



Mattawan Wildcat Football Program Philosophy

The ultimate goal of our football program is to have the type of program the entire student body and community can be proud of, both on and off the football field. We expect to build our program with young athletes who possess character, self-esteem, discipline, and academic achievement. We will teach good work habits, leadership skills, teamwork, commitment, and strive to reach our highest potential.

To be a Champion...

To be a champion, you need to act like a champion. You need to prepare like a champion. You need to practice like a champion. We expect our players to work like a “champion” in the weight room, in class, on the football field, and in our community. Seniors are expected to show tremendous leadership and dedication to each other and the program. As seniors, it is your responsibility to model COURAGE, COMMITMENT, LOYALTY, TRUST, and ENCOURAGEMENT to your teammates. EVERYONE MUST WORK TOGETHER!

OUR CREED

“Forged in FIRE with ICE in our Veins.” – MHS Football

F: FUTURE	What are your goals and vision for the future?
I: INVEST	What are you willing to invest in to achieve?
R: RESPONSE	What is your response to events in your life?
E: EVENTS	What are the events that shape your life? Control what you can.
I: Integrity	Do the right thing, even when no one is watching
C: Class	Be humble and confident. Actions speak louder than words
E: Excellence	Be a person of greatness. Do the things no one else is willing to do

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Achieve in the classroom
2. Excel On the Field
3. Positive impact on student body
4. Represent our community well
5. Prepare for success beyond High School



COACH ARRASMITH COACHING PHILOSOPHY:

I want to give the athlete the best football experience possible. I believe that many of life's lessons can be learned through the game of football. I want my athletes to be able to take lessons they learn in the sports they participate in and be able to apply them to real life situations in the future on and off the field. I was given those same lessons and want to be able to give that opportunity back to the student athletes I coach. My role as a coach is to lead, direct and motivate my team in a positive direction by creating a team culture in which each and every athlete will have an opportunity to feel successful in. I fill this role as a coach by setting the example from the start and what is expected of my team. That each individual on the team has a responsibility to fulfill in order to achieve success as a team. Each job is no more or less important than the other and that each individual must be committed to help make their teammates better for the greater good of the team.

Coach A's Values: The Four F's of Life

1. **FAITH** - is an expression of hope for something better. More than a wish, it is closer to a belief, but not quite. A belief is rooted in the mind. Faith is based in the heart.
2. **FAMILY** - My family means everything to me. They are my "Why." They drive me to become a better man, husband, and father. What family means to me is love and someone that will always be there for you through the good times and the bad. It is about encouragement, understanding, hope, comfort, advice, values, morals, ideals, and faith.
3. **FRIENDS** - Life is all about relationship building. Friends help us deal with stress, make better lifestyle choices that keep us strong and allow us to recover from health issues and disease more quickly. Friendship is equally important to our mental health. One study even suggested spending time with positive friends changes our outlook for the better. That means we're happier when we choose to spend time with happy people. (All the more reason to leave those toxic friendships behind.)
4. **FOOTBALL** - I firmly believe there is nowhere else in the world where you will learn more about life than between the hashes. There is no class you can take and there is no life course that will put you into situations in the highest of highs or the lowest of lows in such a short period of time. Example: having a 75-yard touchdown run called back because of a holding call; losing a 14-point lead in the fourth quarter. Football teaches you to become something more; it teaches you to become a leader, it teaches you to be a part of a team and that everyone is a working part. It teaches you how to handle stressful situations, adjusting on the fly and becoming the best version of you.



OFFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY:

To create an offensive system which has the potential to be balanced in the running game and passing game. We want to effectively make our opponents defend the entire football field, and to be multi-dimensional in our attack. We will be physical in all positions on offense and be very sound fundamentally.

DEFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY:

To create a defensive system which is sound against the run and pass, and effectively be able to adjust to sets, shifts, and motion. We will stress **“SEEK SWARM DESTROY.”** Seek out the football and swarm to the football by getting 10 shirts to the football every play with 1 as safety. Destroy by tackling the ball carrier with proper technique, “alignment to assignment” and playing physical football at every position. **ARRIVE AT THE BALL CARRIER IN A BAD MOOD.**

SPECIAL TEAM’S PHILOSOPHY:

To create a special team system which our opponents must practice being concerned with. We want to develop a sense of pride in our special teams where our best and most deserving players strive to be part of our special team’s effort. We want our special teams to be a threat every time we line up. Special teams are approximately a third of a football game so we must be prepared to execute.

VARIOUS COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES AND PHILOSOPHIES:

On Preparing - I firmly believe that the first step in getting a win on game night is what happens in the scouting department. Mike Shanahan in his book ‘Think Like a Champion,’ states “Not doing more than the average is what keeps the average down.” I believe that the average football coach at our level does not watch enough game films to prepare their team. I am a big believer in film, film, film! Predictability breeds vulnerability. Let’s attack the opponent because they become predictable at what they do. I love to prepare for a football game. It becomes contagious for the kids too. The student-athletes want to be more prepared than we can get them sometimes. I don’t think that you can EVER be too prepared for a football game.

On Winning - Winning is the culmination of the coach’s planning and player’s execution. If a coach doesn’t have a plan, what do the players execute? If players don’t execute, what good is the plan? The two-go hand in hand but when the rubber meets the road, the execution of the players is what really matters! So, us coaches better have them prepared!

On Losing - This is a game of winning and losing. Great teams are going to lose. But don’t ever lose because you failed to give your best effort. Don’t ever lose because you gave up. Don’t lose because you didn’t do YOUR BEST to prepare yourself, your staff and most importantly, your players.

On Practice - Be disciplined. Mass teach. Individually correct. Make sacrifices to better yourself and your team. The length of practice doesn’t do a thing for the quality of work that can be done. Be prepared to prepare.



On Discipline - Discipline must be done fairly, swiftly, and consistently; always keeping in mind that it is not for the coach, but for the players and the team. Too many coaches involve their own pride in disciplining their players. Discipline should always teach, or it is not being done right.

On The “Student” Part of Student-Athletes- Grade checks show players that the coaches do care about their grades and lets me know about the ones that need a kick in the pants academically. I have approached several different teachers about the attitude and work ethic of our football players in their classrooms and have called kids out about specific classroom-related issues. I think that the coaching staff sets this precedent to demonstrate just how important it is to be disciplined in the classroom; both in and out of season.

EXPECTATIONS OF OUR COACHING STAFF:

Be A Positive Role Model - Always carry yourself in a professional manner, on the field and in the community. Players and the community members are always watching. As a representative of the program your actions will reflect upon everyone, not just yourself. Make sure your interactions on the field reflect how you would like your own child to be treated.

Coach Every Player - Players don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. We will coach all players to help prepare them to achieve their greatest potential. Each player is putting in the time and effort to make the team better and it is the responsibility of the coach to help them improve their skills.

Communicate - A football program consists of many parts. It is important that everyone works hard to stay on the same page. All coaches should make sure to work together to stay informed of what is going on with players, scheme, and the program. Coaches should also strive to ensure that players understand the material being presented in practice and be approachable if a player wants to talk.

Commitment - We ask our players to invest a lot of time into our program and therefore the same commitment is needed from each coach. In turn, the program will try to place a priority on using time wisely during meetings, practices, and team activities.



PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

I. The Football Staff will coach their respective teams with these two goals in mind:

- A. To provide a meaningful and learning experience for all participants. We want all participants to be better people for having taken part in our football program.
- B. The development of a sound feeder system to the varsity program.

II. The philosophy of the TOTAL program comes first. SUPPORT THE ENTIRE PROGRAM.

- A. Support other coaches (in players' presence, never correct another coach).
- B. If differences exist between coaches, GO TO THAT COACH, and work them out.
- C. Build for the future more so than the present.
 - 1. Stress fundamentals.
 - 2. Everyone should get an opportunity to play in games (8th, Freshmen, and JV). Have a plan of action for substitution.
 - 3. Do not over criticize players- MAKE IT FUN TO PLAY FOOTBALL!

