



**HIGH SCHOOL  
ATHLETIC HANDBOOK  
FOR  
ATHLETES AND PARENTS  
2022-2023**



**A Guide to Citizenship Standards, Chesapeake 2.0, VHSL Eligibility  
and NCAA Eligibility**

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## **Chesapeake Public Schools Discrimination Policy**

All members of the Chesapeake Public School (CPS) community are reminded that the Chesapeake School Board and all CPS are committed to avoiding discrimination at all times. As School Board Policy 3-6 indicates:

The School Board is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all and shall not permit unfair discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. This principle shall apply to all students, employees, patrons, vendors, and all others who serve or are served by the school system.

This requirement extends to all aspects of the school program, including the educational and extracurricular programs. Procedures for seeking resolution of grievances from alleged discrimination are available from the Title IX Coordinator.

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304 Cedar Road  
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## Introduction

The purpose of the High School Athletic Handbook for Athletes and Parents is to inform athletes and parents of the policies governing athletics and individual athletes at each school. Included in this handbook is information concerning:

- Citizenship Standards/Participation Pledge
- Chesapeake 2.0 Eligibility Requirement
- Virginia High School League (VHSL) Eligibility Rules and Policy
- National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA)
- Sports Concussion Management Plan

Each school hosts a preseason meeting for athletes and their parents/guardians. Important information covered will include the Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Examination Form of the VHSL, VHSL eligibility rules, and the Chesapeake 2.0 Eligibility Requirements. Information about each sport and specific team policies will also be discussed.

Student [accident insurance](#) information and [physical forms](#) are available on the Chesapeake Public Schools website.

If you have any questions concerning the handbook or the preseason meeting, please contact the athletic director of your school.

## **CPS Athlete Parent Handbook Statement of Understanding**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Sport(s) \_\_\_\_\_

The CPS ATHLETE PARENT HANDBOOK can be accessed online and contains information concerning:

- 2.0 Eligibility Requirement
- Athletic Training
- Collegiate Eligibility Requirements
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest
- Sports Concussion Management Plan
- Parent/Coach Communication
- Sportsmanship Policy
- Team Policy and Specific Sport

### **Parental Statement of Understanding:**

- I have reviewed the Concussion in Sports – Information Sheet for Parents and Guardians provided to me at the sports informational meeting, in the CPS Athlete Parent Handbook, or by some other means
- I have reviewed the ImPACT Concussion Management Program Information Sheet provided to me at the sports informational meeting, in the CPS Athlete Parent Handbook, or by some other means
- I give permission for my son/daughter to participate in the ImPACT Concussion Management Program as outlined in the CPS Athlete Parent Handbook. CPS may release the ImPACT (Immediate Post-concussion assessment and Cognitive Test) results to my child's primary care physician, neurologist, or other treating physician, as requested

### **Parent/Spectators are required to meet the following expectations:**

- Realize that you represent the school and community and, therefore, have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through positive behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others
- 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 Recognize that since the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional wellbeing of the players, victory or defeat are of secondary importance
- Treat visiting teams and officials as guests, extending to them every courtesy
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat
- Respect the judgment and integrity of officials, realizing that their decisions are based upon game conditions

I understand the policies governing interscholastic athletics in the CPS through attending a sports informational meeting, the CPS Athlete Parent Handbook, or some other means, and by my signature, grant permission for the student's participation. I also understand that participation in school-sponsored activities is a privilege and not a property right; and therefore, the school's principal may suspend my son/daughter from participation by declaring him/her not in good standing if the student's character or conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon his/her school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Attended Sports Informational Meeting: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Please sign and return this form to your school's athletic director.**

### CPS High School Athletic Programs

SEASON	BOYS	GIRLS
FALL	CROSS COUNTRY	CROSS COUNTRY
	FOOTBALL*#	SIDELINE CHEERLEADING*
	GOLF#	COMPETITION CHEER
	VOLLEYBALL	FIELD HOCKEY*
		VOLLEYBALL*
WINTER	BASKETBALL*	BASKETBALL*
	INDOOR TRACK	INDOOR TRACK
	SWIMMING	SWIMMING
	WRESTLING*#	GYMNASTICS
SPRING	BASEBALL*	SOFTBALL*
	OUTDOOR TRACK	OUTDOOR TRACK
	SOCCER*	SOCCER*
	TENNIS	TENNIS

