

# Wellspring Academic Center



## Athletic Program Handbook

**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 WAC Athletic Program, playing under the name of Wellspring Guardians, is a Christian-based program within the Wellspring Academic Center (WAC).

### *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.

## Leadership

The WAC Athletic Program Board has 5 voting members and 5 ex-officio (non-voting) members.

### **Voting**

Chairman - Holly Thompson  
Treasurer - Monty Absher  
Secretary - Angela Pearson  
At-Large - Leah King  
At-Large - Corey Maillet

### **Ex-Officio**

Director of Athletics – Eric Rossi  
Head Boys’ Coach – Eric Rossi  
Head Girls’ Coach – Laurie Larkin  
Director of Sportsmanship & Character – Mark Pearson  
Director of Strength & Conditioning – Jim Larkin

## Sports Offered

### Basketball

Girls' Basketball – Varsity

Boys' Basketball – Varsity, Junior Varsity, Young JV (U12)

## League Affiliation

Wellspring Guardians is an active member of the Kentucky Christian School Athletic Association (KCSAA) and the Ohio River Homeschool Conference (ORHC). This KCSAA and ORHC membership ties Wellspring Guardians directly to their well-defined 'standards'. As members, Wellspring Guardians understands that it has necessarily agreed to follow these 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

WAC Registration \$5

U12 Players

Facility & Insurance Fee - \$75

Varsity/JV Players

Facility & Insurance Fee - \$125

Sportsmanship & Character Class - \$20

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

U12 - \$130

Varsity/JV - \$200

Method of Payment:

Most athletes make full payment upon registration. However, if only the Enrollment Fee is paid at registration, then there are two options to pay the Facility & Insurance Fee (the Sportsmanship & Character Class Fee is paid directly to the instructor at the first class):

- (1) Payment Schedule
- (2) Financial Assistance

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 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 KCSAA organization, all athletes are required to adhere to KCSAA guidelines, conduct, dress code, etc. For simplicity, the KCSAA guidelines are to apply to all Wellspring Guardians team members, regardless of specific KCSAA membership and participation. Having the KCSAA standards and 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.

1. 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 athletes in our league.
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 social media such as SnapChat, Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. In addition, all male athletes will be expected to show respect to Guardians female athletes, as well as all female athletes in the league. The coaches and AD reserve the right to discipline athletes who fail to comply with these standards.
3. 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.
4. Drugs, alcohol, and smoking are prohibited always.
5. Successful academic performance is required. This means maintaining at least a “C” average during the prior semester.
6. Players must show up for team commitments unless communicated to the coach.
7. Players must be on time for team commitments unless communicated to the coach.
8. 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.

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9. Players are required to take proper care of all equipment, keeping uniforms clean and neat.
10. While competing, players are encouraged to have fun on the basketball court.

### *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 KCSAA organization, all parents are required to adhere to all KCSAA guidelines, conduct, dress code, etc. For simplicity, the KCSAA guidelines are to apply to all Wellspring Guardians team members, regardless of specific KCSAA membership and participation. Having the KCSAA standards and Proverbs 4:23 as a backdrop, parents of Wellspring Guardians participants are expected to protect the organization, now and into the future, by “guarding” their own actions and words in various public settings.

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 social media such as SnapChat, Facebook, Twitter, 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.

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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 Wellspring Guardians being an active member of the KCSAA organization, all coaches are expected to adhere to KCSAA guidelines, conduct, dress code, etc.. For simplicity, the KCSAA guidelines are to apply to all Wellspring Guardians teams, regardless of specific KCSAA membership and participation. Having the KCSAA standards and Proverbs 4:23 as a backdrop, coaches of Wellspring Guardians participants are expected to protect the organization, now and into the future, by “guarding” their own actions and words in various public 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 social media such as SnapChat, Facebook, Twitter, 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.

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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.

### *Eligibility & Academic Requirements*

Participation in the Wellspring Guardians Athletic Program is limited to students who are homeschooled (or, in some cases, with Board approval, may attend a non-public school that does not offer the sport in which they hope to participate).

