



**Norfolk Public Schools**  
The cornerstone of a proudly diverse community

# **Athletic Handbook for Coaches**

*Norfolk Public Schools Athletics*

**2026-2027**

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## Introduction

Norfolk Public Schools has five senior high schools and seven middle schools which offer athletic programs:

<u>High Schools</u>	<u>Middle Schools</u>
Granby – Region 5B	Azalea Gardens
Maury – Region 5B	Blair
Norview – Region 5B	Lake Taylor
Lake Taylor – Region 3A	Lakewood
Booker T. Washington – Region 3A	Northside
	Norview
	Ruffner

## Norfolk Public Schools Athletic Department: Goals & Objectives

Each athletic program will:

1. Contribute to the physical fitness and development of athletic skills of participants through teaching and presenting a sound program of conditioning and practice.
2. Teach the values of sportsmanship through the Virginia High School League Sportsmanship Code so that participants may learn to be humble in victory and gracious in defeat.
3. Teach self-discipline by requiring participants to adhere to a lifestyle that will contribute in a positive way to team effectiveness.
4. Teach the compatibility of self-reliance and cooperation through activities designed to give recognition to contributions of individual athletes and showing that success of the program depends on team effort.
5. Unify the school by providing common goals, involving all students and creating a common purpose, thereby generating school spirit and building alumni loyalty.
6. Provide a wholesome environment for athletic participation and values through teaching positive attitudes and the recreational value of participation.
7. Provide opportunities to achieve educational and personal goals for students/athletes, counseling them to establish goals consistent with their interest, abilities, and needs.
8. Provide an environment that is safe for all participants.

9. Teach transformative values to promote the growth of a student-athlete.

**Department of Athletics**

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**Superintendent of Schools**

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[www.npsk12.com/departments/athletics/overview](http://www.npsk12.com/departments/athletics/overview)

## **Mission & Vision**

Our goal is to develop young men and women to be successful citizens in our highly competitive world. Opportunities supported by the Virginia High School League (VHSL) across 32 athletic programs, as well as debate, forensics, theater festival, school publications, and academic competitions, help increase student participation.

## High School Athletics Program: 2026-2027

<b>VHSL Athletic Program Offerings</b>	
<b>Fall</b> 7/27/26 – 12/12/26	<b>Winter</b> 11/9/26 – 3/13/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheerleading (begins 7/30)</li> <li>• Cross Country (begins 8/3)</li> <li>• Field Hockey* (begins 8/3)</li> <li>• Football* (begins 7/30)</li> <li>• Golf (begins 7/27)</li> <li>• G Volleyball (begins 8/3)</li> <li>• B Volleyball (begins 8/3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G. Basketball*</li> <li>• B. Basketball*</li> <li>• Sideline Cheer</li> <li>• Indoor Track &amp; Field</li> <li>• Swim/Dive</li> <li>• Wrestling</li> </ul>
<b>Spring</b> 2/22/27 – 6/12/27	<b>Activities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseball*</li> <li>• Soccer</li> <li>• Softball*</li> <li>• B. Tennis</li> <li>• G. Tennis</li> <li>• Track &amp; Field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholastic Bowl</li> <li>• One Act Play</li> <li>• Speech</li> </ul>

\* indicate varsity & junior varsity programs

<b>Member Schools</b>			
<b>School</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Athletic Director</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Booker T Washington High School	Matthew Mason	Oronde Andrews	628-3587
Granby High School	Thomas Smigiel	Chris Harris	451-4121
Lake Taylor High School	Latesha Wade-Jenkins	OPEN	892-3203
Maury High School	Karen Berg	Thomas Staples	628-3357
Norview High School	Tori Jacobs-Sumbry	Thomas Adams	852-4503

## Middle School Athletic Program: 2026-2027

<b>League Athletic Offerings</b>	
<b>Fall</b> 8/31/26 – 10/14/26	<b>Winter I</b> 10/12/26 – 11/21/26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baseball</li> <li>• Competition Cheer (8/31/26 -11/14/26)</li> <li>• Softball</li> <li>• B. Track</li> <li>• G. Track</li> <li>• Wrestling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• G. Basketball</li> <li>• B. Basketball</li> <li>• Sideline Cheer</li> <li>• Scholastic Bowl</li> </ul>
<b>Winter II</b> 1/19/27 – 3/3/27	<b>Spring</b> 3/1/27 – 5/27/27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speech</li> <li>• B. Soccer (begins 1/19)</li> <li>• G. Soccer (begins 1/19)</li> <li>• XC (2/16 – 3/23)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field Hockey</li> <li>• Football</li> <li>• Sideline Cheer</li> <li>• B. Volleyball</li> <li>• G. Volleyball</li> </ul>

<b>Middle School League Member Schools</b>			
<b>School</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Athletic Director</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Academy for Discovery at Lakewood	Romanda Hannigan	Tim Maynard	628-2477
Azalea Gardens Middle School	Tammi Hinton	OPEN	531-3000
Blair Middle School	Shenay Lewis	Kurt Straub	628-2400
Lake Taylor School	Melanie Patterson	Brett Jones	892-3230
Northside Middle School	Letisha Lawrence	Audra Gardenhire	531-3150
Norview Middle School	Melissa McFarland-Bryant	Raekwon Johnson	852-4600
Ruffner Academy	Tracey Flemmings	Melissa Castle	628-3466

## Roles & Responsibilities

### Senior Coordinator, Athletics

The senior coordinator of athletics is responsible for conducting, along with the principals, a formal evaluation of the athletic directors, evaluating and making recommendations to the superintendent concerning the entire athletic program, providing direct support in arranging clinics and workshops, preparing budgets, and overseeing the use of school facilities. The senior

coordinator of athletics is responsible directly to the deputy superintendent for teaching and learning support and will:

1. Work with principals and athletic directors in the preparation of the annual budget and keeping accurate records on school expenditures.
2. Work closely with the purchasing department to evaluate equipment and supplies in current use, consult with sales representatives, preview and evaluate new materials, and make recommendations for purchase.
3. Monitor VHSL activities, making sure Norfolk Public Schools is in compliance.
4. Work with principals to ensure Title IX compliance.
5. Stimulate and develop professional staff leadership and motivate a high level of morale and performance in the schools.
6. Develop appropriate written guides and materials for all phases of the VHSL program.
7. Prepare appropriate programs for staff development through in-services.
8. Interview with principals and recommend the hiring of athletic directors and coaches.
9. Assist in the scheduling of transportation for athletic contests and games.
10. Formally evaluate the athletic directors with the principals.
11. Make recommendations on continuation or termination of athletic directors and coaches.
12. Develop clinics for coaches so they are current on techniques.
  
13. Conduct meetings with school principals and athletic directors aimed toward the improvement of athletic activities.
14. Coordinate the joint use of school facilities with Norfolk City Department of Parks and Recreation and the community.
15. Review and makes recommendations on the location of all equipment, playing fields, and buildings with principals, the senior director of school plant facilities, and city parks and recreation personnel.
16. Assess VHSL activities and make appropriate recommendations to the associate superintendent for academic affairs.
17. Conduct an effective, continuing public relations program for all VHSL activities.
18. Assist principals and athletic directors with supervising and evaluating VHSL activities.
19. Arrange for use of non-Norfolk Public Schools facilities when required, i.e., golf courses, swimming pools, etc.
20. Work with principals and senior director of school plant facilities on plans and need for new construction and those renovations already in operation.
21. Work with the department of risk management and safety on athletic insurance issues.
22. Develop and monitor the volunteer coaches program.
23. Develop and monitor the athletic fundraising policy.
24. Develop security with the police liaison officer.
25. Interview and train new athletic directors.
26. Oversee the Teacher Specialist, Athletics.
27. Monitor Norfolk Public Schools concussion policy.
28. Monitor Norfolk Public Schools COVID Mitigation Plan.

### **Athletic Director (High School)**

Each individual high school will have an athletic director who will have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Liaison between the school principal, parent, and coaching staff.
2. Liaison between the central office and coaching staff.

3. Maintain complete records on the athletic program including eligibility lists, insurance lists, physical forms, equipment inventories, awards, rosters, coaching education, and concussion education.
4. Actively promote the school athletic program by cooperating with booster clubs, media, etc.
5. Promote positive sportsmanship among athletic programs consistent with the ideals set forth by the VHSL, NPS, district and region.
6. Instruct coaches to the policies governing the athletic program including state, regional, district, and system regulations.
7. Responsible for the supervision of all interscholastic programs that are offered by the school.
  
