Athletic & Activities

Handbook

2026-2027

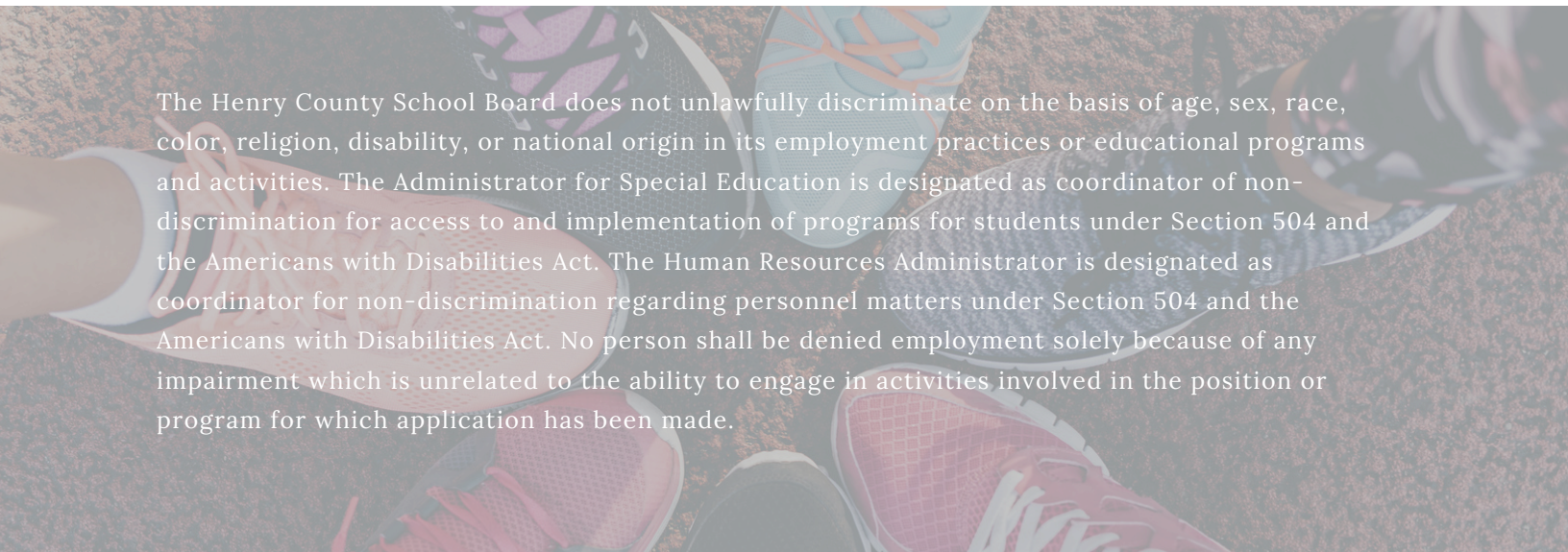
SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

POLICY JFCB

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.

-School Board Policy JFCB
May, 2022



The Henry County School Board does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, religion, disability, or national origin in its employment practices or educational programs and activities. The Administrator for Special Education is designated as coordinator of non-discrimination for access to and implementation of programs for students under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Human Resources Administrator is designated as coordinator for non-discrimination regarding personnel matters under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. No person shall be denied employment solely because of any impairment which is unrelated to the ability to engage in activities involved in the position or program for which application has been made.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Henry County Public Schools is committed to the overall health, character and well-being of each student. Extra-curricular activities are essential to the promotion of these ideals. Henry County Public Schools strives to provide opportunities for students through athletics and activities that bolster integrity, honesty, sportsmanship, innovation, teamwork, dedication and endurance.

Participants are involved in experiences that contribute to the development of both physical and mental wellness. Being involved in an extracurricular activity is a privilege, not a right. Henry County Public Schools strives to make each activity a quality experience for all participants and we reserve the right to revoke this privilege of participation when a student does not conduct him/herself in an acceptable manner or represent our community and school in a positive light.