\*Indicates varsity and junior varsity programs

#Indicates co-ed sports

### High School Athletic Contact Information

SCHOOL	PRINCIPAL	ATHLETIC DIRECTOR	PHONE
DEEP CREEK	MR. BRIAN HAUGHINBERRY	BENNY POLK	757-558-5303
GRASSFIELD	MR. MIKE PEREZ	MATTHEW PURYEAR	757-558-4749
GREAT BRIDGE	MR. JEFF JOHNSON	MATTHEW SMALL	757-482-2867
HICKORY	DR. DONNA WEINGAND	PATRIC TROIA	757-421-4295
INDIAN RIVER	MRS. NAOMI DUNBAR	KIRT OVERTON	757-578-7000
OSCAR SMITH	MR. PAUL JOSEPH	RAY COLLINS	757-548-0696
WESTERN BRANCH	MR. QUENTIN HICKS	TAMEKIA FOSTER	757-638-7900

## **Athletic Department Philosophy**

The coaching staff of CPS has dedicated itself to the development of the total student athlete. Both the physical and psychological growth of each person are considered when planning and implementing our athletic program.

Our professional staff is aware of the individual needs of the youth as well as the social implications of being able to work as a member of a team. Students will be given the opportunity through extensive training, proper equipment, and good coaching to reach their maximum athletic potential.

Our goals are to produce young men and women who have the capacity to be successful citizens in our highly competitive society. We are committed to achieving this goal.

## **Citizenship Standards/Participation Pledge**

Participation in extracurricular activities is dependent upon compliance with all applicable rules, including VHSL, School Board, Southeastern District, and team regulations. These activities are defined as events which do not fall within the scope of the regular curriculum, are officially recognized and sanctioned by the School Board, and for which students do not receive academic credit. Performing groups that receive academic credit (i.e. band and chorus) are not included within this policy.

***Students must understand that participation in extracurricular events is a privilege, not a right.***



## **CPS Board Approved Sportsmanship Policy (9-42)**

### **Sportsmanship, Ethics, and Integrity**

The School Board recognizes the importance 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 the traditional classroom.

A primary goal of the CPS extracurricular and co-curricular programs is the promotion of good sportsmanship, ethical behavior, and integrity. All participation in extra- and co-curricular activities, including athletes and all other student participants, support groups, fans, coaches, and administrators shall be guided at all times by a philosophy of good sportsmanship, sound ethics, and high integrity. This philosophy emphasizes that extracurricular activities are a part of the total educational process and that the same level of responsibility and behavior is expected at practice and competitions as is expected in the classroom. The school administration supports this philosophy by maintaining positive attitudes that promote good sportsmanship. All high schools and middle schools are required to conduct their relations with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship.

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.

All Coaches, student athletes, and parents must complete the sportsmanship pledge each school year. A copy of the pledge is located on the CPS website.

### **CPS Sportsmanship Guide**

Participation in co-curricular activities is a privilege. As representatives of CPS students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that meets the highest standards at all times.

It is the goal of CPS to provide all students with opportunities to engage in athletic activities that enrich their education and further develop the core values of respect, responsibility, fairness, trust, and good sportsmanship.

Engaging in planned instruction teaches good sportsmanship and proper behavior. It is the responsibility of the administration, staff, coaches, parents, and the community at large to create a climate that fosters the development of these behaviors. This is accomplished by encouraging and modeling positive and appropriate behavior within the sporting environment while, at the same time, striving for excellence.

Expectations for the behavior of athletes, coaches, and spectators at athletic contests, practices, and events are outlined below:

#### **Athletes**

Athletes are required to meet the following expectations:

- Be courteous to visiting teams and officials
- Play hard and to the limit of your ability, regardless of discouragement.
- True athletes do not give up nor do they argue, cheat, or taunt opponents

- Retain composure at all times and never leave the bench or enter the playing field/court to engage in a fight
- Be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat. A true competitor does not offer excuses
- Maintain a high degree of physical fitness by conscientiously observing team and training rules
- Demonstrate loyalty to the school by maintaining a high scholastic standing and by participating in or supporting other school activities
- Play for the love and honor of the game
- Understand and observe the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials and accept their decisions without question
- Respect the facilities of the host school and demonstrate the behavior expected of guests

### **Coaches**

Coaches are required to meet the following expectations:

