

Woodbury High School Football Program Handbook



Program Policies, Expectations, and Procedures for Players, Parents, and Coaches.

Letter to Players & Parents

Dear Woodbury Football Player & Parent:

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I welcome you to the Woodbury High School football program. Whether you are a returning player, or if this is your first time playing football, my hope is that your experience as a member of the WHS football program is rewarding and character building. While every high school football team prepares to be victorious on Friday nights, our program seeks to go beyond the stadium scoreboard and help build young people to become difference makers who are able to succeed in life.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline what the Woodbury High School program stands for, our activities and opportunities, along with our policies and expectations. I hope that this will be a reference to answer many of your questions.

High school football is a journey – it usually starts weeks before a student-athlete has ever sat in a WHS academic class – and over the course of one's career, many life, academic, and perspective changes occur. We seek to be the best football team on the field in competition on Friday nights, but what will make us successful on the field are the same qualities that will help a young person have a positive and productive journey through high school. The same character qualities that we look to build, and the challenges and demands of our program, will serve as a source of pride and help form the foundation of a successful young adult. However, like pretty much any other aspect of life, student-athletes and parents should make sure that their individual expectations match up with their level of investment in our program.

On behalf of our coaching staff, I want you to know that we love our student-athletes. We define love as being here for them and working to help them be the best that they can be. We do not define love as giving people whatever they want. Hopefully you will see this in our mission, vision, and culture. This handbook provides the framework for many different individuals, with different motives and goals, to come together with a common understanding of policies and expectations. Please take the time to go over this on your own, player and parent(s) together, so that we can work to move in a collective direction.

Thank you for coming out for football at Woodbury High School. For those who invest in our program, it will truly be rewarding. We will have our ups and downs together, but when reflecting on this journey as a graduating senior, I believe that you will take pride in your investment and accomplishments both on and off the field.

On behalf of the entire WHS Football Coaching Staff,

Coach Hill

The Purpose of Woodbury Football

Woodbury Football Mission: “Building Difference Makers”

Our program’s mission statement answers the WHY question: Why does the Woodbury Football program exist? The core purpose of the existence of our football program is to build young men to be a difference maker in their school, their church, their family, their community, and their high school football team. We believe that by developing character and successful habits, we will empower a young person to become a difference maker within our program, and we will also provide the tools and experience to do the same beyond the hallways, locker room, and playing fields at Woodbury High School. **Everything we do will fall within the PURPOSE of building young people to be difference makers, and we use the game of football to teach these life lessons.**

Woodbury Football Vision: “Consistently Choosing the Path of Excellence.”

The vision statement is our HOW. It answers the question: How does the Woodbury Football program seek to fulfill its mission to Build Difference Makers? The process of becoming a difference maker involves the development of core character traits, as well as the development of **behavioral habits**, and these are both achieved through living out our vision. In order for us to be successful on the football field, in the classroom, at home, and in the community, we need to build a strong character as our foundation, yet this is not an overnight process. We do not require that players or coaches be perfect, but instead work to teach and improve working towards CONSISTENTLY (integrity) making decisions that we know to be right and push us down the road of having the opportunity to make a difference.

Woodbury Football On-Field Goals:

- To WIN football games
- To develop players in both the skills and understanding of the game of football
- To foster a collective identity and family environment

Woodbury Football Off-Field Goals:

- To teach and develop organizational habits
- To empower student-athletes with skills to advocate for their own needs and concerns
- To establish a giving reputation within the Woodbury community
- To help student-athletes achieve non-football goals including attending college after graduation

THREE KEY ASSUMPTIONS: If a player CHOOSES to participate as a member of the Woodbury High School football program, there are Three Assumptions that the coaching staff will make about the player and his/her family. If any of the following are inaccurate, the player should choose not to play football as he/she will not believe that the time and efforts have been a worthwhile investment:

1. You want to be the best person you can be.
2. You want to be the best football player you can be.
3. You want to be a part of something great.

RECOGNIZED PRIORITIES: FAITH – FAMILY – SCHOOL – FOOTBALL

These priorities are in-season priorities because many student-athletes will be involved in other sports or activities after football season. When a higher priority conflicts with football, we will recognize that football will give way to the higher priority. However, players and parents are expected to understand that playing time, depth chart status, and other football-related incentives or activities may be negatively affected by the conflict, even though the conflict results in an excused absence. For example, a player who misses three days of practice for after-school tutoring should not expect to dress or play in that week’s game – he/she is not prepared to play, nor is it fair to the rest of the team to have an unprepared player take up playing time.

