

Wellspring Academic Center



Athletic Program Handbook

2020-2021 Leaders

Athletic Director - Eric Rossi

Guardians Board Members-

President (voting)-

Treasurer (voting) -Monty Absher

Secretary (voting) -Tae Scott-Smith

At-large (voting)- Joseph Robinson

At-large (voting)- Leah King

Boys' Head Coach JV/Varsity (non-voting) - Eric Rossi

Girls' Head Coach JV/Varsity (non-voting)- Laurie Larkin

Athletic Director (non-voting) - Eric Rossi

Coaching Positions-

Boys' Varsity Head Coach - Eric Rossi

Boys' JV Head Coach - Eric Rossi

Boys' JV/Varsity Assistant Coaches - Monty Absher and David Payne

Boys' U14 Head Coach - Sam Rossi

Boys' U14 Assistant Coaches- Luke Larkin, Joseph Robinson

Girls' Varsity Head Coach - Laurie Larkin

Girls' JV Head Coach - Laurie Larkin

Girls' U14 Head Coach - Laurie Larkin

Girls' JV/Varsity/U14 Assistant Coaches -

This handbook is intended to serve as the athletic program guideline and key principles outline. Wellspring Guardians reserves the right to clarify, interpret, and even alter the statements in this handbook as the athletic season progresses.

WAC Athletic Program

The Wellspring Guardians Athletic Program, playing under the name of Wellspring Guardians, is a Christian-based program within the Wellspring Homeschool Community.

Guiding Scripture

The guiding principle for the WAC Athletic Program comes directly from Proverbs 4:23: “Above all else, guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life.”

Vision Statement

The vision of the WAC Athletic Program is to prepare student athletes spiritually, physically, and mentally, both on and off the field of play.

Mission Statement

The mission of the WAC Athletic Program is to develop young people of high character who wish to compete athletically to the best of their abilities.

The Four C's

The Wellspring Guardians operates under four pillars. We are a *CHRISTIAN* organization, centered on providing a *COMPETITIVE* experience, where athletes grow in both skill and *CHARACTER*. In addition, the organization is a *COMMUNITY* in which all involved are considered valuable members and contributors.

Leadership

The WAC Athletic Program Board has 5 voting members and 3 ex-officio (non-voting) members. Board members serve either a two- or three-year term. If during that term, the board decides to extend the member's service, and the board member is agreeable, either another two- or three-year term may be added. However, no voting board member may serve for more than five successive years.*

When vacancies occur on the board, the current board members will recommend potential new candidates. During the first end-of-season board meeting, presumably in May, the current board will reach consensus on who(m) to invite to fill the new position(s). Current board members will then extend the invitation for a new board member to join. If the newly nominated board member chooses to accept

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the duties, then he/she will be presented at the annual Guardians meeting in August. If there is no objection from the organization, the new board member's term starts September 1st of that year.

**A former board member (who has previously served their max 5 year term), may be invited back onto the board, but only after taking a break for a minimum of two years.*

Voting Positions

Chairman
Treasurer
Secretary
At-Large
At-Large

Ex-Officio Positions

Director of Athletics
Head Boys' Coach
Head Girls' Coach

Sports Offered

Basketball

Girls' Basketball – Varsity, Junior Varsity
Boys' Basketball – Varsity, Junior Varsity, Young JV (U14)

League Affiliation

Wellspring Guardians is an active member of the Ohio River Homeschool Conference (ORHC). ORHC membership ties Wellspring Guardians directly to their rules and standards'. As members, Wellspring Guardians understands that it has necessarily agreed to follow these rules and standards during competition.

Coach Agreement

The coaches of Wellspring Guardians seek to challenge the athletes to learn every phase of the sport at a higher level. Wellspring Guardians coaches will provide players with the best possible training and development and thus enable them to achieve full potential and to be competitive in the sport they choose. Above all, though, the coaches will provide an environment that is supportive, loving, full of grace, and fun.

