

Westside High School Parent's or Guardian's Consent Form

I hereby give my consent for _____ to participate for
(Athlete's Name)

_____ School in activities approved by Westside Community Schools.
(Name of School)

I/We realize that participation involves the potential for injury, which is inherent in all sports. I/We acknowledge that even with the best coaching, use of the most advanced protective equipment and strict observance of rules, injuries are still a possibility. On rare occasions these injuries can be so severe as to result in total disability, paralysis, or even death.

I/We acknowledge that I/we have read and understand this warning.

I/We acknowledge that parents are obligated to pay for professional medical and/or related services; the school shall not be liable for payment of such services.

I/We acknowledge that insurance coverage is recommended for all participants at parents' expense and acknowledge that information regarding insurance is available.

I/We acknowledge that we have read and understand the attached student/parent letter regarding the processes of selecting teams through the tryout process, assigning team members and athletic department goals.

I/We have read the rules of eligibility pertaining to activities participation and acknowledge and understand the purpose and content thereof, including the parent domicile, student transfer and eligibility crediting rules.

I/We acknowledge that all activity participants are required to have on school records a minimum of 20 hours credit for the immediate preceding semester, must currently be taking 20 credit hours of instruction each week and that some Westside High School requirements are greater than this minimum.

I/We understand the activity may be conducted at a location other than the student's school of attendance but within the Omaha metropolitan area. In some instances the school and district will not provide transportation between the school of attendance and the site of the extracurricular activity.

I/We understand on trips outside of the Omaha metropolitan area students are required to travel to and from the event in a school vehicle. Exceptions are discouraged. If an exception is needed it must be cleared through one of the school administrators in advance.

I/We give our permission for academic information including grade point average, class rank and any academic awards/recognition received by the student/athlete to be released for the purpose of recognizing excellence in both athletics and academics. Most typically this information will be used by newspapers, school publications and for awards banquets or assemblies, all-conference or all-state awards.

The undersigned student and parent/guardian hereby release Westside Community Schools and its administrators, coaches, and other employees from any and all liabilities and damages for personal injury resulting from the student's participation in athletic programs, except in cases of willful misconduct or gross negligence.

Date _____ Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Signature of Athlete _____

Please sign this form and return with all other required forms.

Dear Parent/Guardian and Student Athlete:

Over the past few years it has come to our attention some parents and students have some misconceptions regarding the high school competitive athletic program. Please take a few moments to read this letter. Hopefully, this will help you understand how a competitive program is conducted and what comprises our expectations and philosophy.

1. In each program, a coach and/or coaches are hired by the school district to be responsible for team selection. Criteria for selection are established by the head coach; possibly with input from the entire coaching staff. This may be a highly subjective process. Team selection, practices, and decisions regarding game situations are the responsibility of the coaching staff.

2. The Westside High School athletic program is highly competitive. Due to the number of student-athletes trying out, and the limited opportunities, we are not able to place every student on a team who wishes to participate. While this is not our desire, it is reality. The hardest thing our coaches have to do is to tell young people they will not be on a team.

Please be sure when your son/daughter tries out for a team, both you and they understand there is every real possibility they may not be selected. If selected, both of you should be prepared to **accept** placement at any team level (i.e. 9th Grade, Reserve, Junior Varsity or Varsity). It is disturbing to have a student tryout for a team and then quit because they were not placed where “they think” they should be. By doing this, they have taken away someone else’s opportunity to be on a team.

Normally, coaches have a very short amount of time to make team selections. They try to do the very best they can in keeping the most talented athletes, filling positions for play, and appropriately placing them on the proper team. They are under a good deal of pressure to assemble the most competitive team possible. Anyone of us might select different athletes for the team. We believe it is the coaches’ responsibility and right to select the team with whom they will work for the entire season.

3. Our experience in athletics reveals there are many “select teams” sponsored by many different organizations. Each coach looks for something different in his or her players. Participation on a “select team” does not guarantee any player a spot on any high school team. While we believe players can gain valuable experience outside of the school athletic program, neither parents or students should count on this type of participation to “guarantee” a spot on a high school team.

4. In order to make a varsity team as a senior, a player must be outstanding and also play a position the team needs. Underclass persons possessing these qualities have the same opportunity to make the team as the senior does. Our team structure (9th Grade, Reserve, Junior Varsity, Varsity) dictates there will always be more underclass players than upper class players in the total program. At selection time, it will be the coaches’ decision.

5. A main goal of a competitive athletic program is to put the most talented members of the team in competition to win the contest. Starting positions and playing time are not guaranteed to seniors making a team; or anyone else for the matter. Each member of a team is very valuable to the team’s overall progress. Some players may play a great deal of time in a contest, while others may not see what a parent would consider to be “significant” playing time. Each student should have personal improvement as one of his or her goals.

If you have questions regarding the team selection process, please feel free to address these questions directly to the head coach. Please call the coach to make an appointment outside of school, practice or game time. There may be times when you have a concern about your student’s participation on our teams and/or in our programs. When these concerns arise, we ask that you use the following chain of communication to deal with the concerns:

- *First:** Ask your student to talk with the coach or sponsor about the concerns.
- *Second:** If the coach or sponsor and the student have not resolved the issues, then the parent/legal guardian should request a meeting with the coach or sponsor outside of class time, practice time, or event time. The coach or sponsor may request that the student attend this meeting. Please take the time to talk directly with the coach or sponsor so that you get the coach's or sponsor's point of view directly.
- *Third:** If these two steps have not succeeded, then the parent/legal guardian may request a meeting with the Assistant Principal/Athletic Director at the school. The student, coach or sponsor will be included in this meeting.
- *Fourth:** If resolution has not been achieved, the parent/legal guardian and student may request a meeting with the Principal, in which the coach or sponsor, parent, student and assistant principal will attend. We hope that the concerns can be addressed at the site level.
- *Fifth:** We would request that you initiate this chain of communication when you first believe a concern warrants communication with the school, for the sooner that we are aware of the concern, the sooner we can attempt to address the concern.
- *NOTE:** Topics that will not be addressed by administrators in these meetings include playing time, game strategies, playing level, starters, student selection on teams, and comparison of students' skills. These are decisions properly made by and discussed with our coaches and sponsors, and we support the freedom of coaches or sponsors to make these types of decisions. We believe that by using this approach, most of the concerns can be addressed and resolved at the most appropriate level.

By being a member of a team, regardless of time spent in actual competition, a person can learn many valuable lessons. Among them are the following: citizenship, sportsmanship, appreciating good play by an opponent, working together to meet team goals, responsibility and commitment to team and school, loyalty, placing team above self, learning to accept instruction and criticism, respect for others, winning and losing with dignity, self-control, and being responsible for one's own actions.

I sincerely hope this helps you to understand the goals and philosophies of the competitive athletic program at Westside High School. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding any aspect of the athletic program.

Thomas G. Kerkman
Assistant Principal/Athletic Director
Westside High School
343-2605
tkerkman@westside66.org