III. Handling Problems

- A. Be proactive, plan. Have a plan of action for substitution.
- B. Explain the decision process of the team.
 - 1. Players need to talk to their position coach, or the head coach about their progress, role, playing time, or other problems.
 - 2. Players may talk to team captains, or coaches with regards to positive or negative situations on the football team.
 - 3. Explain that feeling upset at times will occur with some players, but complaining to friends, parents and teammates will hurt the team.
 - 4. Open door policy- Important players use this policy or know it's available for them. Encourage players to talk.
 - 5. Talk to your players about gossip. If you are not part of the problem, or part of the solution—do not say anything.
 - 6. If there are any parents with questions or concerns, please contact me by email or by phone. If there are concerns that arise after the game, please honor the 24-hour rule before contacting me.
 - 7. PARENTS, I will not discuss information pertaining to any other athlete except your own. (I.E playing time, school, missing practices ect...)



IV. Playing Time

- A. 8th Grade/Freshmen/Junior Varsity- Fundamentals, teamwork, and technique will be stressed, along with the offensive, defensive and special teams' philosophies. This level of competition is primarily for preparing underclassmen to move up in the program by continually working on skills, technique, and concepts. Playing time will not always be equal, but coaches will try to play as many players as possible that deserve to play. Emphasis will be stressed on learning the varsity offensive, defensive and special teams' schemes. Again, winning is important, but individual and team improvement are stressed. The goal is to start as many players as possible in all three phases of the game (offense/defense/special teams).
- B. Varsity- Naturally, more emphasis is placed on winning at the varsity level. Fundamentals, teamwork, skills, concepts, and technique will be stressed. Learning offensive, defensive, and special teams' schemes and concepts are very important. Our coaching staff will expect players to commit to our speed, strength, and conditioning program. Players will be expected to be involved in camps, passing leagues, and clinics to improve their skill level. Coaches will evaluate players and the team through daily practices and game-like situations. Playing time will not be equal, and will vary from player to player, and possibly game to game. Our philosophy is that the "TEAM" will always come first!

LEVELS OF COMPETITION

Varsity- May consist of seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen.

JV - May consist of Juniors, sophomores, and freshmen.

Freshman – May consist of freshmen and occasionally a sophomore.

Our Coaching Staff will determine the level at which a player participates. The Head Coach will have the final decision regarding personnel. All decisions to move a player up will be discussed with the parent prior to the player moving up. Players may play at more than one level.

The criteria we use to decide who gets to play are, who wants to play, who has earned our trust, who has the skill and who shows that skill to play (not in any order) It is easy to tell who wants to play. If a player wants to play, they hustle all the time. They are not an up-and-down player. They work hard to become a consistent player. They do everything they can to show that they want to play. They do not need to be jump-started every day or be talked into working hard. Regardless of whether they are on the first, second or third unit, they are all the way in. The student-athlete displays this in practice to demonstrate the want to play. As a player performs in practice, they will perform in the game.



1. **Are You Coachable?** - Can you listen, and are you willing to learn from the instructions which you are given, or will you insist upon doing things your way?
2. **Commitment** - Are you committed to teamwork or individualism?
3. **Loyalty** - Do you support your fellow players and the mission of the Football Program?
4. **Work Ethic** - Do you do extra work outside of practice to further your own skill to help the team? Are you willing to go the extra mile? Winter and summer off-season strength programs will be available during these respective seasons.
5. **Responsibility** - Are you always on time? Are you bringing all your equipment every day?
6. **Can You Accept Criticism?** - Coaches from time to time will be critical of your actions on and off the field. If you can accept criticism, you should be motivated to correct errors which you have been making. Criticism is never anything personal against you; on the contrary, it is a coach that cares enough about you to make you better. Learn from the criticism.
7. **Relationship with Teammates** – Do your teammates respect you as an individual and as a team member? Do you do the things that will earn their respect?
8. **Are you a team player?** – Do your actions on and off the field show that you are more concerned with the welfare of the team than gaining individual glory? In a team sport, honors may be worn by individuals, but they are earned by the entire team.
9. **Are you Disciplined?** – The greatest player is a disciplined individual, both on and off the field.
10. **Academics** – In order to play, our student-athletes must maintain passing grades throughout the eligibility period of competition. If a student-athlete becomes ineligible, our policy is to have him maintain his presence on the team. Additional study halls can be used to help get students back on track. If a student struggles to pass classes and it becomes a problem, the student will be removed from the team so they may concentrate on their studies. Once a student has proven themselves in the classroom, they will be allowed to return to the team. The most important asset we all have is our education. You can take football away from an athlete, but you can never take away their education.