- Exemplify behavior that is representative of the educational staff of the school and a credit to the teaching profession
- Demonstrate high ideals, good habits, and desirable attitudes in personal behavior and demand the same standards of your players
- Make sportsmanship the #1 priority
- Emphasize to players and bench personnel the importance of proper sideline behavior and the necessity of restraining from entering the playing field/court
- Recognize that the purpose of competition is to promote the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of individual players and that the most important values of competition are derived from playing the game fairly
- Be a modest winner and a gracious loser
- Maintain self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without public display of emotion or dissatisfaction with the officials
- Cooperate with the school administration in the planning, scheduling, and conduct of sport
- Employ accepted educational methods in coaching; giving all players an opportunity to use and develop initiative, leadership, and judgment
- Pay close attention to the physical condition and well being of players, refusing to jeopardize the health of an individual for the sake of the team
- Teach athletes it is better to lose fairly than win unfairly
- Demonstrate integrity. Do not allow gambling, profanity, abusive language, or similar violations
- Refuse to criticize opponents, officials, or others associated with sports activities
- Properly supervise student athletes under your immediate care and specifically observe a coach's responsibilities during events off school grounds

### **Parents/Spectators**

Parents/Spectators are required to meet the following expectations:

- Realize that you represent the school and community and, therefore, have an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through positive behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others
- 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
- Recognize that since the primary purpose of interscholastic athletes 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

- Treat visiting teams and officials as guests, extending to them every courtesy
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat
- Respect the judgment and integrity of officials, realizing that their decisions are based upon game conditions as they observe them

### **Athlete/Parent/Coach Communication**

CPS encourages open communication among athletes, parents, and coaches. Both athletes and parents are urged to discuss their concerns with the coach in the appropriate setting and at the appropriate time.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with the coach include issues of mental and physical well-being, strategies for improving individual performance, and issues of behavior.

Issues not appropriate for a parent to discuss with the coaches include playing time, starting positions, team strategy, play calling, and other athletes.

### **Conflict Resolution**

It is desirable for conflicts to be resolved by an athlete with his/her coach.

Occasionally, however, situations arise where conflicts are not able to be resolved through this interaction and the assistance of the athletic director and/or principal is needed.

### **Spectator Conduct**

The VHSL requires school districts to monitor spectator behavior at all school sponsored activities. Accordingly, an event supervisor may request any person involved in misconduct to leave the premises and contact the police for assistance. The school has the authority to suspend individuals from attending all school sponsored activities for spectator misconduct. CPS appreciates positive support from all spectators.

## High School Athletic Training Program

Parents allowing their children to participate in high school athletics accept the risk of injury. To help minimize the risk and to manage injuries when they occur, The Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters (CHKD) has assigned an athletic trainer to each high school. This individual has met requirements as set forth by the Board of Certification (BOC) to practice as an athletic trainer.

The BOC was incorporated in 1989 to provide a certification program for entry-level athletic trainers. The BOC establishes and regularly reviews both the standards of practice of athletic training and the continuing education requirements for athletic trainers. The organization ensures that anyone using the credentials Athletic Trainer Certified (A.T.C.) is a graduate from an accredited college or university and has passed the core classes at the collegiate level, has had clinical experience under the direct supervision of a certified athletic trainer, and passed national certification examination. In Virginia ATC must maintain their national and state certifications by meeting continuing education requirements.

There are five domains to athletic training. These five domains, upon which the national certification examination is based, are

- Injury/Illness Prevention and Wellness Protection
- Clinical Evaluation and Diagnosis
- Immediate and Emergency Care
- Treatment and Rehabilitation
- Organizational and Professional Health and Well-being

The ATC is an important link in the healthcare delivery system. The ATC serves as a liaison among athletes, parents, coaches, physicians, other allied health professionals, student activities coordinators, and administrators to facilitate healthy participation in interscholastic athletics. *Please note that the ATC is not required to be present at all practices.*

## CPS Sports Concussion Management Plan

CPS recognizes that a concussion is a serious injury to the brain resulting from a force or jolt applied directly or indirectly to the head producing a set of signs and symptoms reflecting the brain's dysfunction. CPS is committed to safe practice and provides a Sports Concussion Management Plan to educate parents, student-athletes, coaches and teachers about the nature and risks of concussions, and procedures to detect and treat these brain injuries prior to safe return to play. Central office and school administrators, athletic directors, coaches, school nurses, teachers, parents, student-athletes, ATC\*, and other health care providers form a team to work together to identify concussions once they occur and to ensure safe return to play.