Woodbury Football Culture

- W** **Work.** To fulfill our mission and to achieve our goals (individual and collective), we embrace the reality that it comes at a price. We must work. We will fight entitlement, and we will not expect to achieve that which we have not earned. In other words, we must WORK to earn high expectations. On the field, in the weight room, in our off-season program, in the classroom, and in our community, we are going to invest time, energy, emotion, and commitment at a level that allows us to pursue excellence.
- I** **Integrity.** Our actions must line up with what we claim to stand for. If we claim to be a football team chasing a championship, then our actions will line up with what it takes to be a champion on and off of the football field. Our integrity is built and reinforced over years, but can be shattered in a moment.
- N** **Never Settle.** The enemy of Great is Good. Too many athletes believe they have “worked hard” or “done my best” the moment they break into a sweat. We will pursue greatness by not being OK with average. Whether this is our grades, or our commitment to volunteering, we do not want people who are happy to “check off the box” but rather those who want their life to be their masterpiece.
- T** **Toughness.** We will be mentally and physically tough. This is not something that can be done in a day, or even in a week. The sum of our small, disciplined decisions day in and day out prepare us to be mentally tough when our situation requires it. Just a muscle mass is increased over months of workouts, so is mental toughness to do what’s right and to respond to adversity.
- H** **Humility.** Humility prevents arrogance or believing that we are entitled to anything. We always want to be “Humble & Hungry.” For our team to succeed we must actively resist the “me-first” mentality that permeates our culture. Great teams have players who express gratitude regularly and credit their teammates for success, and humility keeps them working together, day in and day out, for each other.
- E** **Enthusiasm.** “Enthusiasm is the mother of effort.” We want genuine energy and emotion, which varies from person to person. Eeyore does not have a place in our program. We want people who believe in who we are, and what we want to do, on and off of the field, and who get excited about it.
- D** **Discipline.** We see and teach that discipline is the key to individual freedom, not punishment. Discipline is to do the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, every time. Discipline will separate teams of equal ability. Discipline will drive success in the classroom, at the workplace, and in the home. Discipline is about HABITS and conscious decisions that move us towards our goals.
- A** **Attitude.** We cannot control all of the events we face, but we can control our response to those events, and more often than not, our response will determine the outcome. We control our attitudes, and through controlling our attitudes (and using them to our advantage), we inspire ourselves and others in any situation to walk with hope and optimism.
- Y** **Yolo.** This might surprise you at first, but the modern “You Only Live Once” acronym holds great wisdom if not used as an excuse to blindly engage in immature and stupid behaviors. When viewed through the lens of wisdom, YOLO stands for cherishing the moments and the process. Football is a finite experience, as are so many things in life, and we need to value and celebrate our time together. We will never get to replay this season, so cherish your opportunities. Choose wisely how you spend your time and energy, and you will set yourself to look back with no regrets and no excuses.

Team Policies & Expectations: Academics and In-School

Academics: Academic success is a priority to the football program. We believe it is possible for **every student to pass every class**. The student-athlete formula to be successful is simple: **go to and be on-time for every class AND turn in 100% of your assignments**. The following actions will be put into place to help all football players be successful in the classroom:

1. Plan to Win Academic Planner checks
2. Progress checks with grades along with open feedback on classroom behavior and work ethic
3. Continued tracking of academic progress in the off-season, followed by appropriate action steps

**** Note:** Concerns about academic performance should be brought to a coach's attention by the player or by the parent. Do not assume that the coaching staff knows what is going on academically, because coaches have very limited access to academic information. If we are aware of a concern, we will address it with the player in a timely manner.

Recognizing Academic Success: The Woodbury Football Program will recognize academic success for each trimester during the school year through posting an Academic Honors list on the Woodbury Football website. In years where our Trimester 1 final grades are available a week prior to the football banquet, we will publicly honor those achievements at the football banquet. The academic success is based on a trimester (not cumulative so that despite the past, student-athletes can always try to make the list each trimester). The three categories are: 3.000-3.499 GPA, 3.500-3.999 GPA, and 4.000+ GPA.

Before and After School Academic Help: A key to academic success is not waiting until one has fallen significantly behind before seeking assistance. There are a couple of pieces of information that can help you get the assistance you need if you are struggling in a class.

- Teachers are often willing to help by appointment – so set up a time and show up at the correct time.
- WHS Teacher contract hours are 7:30 am – 3:30 pm. Therefore, it is more likely that a teacher will be available to help walk-ins before school than it is after school.
- Outside adult tutors (free) are available almost every morning at 7:30 am in the Counseling Office – you do not need an appointment to get tutoring help.
- Groups like the National Honor Society at WHS may be able to help with providing free, student tutors set up at before, after, or outside of school appointments. Players seeking this type of tutoring should reach out to your counselor to be connected with a resource and/or tutor.
- Before School Study Hall – Coach Hill's classroom (219) is always open by 7:30 before school to be used as a study hall to complete schoolwork. During the football season, there may be morning meetings, but available desks may be used for a silent study hall.

In season, players are encouraged to utilize before school academic help so that he/she can fulfill one's commitment to the football program after school. Academics are a higher priority than football, but a useful life skill is being able to manage one's time to appropriately meet commitments. Hopefully there are options that will work in order for a student-athlete to receive any needed academic help while continuing to play football.

Lunchroom Policy: *Nobody sits alone at lunch.* The entire team will face a consequence should a coach, teacher, or administrator witness the duration of a lunch period where a student (any student) sat alone. It is the responsibility of the football players in each lunch shift to make sure that nobody sits alone. In meeting this expectation, players are expected to act with kindness – and even respect to one's wishes of privacy – but still sit in close enough physical proximity to allow the student sitting alone to not feel as though he/she is noticeably isolated from the rest of the student body.

Behavior Expectations: From the moment a student-athlete chooses to join the football program, he/she is expected to appropriately represent the football program and Woodbury High School at all times, year round, regardless of whether or not it is football season. If a player's behavior falls below or outside of expectations,

the player and parent can expect the coaching staff to become involved and possible consequences, including playing time, to be on the table in an effort to correct inappropriate behavior. In terms of in school behavior, when an inappropriate behavior is witnessed by a coach, or brought to our attention by another teacher or a school administrator, it will be addressed with the player.