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

Minimum Age – Students must have attained their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday before August 1.

Maximum Age – Students cannot have attained their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday before August 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:

U12 – Players cannot have attained 13<sup>th</sup> birthday before August 1.

JV – Players cannot have attained 17<sup>th</sup> birthday before August 1.

Varsity – Players cannot have attained 19<sup>th</sup> birthday before August 1.

All Varsity and JV players must be making required progress in academics as defined above.. The WAC administrator will determine academic eligibility each year, monitoring progress periodically. Specifically, pre-season documentation of academic standing will be expected. This will include input from WAC instructors, the Sportsmanship and Character instructor, and confirmation by signature of parent that at-home studies are satisfactory. The WAC administrator will gather this information, keeping it on file for as-needed purposes. This allows Wellspring Guardians to state in honest fashion that our athletes are in good academic standing when asked by KCSAA.

Every season each athlete will be required to get a sports physical before they can participate. The expense of the physical will be paid by the families of the athlete. If the athlete gets a sports



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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 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 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

#### U12 BASKETBALL TEAM

The Wellspring Guardians U12 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 U12 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 U12 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.

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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 position on the U12 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 Varsity team. The reason behind this is twofold. First, the number of young ladies interested in participating in a homeschool-centered basketball program is much lower than boys. Second, given that there currently is no Kentucky homeschool basketball league for girls, the number of teams for homeschooled girl athletes to play against is extremely limited. In fact, there currently is no option to participate only at the girls U12 level.

For these reasons, Wellspring Guardians has only a single Girls Varsity basketball team. Although this team is technically at the Varsity level, there may be opportunities to play at lower levels such as JV. 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 U12 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.

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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 Class*

Wellspring Guardians is about much more than sports and athletic skills. In keeping with its Christian and academic foundation, a Sportsmanship & Character Class is both available and required for all players not currently age-eligible at the U12 level. The cost of this class is \$20 per player per season. The class will meet at least once per month, September through April, taught by the Director of Sportsmanship & Character.

### *Off-Season Workouts*

Wellspring Guardians also offers off-season workouts to those athletes who choose to participate. The workouts typically run from June through the end of August and offer the option for athletes to improve themselves physically in preparation for the next season. Off-season workouts are offered to all players not currently age-eligible at the U12 level. The cost of off-season workouts is included in the registration costs. Workouts will often occur weekly and are taught by the Director of Strength & Conditioning. *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 U12 players differently than Varsity and JV players. U12 players are the future of the Wellspring Guardians program. Because of this, U12 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.

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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.

### *Volunteer Positions*

#### **Athletic Director – Eric Rossi**

Director of Sportsmanship & Character – Mark Pearson

Director of Strength & Conditioning – Jim Larkin

Fundraising Coordinator – Leah King

Concession Stand Coordinator – Mark and Angela Pearson/Holly Thompson

Scheduling – Eric Rossi

Referees – Angela Absher

Uniforms – Monty Absher

Video – Ken Rank

Game Admissions Coordinator – Stephanie Wall

Scorebook – Leah King

Scoreboard – Open

Set-Up Coordinator – Jason Carpenter

### *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 currently held, yet others may help/fill-in from time to time (as requested by the AD or the coaches themselves):

Boys Varsity

Head Coach – Eric Rossi

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Boys JV  
Head Coach – Eric Rossi

Girls Varsity & JV Basketball Teams  
Head Coach – Laurie Larkin

Boys U12 Basketball Team  
Head Coach – Sam Rossi & Luke Larkin

Assistant Coaches  
Jason Carpenter; Jackie Whitaker; Jim Larkin

### *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 coach's due date. Parents will also be charged replacement cost for any uniform not returned in good condition.

### *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.

Email: [wellspringguardians@gmail.com](mailto:wellspringguardians@gmail.com)

TeamSnap: Username – [wellspringguardians@gmail.com](mailto:wellspringguardians@gmail.com)