In accordance with the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia, we will continue to take steps, including the provision of supplementary aids and services determined appropriate by the IEP team, to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities (8 VAC 20-81-100.H; 8 VAC 20-81-130.A.2); and include a description of these aids, services, and program modifications in students' IEPs, as appropriate (8 VAC 20-81-110.G.4.b).

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

After school activities may result in situations where participants are at risk of physical injury. Coaches, staff and students exercise care in practices and games and take necessary precautions but this risk remains. It is critical student participants understand these risks and they adhere to all precautions and safety directions from their coach/advisor. These are developed in an attempt to minimize injuries.

EXTRA CURRICULAR OFFERINGS

FALL ACTIVITIES

MIDDLE	HIGH
FOOTBALL*	FOOTBALL
VOLLEYBALL	VOLLEYBALL
APPLICABLE CLUBS*	CROSS COUNTRY
	GOLF
	SIDELINE CHEERLEADING
	ONE-ACT THEATRE
	SCHOLASTIC BOWL
	E-SPORTS
	APPLICABLE CLUBS*

WINTER ACTIVITIES

MIDDLE	HIGH
BASKETBALL	WRESTLING
APPLICABLE CLUBS*	BASKETBALL
	SWIMMING
	INDOOR TRACK
	SIDELINE CHEERLEADING
	FORENSICS
	SCHOLASTIC BOWL
	APPLICABLE CLUBS*

SPRING ACTIVITIES

MIDDLE	HIGH
BASEBALL	BASEBALL
SOCCER	SOCCER
SOFTBALL	SOFTBALL
TRACK & FIELD	TRACK & FIELD
APPLICABLE CLUBS*	TENNIS
	E-SPORTS
	APPLICABLE CLUBS*

*BASED ON SCHOOL INTEREST

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

- **A valid physical must be on file with the school that includes proof of insurance.**
- **Pledge form (including concussion info) signed by parent/guardian and student. The pledge form will be signed once annually in middle school and once annually in high school.**

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS PARTICIPATION

6th, 7th and 8th grade students who meet eligibility requirements are allowed to participate at the middle school level (*with the exception of 6th graders playing football)*

NAME IMAGE LIKENESS (NIL)

High School Athletes are allowed to receive compensation for their own name, image, or likeness. However, NIL deals have to be outside the realm of the individual high school/school division. No reference to the school/division, wearing school uniforms, using school names, or mascots. Additionally, students cannot participate in adult activities, reference drugs/alcohol, gambling, betting, or weapons in a NIL deal.

Penalty is loss of participation rights in VHSL activities if violating these rules.

ACADEMICS

Students participating at the high school level must comply with the Virginia High School League semester eligibility requirements outlined in Section 28-4-1 Scholarship Rule.

2025-2026 Second Semester Final Grades determine 2026-2027 Fall & Winter Eligibility
2026-2027 First Semester Final Grades determine 2026-2027 Winter & Spring Eligibility

For students participating at the middle school level, eligibility is determined based on the Nine-Week grading period listed below. If a student is not passing the required classes at the end of the Nine-Week grading period, the participant will be suspended from competition (will be ineligible) until the interim grades are reviewed by administration. If the student is passing their required classes at the interim, he/she may be reinstated to the team.

End of First Nine Weeks Grading Period: October 13 (Report Cards Issued October 16th)
November 16: Interim Reports

End of Second Nine Weeks Grading Period: December 18 (Report Cards Issued January 6th)
February 5: Interim Reports

End of Third Nine Weeks Grading Period: March 12 (Report Cards Issued March 16th)
April 22: Interim Reports

End of Fourth Nine Weeks Grading Period: May 26 (Final Report Cards Issued May 28)

GRADE	REQUIRED CLASSES TO PASS	GRADING PERIOD
6-8	*4 OUT OF 6 CLASSES *MATH AND ENGLISH MUST BE PASSED	9 WEEKS
9-12	3 OUT OF 4 CLASSES	VHSL SEMESTER

ELIGIBILITY

A Student entering the eighth grade for the first time becomes immediately eligible in the high school of the attendance area of the student's parents and guardians. A student entering the ninth grade for the first time becomes immediately eligible in the high school of the attendance area of the students parents or guardians. Students participating at the middle school level will be considered eligible at the start of the academic school year.