8. Supervise and annually evaluate all athletic coaches to ensure quality and continuous improvement.
9. Insist upon compliance with rules and regulations of the Norfolk City School Board, Virginia High School League, District, Conference, and Regional Council.
10. Accountable for the contracting of officials and other personnel required for all athletic events.
11. Insist upon adequate safety provisions for participants and spectators at all activities.
12. Provide adequate clean facilities and arrange special parking for visiting teams and officials.
13. Provide for the efficient handling of all athletic funds with such safeguards as annual budgets, audits, and proper accounting.
14. Provide athletic staff meetings on a regular basis to review school policies and procedures.
15. Set up and maintains a system for monogram awards.
16. Provide information and make arrangements for coaches meetings, conferences, and clinics.
17. Require each coach to conduct a parent meeting at the beginning of each sport season to explain VHSL rules, NCAA requirements, insurance, and other pertinent information.
18. Make necessary arrangements for transporting participants to scheduled school activities, including meals and lodging.
19. Establish reasonable limits for practice time; assign practice facilities so that all teams will have an equal opportunity to use the facilities.
20. Help coordinate the usage of the activity bus.
21. Maintain a system of inventory and accounting for all sports equipment.
22. Represent the school at athletic meetings relating to district, region, and state.
23. Schedule and coordinate all athletic events and practices at his/her school.
24. Work with the coaches and booster clubs in arranging all sports banquets.
25. Periodically check all facilities for the safety of participants and spectators.
26. Arrange details for home contests.
27. Review eligibility lists of all interscholastic programs and maintain a file on each opponent's eligibility list.
28. Accountable for arranging and approving all athletic schedules.
29. Accountable for the purchase of all athletic supplies and equipment. No purchases will be made through the school for personal use.
30. Provide a plan for maintenance, renovation, and improvement of the athletic facilities.
31. Be an active member of the school's booster club.
32. Provide written quarterly reports to the principal and the office of athletics.
33. Complete all required course work and pass exam to become a Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA).
34. Be an active member of all professional organizations: NIAAA, VIAAA, and EVADA.

## Head Coach

Coaches should regard the safety and well-being of athletes as their highest priority. In establishing that priority, coaches need to teach appropriate skills within their particular sport. They should maintain an effective and safe strength and conditioning program, which includes off-season, pre-season, and in-season sessions. They must recognize potential environmental hazards that could result in an injury from weather or field conditions. The coach must know and understand the emergency action plan for their school. When an injury occurs, coaches must provide, or delegate to a competent aide, emergency care of athletic injuries and application of first aid in the absence of the athletic trainer or team physician. They must make sure the parent/guardian is notified. They should set up pre-season meetings with athletes and parents, which focus on the entire program including emergency procedures, equipment, techniques, insurance information, and injury reporting. Coaches must establish a positive communication system with the team physician, school athletic trainer, and school administrator in regards to injury care and prevention.

The head coach for each interscholastic sport will have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Understand and follow all rules and regulations set forth by the Norfolk School Board, VHSL, Regional, Conference and District Council.
2. Conduct pre-season meetings with prospective athletes and parents to issue eligibility forms, explain VHSL requirements for participation, NCAA eligibility, and letter requirements for athletes.
3. Conduct school pre-season meetings with assistant coaches to establish goals and objectives for the season as well as a plan to accomplish them.
4. Hold team meetings stressing good sportsmanship and penalties for bad sportsmanship. Provide athletes with a written copy of team rules, regulations, and consequences.
5. Organize and plan daily practice schedule.
6. Provide a complete VHSL eligibility list to the school athletic director seven (7) days prior to the first game.
7. Attend professional in-service clinics and/or meetings to improve coaching performance.
8. Issue and maintain equipment during the sport season. Collect, organize, repair and store equipment upon completion of the season.
9. Assure safety and proper conduct for all squad members during practice sessions and games.
10. Secure all rooms, buildings, and practice and/or game facilities after use.
11. Maintain and provide the school athletic director with inventories, requisitions, and award lists following completion of the season.
12. Cooperate with media, civic organizations, booster clubs and other groups promoting interscholastic athletics.
13. Direct all questions, complaints, and comments, to the athletic director for answers to interscholastic related concerns.
14. Maintain a wholesome educational environment:
  - a. Counsel students to improve academically in order for them to meet VHSL and NCAA eligibility requirements.
  - b. Conduct supervised study sessions for athletes.
  - c. Facilitate tutoring for athletes experiencing academic difficulty.
  - d. Monitor grades of all athletes' academic progress.
  - e. Monitor absences of athletes.
15. Hold a current certification in CPR/AED/First Aid.
16. Hold a current certificate in concussion management.
17. Hold a coaching certificate in sportsmanship.
18. Must be a certified coach thru the VHSL coaching education (VHSL Coach Rule 27-2-4)

19. Hold a valid certificate from *Norfolk Public Schools Student-Athlete Mental Health for Coaches* course
20. Maintain pre-season conditioning to designate times allowed for each sport.
21. Teach appropriate skills/techniques within the particular sport.
22. Establish and monitor strength and conditioning program
23. Survey field conditions for potential hazards.
24. Monitor weather conditions.
25. Represent the school by being dressed appropriately and displaying professional behavior at all times.
26. Establish communication with team physician, certified athletic trainer, and athletic director.
27. Demonstrate enthusiasm for sport and coaching responsibilities.
28. Promote a positive relationship between school, parents and booster clubs by attending parent meetings, awards banquets and other activities promoting interscholastic athletics.

### Assistant Coach

The assistant coach for each interscholastic sport will have the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Attend all pre-season meetings as directed by the head coach.
2. Assume all duties and/or responsibilities assigned by the head coach.
3. Attend all practice sessions, games, and meetings as directed by the head coach.
4. Direct all questions, complaints, comments, problems, etc. to the head coach, who is the liaison with the athletic director, principal, and VHSL for interscholastic athletics and related matters.
5. Understand and follow all rules and regulations set forth by the Norfolk School Board, VHSL, Regional, Conference, and District Council.
6. Attend professional in-service clinics and/or meetings to improve coaching performance.
7. Maintain a wholesome educational environment:
  - a. Conduct supervised study sessions for athletes.
  - b. Facilitate tutoring for athletes (when needed).
  - c. Monitor grades of all athletes.
8. Hold a current certification in CPR/AED/First Aid.
9. Demonstrate enthusiasm for the sport and coaching responsibilities.
  
10. Represent the school by being dressed appropriately and displaying professional behavior at all times.
11. Promote a positive relationship between school, parents and booster clubs by attending parent meetings, awards banquets, and other activities promoting interscholastic athletics.
12. Must be a certified coach thru the VHSL Coaches Education Program (VHSL Coaches Rule 27-2-4)
13. Hold a current certificate in concussion management.
14. Hold a current certificate in sportsmanship.
15. Hold a valid certificate from *Norfolk Public Schools Student-Athlete Mental Health for Coaches* course

## Code for Interscholastic Activities

Coaches Should:

1. Exemplify the highest standard of behavior and be a model representative of the educational staff of the school and the teaching profession.
2. Demonstrate high ideals, good habits, and a desirable attitude in personal behavior and demand the same of players.
3. Emphasize to players and bench personnel the importance of proper sideline behavior.
4. Recognize that the purpose of competition is to promote physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of individual players and that the most important values of competition are derived from fair play.
5. Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.
6. Maintain self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without public display of emotion or dissatisfaction with the officials.
7. Cooperate with the school principal and athletic director in the planning, scheduling, and conducting of sports activities.
8. Employ acceptable educational methods in coaching, giving all players an opportunity to use and develop initiative, leadership, and judgment.
9. Pay close attention to the physical condition and well-being of players; refuse to jeopardize the health of an individual for the sake of improving a team chance to win.
10. Teach athletes that it is better to lose fairly than win unfairly.
11. Discourage gambling, profanity, abusive language, and similar violation of the Sportsman's Code.