V. TEAM RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

ACTIVITY CODE VIOLATIONS – (Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco & Vaping Items)

Violations will result in discipline, suspension, or dismissal from the football program as outlined in the Mattawan High School Activity Code of Conduct. Suspended players will not participate in the week's practices for games in which they are suspended. Playing status or depth chart position will be determined upon return.

- A. Consumption of tobacco (smoking/chewing tobacco/vaping), drugs, or alcohol will not be tolerated. Players will be judged according to school policy (student handbook). Stay away from situations in which illegal activity is taking place (smoking, drinking, drug use).
- B. All players are expected to be on time for all meetings and practices. Any unexcused absence may result in being held out of the upcoming game. If you miss practice, you must notify your head coach (varsity-Coach Arrasmith). Tardy is not in the assigned area at the assigned time.
 - A student-athlete is late for any reason without communicating with a coach, they will be sent home and will be suspended for one quarter.
 - If the individual is late for two practices without communicating with a coach, they will be suspended for a half.
 - If the individual is late for three practices without communicating with a coach, they will be suspended for a game.
 - If the individual is late for four practices without communication, they will be dismissed from the team.
 - Any absence, regardless of excused or unexcused will require conditioning to be made up upon returning to practice. (This does not include injured players, determined by the trainer or medical professional, but are in attendance for practice.)

“If you are early, you are on time. If you are on time, you are late!”

***Extenuating circumstances will come into play for players that have an emergency come up. For example, if a player's car were to break down, that would be considered an emergency and the player would not have to make up the tardy policy or missed practice policy. If a reason for missing practice or being tardy is because they could not find a ride, they need to inform Coach Arrasmith ahead of time, so that we can attempt to work something out to get the player a ride to the school.*

- C. **Reporting Injuries.** If you are injured or need to be treated, please contact our athletic trainer to figure out the proper course of treatment. If it is a sudden emergency that happens outside of the team or school, please let Coach Arrasmith know right away so we can help in any way possible. If practice time is to be missed because of injury, please have your doctor or Nico let me know. Although you may be injured, the expectation, if able, is for you to get mental reps, rehab and be at practice. In the event of a concussion, you will have to follow the return to play protocol in order to get back on the field.
- D. If you need to do make-up schoolwork, you must notify Coach Arrasmith, not another player or coach. You will be expected to come to practice ASAP when your schoolwork is completed.