A Middle School Student cannot be eligible for athletic competition if he/she turns 15 years of age before August 1, the year in which he/she participates.

A High School Student cannot be eligible for athletic competition if he/she turns 19 years of age before October 1st of the current school year.

A participant has 4 years to complete eligibility once entered into the 9th grade, whether they participate or not.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT

Student-athletes must be in good standing with their school regarding attendance. Exceptions will follow the HCPS attendance policy regarding absences.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Any participant assigned out-of-school suspension will be ineligible during the assigned suspension period. In addition, they may receive further discipline from the Principal, Athletic Director, or the Coach including temporary or permanent suspension from the team.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Given that any extra-curricular activities are privileges, any participant assigned to in-school suspension will be ineligible for practice or play on the day(s) they serve their in-school suspension.

INCIDENT SUSPENSION POLICY

Any participant who becomes involved in an investigation by school administration will not be allowed to participate in practices or games while the investigation is ongoing.

DISMISSAL/QUITTING

Any student who is dismissed from/or quits a team is ineligible to participate in another sport until that season ends. Students are also ineligible to participate in pre-season conditioning workouts, including open gym, until the end of that season. Appeals can only be granted by the Principal.

EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION/RETURN

All equipment distributed to a student becomes the responsibility of the student until it is returned. Lost, stolen or damaged items are the responsibility of the student and the student will be held financially accountable for those items.

COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Coaches are expected to clearly communicate expectations, team requirements and their coaching philosophy. Parents and students are expected to communicate concerns, scheduling conflicts, illnesses and injuries. Topics of conversation that are discouraged include playing time, team strategy, play calling and other students. These items are non-negotiable and will not be discussed. Additionally, it is inappropriate to approach a coach/sponsor before or after a contest or competition. The following steps are suggested to discuss concerns with a coach/sponsor:

- Preferably the student-athlete and parent arrange a meeting with the coach to discuss concerns.
- If a desirable outcome cannot be reached, set up a meeting with the Athletic Director.

If you feel that the meeting with a coach/sponsor and an Athletic Director did not result in a reasonable explanation, please call and set up a meeting with the Principal to discuss the issue.



SPORTSMANSHIP

FROM THE VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE HANDBOOK: 27-13-8

THE SPECTATOR SHOULD

(1) Realize that he/she represents the school just as definitely as does the member of a team and, therefore, has an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through this behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
(2) Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by approving and applauding good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
(3) Recognize that since the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the players through the medium of contests, victory or defeat is in reality of secondary importance.
(4) Treat visiting teams and officials as guests, extending to them every courtesy.
(5) Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
(6) Respect the judgment and integrity of officials, realizing that their decisions are based upon game conditions as they observe them.



SPORTSMANSHIP

FROM THE VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE HANDBOOK: 27-13-8

THE ATHLETE SHOULD

(1) Be courteous to visiting teams and officials.
(2) Play hard and to the limit of his/her ability, regardless of discouragement. The true athlete does not give up nor does he/she quarrel, cheat, bet or grandstand.
(3) Retain his/her composure at all times and never leave the bench or enter the playing field/court to engage in a fight.
(4) Be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat. A true sportsman does not offer excuses for failures.
(5) Maintain a high degree of physical fitness by observing team and training rules conscientiously.
(6) Demonstrate loyalty to the school by maintaining a satisfactory scholastic standing and by participating in or supporting other school activities.
(7) Play for the love of the game.
(8) Understand and observe the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
(9) Set a high standard of personal cleanliness.
(10) Respect the integrity and judgment of officials and accept their decisions without questions.
(11) Respect the facilities of host schools and the trust entailed in being a guest.