## Volunteer Coaching Policy

- Athletic directors must interview all volunteer coaches before the principal's approval.
- Before selection of volunteers, the head coach must agree to the selection and supervision of the volunteers.
- The athletic director and principal must oversee and monitor the volunteer program.
- If a volunteer is selected for one sport, efforts must be made to recruit volunteer coaches for the equivalent sport.
- Applicants must have expertise in the sport.
- Applicants should be role models.
- Applicants must submit the results of a recent tuberculin skin test/x-ray and fulfill the requirements of the volunteer application.
- A copy of the volunteer application will be kept by the school principal and a copy should be sent to the office of athletics for review.
- Hold a current CPR/AED/First Aid Certification.
- Hold a current certificate in concussion management
- Hold a current certificate in sportsmanship.
- Hold a valid certificate from *Norfolk Public Schools Student-Athlete Mental Health for Coaches* course
- Complete and pass Norfolk Public Schools Volunteer Program.

## Policy on Sex Discrimination

Norfolk Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities. Any complaints of an alleged Title IX violation of the Education Amendments of 1972 will be investigated. Title IX states:

*“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance.”*

Students, parents, or school employees who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of sex may file a complaint in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws and Norfolk Public Schools Policies and Regulations § 6-26 and § 9-48

### **Procedures For Filing Title IX Complaint:**

***Informal Procedure:*** Discuss your problem/complaint with person against whom the problem/complaint is directed. You may seek advice or the services of other parties within the school in attempting to resolve the problem/complaint informally.

***Formal Procedure:*** Submit your complaint in writing to the principal. He/she should make every effort to resolve the matter as quickly as possible, utilizing all available resources within the school system. Should the complaint involve the principal, you may decide to file your complaint with the Title IX Coordinator (Chief of Operations).

***Appeal Procedure:*** If the complaint is not resolved according to the formal procedure, you may file an appeal to the Title IX Coordinator. Such appeals must be submitted in writing within five days from the date of the principal’s decision.

## Fundraising Policy

The following guidelines must be adhered to in the implementation of School Board Policy 6-26 regarding fund-raising for interscholastic competition:

1. Must be approved by principal or athletic director.
2. Must have specific goals for the fund-raising project.
3. Must be for a specific length of time that is agreed upon by athletic director and coach.
4. Money cannot be used for equipment normally purchased by school.
5. Money can only be used for needs not covered by School Board funds.
6. Solicitation by students is discouraged; however, students may participate in approved forms of fundraising such as car washes or dances.
7. When a fundraising project has been approved, the athletic director must offer or apprise the coach of the equivalent sport the same opportunity.

## Student-Athlete Participation in Athletics

All middle school and high school students are encouraged to participate in their schools athletics and activities. Each student-athlete must have a valid physical on file before participating in the Norfolk Public Schools athletics program. The sports physical must be completed by a physician within the past 14 months and clear the student-athlete to participate in athletics. *Once the physical expires (14 months from the date of the physician's signature), the student-athlete will become ineligible and cannot participate in any capacity until a current physical has been turned into the Athletic Director or Athletic Trainer. This includes during the middle of an athletic season.*

**Additionally, all** student athletes and parents **must** review the Preparticipation Forms annually, which include Concussion, Sudden Cardiac Arrest, & Heat-related Illness Education acknowledgement letters. Each student-athlete and parent **must** sign and return the form to the school's athletic director prior to the student athletic practicing or trying out for a team.

For rising ninth grader to be eligible for senior high school athletics, he or she must be enrolled and reside within the schools attendance zone. Once in high school, a senior high student must have passed 5 out of 8 OR 3 out of 4 4x4 scheduled classes during the preceding semester with a minimum 2.0 GPA after the ninth grade.

## Eligibility Requirements Overview

**Virginia High School League:** All students must meet all eligibility requirements as established by the Virginia High School League (VHSL).

**Norfolk Public Schools:** Students must meet all eligibility rules set forth by Norfolk Public Schools. In some instances, Norfolk Public Schools rules may be more stringent than the VHSL rules.

**School Board Policies:** Students must abide by all rules and regulations set forth by the School Board of the City of Norfolk.

**Transfer Rule:** Students who transfer from one secondary school to another within the city without a change of address and court ordered custody students who transfer from one secondary school to another within the city without a change of address, will be ineligible to participate in any VHSL activity for a period of one (1) year from the day of enrollment at the receiving school. Exceptions to this policy may be granted only by the superintendent or his designee (School Board Policy: JCA, see *Virginia High School League & Eastern District Transfer Rule* for more information).

**Virginia High School League Eligibility Falsification Penalty:** If a student or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) gives false information, written or verbal, that affects his/her eligibility upon entering and/or during his/her eight semesters of eligibility, the student shall become ineligible at any VHSL school for a period of one year from the date the information is certified as being false.

**Adopted by VHSL: March 15, 1991**

## Norfolk Public Schools' 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement

### High School

1. All first-time 9th graders are eligible to participate in VHSL athletics and activities during the fall semester of their freshman year. Beginning in the second semester—and for each semester thereafter—student-athletes must pass at least 5 of 8 courses, or 3 of 4 courses on a 4x4 schedule, from the previous semester to remain eligible.
2. GPA will be based on all courses taken for credit
3. GPA will be based on the following:
  - Fall/Winter Student Athletes - year long courses from preceding year.
  - Cumulative GPA
  - Spring Student Athletes – semester 1 GPA or cumulative GPA
4. The grading scale shall be the current scale used by NPS, including weighted classes
5. Summer school shall count two ways:
  - In the event a student must repeat a course, he/she shall be allowed to take the highest grade and average into yearly grades.
  - New classes shall be added to yearly grades.
6. Transfer students shall be eligible until the end of the first grading period (9 weeks), at which time, they shall meet the 2.0 GPA required by NPS. If a student is transferring from a school system which has a requirement for participation in place, the student shall meet the NPS requirement from the first day of enrollment and VHSL standards.
7. Students shall have one appeal or probation period during their middle school (8th grade only) and one appeal or probation period during their high school eligibility (10th, 11th or 12th grade only) if they fall below the minimum GPA requirement and meet VHSL standards.
8. Students receiving special education services, as well as others whose eligibility must be determined under applicable federal and state laws, and who fall below a 2.0 GPA, will be evaluated on an individual basis. Waivers shall only be granted by the superintendent or his designee. Special education students, who request a waiver, must be making standard progress in those courses taken as determined by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### Middle School

1. All first-time 6th graders are eligible to participate in middle school league athletics and activities during the fall semester of their freshman year. Beginning in the second semester—and for each semester thereafter—student-athletes must pass at least 5 of 8 courses, or 3 of 4 courses on a 4x4 schedule, from the previous semester to remain eligible.
2. GPA will be based on all courses taken for credit
3. GPA will be based on the following:
  - Fall/Winter Student Athletes - year long courses from preceding year.
  - Cumulative GPA
  - Spring Student Athletes – semester 1 GPA or cumulative GPA
9. The grading scale shall be the current scale used by NPS, including weighted classes
10. Summer school shall count two ways:
  - In the event a student must repeat a course, he/she shall be allowed to take the highest grade and average into yearly grades.

- New classes shall be added to yearly grades.
- 11. Students shall have one appeal or probation period during their middle school (8th grade only) if they fall below the minimum GPA requirement and meet VHSL standards.
- 12. Students receiving special education services, as well as others whose eligibility must be determined under applicable federal and state laws, and who fall below a 2.0 GPA, will be evaluated on an individual basis. Waivers shall only be granted by the superintendent or his designee. Special education students, who request a waiver, must be making standard progress in those courses taken as determined by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

## Change of Semester

1. Eligibility will begin on the first calendar day of the new semester.
2. Students who use a waiver in the first semester for fall sports will be allowed to continue eligibility with winter sports if they fall below a 2.0 but have passed a minimum of 5 out of 8 OR 3 out of 4 4x4 scheduled classes at the change of semester. Those students who continue with winter sports and will try out for a spring sport must meet the 2.0 rule to compete in the spring.
3. Students must have passed 5 out of 8 OR 3 out of 4 4x4 scheduled classes at the change of the semester.

## Code of Conduct

**Substance Abuse:** Students selected to participate in extracurricular activities may not consume alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs or banned sports performance enhancing drugs at anytime. Students may not violate the provisions of the Norfolk Public Schools "Participation Pledge." This pledge applies during non-school events as well as in school and during school-sponsored activities.

**Team Activity Rules (i.e. debate, scholastic bowl, speech, and One Act Play):** Each coach is responsible for establishing team/activity rules. These rules will be distributed and discussed with participants and parents. Students who do not comply with the team/activity rules may forfeit their opportunity to participate.