- E. **NO HAZING, PERIOD!** We expect all our players to respect each other. Hazing will not be tolerated at any level and will result in maximum punishment by the school administration and football staff.
- F. At our school, we believe in fostering a positive and respectful environment for all participants, including athletes, coaches, officials, and spectators. While we understand that the high intensity of football can sometimes lead to passionate emotions, it is essential to maintain decorum and sportsmanship on and off the field.
- Be mindful of your language.
- Know your surroundings.
- Absolutely no profanity will be directed towards coaches and referees.
- G. Earrings or any type of jewelry will not be worn during practice or games.
- H. Eat balanced meals and get plenty of sleep.
- I. Take care of yourself- mentally, morally, and physically.
- J. All players are expected to wear the appropriate football equipment and attire for practices, games, and team functions. All players will wear the proper game socks, football shoes, and equipment for all games.
- K. Practice attire- Practice jersey, gray shorts, t-shirt under your shoulder pads, helmet, football shoes, and mouthpiece. **IF YOU ARE MISSING YOUR GEAR, YOU ARE MISSING TIME!** I will not provide extra practice gear or anything else that is mentioned. This is time for you to learn to be responsible young men.
- L. Drink plenty of fluids (water, sport drinks, etc.) and stay away from pop as much as possible.
- M. Each player is responsible for their equipment and locking their locker.
Locker Room Edicate: Please take cleats and/or dirty shoes off before entering the school after a practice or game. The locker room is to be left in better condition than we found it. This includes post practice, games and away games.
- N. You may let other people wear your game jersey who attend OUR school or family only and may be worn to the game. Game jerseys are not meant to be worn by opposing schools, to gym class or any other sports practice. **YOUR UNIFORM IS EARNED, NOT GIVEN!**



VI. EQUIPMENT

All players must have regard for the equipment. Equipment care is very essential in maintaining good quality equipment for you and others to use while participating with the MHS Football team. The average cost of outfitting you with essential and proper fitting gear is around \$700 per student athlete. The costs continue to rise each and every year, so it is important for you, as the borrower, to take full responsibility for your equipment care. ALL PRACTICE AND GAME GEAR IS PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL. Personal gear may be purchased at your own expense and is optional. The athletes will need to follow some simple maintenance steps for their borrowed equipment throughout the year.

1. Helmet: cost \$299.00 and up. This is not a device made to use as a weapon. The use of the helmet other than as a safety device is strictly prohibited.
2. Inspect & tighten facemask screws weekly
3. Inspect & tighten chin strap screws weekly
4. Inspect chinstrap buckles weekly
5. Wipe down your helmet weekly (inside & out) with a damp cloth
6. Shoulder pads : cost \$200.00 and up
7. Inspect all straps, strings & clips weekly
8. Tape all of your straps after proper clip adjustment has been received
9. Wash the molded plastic with a damp cloth
10. Clean shoulder pads on a regular basis with boiled water and a disinfectant
11. Pants, girdle, belt, & practice jersey:
 - a. Wash them regularly to keep them from stinking, staining and housing bacteria.
12. Hip pads, thigh pads, knee pads & tail pads:
 - a. Wipe these down with a damp cloth
13. Locks on locker:
 - a. All players are required to have a lock on their locker in the locker room in order to maintain the safety of their equipment.
 - b. If a player loses any piece of equipment, then they are responsible for the cost of replacing it!
14. Players need to report any faulty equipment to Coach Haas

VII. TRAVELING AND DRESS

While traveling, we impress everyone with whom we come in contact. Players will be expected to conduct themselves in the appropriate manner. All team members will wear the proper attire for our road games. You are responsible for any trash, or belongings you bring on the bus.

All Varsity players are expected to ride the bus to and from the football games. No exceptions!

***Extenuating circumstances will come into play for players that have an emergency come up.*



VIII. CLASSROOM CONDUCT, BEHAVIOR AND GRADES

Each member of our team is important. Be loyal to your team, school, and community. Focus on being positive. All players are expected to be a positive role model in the classroom, school, and community. Classroom behavior, study habits, and performance are a major focus of our team. Weekly grade sheets will be mandatory. All players will be held accountable and players who are failing classes will be expected to report to our morning study session. Playing time may be affected by failing grades or poor student behavior in the classroom or school setting. Remember, you represent the **MATTAWAN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM** wherever you go, both on and off the football field. **DO NOT LET OUR TEAM DOWN!**

