ISSAQUAH
MIDDLE SCHOOL

2026 - 2027

WRESTLING HANDBOOK

tinyurl.com/IMSwrestling

WELCOME!

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Wrestlers,

Welcome to the 2025–2027 wrestling season! We're excited to kick off another great year of Panthers Wrestling. There's a lot of important information you'll need to know about how our program runs, so we've put together a Wrestling Handbook for your convenience. Please keep it handy—it's a great quick reference if questions come up.

We have high expectations for our wrestlers. It's their responsibility to be on time for all practices and matches and to have the right gear. Please read through the handbook carefully and make sure you understand everything. If you have any questions, feel free to ask us at practice or send an email.

Remember, all students at IMS are welcome to join wrestling. There are no cuts. However, not everyone is guaranteed to wrestle another school at every match—this depends on whether the other team has someone in the same weight class and skill level. If not, they'll wrestle a teammate instead. Matchups are usually determined on the day of the event.

The Issaquah Middle School athletic program focuses on teaching the skills needed to compete in a positive way. While we always aim to be competitive, our top priority is to make sure every wrestler in good standing gets plenty of mat time. Our goal is to help each athlete grow—not just as a wrestler, but as a student and person.

We expect all athletes, coaches, and parents to represent Issaquah with pride, respect, and sportsmanship.

Coach Dilks
Coach Kappler
Coach Lusk
Coach Knechtel

HOME MATCHES

We'll be hosting **up to five home matches** this season. It's very important that wrestlers get dressed quickly and help with setup. Each match requires moving the mat from the auxiliary gym to the main gym, setting up warm-up mats, mopping the mats, setting up chairs, and connecting the scoreboard. We can't do this alone, so all wrestlers are expected to help.

Cleanup after the matches is just as important. All wrestlers are expected to stay and help put everything away once the JV/Grade matches are done.

Please be **courteous and respectful** to wrestlers, coaches, managers, and fans from other schools. If you're not warming up or sitting in the team chairs by the mat, you should be in the stands with your team. Any misconduct may result in a written warning.

Keep in mind that coaches are very busy before and during home matches. If we can't help you right away, please know that we care and will make time for you as soon as we can.

Matches will start as close to **3:30 p.m.** as possible. They will not finish before **4:00 p.m.**, so there will **not be an activity bus** on home match days. Please make sure to arrange a ride home for both home and away matches.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Wrestling is a **distinguished sport**, and we expect all wrestlers to carry themselves with **class and respect** at all times. Whether you win or lose, always represent yourself, your team, and your school with pride.

A few important reminders:

- Always shake your opponent's hand before and after each match.
- Win or LOSE always thank your opponent.
- Always shake the opposing coach's hand after your match.
- Be ready to wrestle when you approach the scorer's table.
- Never slam the mat out of anger or excitement.
- Keep your headgear on until you return to our bench.
- Never throw your headgear.
- No Swearing

PRACTICES

Practices are a key part of your success in wrestling. You need to come prepared every day with **clean shorts or sweats** and a **clean t-shirt or sweatshirt**. It's important to stay focused, work hard, and give 100%.

Remember, **you're the only one who can push yourself to reach your full potential.**

Practice Schedule:

- **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday:** 2:55 p.m. – 4:10 p.m.
  - Activity bus and parent pickup at **4:25 p.m.**
- **Wednesday:** 3:40 p.m. – 5:10 p.m.
  - Activity bus and parent pickup at **5:25 p.m.**

There will be **no practice on half days or match days.** However, we may have a few **optional practices during Winter and Thanksgiving Break.**

After dressing down, wait until a coach dismisses you into the small gym to start warming up. The 8th graders will lead stretches, we'll make announcements, and then practice will begin.

HEALTH & SAFETY

To help ensure a **healthy and successful season**, please keep the following in mind:

- Mats will be **disinfected daily** before practice.
- If you have **open sores** or are **feeling sick**, you will **not** be allowed to practice or compete.
- If you see **blood on the mat, in the locker room, or anywhere else**, tell a coach immediately — **do not touch it for any reason.**
- If someone gets injured, notify a coach right away and **do not move them.**
- **No live wrestling unless instructed by a coach.**
- Most wrestling injuries happen because of **carelessness or goofing around.** Stay focused and safe.
- All students must have a **current physical on file** and a **valid ASB card** to participate in any Issaquah sport.