Team Policies & Expectations: Out-of-School

Social Media: Playing football at Woodbury High School is a voluntary activity, and therefore players “opt in” to representing our team and our school on and off of the field. This includes social media. Social Media is completely controlled by the individuals choosing to post information, comments, beliefs, and includes the reposting of other’s original content. We will teach our student-athletes how to use social media as a tool to promote themselves in their best light, as we believe this is a skill that will be useful as a young adult outside the world of high school and high school athletics. Much of what high school students post is acceptable and, even if outside of a desired quality of posting, will not draw a response from the coaching staff. However, any posting of **radically offensive, unsportsmanlike, racist, sexist, the promotion or glorification of illegal activity, or comments intended to intimidate a specific individual or group WILL be addressed by the coaching staff and may result in program consequences.** ** Note, in accordance with Minnesota state law, posts on social media may fall within the new legislation regarding bullying and, therefore, would subject the player who posts material to school consequences as laid out in the District 833 bullying policy.

Bullying: All accusations or incidents of bullying will be turned over to the WHS administration in order for the District 833 policy on bullying to be followed. In such events, the WHS coaching staff will work with and at the direction of the administration in order to handle the situation within the guidelines of district policy.

Hazing: Hazing is **not allowed at any time and in any situation**. Hazing is defined by the Minnesota State High School League as, “committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose,” (MSHSL Handbook, Rule 209.00). The Woodbury Football program does not have, nor recognize, any formal or informal initiation activities; and, no action by any player or coach that would approach the definition of hazing will be tolerated.

School Activities & Events: Please refer to the “Behavior Expectations” of the previous section as this would also apply to school activities and events, whether or not the activities and/or events occur during the school day. The football program encourages its members, coaches and players, to participate and/or support other school activities, sports, and important events. In doing so, this is an opportunity to support others and to represent our program, school, and community with pride and first-class behavior.

MSHSL Violations: As outlined in the Minnesota State High School League handbook, by voluntary participation in MSHSL sports or activities, student-athletes and parents agree to an accepted code of conduct. Violations of this code may result in an official MSHSL Violation. In the event of an MSHSL violation, any suspension issued by the MSHSL governing body (or WHS administration) will be honored during the football season for a minimum of 2 weeks (unless the MSHSL suspension is less, then the football penalty would match) at the discretion of the coaching staff. In addition, the Woodbury Football Program addresses violations as outlined below:

1. We will not serve as a suspension tool for off-season violations for students who participate in winter or spring sports. The MSHSL indicates that in order for a suspension to be served, the student-athlete must remain on the team and fulfill all requirements of the team throughout the course of the season. Because football is a no-cut sport at WHS, playing football to serve a suspension has been seen as an option for student-athletes in the past. In this situation, the student-athlete will be dismissed from the program on his/her third absence of ANY KIND, and therefore the suspension will remain for the

student-athlete's next season. **The Woodbury High School Football program will not be used to circumvent the intention of MSHSL policy.**

2. If a football player receives a **FIRST** MSHSL violation involving the use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco during the football season, he/she will serve the MSHSL suspension and be allowed to return to the team, but playing time may not immediately be returned due to changes in the depth chart during the suspension. However, if a student-athlete were to receive his/her **SECOND** MSHSL violation during the season for the above mentioned reasons, he/she will be dismissed from the team, per the approval of WHS administration.
3. If a player receives an off-season MSHSL infraction/violation, and does not immediately inform Coach Hill about the violation at the start of the season, he/she will be suspended for an additional game beyond the MSHSL violation penalty. Choosing to not inform the coaching staff is deceptive and hurts the team – therefore, we have added the additional game suspension.
4. If a football player receives an MSHSL violation for another cause during the season, the MSHSL and/or WHS suspension will be served, and the player can return to good standing with the program after the suspension.
5. All appeals of the violation will be processed through the MSHSL and the WHS Activities Director, and student-athletes may or may not be eligible to participate during the appeal as directed by the WHS Activities Director.
6. Any player who is suspended from being game eligible for an MSHSL violation **will not be eligible to serve as a captain** of the Woodbury High School football program and **will not be eligible for any post-season All-Conference Awards.**

Team Policies & Expectations: In-Season

Levels of Play: The Woodbury High School Football program offers the following levels of play:

VARSITY: The varsity football team will consist of the players who will most likely contribute to the competition goal of winning varsity football contests. This will include every player who qualifies or earns a spot on the Dress List (outlined later). A player may dress for the varsity team and still play in a sub-varsity game if he/she has not used up the MSHSL allowed 6.5 quarters of play.

JUNIOR VARSITY: The Junior Varsity team will primarily consist of Juniors and Seniors who do not receive significant playing time in the Varsity game. JV games occur after the Varsity game, so the JV roster may fluctuate from week to week. When necessary, Sophomores, and possibly Freshmen, may be asked to play in JV games to provide enough personnel to play the game. **It is the program's expectation that all eligible and designated Juniors & Seniors will play in JV games** – if one refuses to participate, that player may be removed from the varsity dress list.

10th GRADE: The 10th Grade Team – what some schools refer to as the “B” team (not a designation that we use at WHS because of the prevalence of 10B and 9B games on our schedule) – will be made up of all sophomores who are in the Woodbury High School Football program. Sophomores who qualified to dress for the varsity games will do so in addition to their primary placement of being on the 10th Grade team.

FRESHMEN: All incoming 9th grade football players will initially be placed on the 9th grade team for their level of participation. In some rare cases, a 9th grader will be pulled up to participate in games at a higher level, but all will begin practicing with the 9th grade team.

“B” Games at 9th & 10th grade: As **ALL LEVELS** of play will **NOT have guaranteed nor equal playing time**, we often look to schedule 9B or 10B games as an opportunity to offer more playing time to 9th and 10th grade players who do not see significant playing time in the regular 9th or 10th grade games. Rosters for the 9B and 10B games will fluctuate based on how much playing time a player receives in the regular games.
**Note: 10B games are traditionally difficult to schedule – we play possibly 1 or 2 per year.