Player Agreement

The players of Wellspring Guardians are athletes who desire to learn and compete in a sport, but who desire to do so in a supportive, loving, and fun atmosphere. Wellspring players will commit to working hard, improving their individual skills, and supporting & respecting their teammates and coaches.

Policies & Guidelines

Financial Policies

Wellspring Guardians participation fees are currently made up of the following components:

All Players

Enrollment Fee - \$50

U14 Players

Facility & Insurance Fee - \$75

Varsity/JV Players

Facility & Insurance Fee - \$125

Based on these components, the Total Per Player Participation Fees are:

U14 - \$125

Varsity/JV - \$175

Method of Payment:

Most athletes make full payment upon registration. However, if necessary, families may discuss a payment plan with the Guardians AD.

Fundraising:

All fundraising money or donations with Wellspring Guardians is program-oriented and goes toward overall program costs now and into the future, including financial assistance. No fundraising money will be applied toward individual player fees except as specifically allocated for financial assistance. No player fee discounts will be provided except as allocated for financial assistance. This is to suggest that all player fees will be as stated above, except for financial assistance. All players are expected to participate in fundraising activities, regardless of financial assistance needs, etc.

With fundraising considered a “team activity”, it necessarily implies an investment in the long-term nature of the program. With that as a backdrop, it will remain clear that anyone who sees Wellspring Guardians as the right fit for them, yet needs assistance financially, will have an avenue to discuss and receive aid in privacy and trust. Wellspring Guardians is committed to working diligently, privately, and creatively to find a way for all who passionately want to participate.

Standard of Conduct for Players:

Wellspring Guardians players must always consider and pursue ‘guarding the heart’ for themselves, their teammates, their coaches and all members of the Guardians family. Additionally, with Wellspring Guardians being an active member of the ORHC (Ohio River Homeschool Conference) , all athletes are required to adhere to ORHC guidelines, conduct, dress code, etc. Regardless of league or conference membership, all Guardians players are expected to hold Proverbs 4:23 as a backdrop. Wellspring Guardians participants are expected to protect the organization, now and into the future, by “guarding” their own actions and words, on and off the court.

The following standards must be observed for one to continue as an active member of the Wellspring Guardians.

Guardians players are expected to pursue a way of life that shows support, displays grace, and expresses love. These behaviors will be expected when interacting with Guardians teammates or others involved in the Guardians program, as well as fellow Christian and public school athletes.

No form of bullying, cocky, vulgar, demeaning, belittling, or similar conduct will ever be tolerated towards teammates, opponents, referees, coaches, or other families on or off the court. This includes displaying these behaviors using ANY FORM of social media such as SnapChat, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, or Instagram, etc.. In addition, all male athletes will be expected to show respect to Guardians female athletes as well as all female athletes in the league. Similarly, all Guardians female athletes will show respect to Guardians male athletes, as well as all male athletes in the league. Any form of threatening by a player will NOT be tolerated. The coaches and AD reserve the right to discipline and/or dismiss from the program any athlete who fails to comply with these standards.

If players are involved in a dispute, they must immediately work out problems amongst themselves. If they are unable to resolve their problem immediately, they must meet with the coaches until their problems are resolved. Problems between players must never be left unresolved.

Drugs, alcohol, vaping, and smoking are prohibited always.

While the Guardians do not monitor or require any specific proof of successful academic performance, ***the organization fully supports our athletes’ academic success as primary.*** Therefore, the AD and all coaches expect that athletes will prioritize their education. While at the same time, the hope is that students will manage their time wisely in order to be present and dependable as team members.

Therefore, parents may feel free to discuss with coaches any items of concern in their child’s academic efforts or achievements. Guardians coaches will back the parent in any disciplinary measures needed to enforce proper progress in academics.

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While competing, players are encouraged to have fun on the basketball court.

Players must show up for team commitments unless communicated to the coach.

Players must be on time for team commitments unless communicated to the coach.

Players are required to take proper care of all equipment, keeping uniforms clean and neat.

