



SHARP SHOOTERS

## Northwest Lacrosse Handbook 2021

### **Mission Statement**

NWLA aspires to promote and maintain a positive and high quality educational-athletic experience for each student-athlete. A positive educational-athletic experience is one in which every athlete:

- Is firmly planted with the ideals of good sportsmanship, respect, honor, honesty, loyalty, humor and courage in order to become better citizens.
- Is coached using these same principles and has fun at practice and games.
- Feels like an important part of the team regardless of experience or expertise.
- Learns life lessons that have value beyond the playing field.
- Learns the skills, tactics and strategies of the game and improves as a player.

### **Philosophy**

The NWLA program is a dynamic and integral part of the youth experience. It provides meaningful learning opportunities not otherwise offered in a classroom. It assists athletes in developing habits, attitudes, and ideals necessary for ethical competition and cooperation in our society. It also provides athletes with lifelong lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, perseverance, commitment, loyalty, self-discipline, pride, cooperation, responsibility, and leadership skills. NWLA encourages all athletes to continue participating in lacrosse by offering a well-rounded program for area boys and girls.

### **NWLA Theme "ONE TEAM"**

*Idea behind the Theme:*

1. We understand ourselves and each other. We know our roles and fulfill them to reach our goals.
2. There is no division within the organization. Coaches, athletes, family and Board are joined together as one TEAM. Remember there is no "I" in TEAM.
3. Everyone is treated equally.
4. Sacrifices are made for the betterment of the TEAM.

5. We look after each other and provide positive support for our teammates.  
This is OUR TEAM.

### **Fundamental beliefs**

1. Each player on the team is a student-athlete, so academics come first.
2. Individual/Team athletic discipline is a top priority.
3. Organization and time management are key points at practice.
4. A focus on fundamentals/technique and player development brings results.
5. Everyone has something to contribute to the team.
6. The TEAM comes BEFORE the INDIVIDUAL.
7. **POSITIVE ATTITUDE + 100% EFFORT = TEAM SUCCESS**

### **Players**

#### *Player's Role*

1. Always have a positive attitude – we are who we think we are.
2. Be a loyal teammate- there is no room for doubters.
3. Don't complain- complaining takes too much energy, if you have a concern, see the head coach..
4. Learn, work hard, and have fun. Hustling is free and requires no skill.

#### *What coaches expect of the players*

1. Maintain a commitment as a representative of the program. Be self-motivated and self-disciplined. Be prepared both mentally and physically.
2. Show respect for coaches, teammates, opponents, parents & officials.
3. Keep lacrosse in perspective – FAMILY – SCHOOL – NWLA
4. Place the needs of the TEAM before his/her own needs.
5. Show good sportsmanship on and away from fields.
6. Be a positive influence to younger players and in school.
7. Have honest communication with coaches, teammates and parents/guardians.
8. Be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity - must be a gracious loser to be an incredible winner.
9. Exercise self-control – no fighting, excessive displays of anger or frustration.
10. Honor the spirit and rules of the game – avoid improper gamesmanship techniques that violate the highest traditions of sportsmanship (ie. no taunting, hazing, poking fun of another player).

Violations of the rules and expectations may reduce playing time for the athlete. Continued violations after corrective actions have been provided/recommended may extend to temporary suspension from the program.

## **Parents**

### *What the NWLA Expects of Parents/Guardians*

1. Allow our coaches to coach your children, we want them to improve. Athletics are a process - please trust the process.
2. Allow your children to make mistakes and fail - it helps them learn about life.
3. When something doesn't go right, have perspective. Don't blame the coach or other teammates. Stay positive!
4. Our organization is a volunteer organization. Please find a way to help out and give back to NWLA.

