

# 2023 WMS TIGER SOFTBALL

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

The coaching staff would like to take this opportunity to put in writing our coaching philosophy and goals for you, your student-athlete, as well as the team for the 2023 Spring softball season. School athletics can be an exciting time for your student-athlete. It can be a place where they grow their skills and confidence as a softball player. As you read through this letter, you will find our coaching philosophy, objectives for the season, information about playing time and positions, team rules and discipline, player and parent expectations, and contact information of the coaches. Please read through this letter, and if you have any questions, feel free to contact Coach Wattie for any explanations. We are excited and hopeful for a successful 2023 softball season!

## **Mission Statement**

To develop respectful and responsible individuals who excel academically, athletically, and socially.

## **Coaching Philosophy**

We believe that school athletics is where student-athletes gain confidence in their athletic abilities. We also believe that the confidence attained in athletics carries over into other aspects of the student-athlete's life. Positive attitudes not just from the student-athletes but also from you as parents and us as coaches are pertinent to achieve the highest level of confidence in your student-athlete. Because of this belief, we will do our best to provide an atmosphere where confidence can grow and be fostered.

We believe that athletics is a place where student-athletes learn hard work, perseverance, competition, effort, and discipline. We will provide an atmosphere where those qualities will be developed. Practices will be hard, but they are hard to prepare the student-athlete for competition. If the student-athlete gives 100% at every practice, they will be rewarded for their hard work.

We believe it is our job as a coaching staff to teach the fundamentals and skills of softball. The place and time to do this is during practice. During a game is where the small things are addressed, but overall this is the chance for the student-athlete to perform the skills they have learned. We expect the same from the parents and would ask for you to refrain from coaching from the stands or coming to the dugout to instruct your student-athlete during games.

## **Goals and Objectives**

- Help your student-athlete develop skills necessary to be successful at the middle school level and to prepare your student-athlete for high school softball.
- To have fun and have each student-athlete develop a love for the game of softball.
- Learn about the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship.
- Give positive reinforcement based on effort rather than results
- Provide a safe and healthy environment for all the kids on the team.

## Expectations

Players are expected to come to EVERY practice, work hard, have fun, display a positive attitude, pass all of their classes, and treat teammates, coaches, and officials with respect. Parents, family members, and friends of the family are expected to support the coaches and **ALL** the players and treat coaches, players, and officials with respect. If you have any concerns, please make an appointment with Coach Wattie outside of practice and game times.

If a parent or friend of the family makes inappropriate comments about the players, coaches, officials, or the other team, the supervisor on duty will be notified, and the parent will be removed from the game. We have **ZERO tolerance** for disrespectful spectators.

**Authorized Absences:** School-sponsored events, Doctor's/Dentist's/Orthodontist's appointments with notes, Funerals.

**Unauthorized Absences:** Non-school sponsored events or competitions, sick without a doctor's note.

**\*\*Any questions refer to the Rules, Team, and Individual Discipline Section on this packet.**

## Practice

Every player is expected to be at every practice. Unauthorized absences from practices will result in penalties and affect playing time. Please call, text, or email Coach Wattie if you cannot attend.

\*Check above or the student handbook for further explanation about authorized and unauthorized absences.

\*Practices are closed to parents. Please wait in the stands for your child. We will try to be prompt at letting them out on time. Also, please do not come to the sidelines and try to coach your student-athletes from outside the field. We know and understand the game of softball and are fully capable of coaching/teaching your student-athlete the game. Coaching from outside the field of play is a distraction and dangerous.

## Games

Willard Middle School Girls Softball Schedule was given to each girl after tryouts and can be found on the softball website. Coach Wattie will give a list of bus times to the players at a later date.

\*There will be an "A" and "B" team and possibly a "C" team. These three teams will be composed of both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls. During home games, the "A" team will play the first game consisting of five innings, and then the "B" team will play the second game, consisting of a five-inning game. "C" team games will be held on different nights than the "A" and "B" games. All of these games will be away games this season.

\*Per the rules of middle school softball, each girl is allowed to play in 18 games per season which includes tournaments. There are two tournaments that the "A" team will play in this season, and the "B" team will play in one tournament. There might be an opportunity for some "B" team members to be asked to play in one of the "A" tournaments. Coach Wattie will notify the girls chosen to play before the tournament is played that they will be participating in that tournament. **All middle school team members, "A" and "B," are expected to be present for all tournaments, whether they are there to participate or support their teammates.** We are trying to get more games for a "C" Team. When/If we have those scheduled, I will send out information to everyone. Missing a tournament will be considered the same as missing a game or practice, and the student-athlete will have to make up for the time they were gone.