**School Attendance:** Students must attend all scheduled classes on the days of activities in order to participate. Coaches may make exceptions to this standard with the approval of the principal or his/her designee.

**In-School Suspension:** Students assigned to in-school suspension may participate in extracurricular activities if they met all requirements of the in-school suspension. In-school suspensions must be reported to the coach, who may choose to take additional action.

**Out-of-School Suspension:** Students suspended from school will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities or attend any school-sponsored activity during time of suspension. At the discretion of the coach, more severe action, including dismissal, might be administered.

**Court Disciplinary Action:** School officials will suspend a student from participating in extracurricular activities who has been charged with any felony or a misdemeanor/felony involving alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons, or violence until disposition of the charges. The participants **MUST** report the incident to the coach. The coach will present the facts to the administrator who will determine eligibility.

Any student convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor/felony involving alcohol, drugs, weapons, or violence will be ineligible to participate for one year from time of conviction. **Norfolk Public Schools Bona Fide Student Rule.**

**Alternative Educational Setting:** Any student who receives a placement in an alternative educational setting because of disciplinary action must complete one semester or its equivalent in his/her home school before becoming eligible for VHSL athletics/activities and middle school activities.

#### **Middle School Appeal:**

The principal of the home school will contact the middle school principals via email to request a panel review. The parent and student will be required to attend the panel review. The review panel will consist of 3 middle school principals. The panel will hear the request for reinstatement in person, and make an immediate decision at the completion of the panel review. The presenting principal will not cast a vote for the reinstatement. A majority vote is needed to reinstate the student. The three member panel's decision is final, and no other appeal will be reviewed for that individual student during the first semester of their return. The student will also have to qualify for reinstatement under the same academic guidelines as all other student athletes in Norfolk Public Schools.

#### **High School Appeal:**

The principal of the home school will contact the high school principals via email to request a panel review. The parent and student will be required to attend the panel review. The review panel will consist of 3 high school principals. The panel will hear the request for reinstatement in person, and make an immediate decision at the completion of the panel review. The presenting principal will not cast a vote for the reinstatement. A majority vote is needed to reinstate the student. The three member panel's decision is final, and no other appeal will be reviewed for that individual student during the first semester of their return. The student will also have to qualify for reinstatement under the same academic guidelines as all other student athletes in Norfolk Public Schools.

### **Bonafide Student Rule**

1. The student will demonstrate good citizenship in the school and the community, avoiding involvement with unlawful activities that would reflect discredit on the school or the team.
2. Any student who is under penalty of suspension or whose character or conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon the school is not considered to be a STUDENT IN GOOD STANDING.
3. School officials will suspend a student from participating in extracurricular activities who has been charged with any felony or a misdemeanor involving alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons, or violence until disposition of the charges. The participants MUST report the incident to the coach. The coach will present the facts to the administrator who will determine eligibility.

4. The Norfolk Public Schools Bona Fide Student Rule states: Any student convicted of any felony or a misdemeanor/felony involving alcohol, drugs, weapons, or violence will be ineligible to participate for one year from time of conviction.
5. A student CONVICTED of use, possession, distribution of illegal drugs or weapons or of any felony, shall be ineligible for athletic participation for one academic year from the date of conviction.
6. In interpreting item 28-1-1 of the “VHSL Handbook,” the Bonafide Student Rule, a “regular” student is considered a student who is enrolled in a school in accordance with the policies, regulations, and administrative directives of Norfolk Public Schools. Any student who is in violation of this interpretation shall be ineligible for competition for one full calendar year from the date the student is declared to be ineligible (all VHSL activities).
  - a. If this violation is discovered during the season, the team will forfeit all games in accordance with VHSL rules which the student participated within 30 days.
  - b. If this is discovered after the fact, the Norfolk Principals Association will resort to the VHSL rules 32-3-1 and 32-4-1.

## Virginia High School League & Eastern District Transfer Rule

As members of the Eastern District and Virginia High School League (VHSL), any student transferring into the Norfolk Public Schools District, or within the Norfolk Public Schools District, must abide by the transfer rules set forth by both the VHSL and Eastern District.

It is important to know that, by default, all students who change from one school to another are ineligible for VHSL athletic and activity participation at the new school. Students will be required to demonstrate that they satisfy the criteria of VHSL Rule 28A-7-1 (Transfer Rule) before they can be declared eligible to participate in any VHSL-sponsored program. General information about the VHSL Transfer rule can be found below.

28A-7 VHSL Transfer Rule Excerpt:

*The student shall not have enrolled in one high school and subsequently transferred to and enrolled in another high school without a corresponding change in the residence of his/her parents, parent, or guardian. The original residence must be abandoned as a residence, that is sold, rented or otherwise disposed of as a residence, and must not be used as a residence by any family members. The entire family must make the change and take with them the household goods and furniture appropriate to the circumstances. The change must be made with the intent that it is permanent. The sending and receiving VHSL school principals are required to complete and file the VHSL Transfer Form, acknowledging that to the best of their knowledge the student has met all aspects of the transfer rule or its exceptions. Home instruction does not constitute enrollment in a public school. Home schooling is a process through which the*

*Virginia Code compulsory education requirements may be met, as is private schooling. Home schooling is the equivalent of school enrollment for Transfer Rule purposes and determining whether the student has met Scholarship Rule requirements of having passed five academic subjects recognized by the Virginia Department of Education in the most recent prior semester. A transfer should be for the welfare of the student and/or school system and not for athletic and/or academic activity purposes.*

Exceptions exist to these rules based on specific circumstances. If you believe that your student-athlete can obtain a waiver, please contact your school's athletic director for more information. You may also reference the VHSL list of exemptions in the VHSL Handbook and Policy Manual.

## **Middle School Athletic League Participation**

1. Any student in grades 6, 7, or 8 establishes athletic eligibility upon first appearing on a team roster in middle school. Once eligibility is established at a middle school, the student-athlete may not compete for another member school or transfer eligibility without a bona fide change of address.
2. All eligible 8th grade student athletes may participate in sports at the middle school level. 8th grade students that are over aged (August 1, 2010) and have a 2.0 can participate at their home zoned High School at the J. V. level. Additionally, 8<sup>th</sup> graders may compete in their home zoned High School JV programs in the following sports –
  - Baseball
  - Basketball (following the middle school season)
  - Field Hockey
  - Football
  - Softball
  - Sideline Cheer: Basketball (the middle school season)

*\* Eighth grade students that try out and make the junior varsity team at their home-zoned high school must provide their own transportation to practices. Transportation after practices will be provided by NPS transportation department.*

3. Student's enrolled in specialty schools may participate in athletics at either their designated 'sister' school or home-zoned school. Sister school designations are as follows –
  - a. Academy of International Studies at Rosemont
    - a. Lake Taylor MS: all 6th-8th graders would participate at Lake Taylor School.  
\* Transportation will be provided by Norfolk Public Schools.
  - b. Southside STEM Academy
    - a. Ruffner MS: all 6th-8th graders would participate at Ruffner Academy.  
\* Transportation will be provided by Norfolk Public Schools.
  - c. Crossroads
    - a. Academy for Discovery at Lakewood\*  
\* Transportation will be provided by Norfolk Public Schools.

d. Ghent Elementary

a. Blair MS\*

\*Transportation will be provided by Norfolk Public Schools.

If a student wishes to participate at their home-zoned school, the parent/guardian must provide their own transportation.

4. NEW VHSL Transfer Rule Exception 28A-7-2(5) – Transition to High School

A new rule set fourth by the Virginia High School League that goes into effect on July 1, 2026, notes that a student must attend the feeder middle school for 8th grade in order to be eligible as a 9th grade student in the Fall of 2027 if he or she attends a high school outside of the attendance zone where he or she resides. If the 9<sup>th</sup> grade student does not attend their zoned high school, this is considered a transfer and is subject to the VHSL Transfer Rule 28A-7 referenced above, and the eligibility ruling as outlined below -

*(a) If a student in 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade transfers before the student was eligible to participate in either (1) at least 50% of the maximum number of regular season contests, or (2) at least 50% of the total number of games on the student's previous team's schedule in that sport, the student is ineligible for participation in the postseason (district championships tournament and thereafter) in that same sport, for the current school year.*

*(b) If a student in 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grade transfers after the student was eligible to participate in either (1) at least 50% of the maximum number of regular season contests, or (2) at least 50% of the total number of games on the student's previous team's schedule in that sport, the student will be deemed to have participated in an entire season and, following the transfer, is ineligible for further participation in that sport for the current school year, including post-season for the current school year only.*

## Hazing Policy

Students shall not recklessly or intentionally endanger the health or safety of a student or students or inflict bodily harm on a student or students in connection with or for the purpose of initiation, admission into or affiliation with or as condition for continued membership in a team, club, organization, association or student body.