SPORTSMANSHIP

FROM THE VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE HANDBOOK: 27-13-8

THE COACH SHOULD

(1) Exemplify behavior that is representative of the educational staff of the school and a credit to the teaching profession.
(2) Demonstrate high ideals, good habits and desirable attitudes in personal behavior and demand the same standards of the players.
(3) Emphasize to his/her players and bench personnel the importance of proper sideline behavior and the necessity of restraining from entering the playing field/court to engage in a fight.
(4) Recognize that the purpose of competition is to promote the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being of the individual players and that the most important values of competition are derived from playing the game fairly.
(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 of dissatisfaction with the officials.
(7) Cooperate with the school principal in the planning, scheduling and conduct of sports activities.
(8) Employ accepted 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, refusing to jeopardize the health of an individual for the sake of improving his team's chances to win.
(10) Teach athletes that it is better to lose fairly than win unfairly.
(11) Discourage gambling, profanity, abusive language and similar violations of the true sportsman's code.
(12) Refuse to disparage an opponent, an official or others associated with sports activities and discourage gossip and questionable rumors concerning them.
(13) Properly supervise student athletes under his/her immediate care and specifically observe a coach's responsibilities in conjunction with district and state contests.

ALCOHOL/DRUG POLICY

It is the goal of the Athletic Department, its coaching staff, athletic trainers, and administrators that all student-athletes are drug, tobacco and alcohol free at all times! The abuse of alcohol and illicit use of drugs can be detrimental to the physical and mental well-being of student-athletes, no matter when such use should occur during the school year. Use or abuse of alcohol and use of drugs can seriously interfere with the performance of students and athletes. This behavior can also be extremely injurious to student-athletes and their teammates, particularly when participating in athletic competition or practice.

The Henry County School Board has issued the following guidelines/consequences concerning the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and vaping. Violations of the Athletic Code of Conduct will result in the following:

- First Offense – 30-day suspension from practice and competition (30 calendar days)
- Second Offense – 90-day suspension from practice and competition (90 calendar days)
- Third Offense – 365-day suspension from practice and competition
- Fourth Offense – Suspended from participation for the remainder of their high school career

Participants and parents must understand that these violations apply to the student's entire secondary school career.

For example, if the first offense occurs in the 9th grade year and a second violation occurs in the junior year, the result would be the 90-day suspension during junior year.

Examples of Violations:

- refusing to take an alcohol breathalyzer
- attending a party where alcohol is served
- possession or consumption of alcohol/illegal drugs

Any athlete removed from the team will forfeit any school-sponsored awards for that activity.

Reinstatement to the team, if at all or at what level following such a suspension, is at the complete discretion of school administration.

CONCUSSION PROCEDURES

The Virginia High School League (VHSL) established guidelines effective July 20, 2011 that all coaches, athletes and parents of athletes be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Signed documentation must be on file by the first practice date or the student-athlete will not be allowed to participate until signed documentation has been received.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury.
Concussions are caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head.

SIGNS OBSERVED

- APPEARS DAZED OR STUNNED
- CONFUSED FORGETS PLAYS
- UNSURE OF GAME, SCORE OR OPPONENT
- MOVES CLUMSILY
- ANSWERS QUESTIONS SLOWLY LOSES CONSCIOUSNESS
- SHOWS BEHAVIOR OR PERSONALITY CHANGES
- CAN'T RECALL EVENTS PRIOR TO
- CAN'T RECALL EVENTS AFTER HIT
-

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY THE ATHLETE

- HEADACHE
- NAUSEA AND/OR VOMITING BALANCE PROBLEMS OR DIZZINESS
- DOUBLE OR FUZZY VISION
- SENSITIVITY TO LIGHT OR NOISE
- FEELING SLUGGISH
- FEELING GROGGY OR FOGGY CONCENTRATION OR MEMORY PROBLEMS
- CONFUSION

REMOVAL FROM EXTRACURRICULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

- A student athlete suspected by a coach, trainer or team physician of sustaining a concussion or brain injury in a practice, game, or competition shall be removed from the activity immediately, evaluated and referred for further treatment (if necessary).
- A student athlete who has been removed from play, evaluated and suspected to have sustained a concussion shall not return to play the same day.
- The determination of whether a student athlete removed from play is suspected of having sustained a concussion shall be the sole determination of the licensed health care provider, coach or properly trained individual conducting the assessment. Such determination is final and may not be overruled.
- The coach of a student athlete may elect not to return the student athlete to play, even after an assessment determines the student athlete is no longer suspected of sustaining a concussion.