\*During ALL games, please refrain from coming to the dugout. You may bring drinks to the players **BEFORE** the game, but while playing, please refrain from coming to the dugout and distracting your student-athlete from the game. All facilities we play at will provide water for the team, so they will not be without hydration during games.

\*After both games (“A” and “B”), there will be a team meeting where the coaching staff will discuss the game and the upcoming agenda. Sometimes this meeting will take a bit, and we would appreciate it if the parents, family members, and friends of the family do not interrupt those meetings. We are aware of the time the games end and the bedtime for the girls, so please be respectful of our time to talk to the girls about skills needing improvement.

\*During away games, your daughter must be signed out by **YOU** not to ride the bus home. You may not call or have another parent sign her out, even if she is a teammate.

\*We will have a concession stand operating during all home games. Please be prepared to volunteer to work during either “A” or “B” home games. We will assign games that parents will work in the concession stand. You are responsible for covering your shift if you cannot work that game. If you do not show up to work at your specific time, we will have your student-athlete work in your place. Parents of girls on the “B” team will work the “A” games and vice versa. This allows you to watch your student-athlete in the game that they are playing.

### **Playing Time**

Playing time will be based on attendance to practice, work ethic, and attitude. Those players who do not miss practice, work hard and display a positive and encouraging attitude will earn more playing time.

**\*Playing time will not be discussed with parents. If you or your child would like an explanation about playing time, your student-athlete can speak with the coaching staff on ways to improve their chances of receiving more playing time.**

### **Rules, Team, and Individual Discipline**

As stated above, unauthorized absences from practices will result in extra conditioning and shortened playing time.

- School-related activities, certain family activities, and absences that result in a doctor’s note are considered authorized. However, each player will be expected to make up conditioning from that practice.
- Three unauthorized practices will result in removal from the team.
- Tardiness for practices and/or games will also result in extra conditioning for the team.
- Must be on the field ready to go 10 minutes before practice starts.
- Practice will start promptly at the scheduled time.

All extracurricular activity rules stated in the Willard Middle School Handbook will be followed.

- A student absent for 15 minutes or more from class(es) on the day of an activity may not participate in the activity unless the principal gives prior approval.

All students participating in athletics must have a physical examination on file before the first practice.

All students participating in athletics must have paid the \$40 athletic fee and \$20 activities’ pass before the first game.

No student will be allowed to participate in any interscholastic activity before the public until a Citizenship Standards Eligibility and Drug Testing Consent Form have been signed and placed on file in the principal's office.

The Willard Middle School is a Missouri State High School Activities Association member. All activities governed by the association will adhere to its by-laws and guidelines. You can find those guidelines on the MSHSAA website.

There has been an increasing concern about using social media and student-athletes. If a student-athlete engages in inappropriate behavior on any social media, the following actions will be taken:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Student-athlete will be verbally warned, have extra conditioning, and loss of playing time, and parents will be notified.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Student-athlete will be removed from the team.

Any player receiving school discipline will spend their first practice back from suspension doing **INTENSE** conditioning at the coach's discretion.

For In-School Suspension, if the team has a game on the day a player serves ISS, the player will sit out that game. If the team does not have a game during the assigned day(s) of ISS, the player will sit out the next game to be played.

For Out-Of-School Suspension, the coaching staff will examine each disciplinary case and determine the best course of action for all involved parties.

Any player receiving any other form of discipline during the school day (i.e., office referral, detention, etc.) will receive extra conditioning at the coach's discretion and loss in playing time during the next game.

Repeated offenses will result in removal from the team.

Staci Wattie MS Head Coach/ HS Assistant Coach <a href="mailto:staciwattie@willardschools.net">staciwattie@willardschools.net</a> School: 742-5430 ext 3901 Cell: 417-234-0532	Glenn Dawson MS Assistant Coach	Ashleigh Williams HS Head Coach <a href="mailto:ashleighwilliams@willardschools.net">ashleighwilliams@willardschools.net</a>
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If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Coach Wattie to schedule a meeting time. Please sign and detach the bottom of this paper and return it to the coaches once you have read the entire packet.

Thanks,  
WMS Softball Coaching Staff

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the information in the softball packet.  
**(Student-athlete's Signature)**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, parent of \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Parent Signature & Printed Name)** **(Student-athlete name)**

have read and understand the information in the WMS Softball Parent Letter.