Students should be reminded that the Commonwealth of Virginia has anti-hazing statues that if found guilty may provide punishment related to being guilty of a misdemeanor or felony.

## Travel Guidelines

**Transportation from Practice:** Student-athletes are eligible to ride the late bus home after each day's practice. Usually, these buses depart from the middle schools at 5:05pm and the senior high schools from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. For more specific details, see your high school's athletic director.

**Team Travel Within the Eastern District:** Norfolk Public Schools Transportation Department will not provide transportation outside the Eastern Region without the permission of the director of transportation.

**Use of Personal Vehicle for Transportation:** When teams need to travel to practices or games, Norfolk Public Schools recommends that a request be made through Norfolk Public Schools Transportation Department. If a team member or volunteer desires to use their personal vehicle for transportation, they must file with the athletic director, the “*Volunteer Driver Information Form*” prior to travel. On next page is a copy of the “*Volunteer Driver Information Form*.”

## Administrative Duties of a Coach

### Disciplinary Action

It is strongly recommended that the coach clear his/her discipline policy with the principal and athletic director before the start of the season. Normally, it is the responsibility of the coach to decide how to discipline the players on the team. However, coaches must set their discipline policies within Norfolk Public Schools rules and regulations.

#### **28-1-1 Bona Fide Student Rule**

The student shall be a regular student in good standing of the school.

#### **28-1-3 Interpretations**

1. “Regular” student is considered a full-time student who is in regular attendance and is carrying a schedule of subjects which, if successfully completed, will render him/her scholastically eligible for League participation the ensuing semester.
2. Any student who is under penalty of suspension, or whose character or conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon his/her school, is not considered in good standing.
3. Any student is permitted to take course work outside the VHSL high school building provided he/she is enrolled in the high school and is eligible.

#### **Checklist**

- ✓ Clear discipline policies with the principal and athletic director before start of the season.
- ✓ Inform the team of training rules before start of the season.
- ✓ Inform the parents of rules, regulations, and policies at pre-season meetings.
- ✓ All rules and regulations must be in writing and given to each athlete and parent.

### Association With Questionable Characters

The student will demonstrate good citizenship in the school and the community, avoiding involvement with unlawful activities that would reflect discredit on the school or team.

Any student who is under the penalty of suspension or whose character or conduct to reflect discredit upon the school, is not considered to be a STUDENT IN GOOD STANDING.

A student charged with a felony shall be suspended from the team pending court action.

A student must understand that associating with questionable characters could lead to their dismissal from the team, school, and in some cases, a report to police authorities.

### **Eligibility Of Athletes**

The coach will ensure that every athlete trying out for a VHSL team meet the requirements set forth by the district, conference region, and state governing bodies. It is the coach's responsibility to be cognizant of requirements covering his/her sports. Making sure athletes are academically eligible is often a responsibility delegated to the coach. Currently, it is required that every athlete be enrolled in no less than five (traditional scheduling) or three (block scheduling) subjects offered for credit that may be used for graduation and pass five out of eight OR 3 out of four subjects in the semester previous to their participation in a VHSL activity. The coach may use the athlete's report card or credit sheet to check the number of subjects passed. However, the coach should never take the word of a student/athlete that he/she is academically eligible. If coaches are not sure that athletes are academically eligible, they should confer with the athletic director.

Coaches must also ensure that athletes and their legal guardians live in the school district for which he/she is participating. Most of the time, this is accomplished by having athletes return the residence form. If coaches have any questions about an athlete's residence, they should confer with the athletic director. Athletes that are not enrolled with the school cannot practice, workout or play with that school. Athletes must be enrolled to participate.

It is the coach's responsibility to see that no athlete practices without a valid VHSL Athletic Participation/Parent Consent/Physical Examination Form, Concussion, Cardiac Arrest, and Heat Illness Education Letter. The coach must see that every athlete is properly insured and has returned the parent insurance form. All athletes participating in VHSL sponsored activities must be listed alphabetically on a VHSL eligibility form with all pertinent information completed. This form must be turned into the athletic director by the designated time to avoid being penalized.

### **Checklist**

- ✓ Read the current "VHSL Handbook" eligibility requirements.
- ✓ Confer with the athletic director on VHSL district requirements.
- ✓ Obtain proof that the athlete and legal guardian live in the district for which the athlete is participating or meet the transfer requirements.
- ✓ Obtain a completed VHSL Athletic Participation/Parent Consent/Physical Examination Form signed in appropriate areas by the parents and doctor.
- ✓ Obtain insurance verification form from each athlete, APPROPRIATELY SIGNED, with each athlete properly insured.

- ✓ Obtain guidance from the athletic director if any doubt arises about eligibility requirements.
- ✓ Obtain a signed Cardiac Arrest, Concussion and Heat Illness Education Form

### **Scheduling Of Events and Transportation**

The coaches' responsibilities in scheduling scrimmages, contests, officials, transportation, etc. should be discussed with the athletic director prior to start of the season. However, it is sometimes the responsibility of the coach to make arrangements for team contests and transportation schedules. If this is the case, the coach must comply with the VHSL rule for maximum number of scrimmages and contests. If the athletic director empowers the coach to make transportation arrangements, the coach should be familiar with the procedure for communicating with the bus company.

#### **Checklist**

- ✓ Refer to the "VHSL Handbook" for the maximum number of scrimmages and contests.
- ✓ Confer with the athletic director about who makes the schedule.
- ✓ If empowered to do so, call the bus company and arrange transportation to all away contests.
- ✓ If empowered to do so, call other schools and set contest dates.
- ✓ Have all schedules and arrangements approved by the athletic director.
- ✓ If empowered to do so, contact the commissioner of officials for your sport with the schedule of home games.

### **Postponement Of Events**

When schools are closed due to inclement weather, all activities including athletics are canceled. The Superintendent or Chief of Operations may waive this directive when improved weather conditions warrant consideration.

In the event of inclement weather or other problems that may arise, the coach should know how to handle postponements. Postponing an event should never be the sole responsibility of the coach. A conference with the athletic director and principal should be held before any decision is made. Every effort should be made to meet the obligations of hosting the contest. However, if it becomes impossible to do so, the coach should have a plan for notifying players, staff, volunteers, transportation, officials, and the opposing team.

#### **Checklist**

- ✓ Confer with the athletic director and principal before taking any action.
- ✓ Have a plan for notifying players, staff, volunteers, transportation, officials, and opposing team.
- ✓ If any questions should arise, confer with the athletic director about developing a postponement plan.

## Inventory

It is the coach's duty to keep an up-to-date and accurate inventory of all equipment being used in his/her sport. This includes having a procedure for issuing and collecting uniforms and equipment. The coach should confer with the athletic director to learn the policy covering equipment inventory and collection.

At the end of the season, the coach must compile a list of uniforms and equipment needed for the upcoming year. Having kept an accurate inventory will greatly aid the coach in this task. The athletic director will provide the standardized order form to be completed by the coach.

### Checklist

- ✓ Keep an accurate and up-to-date inventory of team equipment.
- ✓ Have a procedure for issuing and collecting equipment and uniforms.
- ✓ Have a plan for handling collection problems.
- ✓ Complete the order form on time for new equipment or replacement equipment.
- ✓ Confer with the athletic director to understand the school's policies on inventory.

## Securing The Facility

The coach must often secure the locker room before and after practice or contests. If more than one team is using the locker room, the athletic director may assign locker room duty. If the head coach has assistants, he/she may delegate the supervision to the assistants. Securing the players' valuables and facility in general is a task not to be taken lightly. If the coach has any questions about this responsibility, he/she should confer with the athletic director.

Upon leaving the facility, the coach is responsible for securing the building/facility as directed by the Athletic Director.

### Checklist

- ✓ Lock the locker room when it is not in use.
- ✓ Either be present or assign an assistant coach to be present when the athletes are using the locker room.
- ✓ If more than one team is using the locker room, the athletic director should make the locker room assignments.
- ✓ Securing the players' valuables and facility is the responsibility of the head coach. The head coach must report all valuables lost or stolen.
- ✓ Direct any questions regarding security to the athletic director.

