials are in charge of the contest and they are charged with the safety of the event; and when needed, they have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed.

### **Spectator-Cheerleader:**

Cheerleaders try to infuse spirit into the fans/spectators and to lead them in selected cheers. Taking this responsibility into your own hands is not appropriate. Fans who leave the stands to direct cheers may often cause or lead to confrontations with the opponents. Following the cheerleaders' directions, therefore, is absolutely necessary at all athletic contests.

The emotion and atmosphere at athletic contests can be very exciting and the cheerleaders need to be allowed to direct and control this aspect of the event.

### **Chain of Communication:**

We follow the following chain of effective communication, so please try your best to work out details and problems in this manner. This is the foundation of the “Triangle of Success.”

- Team Captains
- Assistant Coaches
- Head Coach
- Athletic Director
- Principal

### **Expressing Concerns:**

When expressing concerns with a coach, please refer to and use the following guidelines:

- Never approach a coach immediately after a contest. This is not the proper time or place for a discussion concerning your child or the team.
- Call the following day and make an appointment which is convenient for both you and the coach to meet.
- Raise your concern in a calm and civil manner. Rude and obnoxious behavior and the use of abusive language will not help you communicate what you really want to say.
- Once you have stated your question or concern, listen to the explanation. Often a parent may be hoodwinked by emotions and this always overrides logic and reason. Listening receptively will help bring about necessary understanding.

### **Sportsmanship:**

Since athletics should be educational in nature, it is important that all parents demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models for our athletes and students. Sportsmanship is an overt display of respect for the rules of sport and for all others. It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. This means:

- There can be no abusive or inappropriate language from our fans or spectators.
- Spectators cannot leave the bleachers or enter onto the court or field during a contest.
- Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheer for our team and not against our opponent. No taunting or trash talking of our opponents and their cheerleaders.
- We should not impede or interfere with our opponent’s cheerleaders from leading their cheers.
- In some specific sports such as basketball and volleyball, we will not allow personalized comments to be cheered while an opponent is at the foul line or as a player attempts to serve.
- School officials have the authority to remove a spectator(s) from a contest for unruly or improper conduct. The individual(s) may be removed for the duration of a particular contest or for any extended period of time depending on the severity or frequency of the improper conduct.
- Possession of intoxicants and/or illegal substances is prohibited. Smoking is also prohibited on school grounds.

## **Acceptable Behavior for Coaches, Player and Parents**

- Applaud during the introduction of players, coaches and officials
- Recognizing a player's good performance with applause.
- Accept all decisions of officials. Shake hands at end of contest between participants and coaches regardless of the outcome.
- Treat the competition as an athletic event and NOT a War.
- Search out and congratulate opposing coaches and players.
- Show concern for an injured player regardless of which team he or she plays for.
- Encourage only sportsmanlike conduct which includes class, dignity and respect.

## **Unacceptable Behavior:**

- Performing disrespectful, derogatory or individually directed chants, songs, or gestures.
- Excessive booing or continuous heckling an official's decision.
- Constant, loud criticism of officials and outward displays of anger over calls made
- Antagonizing the opponents.
- Refusing to shake hands or give recognition for good performances.
- Blaming loss of game on officials, coaches, or participants.
- Taunting or name-calling to distract an opponent.
- Using profanity or displays of anger that draws attention away from the game.
- Performing your own cheers instead of following lead of the cheerleaders.

## **Responsibilities of an Athlete:**

Most coaches and parents would expect an athlete to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Team goals, welfare and success must come before any desires of individualism.
- Athletes must consistently attend practice sessions. Missed practices will result in restricted or suspended playing time and eventual team dismissal.
- Players must be cooperative, teachable, and receptive to instruction.
- Team members are responsible for returning all issued uniforms and equipment.
- Student-Athletes represent not only themselves, but are also ambassadors for their families, coaching staff, school and community.
- All injuries must be communicated to the coach.

## **Responsibilities of a Coach:**

Coaches have the responsibility for the following:

- The selection of the squad.
- The determination of the style of play, including the offensive and defensive philosophy.
- The teaching and instruction at practice sessions.
- The determination of playing time.
- The decision of who plays in what position.
- The establishing of team rules.
- The selection of team captains.
- The establishing of the requirements to earn letter awards.
- The communication with athletes and parents with respect to when practice sessions will be held, and when the sessions will start and finish.

## **Participation and Team Selection:**

It is important to understand that participation on a varsity interscholastic athletic team is a privilege and not a constitutional right. Remaining a member of a team means accepting all the responsibilities expected of a high school student-athlete. As well, unlike recreation or intramural teams, playing time in a varsity interscholastic athletic activity is by nature competitive and therefore not expected to be equal. In an effort to put the team in position to win the contest, a coach is required to use good judgment in putting players into proper position to meet the conditions and/or demands of the contest.