Players must immediately report all ***physical injuries*** or illness to their head coach. The preference is for injuries or illnesses to be handled between the player and coach, but circumstances may warrant parent involvement.

Concussion Protocol: If a player has a blow to the head, the coach or assistant coach MUST assess the player on the bench before letting them back in the game or practice.

When a significant blow to the head occurs, the athlete will be assessed by TWO trained members of the Guardians leadership. If those two trained leaders agree that the athlete is manifesting one or more of the signs and symptoms listed on this [CDC concussion information sheet](#) (see full list of symptoms in Appendix A of this handbook) the player MUST come out of the game/practice immediately and must be checked by a healthcare professional as soon as possible.

In addition, whenever TWO trained leaders have agreed that an athlete is manifesting one or more of the signs or symptoms on the /CDC sheet, the player MAY NOT return to a game OR practice unless he/she has documentation from a healthcare professional stating that it is safe for him/her to return to competition.

ALL coaching staff and the AD must complete the FREE [CDC concussion training course](#) annually prior to the commencement of season practices and games. The AD and each coach must print out the certificate of course completion and give it to the Guardians Board Chair to be filed.

Standard of Conduct for Parents:

The parents of Wellspring Guardians athletes must always consider and pursue ‘guarding the heart’ for themselves and other members of the Wellspring Guardians family. Additionally, with Wellspring Guardians being an active member of the ORHC (Ohio River Homeschool Conference), all parents are required to adhere to ORHC guidelines, conduct, etc. Regardless of league or conference membership, all Guardians parents and family members are expected to hold Proverbs 4:23 as a backdrop. Wellspring Guardians parents and friends are expected to protect the organization, now and into the future, by “guarding” their own actions and words in various settings.

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The following parental standards must be observed for your child to continue as an active member of the Wellspring Guardians.

1. Guardians parents are expected to pursue a way of life that shows support, displays grace, and expresses love. These behaviors will be expected when interacting with Guardian families or others involved in the Guardian program.
2. No form of bullying, cocky, vulgar, demeaning, belittling, or similar conduct will ever be tolerated towards teammates, opponents, referees, coaches, or other families on or off the court. This includes displaying these behaviors using ANY FORM of social media such as SnapChat, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, or Instagram.
3. If parents are involved in a dispute, they must immediately work out problems amongst themselves. If they are unable to resolve their problem immediately, they must meet with the Athletic Director or Board of Directors until their problems are resolved. Problems between parents must never be left unresolved and should not draw other uninvolved families into the conflict.
4. Avoid whispering amongst each other. If there is a problem or situation that needs to be handled please work it out yourself or allow the Guardians organization to deal with it in the open.
5. Resist coaching the players on the court. Allow the players to follow their coach's instruction without interference from the stands.
6. Understand that you may not agree or like every coaching tactic, comment, suggestion, or decision, but this does not warrant rudeness. Use common sense, give the coach the benefit of the doubt, and approach the situation and coach with support, grace, and love.
7. Support the team in as many ways as you can or feel led to do. We are a small organization with a lot of work to do. We need every family to participate on and off the court. While all families are not able to provide the same amount of assistance, some degree of assistance will be expected from all involved families.
8. Communicate as much as possible with your coach and the organization. Healthy communication can avoid a lot of misunderstandings.
9. Parents are encouraged to have fun while cheering, working, or participating in the Guardians organization.

Standard of Conduct for Coaches

Wellspring Guardians coaches must always consider and pursue 'guarding the heart' for themselves and other members of the Wellspring Guardians family. Additionally, with

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Wellspring Guardians being an active member of the ORHC (Ohio River Homeschool Conference), all coaches are required to adhere to ORHC guidelines, conduct, etc. Regardless of league or conference membership, all Guardians coaches and assistants, as well as others representing the team (books, scoreboard) are expected to hold Proverbs 4:23 as a backdrop. Wellspring Guardians coaches, assistants, and other representatives are expected to protect the organization, now and into the future, by “guarding” their own actions and words in various settings.

The following standards must be observed for one to continue coaching for the Wellspring Guardians.