We strongly recommend that wrestlers shower as soon as they get home after practice or a match. This is the best way to prevent skin infections and illness. Wrestlers should use an antibacterial soap and make sure to clean thoroughly after every workout.

SAFETY / INJURY PROCEDURES

If an athlete is injured, coaches will assess the situation and contact parents if needed. All injuries requiring medical attention must be cleared by a doctor before returning to practice or competition.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

As a member of an athletic team, student-athletes are expected to follow the **code of conduct** set by their coaches and the expectations outlined in the **student handbook**.

If, during the season, a student violates these behavior expectations, they may become **ineligible to participate** in practices or competitions.

If we have a problem with your behavior at practice or during a match, you will receive a **written warning** that must be **signed by your parent(s)**. If you receive **two written warnings** or are **referred to the office** by coaches or staff for disciplinary reasons, you may be **suspended from the team** and will no longer be able to participate in wrestling.

LOCKER ROOM EXPECTATIONS

Keep the locker room clean and free of horseplay. Report any issues to a coach immediately.

ELIGIBILITY

To participate in **wrestling at Issaquah**, you must meet the following requirements:

- Turn in your **emergency medical forms**.
- Have a **current physical** and a **valid ASB card** on file.
- Show **appropriate behavior** at school and during practice.
- Have a **complete uniform** for matches.
- **Weigh in at or below** your designated weight class.
- Complete at least **eight practices** before your first match.

UNIFORM

Head

- **Headgear** must be worn during matches. It's a good investment for any wrestler serious about the sport since it's adjustable and can grow with you. The cost ranges from **$25–$45**. Headgear will be **provided for those in need**.

- **Mouthguards** are optional, but **required if you have braces**. You must have both a **top and bottom mouthguard**, and it must be **colored** — **no clear mouthguards**. A one-piece style is preferred.
- **Hair** must be tucked into a hair cap if it's too long. The school will provide hair nets that fit under headgear. Hair caps are also available for purchase online.

Body

- **Singlets** must be worn during matches and will be **provided by the school**. Wrestlers may not walk around with a bare chest — singlets or warm-ups must be worn at all times.
- **Warm-ups** will be provided based on availability.
- **Fingernails** must be kept **short and smooth**.
- Wrestlers wearing boxers underwear **will not be allowed to compete.**
- **Athletic supporters** are optional.
- **School singlets** may **not** be worn during practice.

Feet

- **Wrestling shoes** are required for all matches. Prices range from **$30 to $100+**. Limited loaner pairs are available—ask a coach if you're interested.
- **Shoelaces** must be **taped before each match** if shoes do not have a protective lace strap.

The referees take this uniform very seriously.

AWAY MATCHES

For coaches to stay focused on the matches in progress, it's important that wrestlers take **responsibility for themselves.** Be ready when it's time for your match. We'll stretch together as a team, but you should continue to **warm up and drill** before your turn on the mat.

Misbehavior will not be tolerated. Stay with your team in the bleachers, support your teammates, and show good sportsmanship at all times. Misconduct will result in a **written warning.**

During bus rides to host schools, use the time to **focus and mentally prepare** for your match. Stay seated, be respectful, and listen carefully during attendance and announcements.

Remember: You represent **Issaquah Middle School** and your coaches. Always be **polite, respectful, and thankful** to the host school.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS PICKUP

If you plan to take your child **home directly from an away match**, please make sure to **sign them out with the coaches** before leaving. If your wrestler is not signed out, we have no way of knowing whether they are supposed to ride the bus home.

If your child will be **riding home with another parent**, please send a **written note** with your child and have them give it to a coach **on the day of the match.**

If you are taking your child home from an away match, please **arrive before the bus departs** from the host school. If you are not there when the bus leaves, your child will ride back to Issaquah and can be picked up there.

SCORING

Wrestling can be a little confusing to watch if you're not familiar with how the scoring works. To help make it easier to follow, we've included a quick summary of the **terms and point values** used by referees for both **individual matches** and **team scoring**.

INDIVIDUAL SCORING

Takedown – 3 points

When a wrestler brings their opponent to the mat and gains control from a standing position. (This used to be worth 2 points.)

Escape – 1 point

When a wrestler gets away from their opponent and returns to a neutral position.

Reversal – 2 points

When a wrestler on the bottom switches positions and gains control on top.