Every coach has the responsibility and authority for selecting his or her team. Criteria for selecting the team are developed by the coach and will be communicated to players and parents. It is also important to remember that players from the previous year's team, for example, do not automatically continue in the same playing capacity the next season. Having been a member of a team during the previously, or even being a senior, does not ensure that a player will be selected for the final roster. Parents should expect that every tryout player will be treated fairly and given every consideration. Coaches are sensitive to feelings of disappointment. They will handle the task as positively as possible and will be available to answer questions.

While we understand that being cut is disappointing for many athletes and even for their parents, we unfortunately cannot keep everyone. Anyone cut from a team is encouraged to tryout again next season or to try another sport. When parents and athletes understand and support the coach's decision, this difficult process becomes a less painful experience for all.

## **The Purpose of a JV Team:**

JV Teams exist to provide those athletes who are unable to participate on the varsity squad an opportunity to develop skills and gain experience. While the athlete's age, size, or skill level may be the limiting factor in not making a varsity team, participation on a JV team may enhance the athlete's potential to make the varsity squad in the future.

A caution, however, must also be given. Being a member of a JV team does not guarantee that an athlete will automatically move up the following year to the varsity squad. The athletes best suited for varsity competition will make the team roster each year.

Striving to win is important in athletics. However, compiling a great record or winning a championship should not be the primary objective of a JV team. The development of athletes should be the ultimate purpose of a JV squad, while at the same time acknowledging the value of winning, learning, and enjoying being a member of a team.

## **Practice Sessions and Games:**

Practice sessions are normally closed to spectators and there is a very sound reason for this. These sessions are the equivalent of a teacher's classroom and there is real, quality instruction taking place. Interruptions and interference to an athlete's concentration and focus in practice cannot be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic setting. Practice sessions:

- Are limited to two hours of instruction.
- Are canceled when the daily school schedule is altered by inclement weather.
- May be held on Saturdays and during holiday periods when allowed.

### **Athletic Award Letters:**

Coaches determine the requirements for the following Varsity Letter Awards:

- Varsity Certificate
- Varsity Athletic Letter (One per entire high school career)
- Sport pin(s)
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> year letter pins
- Senior Award for four years participation in a sport
- Manager pin
- Captain pin
- Scholar Athlete (JV and Varsity)
- Sportsmanship (JV and Varsity)
- Athletic Participation Certificate (JV, other non-varsity participation)

### **Team Captains and Managers:**

There are several good reasons for having captains of a team. As leaders, these athletes serve as positive role models, links between the team and the coach, and help teammates to be successful.

While some coaches may allow their team to select captains, the ultimate responsibility of choosing leaders lies with the coach. It is also important to understand that serving as a captain is not reserved solely for seniors on a team, nor the most talented players, but rather, team captains are selected by their ability to handle the responsibilities of sound leadership.

Managers perform duties assigned by the coach and they answer only to the coach. They are not personal servants existing for the pleasure of players and will be treated with respect.

### **Risks of Athletic Participation:**

In spite of using protective equipment, qualified supervision and sound instruction by our coaches, there are some risks associated with athletic participation. Injuries can and do occur. In extremely rare cases, death could also result. All athletes and parents need to be aware and understand this possibility. We will do all that we can to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our athletes.

### **Booster Club:**

Our Booster Club exists to support the entire athletic program. Our Booster Club has three primary goals:

- To provide financial support to the athletic department through fund raising activities.
- To support and assist other needs of the athletic program.
- To increase school spirit.
- To encourage and promote good sportsmanship.

The Booster Club is not a vehicle to remove coaches, advance vested interests or to alter athletic department policy. It is a service and support organization working in harmony with the athletic program. The athletic director serves as the liaison between the booster leadership team and the principal. He serves as the advisor to the club and provides direction for purchasing athletic department and team needs. Consideration of requests is given to the budget, strategic plans and an overriding belief that any purchase should help the total athletic program and not a single team. Coaches or players must not approach the Booster Club with requests without first discussing matters with the athletic director.

**WATKINS MILL HIGH SCHOOL**  
*Wolverines*

**SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY**

**Statement:**

A mission of the Watkins Mill athletic program is to teach and reinforce in student-athletes values relating to wholesome competition, good sportsmanship and fair play. It is expected that coaches, parent and spectators reinforce these values by exhibiting appropriate behavior at athletic events. A condition of entry into an MCPS athletic event is that all spectators agree to recognize the event as an extension of the learning process, and that all present have the responsibility to model appropriate behavior. The event is a unique opportunity for spectators to be a part of a positive and productive learning environment and to model behavior appropriate to a high school setting.

**Expectations for Parent and Spectator Behavior:**

- **APPLAUD** players for their efforts
- **ACCEPT** the decisions of officials
- **APPRECIATE** participants for their commitment
- **SUPPORT** school personnel in conducting an orderly and spirited contest
- **MAINTAIN** composure when breaks seem to go against your team
- **RESPECT** the rights of other spectators
- **REWARD** sportsmanlike behavior through cheering
- **FOCUS** attention on positive aspects of competition
- **ENCOURAGE** players by showing enthusiasm and positive recognition
- **DEMONSTRATE** concern for the safety and welfare of athletes

**Remember:**

These young men and women are students and not professional athletes. They will make errors in the course of competition, as will game officials and coaches. However, all participants are trying their best. Negative criticism and discouraging comments will not help them to improve and are unacceptable forms of expression at this event. You can assist in their development as athletes by focusing attention on the positive aspects of their performance. Your cooperation is important and is appreciated.