## Maintaining the Facility

Maintenance of all athletic facilities is the responsibility of the athletic director. However, each coach should take pride in the facility and do whatever is necessary to help keep it in good working order. The coach comes in daily contact with practice and game areas; therefore, he/she will notice any damages before anyone else. It is the coach's charge to see that any area used by the team is safe.

The coach may wish to personally handle minor repairs; however, any unsafe area must be reported to the athletic director as soon as it is noticed. Then it becomes the athletic director's responsibility to file a work order with the maintenance department and follow through on the repair. Similarly, any requests for improvements should be handled through the athletic director. Confering with the athletic director is the best way to learn the school's policy on facility maintenance and repairs.

### **Checklist**

- ✓ Take pride in your work area.
- ✓ Make any area used by the players totally safe.
- ✓ Report all unsafe areas to the athletic director.
- ✓ Coaches may handle minor repairs.
- ✓ The athletic director should handle all work orders.
- ✓ Confer with the athletic director to learn the school's specific policy regarding facility maintenance and repairs.

### **Reporting Athletic Injuries**

1. Each coach has the responsibility of reporting all athletic injuries to the athletic trainer at his/her respective school.
2. The school-based athletic trainer and/or Teacher Specialist, Athletics will evaluate all athletic injuries and determine the plan of care (i.e., physician referral, parent notification, return to play)
3. When an athlete is injured, the hierarchy to determine the playing status will be as follows:
  - a. Physician
    - i. Please note: When a student-athlete sees a physician for an injury/illness/condition, a sport clearance letter must be turned in to the Athletic Trainer prior to returning to participation
  - b. NPS Athletic trainer
  - c. Coach
4. It is the responsibility of the school-based athletic trainer to record all athletic injuries that occur at his/her school.
5. The school-based athletic trainer will record a written injury report when the injury meet the following conditions:
  - a. A comprehensive injury evaluation was performed
  - b. Athlete was referred or self referred
  - c. Athlete is receiving treatment/rehabilitation
  - d. Athlete's participation status is modified.
6. Progress notes will be maintained on all athletic injuries that require continuous treatment or rehabilitation.
7. The coach and athletic trainer will be responsible for notifying parents or guardian when the son or daughter has sustained injury during practice/game. The following procedures are used to notify parents or guardian:
  - a. Parents or guardian will be notified by a telephone call.
  - b. An Athletic Injury Report for Parent/Guardian will be submitted.
8. A parent/guardian, coach, or school official must accompany any athlete that requires ambulance transportation.
9. Each coach has the responsibility of understanding the NPS concussion policy. Coaches must report all concussions to the school's Athletic Trainer.
10. Each coach has the responsibility to understand and follow the school's emergency action plan, including the location and/or possession of the nearest AED

## Virginia High School League Coaches Education

Coaches Education Requirements: ALL coaches who are paid and volunteer at the high school and middle school level are required to have the following completed prior to the start of their season -

### **Approved Courses**

1. VHSL Coaches Education Program
2. Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition & Intervention Training
3. American Heart/American Red Cross Certification – CPR/AED/First Aid
4. Concussion Education
  - a. Active Concussion Management, “Athletic Concussion Training for Coaches”
  - b. Heads Up, Concussion in Youth Sports
5. NFHS Sportsmanship Course
6. Outdoor Sports – NFHS Heat Illness course
7. NPS Student-Athlete Mental Health for Coaches (biannually)
8. VHS be nice Course

## Conditioning Programs

### Out of Season Conditioning

Norfolk Public Schools encourages all coaches and athletes to participate in a supervised conditioning program enabling them to develop their overall strength, flexibility, and skill level within their particular sport:

1. Members of the coaching staff or school official must supervise teams conditioning or physical fitness activity.
2. Each coach should develop a weight-training program that focuses on the following areas:
  - a. Strength
  - b. Speed
  - c. Endurance
  - d. Flexibility
3. Each coach should develop sport specific skills that will enable the athlete to enhance his/her skill level for the upcoming season.
4. All VHSL member school sponsored athletic teams are restricted from any organized activities during designated “dead periods.” Out-of season dead periods shall be 10-day periods beginning with the first permissible practice date of a sports season as published in the VHSL Calendar. A “summer dead period” for all athletic teams shall be from Sunday through Saturday of the week containing July 4<sup>th</sup> (Week 52 or Week 1 of the NFHS Standardized Calendar). During dead periods, no coaching, observing or contact between a coach(s) or player(s) may occur in the VHSL member school sponsored athletic team or activity involved. There may be no VHSL member school sponsored practice, open facilities, weight training/conditioning, out of season league(s) or member school sponsored clinics/camps. Outside of dead periods, all VHSL member school sponsored activities may occur on any day except Sunday. Team vs. team competition may occur only in camps or leagues. Schools, districts and/or regions may impose

more restrictive guidelines. VHSL catastrophic insurance is not applicable to any out-of season activities.

5. A candidate for a school athletic team may attend a specialized camp, school clinic or other similar program involving coaching and instruction as long as the school does not provide the fee for the specialized sports camp. Attendance at a summer recreation type camp where a variety of recreational and sports activities are treated equally is not considered a specialized sports camp. Schools may provide transportation for students attending a specialized sports camp. Schools may also issue equipment to students attending such camps.
6. A student may participate as an individual and may not be connected with his/her school.
7. A student shall not be provided nor may he/she use any uniform belonging to a school. A student may use shoes provided by his/her school (This rule does not apply to cheerleaders.).

### **In-Season Conditioning Program**

Norfolk Public Schools recommends and supports an in-season conditioning program for all athletic teams. The following recommendations will allow athletes to maintain their current level of fitness and reduce potential injury that may occur during the athletic season:

1. A two-day, nine-week maintenance program focusing on maintaining strength and flexibility.
2. Weight lifting scheduled on non-competitive days.
3. The coaching staff must supervise the in-season program.

### **Practice**

Practice is defined as the involvement of individuals or group of individuals from a member school in any organized program of demonstration, instruction or participation conducted in part or entirely by a person or group of people who are involved in the coaching of these athletes for pay or other remuneration. The spirit of the practice rule shall be that every school and participant shall have the same opportunities to practice prior to the first game of the season.

Practice time will begin under the Sports Season Rule (27-7-1 VHSL)

### **27-7-1 Sports Season Rule**

All VHSL member school sponsored athletic teams are restricted from any organized activities during designated "dead periods." Out-of season dead periods shall be 10-day periods beginning with the first permissible practice date of a sports season as published in the VHSL Calendar. A "summer dead period" for all athletic teams shall be from Sunday through Saturday of the week containing July 4<sup>th</sup> (Week 52 or Week 1 of the NFHS Standardized Calendar). During dead periods, no coaching, observing or contact between a coach(s) or player(s) may occur in the VHSL member school sponsored athletic team or activity involved. There may be no VHSL member school sponsored practice, open facilities, weight training/conditioning, out of season league(s) or member school sponsored clinics/camps. Outside of dead periods, all VHSL member school sponsored activities may occur on any day except Sunday. Team vs. team competition may occur only in camps or leagues. Schools, districts and/or

regions may impose more restrictive guidelines. VHSL catastrophic insurance is not applicable to any out-of season activities.

*27-7-2 Exception:*

*(1) Sunday activities that are part of a camp or league are permitted.  
27-7-3 Penalty: Any school adjudged guilty of violating the Out-of-Season Practice Rule shall be subject to a fine as stated in 30-5-1 and such disciplinary action, including ineligibility for district championships, as the appropriate district committee, interdistrict committee or VHSL Executive Director may impose.*

Violation of Practice Rule May Result In the  
Termination of a Coaching Position

## **Sportsmanship**

### **Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity (School Board Policy (IFGB))**

The School Board recognizes the value of extracurricular activities in the educational process and the values that students develop when they have the opportunity to participate in an organized activity outside of the traditional classroom.

Participants and responsible adults involved in School Board Approved extracurricular activities are expected to demonstrate the same level of responsibility and behavior at practice and competitions as is expected in the classroom. The School Board further encourages the development and promotion of Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity in all phases of the educational process and in all segments of the community, including administrators, participants, adult supervisors, parents, fans, spirit groups and support/booster groups.

