

Student-Athlete Philosophy and Guiding Principles



All middle school and high school students are encouraged to participate in the Washington Student Cycling League (WSCL) regardless of their ability and prior experience with organized sports. The WSCL emphasizes participation and fun over competition.

In addition to the general mission and vision of the WSCL, the Spring League Program should also provide opportunities for all students to:

- Improve self-esteem and feelings of competence through positive interactions with their peers and adults;
- Acquire new skills and refine those previously learned;
- Learn to function effectively as members of a team or group;
- Improve personal health and fitness levels;
- Have fun and enjoy biking in the outdoors.

Our Philosophy

Recognizing the unique developmental needs of middle school and high school students, the WSCL promotes the building of student success through active participation, increased skill building, and positive sportsmanship.

Participation

- Emphasize having fun;
- Emphasize participation and practice over racing and race results;
- Communicate that racing is optional;
- Balance competition with cooperation;
- Encourage lifelong participation in biking;
- Promote academics as the highest priority.

Cycling Skill Building and Conditioning

- Develop experience - based appropriate skills;
- Focus on fundamentals for a safe riding experience;
- Develop skills and conditioning as a foundation for improvement and rider progression.

Sportsmanship

- Develop a positive individual and team attitude;
- Encourage, cooperate and collaborate with peers;
- Present positive adult role models that demonstrate self control and mutual respect.

Benefits of Sport Participation at the Middle School and High Level

Numerous authors and organizations have cited the potential benefits of participation in sport and physical activity. A representative list of such benefits, developed by the World Health Organization (2009) includes the following:

- Improvement of motor skills and physical fitness;
- Enhancement of normal physical and social growth and maturation;
- Improvement of socialization, self-esteem, self-perception and psychological well-being;
- Establishment of a basis for a healthy lifestyle and lifelong commitment to physical activity.

Student-Athlete Philosophy and Guiding Principles



In addition, the Centers for Disease Control (2002) lists the following benefits of physical activity, specifically for middle school students:

- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints;
- Helps control weight, build lean muscle, and reduce fat;
- Prevents or delays the development of high blood pressure and helps reduce blood pressure on some adolescents with hypertension;
- Appears to reduce depression and anxiety, improve mood, and enhance the ability to perform daily tasks throughout the lifespan;
- May contribute to a physically active lifestyle that may continue into adulthood.

Concerns About Sport Participation at the Middle School and Level

Despite the impressive list of benefits of participation in sport and physical activity programs, there are some concerns that coaches and parents should be aware of:

- Student's educational priorities;
- Overuse injuries and burnout;
- Psychological stress about competition;
- Time management / stress if overcommitted with other physical activities/commitment.