Playing Time & Positions: Playing time is usually the most critical factor in the surface level satisfaction of players and parents when evaluating a player’s experience in the Woodbury Football Program. While the coaching staff understands this, we also understand that the priorities greater than each individuals playing time are: (1) helping the team to compete and try to win games at every level of high school football, and (b) helping players develop in the position(s) that most prepare them for on-field success on our team.

What determines playing time?

- Several factors: knowledge of assignments, attendance at practice, physical performance IN PRACTICE, execution of assignments in the game, attitude, and talent.
- COACHES determine the playing time at each level. **Varsity, JV, 10th, and 9th Grade games DO NOT HAVE EQUAL OR ANY GUARANTEED PLAYING TIME.**
- “B” games at the 9th & 10th grade level are played with the intention of having all players who dress for the “B” game play in the game, although playing time might not be equal.

What should I do if I (or my child) is not receiving playing time, or enough playing time as one wants?

- Later in this handbook you will find the ***Conflict Resolution*** schedule, please follow this.
- MAKE SURE that your child is actually attending practice – do NOT assume – over half of our conflicts where playing time is an issue result in a parent finding out that their child has not been attending practices.
- Be prepared to execute your assignments when given an opportunity in practice and/or a game, and keep a positive attitude while working hard and waiting for your opportunity. Coaches will not play a player who is pouting.

How is Varsity Playing Time determined?

- At every level, playing time is determined as mentioned above. The playing time at all levels can change from week to week as several factors can and will adjust the line-up.
- From the Varsity standpoint, **the Junior Varsity and Sophomore teams are EQUAL** in terms of evaluating players who might be ready to contribute at the varsity level – the JV is primarily for current Juniors and Seniors, and the 10th grade is for Sophomores. Therefore, a player on either of those levels wishing to work his/her way into the varsity rotation should DOMINATE in their JV or 10th grade game.
- If there is a DOMINANT 9th grader, before being brought “up” to the varsity level, in most cases he/she will be asked to play in either a 10th or JV game so the staff can evaluate the player’s readiness to compete at the varsity level.

How are positions determined?

- Positions are initially selected by players during the first day of practice or during the summer when players can choose to work with the position coach of their choice.
- After this, coaches may move a player to a different position based on the following two criteria in order: (1) The new position is in the best interest of helping the team be the best that it can be, and (2) the new position will give the player the best opportunity to get on the field.
- Positions are re-evaluated by the coaching staff on a regular basis, and changes will be made when the above circumstances come into play.

Dress List: Each week the Woodbury Football program will have a “dress list” which indicates which players in the program will suit up to be able to participate in that week’s varsity football game. The dress list can, and likely will, fluctuate during the course of the season. One can earn a spot on the varsity dress list by:

- Being in the top two players at a position on the varsity depth chart. This will be demonstrated in practice and/or other games.
- During the off-season, coaches determine that a player has demonstrated outstanding commitment, but is not in the top 2 on the depth chart at his position, the coaching staff can choose to have a player be placed on the dress list.
- Note: An injured player who, prior to the injury, is evaluated to have been likely to be on the varsity dress list will be on the varsity dress list. This evaluation is made by the WHS coaching staff alone.

While it is not a common practice in the Woodbury Football program, it is possible to be removed from the dress list after having previously been on it. This would happen with one or more of the following:

- Extreme drop in the depth chart to where varsity playing time is very unlikely.
- Not remaining in good standing with a sub-varsity team. For example, a rising 10th grader who was selected through his commitment demonstrated during off-season workouts, but then misses enough practices that cause him to not dress for the 10th grade game. This would result in the removal from the varsity dress list.
- Academic or behavior concerns, at the discretion of the coaching staff, where removal from the dress list serves as a motivational tactic to improve academic performance or behavior.
- Poor attitude, sportsmanship, or behavior – at either a varsity or sub-varsity level, as determined by the appropriate level coach - that takes away from the atmosphere or performance of the varsity football team where the coaching staff believes that performance will improve without a certain player present.

If a player is removed from the varsity dress list, or does not initially make the varsity dress list, it is possible for them to earn a spot on the dress list over the course of the season. ** Note: **One’s position on the varsity dress list, or even in the starting lineup, during one season does not automatically place him/her on the dress list the following year.**

Cut Policy: The Woodbury Football program does not cut players based on football ability. Our goal and intention is to have every student-athlete at Woodbury High School who wants to play football, and is committed to these policies and expectations, to be able to play football. We have equipment and uniforms to have approximately 160 student-athletes play football each year, so we will not cut players. ** This does NOT mean that players cannot be dismissed from the program for violations of policies as indicated throughout this handbook.

Attendance: Attendance at all in-season football practices, games, meetings, and team activities is **mandatory**. While all determinations involving absences are at the discretion of the coaching staff, the following guidelines are generally accurate:

Unexcused Absence: Any absence that Coach Hill (Grades 10-12) or Coach Smith (Grade 9) is not notified about at least 30 minutes PRIOR to the absence, with the exception of a medical emergency involving an ambulance, is an unexcused absence. Notes:

- Not all notified absences will be “excused” so it is quite possible that a pre-practice notification will still be designated as unexcused.
- EVEN IF A PLAYER IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL, he should email or text Coach Hill or Coach Smith – failure to do so may result in an unexcused absence.
- IF A PLAYER GOES HOME FROM SCHOOL, he should tell Coach Hill, Coach Smith, or leave a note with Cathy Lulich (Administrative Assistant to the Activities Director) in the Activities Office.