### **27-13-1 Sportsmanship Rule (VHSL Handbook)**

Member schools are required to conduct all their relations with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship. Acts, which are prima facie evidence of failure to abide by this rule, are those, which are noted below, and others of a similar nature, which transgress the usually accepted code for good sportsmanship. All incidents of conduct that are violations of the Sportsmanship Rule must be reported to the VHSL.

**27-13-4 Harassment of Game Officials by a Coach and a Coach's Ejection from a Contest (VHSL Handbook)**

Any coach's ejection is to be reported in writing to the League office by the school whose coach is ejected with copies placed in the school's and officials' association files. Any incidents involving a spectator, coach or other school personnel or player striking or pushing an official is to be reported. A coach going on the floor or field to interrupt a contest while the ball is "alive" in protest of a decision by an official, conduct which invokes a penalty against the team because of the conduct of a coach or team member or any individual in the official party of a team, continued and visible actions on the part of a coach will indicate to team members and/or to spectators that the coach believes the game is being improperly officiated, public demonstrations with game officials which indicate to others extreme dissatisfaction with officiating, and such related actions when exhibited in aggravated form are evidence of poor sportsmanship.

**27-13-5 Failure of a School to use every means at its disposal to impress upon its faculty, student body, team members, coaching staff and officials, the values of sportsmanship in the preparation for and the conduct and management of interscholastic contests (VHSL Handbook)**

School personnel must make every effort to ensure that substitute players and bench personnel do not enter the playing field/court during a verbal or physical altercation or do not engage in other unsportsmanlike conduct before, during or after the contest; such action is a violation of the sportsmanship rule and is to be reported. A school whose substitute players or bench personnel violate this rule is subject to a fine.

Any coach suspended from a VHSL contest will automatically be suspended from coaching on the floor at the next contest. If these problems are continuous, administrative action, as deemed necessary, will be taken including dismissal.

NPS sportsmanship Violations: Any coach or player suspended from VHSL contest will need to complete online sportsmanship training (NFHSLearn.org). The parent/guardian will need to complete the training as well. The student-athlete will be reinstated once all their penalties and training has been completed.

## Individual Sports

### **54-9-1: Mandatory Compliance with all Rules (VHSL Handbook)**

*In all interscholastic athletic competitions, individual contestants and member schools shall observe and comply with all VHSL rules and regulations set forth in Section 26 through 33 and with the rules governing specific sports and activities set forth in Section 50 through 126 of the League Handbook. These rules and regulations are binding upon all member schools and may not be waived except as authorized in specific sections of the "VHSL Handbook." (Violations are punishable by such penalties as the appropriate district committee, inter-district committee, sportsmanship committee or executive committee may impose.)*

### Junior Varsity Eligibility

In addition to the general eligibility rules (e.g., Transfer Rule and "C" Average Requirement) stated above, the following rules apply to participation in all Junior Varsity athletics:

- Athletes may only be enrolled in the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Athletes may not have reached the age of 17 on or before the first day of August.
- Athletes shall not be in their third year of high school since entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
- JV athletes moved from the JV to Varsity team during the season are only allowed to participate in a combined total of the maximum number of games allowed for Varsity players.
- Size of JV teams and scheduling of JV competitions may vary from sport to sport.

## Football

1. Varsity athletes may wear their jerseys during the game and during school hours on game day.
2. Varsity athletes are not permitted to wear jerseys at games in which the team is not involved.
3. During games, only coaches, players, and other designated team/staff members are allowed on the sideline.
4. Each team has the responsibility of general clean up after the game (i.e., cups, ice bags).
5. The head coach is responsible for sideline management and conduct.
  
6. All athletic injuries should be reported to the athletic trainer on staff.
7. Coaches should remember that only 8<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to play J.V. Football.
8. Coaches should do a general survey of field conditions before practice and games (i.e., potholes, broken glass).
9. Each coach should be familiar with all rules and regulations that govern the sport of football practices and games.
10. Coaches should ensure that videos are of good quality when exchanging.

## Golf

1. Athletes should follow the code of behavior referred to as golf etiquette and safety.
2. Golf etiquette helps individuals enjoy the game, keep play moving on the course, encourage safety, and protect the course from unnecessary damages.

3. Caddies may not be used for regular matches or district tournament.
4. Athletes are not allowed to use carts at any time during practices or matches.
5. Golfers must check in with the starter before teeing off.
6. Players should play in foursomes – never one player alone and twosomes only when necessary. Players from different schools should know each other and form threesomes or foursomes.
7. Players should ask the starter what tee they should go off on and never cut in front of players.
8. Players should never monopolize practice area or greens - - 30 minutes only on practice green and players must receive permission for practice area.
9. Obey all rules of golf etiquette (i.e., repair divots, ball marks, and fast play).
10. Do not use pro shop for waiting or congregating area – DO NOT LOITER.
11. All players should finish 30 minutes before sunset. Be thoughtful of golf course personnel.
12. Do not leave books or personal effects in the pro shop or locker room.
13. Players must remember that they represent their schools – no gambling, abusive language, or horseplay.
14. Please remember that golf course privileges are extended by professional and their staff – it is not a right without a responsibility.

## Volleyball

1. Each coach is responsible for setting up appropriate equipment.
2. Each coach is responsible for inspecting equipment and reporting any defects to the athletic director.
3. Coaches and physical education teachers should work together to ensure proper floor maintenance.
4. The home team is responsible for paying officials.
5. For safety purposes, the amount of distance from the boundary lines to any walls or obstacles must be at least six feet.

## Basketball

1. Coaches and physical education teachers should work together to ensure proper floor maintenance.
2. Coaches who practice at middle school should follow the building principal's rules and regulations regarding gym use.
3. Each coach is responsible for managing equipment.
4. J.V. players are limited to 8<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grades only.
5. Players moved from J.V. team to varsity team are allowed only a total of 20 games per season combined.
6. Officials are governed by principals as stated in the VHSL handbook.
7. The national anthem is allowed to be played at the beginning of the game.
8. No shooting is allowed during halftime of early game by teams playing late games.

## Swimming

1. Before the start of each swim season, a schedule will be compiled and sent to the athletic directors of each of the five high schools. It then becomes the responsibility of that athletic director to distribute a copy to each swim coach.
2. District meets will be held at Maury High School and Southside Aquatic Center unless all principals, athletic directors, and coaches are notified at least one week in advance. The first meet is scheduled to begin at 3:30 p.m. and the second meet at 5:30 p.m. The third meet is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Members of each team should be given at least a 15-minute warm-up period before the start of a meet.

3. The home team in the first meet is responsible for set-up (example: putting the lane lines in the water) and the home team in the third meet is responsible for putting away any equipment used.
4. In any meet, the home team is responsible for providing the following:
  - A. Two score keepers and score sheets, one to keep and one to give to the visiting team(s).
  - B. Six timers and six working digital stopwatches.
5. It is the responsibility of the home team to notify the newspaper of the meet outcome. This must be done on the same day of the meet.
6. Since safety must be the utmost concern, at least one coach must be present at all times to supervise swimmers. This duty is important during swim meets as well as during each practice. The responsibility of swim team supervision also includes the locker rooms.
7. All coaches should make every effort to make the swim meets run as smoothly as possible.

## Wrestling

1. All coaches must have a complete understanding of the VHSL Wrestling Weight Control Program (WCP) refer to 88-4-3 in the VHSL Handbook.
2. Coaches must clean mats with appropriate solution during each practice and match.
3. Coaches must inspect all athletes for any type of skin lesion.
4. Coaches and athletes must adhere to VHSL weight control program.
5. J.V. teams must have eight members to be considered a team.
6. If a school does not have a J.V. team, officials and opponents' schools must be notified in advance.
7. J.V. matches will be conducted as regular matches and exhibitions will be conducted between J.V. match and varsity match.
8. J.V. wrestlers:
  - a. May only be ninth and tenth graders.
  - b. May not have reached the age of 17 on or before the first day of August.
  - c. Shall not be in their third year of high school since entering the ninth grade.
9. Schedule for matches:
  - a. High School: Periods will be 2-2-2 minutes (Exhibitions will follow J.V. match if time permits and will begin on the first mat available.)
  - b. Middle School: Periods will be 1-1.5-1.5 minutes

## Soccer

1. Every effort should be made to control the crowd.
2. The home team wears light jerseys and visiting team wears dark jerseys. If there is a discrepancy, the home team will make the change.
3. Coaches should remind athletes of the rule regarding not wearing jewelry.
4. The shirt of an athlete is to be tucked in at the beginning of the game.
5. Only designated or involved personnel are allowed on the sideline.