### *What Coaches Expect of Parents/Guardians*

1. Be a positive supporter of the program, the players and coaches.
2. Recognize that coaches strive to coach without prejudice.
3. Let the coach do the coaching, however you can do some teaching – teach sportsmanship and how to deal with success and failure. Develop player character and teach life skills that sports bring to the forefront.
4. Contact coaches with open and honest concerns about players role in the program, while always obeying our **5 Step Process**.
5. Look at each player as a part of the team rather than as a separate individual.
6. Get to know your coach, however, respect the coach's personal time.
7. Have all parents/guardians in attendance at requested meetings.
8. Have realistic expectations in order to keep lacrosse in perspective – **FAMILY – SCHOOL – NWLA.**

Everyone is entitled to a positive experience when they attend a NWLA event. If you see poor behavior, correct it. Otherwise seek a Program Director or Board Member to intervene. **Remember, if we permit it, we promote it.**

## **Coaches**

### What Parents/Guardians Expect of Coaches

1. Utilize clean, honest, open communications.
2. Set clear goals and expectations and then explain these items at the start of the season.
3. Establish a safe, fair, and positive environment with proper supervision.
4. Demonstrate professional role modeling while treating each player with understanding, respect and dignity.
5. Provide an enthusiastic, fun, and organized practice and game experience.
6. Maintain current knowledge of lacrosse.

### What Players Expect of Coaches

1. Be a positive role model who is enthusiastic and encouraging.
2. Be treated fairly and with respect.
3. Provide an atmosphere for open communication.
4. Understand that the player has a personal life and has commitments outside lacrosse.
5. Create a safe environment and be knowledgeable about health and accident issues.
6. Be knowledgeable about lacrosse.

## **Hazing**

Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any organization that willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person. No player shall conspire to engage in hazing, participate in hazing, or commit any act that causes, or is likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation, or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any fellow athlete or person. Hazing is absolutely forbidden and will result in immediate suspension from the team and a hearing of the executive committee.

## **Practices**

Start/stop times: Practices will start at the scheduled time. Coaches will make every effort to end practices on time, however, the athletes will be responsible for field

breakdown and clean up and will not be released until the Program Directors are satisfied that the fields meet the standards set for the end of practice.

Practice Length:

Boys 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade divisions = 1 ½ hours (3 days a week)

Girls 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade divisions = 1 ½ hours (2 days a week)

Girls & Boys 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade division = 1-1 ½ hours (2-3 days a week)

*Coaches may schedule additional practice periods with notification of the Program Directors and parents.*

**Uniforms / Equipment**

Players are expected to wear proper equipment for all practices and games.

For girls this includes:

- Helmet (optional)
- Eye protection goggles
- \*\*Mouthpiece
- Cleated shoes (optional)
- Gloves (optional)

For boys this includes:

- Helmet (black preferably)
- Shoulder pads (NOCSAE Approved starting 2022)
- Elbow pads
- Gloves
- \*MYLA/USL approved Lacrosse Stick
- \*\*Mouthpiece (not clear or white)
- Cup
- Cleated shoes (optional)
- Goalies must wear a chest protector (NOCSAE Approved starting 2021)
- Jersey (game days)

*\*Note - Boys that play Close Defense or Long Stick Middie (LSM) will ALSO have a short stick available for all practices and games.*

*\*\*Note- All players must have their mouthpiece fully IN their mouth anytime they are on the field.*

Coaches certify that all players are properly equipped prior to each game. If a player is found to not be properly equipped, the TEAM may receive a 3-minute, non-releasable penalty.

**Playing Time**

Equal playing time is encouraged at all levels below 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> level. Lacrosse Athlete Development Model substitution rules shall be followed.

At the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> levels, it is important to note that we are a competitive program. Coaches should make every effort to play all of their players in a fair manner, but equal playing time is not required. Please note that fair and equal are not the same thing.

Players do become more specialized by position as they get older. NWLAX requires development of players per the LADM at the 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade levels. Progression with athletes should be as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade-** Equal play

**3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade-** Equal play, equal opportunity for attack, defense, mid fielder, & goalie.

**5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade-** Each player should play meaningful minutes in each half with emphasis on team success in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. Equal opportunity for attack, defense, mid fielder, including goalie but limited to 3-4 players.

**7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade-**

**A Team-** Each player should play meaningful minutes in each half. Playing time after that is earned. Emphasis on position playing with additional opportunity play when games allow for depth and development.

**B Team-** Each player should play meaningful minutes in each half. Playing time after that is earned. Emphasis on opportunity for attack, defense, mid field, including goalie. Although competitive, placement on the team is for developing first year players and developing veteran player skills.

## **Academics**

The association keeps lacrosse in perspective **FAMILY – SCHOOL – NWLA**. Parents are encouraged to discuss a player's academic needs with their coach or the Board Member Representative if we can better accommodate students-athletes.