## **UNDERSTANDING SPORTS-RELATED CONCUSSION: PLAY SAFE PLAY SMART!**

### **What is a Concussion?**

*A concussion is an injury to the brain that:*

- Is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head.
- Can change the way your brain normally works.
- Can range from mild to severe.
- Can occur during practices or games in any sport.
- Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.
- Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged" or had your "bell rung."

### **How do I know if I've had a Concussion?**

*Something feels different:*

- You might notice some symptoms right away (confusion, loss of balance, fogginess).
- You can't follow the game or the plays.
- Other symptoms may take hours, days, or weeks to appear (headache, irritability, poor concentration).
- You may have difficulty with your schoolwork or completing daily tasks.

### **What are the Symptoms of a Concussion?**

*Three symptom types:*

- Physical: Headache, nausea, balance problems or dizziness, double/fuzzy vision, sensitivity to light or noise, feeling sluggish or fatigued
- Thinking: Problems with concentration, memory (trouble following conversation or forgetting game plays), feeling foggy or groggy, confusion
- Emotions: irritable, more emotional, sadness

### **Signs that Parents/ Coaches/ Teammates See**

- Appears dazed, stunned, glassy
- Is confused about game assignment and tasks
- Forgets plays, repeats same questions
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily/slowly
- Answers questions slowly
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events before hit or after hit
- Loses consciousness

## **What should I do if I think I have a concussion?**

- Do NOT ignore a blow or jolt to the head.
- Do NOT play with symptoms.
- Tell your coaches and your parents.
- Get a medical checkup, especially if symptoms persist

## **What should I do if I think I have a concussion?**

*GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO RECOVER -REST!*

- Your brain needs time to heal.
- If not healed, your brain is more likely to be injured again -and it may be worse.

## **What could happen if I do nothing?**

- You are putting yourself in greater danger and are more likely to be re-injured.
- Second and third injuries could cause permanent brain damage which are likely to be more severe and can take you longer to recover.
- You are not helping your team if you continue playing with a concussion.

## **After a Concussion, When Can I Return to Play?**

*After rest, increase your activity gradually until:*

- Symptoms no longer exist
- Cognitive/ thinking skills are back to “normal.”
- Cleared by medical professional
- Recovery can take several days or weeks.

## **How Can I Prevent a Concussion?**

- Follow the safety rules for your sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship.
- Use proper equipment for the sport and position.
- Use well maintained equipment that is fitted properly and every time you play.

## **Key Points**

- Know what a concussion is and its symptoms
- 3 types of symptoms
- Dings and bell-ringers count! **Better to miss one game than the whole season!**
- Don't ignore symptoms. Tell your coaches and parents.
- Teammates: Watch out for one another.
- Give yourself time to recover. REST!
- Follow the rules of the sport.
- Use equipment properly. Play Hard! Play Safe! Play Smart!

## WATKINS MILL HIGH SCHOOL BOOSTER CLUB

Watkins Mill High School has an All-School Booster Club. Our Booster Club raises funds for all 34 WMHS athletic teams and all 50 extracurricular clubs. We strictly comply with Montgomery County Public Schools Equity Standards and Procedures.

### The Booster Club:

- Is a \$75,000.00/year non-profit corporation
- Earned \$34,000.00 in 2006/2007
- Donates half of its earnings to Athletics; half to Extracurricular Clubs and scholarships
- Enlists 150 parent members per year
- Is operated by a 9-15 member Board of Directors made up of volunteer parents and staff
- Awards \$2400.00 in scholarship to students of Members.

### Our earnings come from:

- Concessions and merchandise at home games 40%
- Business Sponsorships 30%
- Special Events 20%
- Memberships 5%
- Merchandise 3%



# Watkins Mill High School 2007-08 Booster Club Membership Application

**Who should join:** WMHS Parents, Students, Faculty & Staff

**Benefits:** Your \$35 membership funds WMHS Athletics, Clubs and scholarships, and qualifies your senior for scholarship funds

**Member Responsibilities:** Members choose the Boosters activities they want to support. Our event chairs will contact you.

**How to Join:** Register online at  
<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/watkinsmillhs/booster>

Or Fill out this form, one per family. Deliver the form with a \$35 check, payable to WMHS Booster Club, to:

WMHS Booster Club 10301  
Apple Ridge Road  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20879.

Parent Information	
Name	
Address	
City	
State	
Zip	
Home Phone	
Work	
Cell	
Email	

Student Information			
Student Name 1		Student Name 2	
Graduation		Graduation	
Sports		Sports	
Extra-Curricular Activities		Extra-Curricular Activities	