## Softball & Baseball

1. During inclement weather, fields need to be checked by 1:00 p.m. so a decision can be made whether the game should be played.
2. Umpires need to be on the field as teams' line up to shake hands in case of possible conflict.
3. Both coaches are responsible for general cleaning after game (i.e., cups, ice bags).

4. When a rainout occurs, the home team must call the opposing coach or athletic director with a make-up date and site to be scheduled as quickly as possible.
5. When a rainout occurs, the home-team coach must call the umpire director, Eastern Virginia Official Association to cancel and reschedule the makeup date.
6. Home team is responsible for all field preparation.
7. All field problems should be directed to the athletic director.
8. All bases should be securely fastened and checked prior to games.
9. Home team is responsible for supplying baseballs and paying umpires.
10. Jewelry should be removed prior to games.
11. Only 8<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to play J.V. baseball and softball.

## Boys & Girls Tennis

1. Players should be courteous.
2. Players should value the honor system.
3. Coaches should construct the play lineup according to ability level.
4. Coaches should enforce USTA/VHSL dress code.
5. The home team will provide new USTA approved extra-duty felt tennis ball (no casual or soft court balls).
6. The player must play at least one-half of the District matches at or above their team position for tournament seeding and draw purposes.
7. One player of a doubles team must play in that team's position for it to count on that doubles team district season record.
8. Only coaches can coach during side changes – no coaching during or between even games.
9. Coaches should exchange lineups before play begins. Substitutes in doubles only in accordance with VHSL rules.
10. Doubles matches should start within ten to fifteen minutes of when all players in that match are available.

## Indoor & Outdoor Track

1. All coaches participating in the track meet will assist in the running of the meet. This includes setting up and securing equipment.
2. The coaches are responsible for the following before and after track meets and after practices:
  - a. Raking the long jump and triple jump pit.
  - b. Setting up and removing all hurdles from the track and returning them to a designated area.
  - c. Returning all starting blocks to a designated area.
  - d. Covering the pole vault landing pit and equipment designed to cover the pole-vaulting box.
  - e. Returning the high jump landing pit to the designated area.
  - f. Reporting any damage to the athletic director.

## Cheerleaders

The cheerleading squads are the driving force in promoting positive sportsmanship. It is required that we demonstrate positive sportsmanship at all times.

### RULES

- Rules in the high School Spirit Rule Book of the National Federation of State High School Associations and the VHSL Handbook will be used by all cheerleaders.
- Appropriate behavior is required at all games and competitions.
- Prior to either the first performance involving stunting or the first competition, each participant shall practice a minimum of twenty (20) days. This applies to each student.
- Cheerleaders must be under the direction of a coach at all times.
- The maximum number of cheerleaders that can participate in competition or a game is twenty (2).
- Pyramid stunts are limited to two (2) persons high.
- Practice must be held in a safe and supervised place.
- Coaches (varsity and junior varsity) are required to ride buses with cheerleaders and remain until **ALL** have departed for home.
- Cheerleaders **must** remain in uniform during **ALL** games.
- **NO "COPYCAT" CHEERS**
- Sideline cheerleading's start date will follow VHSL guidelines, rule 62-1-1 Their "season" is from the first fall practice date until the last contest by any school team they support as a cheer squad or the last day of school, whichever is later.

### **CHAMPIONSHIP**

All Eastern District schools may enter the district competition. Teams will advance to regional competition, which is decided by the region's advancement criteria.

### **Cheerleader Guidelines by Sport**

#### *Football*

- Welcome and hello cheers for varsity games should be held before the game.
- Welcome and hello cheers for junior varsity games should be held prior to the event.

#### *Basketball*

- The location and arrangement of the cheer squad during a game will be determined by the home athletic director.
- ROTATE cheers with the other school.
- ALTERNATE standup cheering, only during FULL TIMEOUTS AND THE END OF QUARTERS, with the other team
- Cheer to their stands.
- It is the responsibility of the coach, athletic director, assistant principal, and principal to monitor their behavior.
- FOLLOW all other rules from the EDPA's HANDBOOK, and Regional HANDBOOK
- Cheerleaders must stay clear of the playing court during the game.
- There will be NO yelling during free throws such as "miss it, miss it".

#### *Wrestling*

- Cheerleaders should be seated on the floor, 3 to 5 feet away from the mat.
- There should be NO banging sound coming from the floor.

## Field Hockey

1. Coaches are responsible to notify athletic director in regarding field maintenance (i.e., cutting grass, field markers).
2. Coaches should do general survey of field conditions before practice/game (i.e., broken glass, potholes).
3. Only designated personnel are allowed on the sideline.
4. Players should not wear boxer underwear under their uniforms.
5. Players may wear appropriate clothing when weather permits.
6. Each coach is responsible for inspecting equipment (i.e., balls, ticks, shin guards).
7. The home team is responsible for getting checks and paying officials.
8. Every participant must wear a mouth guard for practice and games.
9. Every participant must wear approved NFHS eyewear for practice and games.
10. Goal keeping equipment is adequate to protect goalie.
11. Only 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students are eligible to play J.V. field hockey.

## Cross Country

1. The running course should be inspected to detect any possible hazards, which might contribute to injury (i.e., broken glass, potholes).
2. Avoid using roads as part of the course.
3. Every effort should be made to prevent spectators from interfering with runners.
4. During practice times, every effort should be made to supervise running within residential areas.
5. Notify local police about athletes running in residential areas.
6. Course marshals should be placed at key areas to assist runners with course markings when possible.

## High School Coaches Evaluation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Professional Responsibilities</b>		Excellent	Above Average	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable	Not Applicable
1.	Understand and follow the rules and regulations set forth by the Norfolk School Board, Virginia High School League, Eastern Region Council, and the school.						
2.	Follow the code for interscholastic athletics as defined in the Norfolk Public Schools Athletic Handbook for Coaches and meet all criteria as outlined in the job description.						
3.	Communicate any problems, concerns, or comments to the athletic director or school administrator.						
4.	Participate in in services, clinics, and professional meetings to enhance coaching skills.						
5.	Demonstrate good public relations by cooperating with the media, booster clubs, and other groups to positively promote interscholastic athletics.						
6.	Participate in parent meetings, award banquets, and other activities that promote interscholastic athletics.						
7.	Belong to professional coaching organizations.						
8.	Monitor academic progress of all athletes.						
9.	Follow proper procedures for requisitioning equipment, care of equipment, issuing and collecting equipment, inventory, and storage of equipment.						
10.	Maintain self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without public display of emotion or dissatisfaction with the officials.						
11.	Work well with other members of the coaching staff.						
12.	Support and attends other athletic activities.						
13.	Attend and is punctual to conferences and required meetings held in the school, in the district and at the regional level.						
14.	Submit requested materials and reports by the deadline set by the athletic director.						
15.	Prepare and submit to the athletic director a plan for out-of-season preparation and conditioning.						
<b>Pre-Season Responsibilities</b>							
1.	Assume responsibility for awareness of and implementation of Title IX guidelines.						
2.	Conduct pre-season meetings with parents and athletes to explain VHSL rules, NCAA requirements, insurance coverage, and other pertinent information.						

3.	Provide athletes with a written copy of team rules, regulations and consequences.						
4.	Submit to the athletic director a complete VHSL eligibility list a week prior to the first game.						
<b>Team Management</b>		Excellent	Above Average	Adequate	Needs Improvement	Unacceptable	Not Applicable
1.	Demonstrate good sportsmanship and require the same behavior of athletes.						
2.	Provide an example for athletes by his/her appearance, promptness, behavior, language, and conduct.						
3.	Provide proper supervision for athletes in the locker room, weight room, gym, playing field, and on bus trips.						
4.	Is fair, understanding, and patient with team members.						
5.	Maintain communication with the school athletic trainer, team physician, parent, and school administrator regarding an injured athlete.						
<b>Coaching Performance</b>							
1.	Schedule and conduct well-organized and planned practices.						
2.	Have fundamental knowledge and the ability to teach the sport.						
3.	Has the ability to motivate athletes.						
4.	Has the ability to give direction and exhibit leadership in practice and game situations.						
5.	Use effective strategies in practice and game situations.						
6.	Develop and implement a game plan that allow for adjustments based on the team and opponents play.						
7.	Execute game plan under pressure.						

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Athletic Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I have reviewed my evaluation.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Coach's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date