Excused Absence: When notified prior to the absence, the coaching staff may classify the absence as excused. Most excused absences include personal or family illness, unavoidable conflicts, or emergency situations.

Tardies: Every two justified tardies will be counted as an excused absence, and two unexcused tardies will be considered an unexcused absence. Any player whose tardiness causes him/her to miss an extreme amount of practice, in the coaches' opinion, will be counted as an absence. (For example, a player tardy because he is making up a test until 3:45 is simply tardy, but if he is gone until 5:00 it will be an excused absence).

Dismissal: At the discretion of the coaching staff, and evaluated on a case by case basis, the general attendance policy may reach the point of a recommendation for the dismissal of a football player being submitted to the Activities Director at the following points:

- 3 Unexcused absences
- 8 Excused absences (two full weeks of practice in an 8-week season)
- Note: It is our hope to not have to dismiss any members of our program. However, being a member of the Woodbury High School Football program is a privilege and has value, and this is diminished if policies are ignored or unenforced. Therefore, in a spirit of fairness, dismissal will be an option for repeated absences.

Vacations: **Vacations should not be scheduled during the football season.** Any vacations that have been scheduled on or after the official start of practices in August should be communicated to Coach Hill (Grades 10-12) or Coach Smith (Grade 9) immediately. Vacations not communicated may be counted as unexcused absences. Vacations that are properly communicated will be accepted with the following understandings:

- Every day missed will count as an excused absence
- The player will sit out one game for every three excused absences due to vacation, and this will be prorated by coaches.
- The player will drop to the bottom of the depth chart and have to work one's way back up to regain and/or earn playing time.

Injuries: Players are to see the athletic trainer immediately if an injury is believed to have occurred. Players are to follow the instructions of the athletic trainer including medical referrals and clearance to return to action. **If an athlete chooses to go to the hospital or a family doctor without seeing our athletic trainer, that specific doctor (the one seen by the student-athlete) will be required to sign a note that specifically clears you for "a return to full participation in football". The note must include those exact words.** Keep in mind, our athletic trainer has the final word on allowing an athlete back on the field, even if the athlete has been cleared by another doctor. Our athletic trainer, however, cannot clear an athlete to return if a doctor has been consulted, even if that doctor does not specifically hold the student-athlete out of participation. Therefore, **any time a player sees a doctor**, he/she should get a written note for our trainer specifying the level of participation the player is allowed to engage in.

Injured Reserve: Players suffering from an injury that keeps them from participating in practice must fulfill whatever activities that the coaching staff or the athletic trainer requests. We will not have an IR group that functions as a social club, and absences by injured players will be evaluated according to the attendance policy. In other words, a player is not to skip practice because he/she is injured. If a player is participating in medically designated physical therapy, that is viewed as being at practice because the student-athlete is doing what he/she has been instructed to do in order to be able to return to play.

Injured → Managing: One of our greatest assets in previous years has been when an injured player has chosen to stay with and help our team in the role of a manager until he can rejoin the team (even if it's the following season) as a player. Players in this situation should talk to Coach Hill, and he will outline the expectations of helping as a manager. If a player is not going to be able to meet these expectations,

then he may be dismissed or choose to leave the program. **Injured players should not assume that they will be automatically accepted to move to a managing role.**

Practice to Play: Players wishing to participate in a game must participate in practice. At sub-varsity levels, the appropriate amount of practice participation in order to play in a game will be determined by the coaches. If a player has not met this expectation, he/she will not be allowed to dress for the game in full equipment (but may wear a jersey and stand on the team's sideline). At the varsity level, in order for a player to play in a Friday night game, he/she must participate in the following: (1) at least one full-contact practice, and (2) full participation in Thursday's "polish" practice. This is flexible within the reasonable judgment of the coaching staff on a case by case basis. However, no player should assume that he/she will be awarded playing time in a game if he/she has not met the practice to play requirement.

Thursday Dress: As our Thursday practice is known as our "polish" practice, we will live this out in how we dress during the school day on Thursdays. **Players will dress up.** This will include a shirt and tie with appropriate pants – this will be part of the ***NFL's Greater Game Movement***. Other "dress up" options may be acceptable, but players should check with a coach. Jeans or shorts of any kind or color, and tennis shoes, will not be accepted. Players who do not participate will receive a first time warning, followed by a quarter's suspension for subsequent violations.

- For 9th and 10th grade players who have a game on Thursdays, they can wear their game jersey (home or away) instead of dressing up.
- For any JV, Varsity, or 9th grade player without a game, the Thursday Dress policy is in effect.

Preparedness: We must be able to adapt to necessary change on the fly, and being prepared is critical to successful adaptation. Therefore, players should always have the following in their locker:

- All football equipment and practice gear
- PLAYBOOKS should be with a player at ALL TIMES outside of practice in August and in their bag at school
- Blue or White team-issued mesh shorts
- Swimsuit & Towel
- Two pairs of socks and two t-shirts (Woodbury Football or WHS)
- **Athletic, non-cleated shoes for the occasion that we must practice in the gym or Activity Center**

Jerseys: Players will be issued home (blue) and away (white) jerseys for the team(s) that they are slotted to play with. It is the player's duty to maintain the cleanliness and quality of the jersey, and jerseys will be turned in at the end of the season. Jerseys, once washed after competition, can be stored at home or in one's locker, but it is the responsibility of the player to have the appropriate jersey available for games. If a player does not have his/her jersey, then it is quite possible for the player to be held out of the game. **Also, jerseys are NOT to be passed on to parents, girlfriends, friends, or others to be worn at any time** (with the except of Senior Night for seniors). This applies to players at all levels. It is acceptable for a sub-varsity player to wear his/her team's jersey to a varsity game, but only for the player (not friends or relatives).