1. Wellspring Guardians coaches, by nature of their position of influence and authority, will be held to the highest standards of conduct. Guardians coaches are expected to exemplify the characteristics upheld by the organization and to be role models of the values being taught to the athletes.
2. Guardian coaches are expected to pursue a way of life that shows support, displays grace, and expresses love. These behaviors will be expected when interacting with Guardian families or others involved in the Guardians program.
3. No form of bullying, cocky, vulgar, demeaning, belittling, or similar conduct will ever be tolerated towards teammates, opponents, referees, coaches, or other families on or off the court. This includes displaying these behaviors using ANY FORM of social media such as SnapChat, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, or Instagram.
4. If coaches are involved in a dispute, they must immediately work out problems amongst themselves. If they are unable to resolve their problem immediately, they must meet with the Athletic Director or Board of Directors until their problems are resolved. Problems between coaching staff, or coaches and parents, must never be left unresolved.
5. Coaches must communicate often and effectively to the players, families, Athletic Director, and Board of Directors. Healthy communication can avoid a lot of misunderstanding. Coaches should be open and approachable-willing to have discussions with players and families that will lead to healthy relationships and outcomes for the team.
6. Coaches must understand the specific culture in which they are coaching. This means they have an understanding of the population they are serving- a group of closely knit homeschooled Christian athletes from central Kentucky. While the organization strives to better our athletes on the court, to compete at a high level, and win games, we will not do so at the expense of our core values of support, grace, and love.
7. Coaches are encouraged to have fun when they are coaching at both practice and games.

Age, Team, and Health Eligibility

Participation in the Wellspring Guardians Athletic Program is limited to students who are homeschooled.

Individual player participation in the Wellspring Guardians Athletic Program is based on the following age cut-offs:

Minimum Age – Students must have attained their 10th birthday before September 1.

Maximum Age – Students cannot have attained their 19th birthday before September 1.

* NOTE - exceptions to the minimum age may be handled on a case-by-case basis

Team eligibility is based on the following age cut-offs:

U14 – Players cannot have attained their 15th birthday before September 1.

JV/Varsity – Players cannot have attained their 19th birthday before September 1.

Every season each athlete will be required to get a sports physical before they can begin practices. The expense of the physical will be paid by the families of the athlete. If the athlete gets a sports physical for another sport they can use this as a valid physical for the Wellspring Guardians organization as long as it took place during that year.

Participation in Multiple Sports

Wellspring Guardians acknowledges that many athletes are involved in multiple sports, sometimes with overlapping seasons. This provides challenges for scheduling practices, games, and other similar events. For this reason, although multiple sport involvement is encouraged so as to aid in the well-rounded student athlete, clear communication is necessary. Wellspring Guardians understands that such athletes will undoubtedly miss practice and perhaps even game time under such circumstances. If an athlete's participation in multiple sports becomes a detriment to the team, the athlete understands that his/her coaches have every right to make necessary adaptations to the athlete's play time. Guardians coaches must consider "team" over "individual" in such instances.

Structure of Basketball Teams

VARSITY & JV BOYS BASKETBALL TEAMS

The Wellspring Guardians Varsity and JV basketball teams are expected to have approximately 10 players on each team. All age eligible players that were an active

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roster member in good standing of the Wellspring Guardians basketball program the prior season will be offered an age-appropriate roster spot for the next season. Such returning players must accept this offer and commit to the next season by August 1st to reserve their new roster position for the upcoming season. If a player from the previous year's team decides to play after August 1st it is at the coach's discretion to allow the player on the team.

After the previous year's players have committed to roster positions, all remaining available open roster positions will be filled with a tryout during the summer. Players selected from this tryout will be asked to fill specific roster positions on either the Varsity or JV team.

Although basketball players are assigned roster positions specific to Varsity and JV teams, the coaching staff may move players between these teams based on various needs and determinations. The determination can be made from game to game within a season or from year to year.