RETURN TO PLAY

1. No student athlete shall be allowed to return to extracurricular physical activities (practices, games, competitions) until they are full participating in all of their classes, and the student athlete presents" a written medical release from his/her health care provider. The release shall certify that:
    - The provider is aware of the current medical guidance on concussions evolution and management;
    - The student athlete no longer exhibits signs and symptoms or behaviors: and
    - The student athlete has successfully completed a progressive return to sports program which shall last a minimum of five (5) calendar days.
2. The coach/athletic director must inform the school nurse regarding a suspected/confirmed concussion prospect as soon as possible. The school nurse will evaluate the student two times a week until the student is symptom free for 24 hours. The school nurse will notify the teachers regarding the return to play, until they are 24 hours without symptoms of a concussion, The athletic trainer will then start the RTP process.
    a. Please note that even with a written medical release, the student will need to successfully complete the RTP prior to participation.
3. The coach may elect to not allow the student athlete to return to physical activities (even after receiving a medical release) if the coach observes signs or symptoms of a concussion. If the coach makes this decision, the coach must relay his observations and concerns to the parent/guardian of the student athlete within 24 hours.

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

Symptoms are: collapsing with no pulse or respirations.

Prior to collapsing, a person may clutch their chest, have difficulty breathing, become pale or flushed with sweating, become nauseated and vomit and say they have chest pain.

A student-athlete who is experiencing symptoms that may lead to sudden cardiac arrest must be immediately removed from play. A student-athlete who is removed from play shall not return to play until he is evaluated by and receives written clearance to return to physical activity by an appropriate licensed health care provider as determined by the Virginia Board of Education. The licensed health care provider evaluating student-athletes may be a volunteer.

HEAT RELATED ILLNESSES

Symptoms are: Flushed skin, Altered mental state or behavior, Fainting, High Fever, Intense headache, Intense nausea, Vomiting, Difficulty breathing, Increased heart rate, Muscle cramps or weakness, Lack of sweating, Dizziness

Student athletes should be exposed gradually to physical activity intensity and duration. VHSL guidelines suggest “Athletes should remain well hydrated and replace fluids lost through sweat
during activity, including conditioning/training sessions, practices and games. It should be emphasized that athletes should have free access to readily available fluids at any time, not just during breaks. It is imperative that relevant personnel be trained in prevention, signs and symptoms, and treatment of EHI (Exertional Heat Illness).

When high temperatures and/or humidity is forecasted, those supervising practices and competitions should make accommodations based on these conditions, including:

- Increasing frequency and duration of water breaks
- Increasing frequency and duration of rest breaks
- Reducing the amount of equipment worn during activity
- Modifying total amount of time engaged in practice
- Changing activity location

GAME ADMITTANCE

All in-season athletes participating in a sport must pay to enter other sports contests. Only the JV team of the corresponding sport is allowed in free. Henry County employees are admitted free of charge upon showing their Henry County Employee badge. This does not include family members or other guests of the employee. Henry County Volunteer Badges are not accepted. Children under the age of 5 are also admitted free of charge to all events. Children 14 and under are admitted free to middle school events only.

WEB SITE INFORMATION

Henry County Public Schools strives to keep parents and community members informed of events, performances, schedules, changes, and cancellations with regards to our extra-curricular activities. We encourage you to sign up to receive email and/or text message notifications about schedule changes. You can do this by following the directions below:

- www.piedmontdistrictva.org
- Click on your school (for middle school the high school you will attend)
- Click on the “Notify Me” button on the right side of the page
- Follow the onscreen prompts to enter your information

You can also visit each schools’ webpage to find out information about events happening at that school. You can do this by following the directions below:

- www.henry.k12.va.us
- Select “Schools” on the left side of the page
- Choose your school



HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HCPS PLEDGE PROGRAM

I understand fully that my participation in VHSL-sanctioned, competitive, extracurricular activities and middle school athletics is a privilege. In order to participate, I must be a "student in good standing." Therefore, I hereby agree to accept and abide by the standards, rules, and regulations set forth by the Henry County School Board and the coaches/sponsors for these activities in order to participate. I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Pledge Program guidelines.