LOCK YOUR LOCKER: Whenever you are not directly in front of your locker, it should be closed and locked. This includes simply running to the bathroom or shower. Any locker left open is vulnerable to having items stolen. The football program and Woodbury High School is not responsible for items stolen from lockers, so players must be vigilant when it comes to locking lockers. Also, **any player caught stealing valuables from a teammate's locker will be immediately dismissed from the football team.**

Cell Phones/Electronics: Electronic devices are harmful to the football team environment for two reasons: (1) they are isolationist in nature, either locking one into their own private concert or entering into conversations with people outside of our team, and (2) they are targets for theft. **These are not allowed at any football event – players will have 1 minute upon entering the locker room to secure their phones in their lockers, after this**

phones may be confiscated by a coach to be returned after practice/game. Players are advised to keep such items at home or in one's car. If a player is continually violates this policy, the device will be confiscated by a coach and only returned to a parent. **Exception: For VARSITY players wanting to listen to music while prior to a game, headphones and a music device are allowed while traveling on the bus or prior to a team meeting and/or traveling to the WAA building for a home game.** Cell phones are NOT to be used for making videos, posting to social media, or communicating with others (friends or family) while on the bus traveling to or home from an away game. Securing items during the varsity game is NOT the responsibility of the coaching staff, the athletic trainer, other injured players, or managers, so players must plan accordingly.

Weekly Schedule: Football players and parents should always consult the Woodbury Football website for the latest calendar information: www.WoodburyRoyalsFootball.com. For players only on the 9th Grade and 10th Grade team, it is unlikely that there will be a Saturday practice or event. Most JV games are on Saturdays, and varsity players will have a Saturday morning practice or film review. There will be no team events on Sundays per MSHSL rules for mandatory activities. For Varsity & JV players, conflicts on Saturdays will count as unexcused absences if not cleared with a coach **by Thursday** of a given week. Work is not an excused absence for a Varsity or JV player on Saturday mornings. Players can schedule other events starting at 12:00 pm on Saturday as practices, meetings, or games should be wrapping up by noon.

WAA Community Outreach: Every player entering grades 10-12 will be assigned to a WAA football team – either flag or tackle – during the fall. The expectation is that all players will attend FOUR of their team's events over the course of the fall. This can be games, practices, or other team events. Starting in 2015, fulfilling this requirement is part of one's requirement to earn a varsity letter in football.

Lettering Policy: In order to earn a varsity letter in football at Woodbury High School, a player will need to meet the following criteria:

- Participation in 4 varsity football games (1 play = 1 quarter played)
- PASS all classes during the fall trimester
- Complete WAA volunteer requirement OR 5 hours of pre-approved community service (not dual-purpose, i.e. NHS service hours).
- End the season in good standing with the team

Exceptions – varsity letters may also be awarded based on the following:

- Seniors who have been in the football program for at least two consecutive years, have been on the varsity dress list for both seasons, but do not hit the participation requirement can still receive a varsity letter if they complete the other three stipulations.
- Players who were prevented from meeting the participation requirement due to injury, but if uninjured would have (at the coaching staff's discretion) met the requirement.
- Extenuating circumstances in regarding an academic situation in which the player is fulfilling a plan to earn all credits for the fall trimester but may not complete this during the trimester. This does NOT include credit recovery for failed classes, and it is most likely a medical or other emergency exception.

Team Policies & Expectations:

Parental Involvement & Conflict Resolution

Parental Involvement: Parents who choose to be involved with our football program are valuable assets to our program's success. This involvement, however, must have some guidelines to provide for the fairness of all. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

- Starting in 2016 our program now controls our Concession Stands – this is a HUGE source of revenue to help our program meet our financial obligations. **Therefore, every player entering 9th and 10th grade will be assigned 1 contest for which one adult representative is expected to work in the concession stand. Parents can sign up on the night of the Player/Parent meeting, otherwise slots will be assigned.**
- Please become a member of the Woodbury Gridiron Club and get plugged in to some of our many activities that occur throughout each year.
- Parents are **not to watch practice**, except on occasions when it will be clearly identified.
- Parents trying to communicate with their child or other players during practices and/or games cannot and will not be tolerated. If a player is actively receiving or reciprocating communication, he will be removed from the game.
- Coaches will meet with parents during **scheduled meetings only** – never after games, and only after practice if it was a previously scheduled meeting.
- Parents should visit with their player daily to discuss the character theme or lesson of the day or week, and to review the player's Plan To Win Academic Planner.
- Parental volunteers are the core of many of our activities; however, **no on-field personnel decisions (including playing time) will be based upon a player's level of parental involvement.**

Conflict Resolution: We want each of our student-athletes to be an advocate for himself. Self-advocacy is a critical life skill, and the appropriate conflict resolution is an important piece of this development. Conflicts between a player and the coaching staff will be resolved using the following progression:

- **Step One:** Player & Position Coach meet
- **Step Two:** Player & Position Coach & Head Coach meet
- **Step Three:** Player & Parent meet with Position Coach and Head Coach
- **Step Four:** Player & Parent meet with Position Coach, Head Coach, and Administrator

Step Four will be the final step of this process, resulting in either a resolution or a decision to end the relationship between the player and the program. Conflict is often a part of the experience of playing competitive team sports, and it is an opportunity for growth. If a parent chooses to bypass the steps of conflict resolution, then the opportunity for growth is lost and even greater damage is done. ****Note: Players must attend all meetings – there will be no “don't tell my son I talked to you” meetings.**

Blunt Advice: **Parents should always encourage their son/daughter to communicate with the coach at all times without the parent stepping in to communicate information or concerns that the son/daughter is fully capable of sharing.** For example, if a player is going to miss a practice, the PLAYER and not the parent should contact the coach. This is in line with our mission to BUILD DIFFERENCE MAKERS as an essential foundational skill for a young person is the ability to advocate for oneself.