U14 BASKETBALL TEAM

The Wellspring Guardians U14 basketball team is expected to have approximately 10 players. All age eligible players that were an active roster member in good standing of the Wellspring Guardians basketball program the prior season will be offered an age-appropriate roster spot for the next season. All interested new U14 age-eligible players that have an older sibling in the Wellspring Guardians athletic program are to be offered a roster position (this offer does not hold for players above the U14 age eligibility). Such returning and new players must accept this offer and commit to the next season by August 1st to reserve their new roster position for the upcoming season.

After the previous year's players have committed to roster positions, all remaining available open roster positions will be filled with a tryout during the summer. Players selected from this tryout will be asked to fill specific roster positions on the U14 team.

Although basketball players are assigned roster positions specific to the U12 team, the coaching staff may move players to the Varsity or JV team based on various needs and determinations. The determination can be made from game to game within a season or from year to year.

GIRLS' PROGRAM

The girls' program within Wellspring Guardians is unique in as much as it currently exists only as a single Girls JV/Varsity team. The reason behind this is the number of young ladies interested in participating in a homeschool-centered basketball program is much lower than boys. In fact, there currently is no option to participate only at the girls U14 level.

For these reasons, Wellspring Guardians has only a single Girls JV/Varsity basketball team. Although this team is technically at the JV/Varsity level, there may be opportunities to play at lower levels such as U14. The Guardians AD will actively seek

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out opportunities for the U14 level girls to play games with others in their age range. When this occurs, only age-eligible players will be able to participate.

Wellspring Guardians knows, however, that the future in the girls' program lies with the younger athletes. To help with the future of the program and to better meet the needs of our young female athletes, Wellspring Guardians invites U14 age girls to participate. This participation, however, must necessarily come with the realization and acknowledgement that this age discrepancy on a varsity team would not otherwise exist (skill, size, athleticism, etc.). In fact, above all else, younger girls participating in the Wellspring Guardians basketball program should see their involvement based primarily around dedicated practice time and skill-building sessions from highly trained coaches.

To better help set expectations and guarantee player safety for our younger girls, Wellspring Guardians will designate some young ladies as 'Developmental'. 'Developmental' implies the young lady is part of the girls' program, yet has a unique focus on development of skills so as to merit playing time at the higher level. With this in mind, practices for these younger girls will likely be separated at times from the older ladies. All girls, regardless of designation, however, are invited to come to any and all girls' basketball games. With the "developmental" designation, a young lady will expect to get little if any playing time. Lastly, there may be times when a younger lady is explicitly asked to attend games due to absences, injuries, etc. of older players. That said, ALL younger girls are always invited to attend games, if only to be part of the team, enjoy the atmosphere, and learn various aspects of the game.

As with all other Wellspring Guardians athletic programs, game involvement is never guaranteed. Such game time minutes are perhaps even more questionable for these younger ladies on the Girls Varsity basketball team.

Keeping all this in mind, the Guardians Athletic Director and coaches **do not expect** these developmental players to travel great distances or take extreme measures to attend games. The Guardians understand the stress such events put on families, and given the minimal playing time available, do not want families to feel obligated to attend games.

Sportsmanship & Character

Wellspring Guardians is about much more than sports and athletic skills. In keeping with its Christian and academic foundation, the Guardians will, at times, require attendance at special sessions/classes on relevant topics to the development of good character and team cohesion. In addition, the players may be required to participate in community work projects, especially as they pertain to our host church and/or fundraising activities.

Off-Season Workouts

Wellspring Guardians also offers off-season workouts/shoot-arounds to those athletes who choose to participate. The workouts typically run from June through the end of August and offer

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the option for athletes to improve themselves physically in preparation for the next season. Off-season workouts, in particular, are offered to all players not currently age-eligible at the U14 level. However, on occasion, coaches and/or leaders may extend the opportunity for these younger teams to participate in shoot-arounds or less strenuous exercise opportunities. The cost of off-season workouts is included in the registration costs. Workouts will often occur weekly and are taught by the Guardians coaches. *The off-season workouts are always considered optional and are not a requirement to participate on the teams.*

Playing Time

Wellspring Guardians is a 'Pay to Participate' organization. This is different from a 'Pay to Play' organization. As such, the Wellspring Guardians payment assures that each player, with dedicated effort and attendance, regardless of skill level, will receive attention and training in practice and other dedicated activities. Payment does not assure anything with respect to playing time in officiated games.

