High School Wrestling Team Handbook

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1. Team Mission & Philosophy

Our mission is to develop student-athletes who demonstrate integrity, discipline, sportsmanship, and a commitment to personal and team success—both on and off the mat. Wrestling teaches accountability, sacrifice, discipline, dedication, hard work, responsibility, and service. Every member of the program is valued and contributes to the team's success.

2. Code of Conduct

All wrestlers are expected to:

- Represent the team, school, and community with pride.
- Show respect to coaches, parents, teammates, officials, and opponents.
- Give maximum effort in practice and competition: focus on growth and effort NOT results.
- Maintain eligibility through academic performance and behavior.
- Follow all school and MSHSL rules.

3. Conflict Resolution

Disagreements and misunderstandings can happen. We believe in addressing issues respectfully and directly.

Step 1: Wrestler speaks privately with the Head Coach and a second coach to discuss the concern.
Step 2: If the issue remains unresolved the parent/guardian may meet with the coaching staff after the wrestler has followed the first step.
Step 3: If further resolution is needed, the athletic director may be brought into the discussion.

> *Note: Conflicts should never be discussed during or immediately after a match or competition. A 24-hour cooling-off period is encouraged.*

4. Wrestle-Off Policy

1. Wrestlers will write their name on the board next to the weight class they would like to wrestle-off for. They will also indicate a second weight should they not not win the varsity spot at their first choice.
2. Wrestle offs will be designated on the season calendar. There will be 4 wrestle offs during the season.
3. Wrestlers must be present and make weight on the day the wrestle-offs are posted.
4. A wrestler may challenge in one weight class only during a given week, and advance up the ladder one rung at a time. Exception to the first wrestle off of the season.
5. A wrestler must weigh-in **below the next weight** of the weight class he has challenged. Weigh-ins will be conducted before the practice of the wrestle-off; failure to make weight will result in a "forfeit".
    a. Example: Sign up for 107; must weigh-in below 113.9 to be eligible for wrestle off
6. The first wrestle off will be a setup in round robin brackets between all wrestlers challenging for that weight class. After the first wrestle off, any challengers will be a best of 1 match in order to face the starter who must be beaten twice in a row. The top two will compete for best 2 out of 3 matches, the first wrestle off date.
7. After the first wrestle-off, the winner will be considered the starter in that weight class until replaced/ removed by the wrestle-off/ challenge match system or otherwise determined by the coaching staff.
    - If a varsity wrestler is challenged he must be defeated in the first match and then one of the next 2 matchings making it 2 out of 3..
    - **If strategy or injury dictates changing the line up after wrestle-offs have concluded, the coaches can determine the competitors per weight class for a dual meet.**
    - **A wrestler who is ineligible (including not making weight if someone else does) for any reason loses the starting spot and must wrestle off for the position when he is eligible again.**
    - **A wrestler who is the starter, but not able to defend their spot due to injury, ineligibility or unexcused absence at the next wrestle off will lose their starting spot and become a challenger at the next wrestle off.**
8. If any varsity wrestler is unable to compete due to illness or injury, is still considered to be the varsity starter upon his return although another wrestler competed in his place. However If they are unable to wrestle off during wrestle offs they will be replaced with the winner of the wrestle offs.
9. A #1 ranked or #2 ranked wrestlers may challenge laterally, one weight classification. These wrestlers will not be required to start at the bottom of the weight class ladder.
10. If a varsity position is vacated, that weight class is declared "OPEN" and any wrestler can challenge for it. Only one victory over each competitor is required to earn that position.

11. Extenuating circumstances may lead to appropriate modifications in these guidelines.

5. Communication Guidelines

Athletes' Responsibility:

- Check practice and meet schedules daily.
- Communicate absences, injuries, or conflicts as early as possible.
- Use proper channels (in person or official team communication apps).

Parent/Guardian Communication:

- Contact coaches respectfully and at appropriate times.
- Follow the 24-hour rule before discussing concerns about competition or playing time.
- Support your wrestler by reinforcing team values and expectations.

Coach Responsibility:

- Communicate schedules, expectations, and any team issues promptly.
- Provide feedback to athletes on performance and progress.

6. Lettering Requirements

Lettering is an honor that recognizes commitment, contribution, and performance.

To earn a varsity letter, a wrestler must meet **one or more** of the following criteria:

1. Compete in **50% or more of varsity duals/tournaments**.
2. Score **points in the postseason** (conference, sectionals, or state).
3. Demonstrate exceptional **leadership, attitude, and work ethic** as determined by the coaching staff.
4. Complete the **season in good standing**, including attendance, academics, and conduct.

   Managers or statisticians may also letter by fulfilling all assigned duties throughout the season.

7. Captain expectations

- Attend and encourage others to attend a summer team camp.
- Attend and encourage others to attend summer practices. There are only 6-7.
- Maintain a positive attitude. This includes making sure that you are encouraging and building up team members, not tearing them down
- Support Team members who need extra help.
- Be in shape and get the team in shape before the first day of practice by holding captains practices.
- Follow all school, program and MSHSL rules and policies.
- **Emphasizing the importance of <u>team</u> success helps <u>individual</u> success.**

8. Attendance & Absence Policy

- Attendance at all practices, meets, and team events is **mandatory**.
- **Excused absences** include illness (with a note), family emergencies, or school-approved activities.
- **Unexcused absences** may result in loss of varsity position, match participation, or disciplinary action.
- Repeated absences may lead to dismissal from the team.

9. Parent/Guardian Involvement

Parents play a vital role in supporting our program by:

- Encouraging sportsmanship, effort, and teamwork.
- Helping with transportation, fundraisers, and events when possible.
- Respecting the coaching staff's decisions and promoting a positive environment.
- Attending matches and celebrating both effort and improvement—not just wins.

10. Acknowledgment Form

I have read and understand the expectations and policies outlined in the **High School Wrestling Team Handbook**. I agree to uphold these standards and represent my school and team with pride.

Wrestler Name: _____
Wrestler Signature: _____
Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature: _____
Date: _____