Communication with the Coach: Whereas we want players to be advocates for themselves, it is also understood that a great amount of planning and coordination goes into a student-athlete's schedule that involves one's parent(s). Therefore, it is acceptable to email a coach with a question or concern, but we respectfully ask that parents make sure that the following steps have been checked:

1. Refer to all previous informational emails – please save emails where “SAVE” is included in the subject.

2. Check the Woodbury Football website: www.WoodburyRoyalsFootball.com
3. Ask your player
4. If the above three options all cannot answer your question or concern, please communicate it via email to the appropriate coach. Please give 24-48 hours for a response.

Also, players in the Woodbury Football program may be given phone numbers for a coach, as well as having their own cell phone numbers collected, in order to disseminate information quickly. For communication via telephone or texting, please respect the following:

- Players are the only ones who should call or text a coach.
- **Parents should NOT text or call a coach unless their player has a medical emergency.** Concerns, requests for a meeting, family conflicts, and any other request or information must be communicated via email.
- **Parents should not text or call a coach on the behalf of a player.**

Team Policies & Expectations: The Off-Season

Off-Season Note: Per the MSHSL rules, all of our off-season activities are NOT mandatory. We offer programs and events in order to help the continued development of our players as students, athletes, and community members. Participation, or lack of participation, does not effect one's opportunity to play high school football at Woodbury High School. We often use the phrase "strongly encouraged but not mandatory" because we offer programs because we believe they are worthwhile, but we do not penalize those who are unable or do not want to participate.

Academic Recognition: The Woodbury Football program seeks to recognize the efforts of our student-athletes who have earned a 3.000 or better GPA in each of the three trimesters: Fall, Winter, and Spring. During the fall trimester, recognition will be announced at the end of season banquet. For the Winter and Spring, recognition will take place on the Woodbury Football website and through an email to our program's database.

Academic Assistance: Similar to the academic assistance in-season, players who need academic help should visit with their counselor and/or Coach Hill as soon as the need is identified. We will work to find the opportunity that will fit a player's schedule and connect him/her with the best assistance available. In addition, Coach Hill's room can be used for a study hall pretty much any day of the week by 7:30 am.

Summer School: Our district offers two types of Summer School – credit recovery and then the opportunity to take certain classes for credit outside of the school year. Credit Recovery is for students who either failed a course or did not complete a course during the regular school year. It is our program's hope that all of our student-athletes will pass every class so that credit recovery is not an issue. Should credit recovery be needed, then the rules and expectations of the District 833 summer school take priority over any football activity in the off-season. Players and parents should not expect the school district to adjust their expectations in order to fit the schedule of off-season workouts and/or camps.

In the situation where students wish to take a course for credit during the summer in order to have more schedule flexibility during the school year, our position is that this is up to each individual player's family. As stated at the beginning of this section, off-season programs are not mandatory. Players and parents are strongly encouraged to consult the schedules before signing up for a course that can rather easily fit into one's regular academic schedule.

Link Crew: Link Crew is a student group at WHS that helps welcome new students and entering 9th graders to Woodbury High School. In and of itself, Link Crew is a good thing for WHS. However, Link Crew is a voluntary

activity, just like playing football is a voluntary activity. A player should not assume that he/she can do both LinkCrew and Football if schedules conflict; therefore, please look at calendars and consult both with Coach Hill and the Link Crew leadership before making a decision to participate in both. Some years there will not be an overlap and players can do both without any conflicts. However, in years **where there is a schedule conflict, players are expected to be at all football events** or have missed football events counted as excused or unexcused absences.

Involvement in Other High School Sports: Our program values the lessons that student-athletes can learn from other sports and/or groups at Woodbury High School. We do not expect our players to be exclusively football players, and statistics show that most college scholarship football players also played other sports in high school. If a student-athlete enjoys another sport, **we encourage that athlete to play the other sport(s)**. For those who are not in a sport, we encourage players to participate in the off-season strength and speed program. For student-athletes who do play other sports, but those sports do not have a strength training component in their weekly schedule, we encourage them to supplement their in-season sport with TWO before school workouts per week with our team. ****NOTE:** The WHS Activities Director has stated that in-season and out-of-season strength training should be a central part to all athletic programs at WHS. Therefore, in encouraging in-season athletes to work out for two days per week, we are not pulling them “away” from their sport towards football, but rather encouraging the continued development of one’s athleticism.

Strength and Speed Training: In the months of December through May, the Woodbury Football program will offer a strength and speed training program that is open to all student-athletes at Woodbury High School. This will be in conjunction with the before or after-school program offered by the WHS Strength & Conditioning Coach. The training program focuses on strength development, explosiveness, agility, and speed training. All workouts will be supervised by experienced coaches, and attendance is taken for the purpose of offering incentives.

Note: Strength and Speed Training is not a “football” activity. No matter what sport a person plays, being stronger, more explosive, and agile is only going to help performance. Too often in the past, only the Football and Wrestling programs have worked for this year-round athletic development. Our hope is that the mindset will change to see that a strength and speed training program is beneficial to all sports.