Often seen as “athletes in development”, Wellspring Guardians views U14 players differently than Varsity and JV players. U14 players are the future of the Wellspring Guardians program. Because of this, U14 athletes are likely to experience regular playing time, as well as practice decisions with a stronger focus on early-age player development.

During an officiated game, the coach may elect to play or not play certain players based on many factors. These include, but are not limited to, such things as the opponent, the game situation, combination of skills needed, attitude, and emotional/physical state of players, and practice attendance. No player is guaranteed any playing time, and occurrences may even arise where an individual player does not enter the game at all.

Playing time in officiated games is completely the coach’s decision. Wellspring Guardians works under the guideline that “a player may ask to come out of the game, but never to go into the game.” A request to enter the game necessarily is a request that a teammate be taken out, which of course is always a decision only to be determined by the coach. Concerns around playing time are very similar to these statements. Under no circumstances should playing time be questioned or discussed independently with the coach.

Handling Disputes

All disputes should be handled first by the individual parties involved in the dispute. If significant effort has been made to handle the dispute between individual parties and resolution cannot be reached, the dispute should be brought forth to the Athletic Director or Board of Directors for resolution. Once brought forth to the Athletic Director or Board of Directors it is at their discretion how the dispute is handled for the betterment of the Wellspring Organization.

Annual Volunteer Positions

Athletic Director

Family Volunteers

Fundraising Coordinator
Concession Stand Coordinator
Volunteer Schedule Coordinator
Referees
Uniforms
Video
Game Admissions Coordinator
Scorebook
Scoreboard
Set-Up Coordinator

Volunteer Coaching Positions

All Wellspring Guardians coaching positions are on a volunteer basis. Coaches are giving a tremendous amount of time on and off the court. Below are the official volunteer coaching positions, yet others may help/fill-in from time to time (as requested by the AD or the coaches themselves):

Boys' Varsity Head Coach

Boys' JV Head Coach

Assistant Coaches Boys' JV/Varsity

Boys' U14 Head Coach

Assistant Coach(es) Boys' U14

Girls Varsity & JV Head Coach

Girls' Assistant Coach

Uniform Policy

Athletic tuition covers the cost of the use of game uniforms. Some sports may require additional uniform pieces or equipment not covered by athletic fees. Coaches will inform the parents and athletes of the additional items needed.

Game uniforms will be issued at the beginning of the season and must be returned at the end of the season. Parents will be charged replacement cost for any uniform not returned by the AD's due date. Parents will also be charged replacement cost for any uniform not returned in good condition.

Any additional basketball apparel that is worn during games must be either the same color as the uniform or black. NO WHITE apparel (sleeves, knee pads, etc.) is allowed.

Laundry Care of Uniforms

A good portion of the athletic budget is used to purchase uniforms for athletic teams. Athletes are responsible for properly maintaining uniforms issued to them.

Athletes/parents should wash all uniforms on machine wash cold/cold with mild detergent (no bleach) with lettered/numbered uniform pieces turned inside out (when/if possible).

All uniforms are recommended to be air-dried. Do not use a heated dryer to dry uniforms as it causes logos and numbers to deteriorate. You may tumble dry on cold if necessary to remove wrinkles.

Communication

Wellspring Guardians makes use of various forms of communication. The primary source of up-to-the-minute information is the TeamSnap App. In addition, email is often used. The AD will notify parents and team members of the communication methods to be used each season.

APPENDIX A

CONCUSSION SIGNS/SYMPTOMS

HOW CAN I TELL IF I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not “feeling right” or is “feeling down”

SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall

Source:

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/resources/custom.html#imagePreview>