IX. SOCIAL MEDIA EXPECTATIONS

1. **Keep private and personal matters offline.** Use private messages and never engage in heated arguments online. No one ends up winning.
2. **Be mindful of what you post on your site and other sites.** The cliché, think before you post, never gets old. That means swearing, calling out players or coaches and discussions about other parents/families. No posts in jersey unless approved by Coach Arrasmith
3. **Keep your tone in check.** Never use all caps. Digitally speaking, typing in all caps relates to yelling or screaming.
4. **Declutter your friends.** Especially if they are continuously adding questionable content or comments to your sites.
5. **Interact with empathy and respect.** No matter where you are online, (blogging, chat rooms, forums, etc) be sure your keystrokes are engaging with respect towards others.
6. **Sign-off.** If you are having a bad day, don't be afraid to unplug from all devices and social media for 24-hours before you post something you may regret.
7. **Don't Overshare.** Privacy has become a priceless commodity online today. Don't assume your texts, Tweets and posts can't be forwarded, copied and pasted -- all before you get a chance to 'delete' a digital mistake. Another cliché that has come full circle, 'you don't get a second chance to make a first impression.' Today your first impression is likely to be what a search engine has to say about you - your digital reputation; your online social behavior. A search engine can likely dictate that first impression of your college and your next job. That is the importance of your social media behavior. Treating others as we want to be treated is what most of our parents have taught us. What we need to remember is this is equally important online. Kindness is always a priority in all that we do - offline and online.



IX. PARENT EXPECTATIONS

1. Be positive with your athlete. Let them know you are proud they are a part of the team. Focus on the benefits of teamwork and personal discipline.
2. Encourage your athlete to follow all training rules. Help the coach build commitment to the team.
3. Set a good example in your personal lifestyle.
4. Allow your athlete to perform and progress at a level consistent with his ability. Athletes mature at different ages; some are more gifted than others.
5. Always support the coaching staff when controversial decisions are made. The coaches need your backing to keep good morale on the team.
6. Insist on positive behaviors in school and a high level of performance in the classroom. Numerous studies indicate extracurricular involvement helps enhance academic performance.
7. Stay calm in injury situations. Parents can help minimize the trauma by being in control and offering comfort. Allow the medical staff to perform their assessment on your player's injury.
8. No parent is allowed on the field unless the training staff requests it.
9. Cheer for our team and players. Opponents and referees deserve respect. Realize that high school players will make mistakes. Your support is needed during tough times.
10. Promote having fun and being a team player. Very few high school athletes receive scholarships.
11. Concentrate on what is best for the team. Preoccupation with statistics can be very distracting.
12. An athlete's self-confidence and self-image will be improved by support at home. Comparison to others is discouraged. Encourage the athlete to do their best regardless of family or friends who may have been outstanding players.
13. Winning is fun, but building positive team values is most important. The concept of working together to perform a task will have lasting benefits. Winning takes place when all the little things are done correctly.
14. Find the time to be an avid booster of school activities. Help build a solid support system for athletes and coaches.
15. Help students keep jobs and cars in proper perspective. Materialistic values can detract from the commitment to the team. Teenagers should have the opportunity to take advantage of extracurricular activities.



16. Athletes must attend all practices, games, and team events. Stress the necessity to make a commitment to the team.

17. Emphasize the importance of well-balanced meals and regular sleep patterns. An athlete functions best when care is taken to consume nutritious food and obtain sufficient rest.

Persistence and being able to accept a role is extremely important for the team to be successful. Not everyone will be a starter, but everyone is important to the team. Some players may not develop until their senior season. Encourage them to be persistent.

COACH ARRASMITH CONTACTS

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Facebook : Mattawan Wildcat Football

Website:



MATTAWAN WILDCAT FOOTBALL AGREEMENT TO EXPECTATIONS

I have read and agree with the packet of information given to me in this handbook of the expectations that will be placed upon the player and the parent.

I willingly agree to the precedents the coaching staff at Mattawan has put in place for my athlete.

I understand that football is a contact sport and injuries may occur. The student-athletes at Mattawan high school are provided with an athletic trainer.

I agree to let my child participate in football for the Mattawan Wildcats and understand the health risks associated with the game of football.

Player Printed Name: _____ Grade: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Email: _____

Parent Phone #: _____

Player Signature: _____ Date: _____

Player Phone #: _____

****THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO COACH ARRASMITH AUGUST 7TH**