

## Wildcat Softball Program Philosophy

### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Program

The goal for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program is to provide a quality experience to each athlete while preparing them to move on to higher levels of competition. Through the 9<sup>th</sup> grade program, players will learn game strategy and improve their throwing, catching, hitting, fielding, and running skills. They should have fun while learning the game of fast pitch. The players should know how to throw, catch, hit, run, and field. Although some may not have played fast pitch before the ninth grade, they should possess limited knowledge of the game).

We will have only an “A” team at the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level, with 15-18 players. Players should see a good amount of playing time at this level, although playing time will not be equal. Each player should start at least one game during the season.

By the end of the season, this team should understand basic game strategy and be able to execute basic plays with consistency. They should know how to bunt, steal, slide, hit and run the bases aggressively. They are expected to play a highly competitive game. These players generally enjoy highly competitive softball.

### Sophomore or “C” Squad

The sophomore or “C” squad will consist of freshmen, sophomores, juniors, or seniors who want to continue to enjoy the game. This team will have a 14-game schedule that is consistent with the varsity team. They will practice independently. The goal of this team is to provide a place for positive competitive place to play. The team will consist of 15-18 players, who will see playing time in each game. The players should improve their skills while having fun. It is possible that they may become a part of the varsity program in the future. They should continue progressing towards understanding the components of the game of softball.

### Junior Varsity Program

This team is designed for any freshman, sophomore, or junior that does not have the skill level yet to play varsity ball. The junior varsity is the second best team in the program. Each player should start at least one game of the season. This team will play the same schedule as the varsity. This includes traveling with the varsity. The goal of the team is to prepare players for the varsity level of competition. Therefore, the level of play should exceed the expectations of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and sophomore teams. These players may need to review basic strategy, but should then be ready for some advanced strategy. This is true especially in the area of “thinking the game.” These players must be able to anticipate the opponent’s play. These players will likely see varsity competition in the future and need to be prepared for that level of competition. Many players that participate at the Junior Varsity level will make the tournament team.

### *Varsity Team*

This is the highest level of softball competition at Eagan High School. The best players will participate on this team regardless of their age. These players will possess maturity, dedication, leadership, ability to work hard, and desire. These attributes will provide players with the skills and potential to perform at the highest level of play. They will play an advanced game strategy, which has as its foundations the basic skills taught at the earlier levels. The team will not exceed 18 players, and may at times be fewer than 14. A tournament team will be compiled at the end of each season. This team will consist of no more than 20 players and two managers. This team will be compiled of the varsity players and any outstanding players from the freshman, sophomore, or junior varsity teams.