The only workouts that will be counted towards program incentives are workouts completed **start to finish** in the Woodbury Football workout window. Players who work out on their own, with a parent, or through another training facility are welcome to do so, but the incentives are tied to working out within the program offered by the WHS Football program. Again, these are open to any student-athlete at WHS and are administered by members of the Woodbury Football coaching staff.

Summer Camps: Along with the Royal Power & Speed camp that has traditionally been offered to develop strength, explosiveness, and speed, the following camps are typically offered each summer:

Junior Royals Camp – This is a camp for our rising 1st – 5th graders. Players are invited to volunteer to help serve as instructors for these camps. We traditionally host two Junior Royals Camps for four days each during the summer months of June & July.

Middle School Camp – This is the camp for rising 6th – 8th graders and is offered one time during the summer. Returning varsity letter winners are invited to work as coaches for this camp.

Varsity Team Camp – This is our week-long (usually 8 sessions over 2 weeks) camp that focuses on the teaching and installation of the base offensive and defensive schemes that we will use during the fall season. We issue equipment and lockers for this camp, but contact is limited.

The weeks and times of the camps may vary dependent up on the stadium schedule and other conflicts each summer. We attempt to solidify camp dates by the end of January for the following summer.

The Woodbury Gridiron Club

The Woodbury Gridiron Club is an independent, 501(c)3 non-profit organization established to raise funds to support the high school football program at Woodbury High School. More information about the WGC can be found on the Woodbury Football website.

There are many ways to get involved with the WGC, including but not limited to volunteering for events and by serving as a member of a WGC committee or on the WGC board.

The Woodbury Gridiron Club raises funds through six major avenues:

- 1. Membership** – If at all possible, please join the WGC. Your investment to become a member will not only cover the cost of 2 tickets to all home regular season varsity football games and tickets to the pregame tailgate, but it will also serve as a donation to directly help fund our program.
- 2. Business Partnerships** – The Woodbury Gridiron Club works to secure financial business partnerships with local businesses. The funds raised by business partnerships cover approximately half of the WHS Football program's budget. If you are a business owner or decision maker and would like to become a Business Partner, please contact Coach Hill or the WGC. As a member of the program, we always encourage you to spend your discretionary money, when possible, at the businesses that support your child's football program.
- 3. Gold Card Sales** – Gold Cards are the only player-driven fundraising event that the Woodbury Football program conducts each year. The WGC builds the cards by securing business discount offers and printing the cards for approximately \$0.35 per card. In the past, and currently at other schools, \$5 or more per sale go to the fundraising company that puts together the card. By the WGC's work to put together the Gold Card, an additional \$4.65 per card goes to fund the Woodbury High School football program.
- 4. Salt Sale** – Two times per year – once in the spring and once in the fall – the Woodbury Football program promotes an online Salt Sale. This sale includes both Extra Coarse and Pellets for water softeners. In the winter, we offer a sidewalk salt as well. All orders are collected online and players are asked to volunteer on one morning to help deliver the salt to the homes or businesses of those who purchased salt. The time has been less than 2 hours of volunteering per delivery morning over the past three years. Please help us promote the Salt Sale when it launches each fall and spring.
- 5. Royal Open** – Each August, the Woodbury Gridiron Club will host the Royal Open and Season Kickoff Dinner. Whenever possible, this will take place on the Friday prior to the varsity team's Saturday scrimmage. This is a shotgun start, best ball scramble tournament format. Prizes are awarded to winning teams at the Season Kickoff Dinner that follows the tournament. The WGC also runs a silent auction and raffle during the Royal Open.
- 6. Charitable Giving** – There are many ways to contribute through charitable giving. As a registered non-profit organization, many businesses will allow employee giving and/or matching programs to designate the Woodbury Gridiron Club as the destination for donated funds. If every family in the Woodbury Football program dedicated just \$10 of charitable giving per month to the WGC, that would amount to \$18,000 over the course of the year (and that is without any matching funds). It is a powerful tool and can help provide purchasing power to the Woodbury Football program during the winter and spring months when there is little revenue coming into the program. Please see the WGC treasurer or Coach Hill if you are interested in learning more about charitable giving options.

Website: The Woodbury Football website is hosted and paid for by the Woodbury Gridiron Club. This is your one-stop shop for all of the most current information about the Woodbury Football Program. Players and parents are strongly encouraged to spend a couple of minutes on the Woodbury Football website in order to familiarize yourself with its layout and content. You are especially encouraged to check out the calendar, and if you would like, sync the RSS feed with your own device.

The website address is: **<http://www.WoodburyRoyalsFootball.com>**

TWITTER & FACEBOOK: Please follow the Woodbury Football Program on Twitter at: @WoodburyFB and “Like” our group on Facebook at www.facebook.com/WoodburyRoyalsFootball.

TYPICAL ANNUAL TIMELINE:

January	Off-Season Program is in full-swing, available to in-season and out-of-season athletes End of January – informational meeting for Rising 9 th Graders
February	Off-Season Program continues; website calendar is updated with football season info
March	Off-Season Program continues; Rising 9 th Graders may join after school workouts
April	Off-Season Program continues
May	Off-Season Program continues; End of May is the Rising 9 th Grader Signing Night
June	Summer Strength & Speed Training
July	Summer Strength & Speed Training; Team Camp followed by WSU Team Camp Registration for football usually opens around the 2 nd week in July
August	Football season starts in mid-August
Sept – Nov	Football Season
December	Football Banquet in the late afternoon on the first Sunday in December