Near Fall (Back Points)

- **2 points** – holding an opponent's back close to the mat for 2 seconds
- **3 points** – holding for 3 seconds
- **4 points** – holding for 4 seconds or longer

Penalty Points – 1 or 2 points

Given to the opponent when a wrestler commits an illegal move, locks hands, or shows poor sportsmanship.

Stalling

Wrestlers must stay active. After one warning, points are given to the opponent for continued stalling.

Technical Fall – 15-point lead

If a wrestler gets ahead by 15 points, the match ends automatically.

Pin (Fall)

If both shoulders of a wrestler are held to the mat for 2 seconds, the match ends immediately.

TEAM SCORING

Teams also earn points for individual wins:

- **Pin / Fall:** 6 points
- **Technical Fall (15-point lead):** 5 points
- **Major Decision (win by 8–14 points):** 4 points
- **Decision (win by 1–7 points):** 3 points
- **Forfeit / Default / Disqualification:** 6 points

WEIGH-INS AND WEIGHT CLASSES

78	85	90	95	100	105	110	115	120	125	130	137	145	154	164	175	HWT

Middle school wrestling is divided into **17 weight classes.** At the start of the season, all wrestlers will complete an official weigh-in. To help keep wrestlers healthy, they may only drop **one weight class** from their original weigh-in. We **strongly recommend** that middle school wrestlers do **not** try to cut weight.

Weigh-ins for matches will take place **during the practice before the match.** This applies to **Varsity** wrestlers only—**JV** wrestlers don't need to weigh in but should still know their current weight.

The only exception is for **Monday matches**, when weigh-ins will happen **the morning of the match.** If a wrestler does not make weight, they will **not be able to compete**, and if there's a JV wrestler in the same weight class, that wrestler will compete in their place.

WRESTLE OFFS

If there are **multiple wrestlers in the same weight class** (and their skill levels are similar), they will **wrestle off during practice** to decide who will compete at the **Varsity level.** The wrestler who remains **undefeated** in the wrestle-offs will earn the Varsity spot, and the **runner-up** will compete at the **JV level.**

When time allows, **challenge matches** may be held during practice for wrestlers who want to compete for a Varsity position.

At the coaches' discretion, experienced 6th graders may wrestle Varsity **if they win the wrestle-off.**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT / VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We appreciate all parent support. If you're interested in helping with home meets, scorekeeping, or team events, please reach out to the coaching staff.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Head Coach: Brian Dilks
Email: DilksB@issaquah.wednet.edu
Cell: 206-351-1536

Assistant Coaches:

Ben Kappler
Andy Lusk
Allie Knechtel

Issaquah Middle School
600 2nd Ave SE, Issaquah, WA 98027
(425) 837-6800

Recommended Gear

Headgear

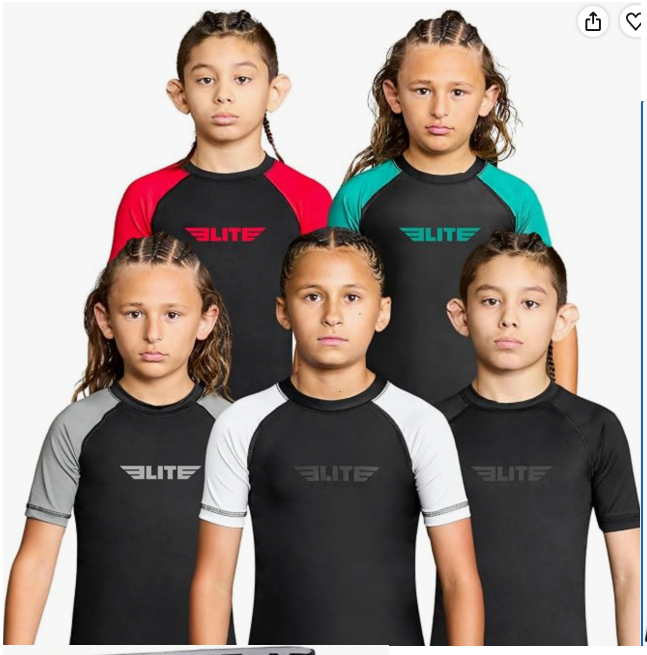
1.	
2.	
3.	

Shoes

1.	
2.	

Under Singlet

Compression Rash Guard







Mouthgaurd





Soap

Any Antifungal or soap that contains tea tree and eucalyptus oils



https://tinyurl.com/IMSwrestling1