Furthermore, I understand that any use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, tobacco, or other illegal or synthetic drugs is strictly prohibited. I pledge not to use, possess, or distribute these substances under any circumstances.

I understand that I may forfeit my privilege to participate in VHSL sanctioned sports/activities if I break this pledge.

Unless you opted out during the enrollment process for this school year, you have already given permission that you will abide by this pledge and accompanying information in this handbook when you completed Infosnap. If you opted out, please sign and turn in the signature page to your corresponding athletic director.

HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HIGH SCHOOL PARTICIPATION FORM FOR EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS

Any eighth grade student who would like to try out for junior varsity athletic teams and other activities that are available for ninth grade students' participation (Soccer, marching band, etc.) for the current school year must have this form completed prior to try out. Any eighth grader who attempts to try out before this process is completed will not be allowed to participate on that team/activity. These guidelines are in place to provide all students with opportunities for success and achievement, and to ensure there are a sufficient number of athletes to field a junior varsity team or other high school sponsored group.

SPORT/ACTIVITY: _____

HIGH SCHOOL COACH/SPONSOR NAME: _____

STUDENT'S NAME: _____ **STUDENT ID#:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____

By signing here, the coach/sponsor states that he/she is taking only players who will be necessary for the success of the JV program. Additionally, signature indicates that only players who will receive at least 40% or more in every competition are being offered the opportunity to play JV.

HIGH SCHOOL COACH / SPONSOR NAME	HIGH SCHOOL COACH / SPONSOR SIGNATURE	DATE

The following signatures below acknowledges that the student-athlete has made both their corresponding athletic director and eighth grade coach/sponsor aware that they plan on trying out for the junior varsity team.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COACH / SPONSOR NAME	MIDDLE SCHOOL COACH / SPONSOR SIGNATURE	DATE
MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC DIRECTOR NAME	MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC DIRECTOR SIGNATURE	DATE

Furthermore, Eighth grade students understand that participating at the high school level cannot prevent the fielding of a middle school team/group for the sport/activity noted above. No qualified ninth or tenth grade student will be "cut" from a junior varsity team to create an opening for an equally qualified eighth grade student. All eighth grade students who are eligible and receive a spot on any junior varsity athletic team must adhere to the same guidelines and expectations as the participating high school students. Special placement students must participate in extracurricular opportunities at the school they are approved to attend.

HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HENRY COUNTY ATHLETICS/ACTIVITIES CODE SIGNATURE PAGE

It is the goal of Henry County Public Schools, our coaches, administrators and faculty that all Henry County students should be drug, tobacco, and alcohol free at all times. A student's opportunity to participate in an extra-curricular activity is a privilege, not a right. Student-participants who represent their school during or beyond the normal school day must be willing to abide by regular school rules and additional guidelines established by the coach/sponsor.

By signing this statement, you, both student and parent, are agreeing that you have a complete understanding of the rules and consequences of the Henry County Activities/Athletic Code and agree to abide by these rules and regulations.

By signing, you agree that this is binding for your entire middle school/high school career.

Student-Athlete Printed Name	Student-Athlete Signature	DATE

Parent/Guardian Printed Name	Parent/Guardian Signature	DATE

Parent/Guardian Email

HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HENRY COUNTY ATHLETIC PERMISSION FORM

STUDENT-ATHLETE NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

My son/daughter has permission to ride home with the below named parent/guardian from away sporting events (rather than returning on the bus with the team):

*Students must be transported by a parent/guardian who is at least 21 years of age and possess a valid Virginia Driver's License and liability insurance.

_____ _____

_____ _____

I relieve Henry County Public Schools of any liability (financial or otherwise) in the event(s) of illness, accident, or other emergencies that may occur while transporting my student from athletic events.

_____ _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE **DATE**

TEAMS THAT PRACTICE OR PLAY OFF SITE

DUE TO THE LOCATION OF FACILITIES

_____I give my child permission to drive to practice or to a home game site throughout the season.

I relieve Henry County Public Schools of any liability (financial or otherwise) in the event(s) of illness, accident, or other emergencies that may occur while transporting my student from athletic events.

_____ _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE **DATE**