## **Informed Consent**

By its very nature, competitive athletics can put athletes in situations in which serious, catastrophic and perhaps fatal accidents could occur.

Athletes and parents/guardians must assess the risks involved in such participation and make their choice to participate in spite of those risks. No amount of instruction, precaution, or supervision will totally eliminate all risk of injury. The obligation of parents and athletes in making this choice to participate cannot be overstated. There have been accidents resulting in death, paraplegia, quadriplegia, and other very serious permanent impairments as a result of athletic participation.

By granting permission to your son/daughter to participate in athletic competition, a parent/guardian acknowledges that playing or participating in any sport can be a dangerous activity involving many risks of injury.

### **Concussion Policy and Procedure**

Concussions are defined as traumatic brain injuries. Concussions are usually associated with a blow to the head and can occur in athletics. As more research is done on head injuries, the athletic community is taking more precautions to prevent them and more vigilance to treat them. NWLA has developed a very stringent concussion policy to protect our student athletes.

### **Concussion Evaluation**

- An athlete with a suspected concussion must be removed from play immediately. If only coaches are present the athlete will NOT be returned to play that day.
- A medical practitioner (athletic trainer onsite if available) should be notified immediately to evaluate the athlete.
- Evaluation by the medical practitioner will include screening of signs and symptoms, a cognitive assessment and assessment of postural stability.
- If the medical practitioner diagnoses the athlete with a concussion of any degree, the athlete will not return to play that day, or until released for play.
- If the medical practitioner feels the concussion is life threatening, the athlete will be transported either by ambulance or a parent to the hospital emergency room.
- If the Athletic Trainer does not immediately refer the athlete to a physician, the parent may request a physician referral and the athletic trainer will assist to provide referral information at any time.

### **Treatment of Concussions**

When an athlete sustains a suspected head injury they are to be removed from play immediately. The athletic trainer will assess them and determine if immediate referral to a doctor is necessary. The athletic trainer will also contact the athlete's parents. In the absence of a certified athletic trainer, the supervising coach will be responsible to remove the athlete from play, contact a parent and refer to a medical doctor if

necessary. The athlete will not participate in any NWLA sanctioned activity until they are symptom free. Once symptom free the athlete will begin a graduated progression before returning back to their sport.

**Parent or Legal Guardian is to Provide an Email to the Member Representative and the President of the league of the incident and monitoring of Return to Play**

**Return to Play**

The graduated progression to return an athlete back to play after a concussion will begin at the earliest one day after the athlete is symptom free. The progression takes a minimum of 5 days until full release. If the athlete is able to perform one-step symptom free, they may advance to the next step the following day. If they become symptomatic at any step, they will start back at Step 1.

Step 1- Return to School Full Time

Step 2- Light Aerobic Exercise

Step 3- Sport Specific Drills

Step 4- Non- Contact Practice

Step 5- Contact Practice

Step 6- Game Play According to MLA and NWLA rules, an athlete with a head injury must be cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional (MD, DO, NP, PA, DC) before returning to contact drills.

**Conflict Resolution 5-Step Communication Process**

24 Hour Rule: For parents, it is important to separate game emotions from the best interests of their child's sports development. For this reason, NWLA has adopted the "24 Hour Rule". The intent of this rule is to move an emotional and confrontational discussion away from the presence of the players, and to allow the parties to "cool off", compose themselves and put the provoking incident or situation that occurred in the game in perspective before meeting to discuss it.

NWLA has a 5-step process of communication to use in resolving conflicts. Communication in this order helps to ensure strong relationships and trust amongst all who are involved in resolving problems. The process is as follows:

1. Player meets with the coach. (If a player is uncomfortable meeting with the coach by himself or herself, a teammate can assist in starting the dialogue with the coach.
2. Player and parent meet with the coach.
3. Player, parent, and coach meet with the Member Representative.

4. Player, parent, coach, and Member Representative meet with the Board Member that directly runs the related area.
5. Player, parent, coach, Member Representative, and Board Member meet with the President.

**Website and Photo Release:**

NWLA will utilize our website and selected social media forms to communicate with the community about our program. Team rosters will be posted and photographs from our events may be posted to these mediums.