CPS guidelines mandate that if a student-athlete exhibits or reports any sign or symptom of a concussion, he/she will be removed from practice or play. Parents are notified on the day of the injury. The parents will obtain a proper medical evaluation by a licensed healthcare professional with training in concussion evaluation and management per the CPS Sports Concussion Management Plan. CPS acknowledges that clearance to return to play is a medical decision. The licensed healthcare professional(s) who evaluates the student-athlete is the only individual to provide clearance, which will then place the student-athlete in the care of the ATC, possibly in consultation with the CHKD Sports Medicine physician, to oversee the Gradual Return to Sports Participation Program. The licensed health care professional can not be a parent or guardian. CPS will not allow the student-athlete to participate in a practice or game while experiencing any lingering or persisting symptoms of a concussion, no matter how slight. The student-athlete must be completely symptom free at rest and during physical and mental exertion, with neurocognitive functioning that has returned to their normal baseline, as determined by the results from the Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing (ImPACT) prior to return to sports training, practice, play, or competition.

The CPS Sports Concussion Program includes the following five fundamental components:

- Verified training of coaches on concussion risks, recognition, and management
- Education of parents and student-athletes on concussion risks, signs and symptoms, and post- injury management for sports and school Parents and student-athletes will read, sign, and submit to the school the CPS Concussion Information Sheet before the first practice
- Immediate removal from play by the student-athlete's coach, ATC, or team physician of any student-athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion in a practice or game (i.e. exhibiting signs and/or symptoms), "When in doubt, sit them out" is the operating principle
- Written clearance to return to play of the student-athlete by a licensed health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of a concussion. The written clearance must be received by the ATC before the student-athlete is allowed to return to the field/ court, "Return to Play Requires Medical OK" is the operating principle
- Treatment of the Student-Athlete in School, school personnel will be trained on concussion management in the school. School personnel will

be informed of the student-athlete's injury and its specific symptom manifestations-physical, cognitive, emotional, sleep. An individualized school care plan will be developed and implemented to assist the student athlete's recovery, providing maximally tolerated academic activities

### **Impact Concussion Management Program**

CPS is utilizing an innovative concussion management program for our student-athletes in certain sports having a greater risk for head injuries (cheerleading, field hockey, football, basketball, gymnastics, wrestling, baseball, soccer, softball, diving, high jump, pole vault). The program is called ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) and involves an online computerized exam that each athlete takes prior to an athletic season. In order to participate in any of the sports listed above, student athletes must be tested in the ImPACT program during the preseason. If the athlete is believed to have suffered a concussion during participation, the exam is taken again and the data is compared to the baseline test. This information is then used as a tool to assist the athletic training staff and treating physicians in determining the extent of the injury, monitoring recovery, and in making safe return-to-play decisions. If an injury of this nature occurs, we will be in contact with you. Post-concussion tests will be taken under our supervision at school. Return-to-play decisions must be made by a physician. Founded by the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center's Sports Concussion Program, this software system is utilized throughout professional sports and at a number of colleges and high schools across the country. Additional information can be found at [www.impacttest.com](http://www.impacttest.com). The exam takes about 25-30 minutes and is non-invasive. The program is set up in a "video game" type format. It tracks neurocognitive information such as memory, reaction time, brain processing speed, and concentration. For example, in one part of the exam, a dozen common words appear one at a time on the screen for about one second each. The athlete is then later asked what words were displayed. It is a simple exam and most who take it enjoy the challenge of the test. One of the reasons concussions are so dangerous is a condition called Second Impact Syndrome. If an athlete sustains a second concussion before completely recovering from the first, the results can be deadly. We understand the competitive nature of sports; however, our top priority is ALWAYS the health and safety of our athletes.

*\* The ATC is a highly educated and skilled professional specializing in athletic health care. In cooperation with physicians and other allied health personnel, the athletic trainer functions as an integral member of the athletic health care team in secondary schools, colleges and universities, sports medicine clinics, professional sports programs and other athletic health care settings.*

Entire CPS Sports Concussion Management Plan, with forms, are available at [Sports Concussion Management Plan](#)

## Chesapeake 2.0 Eligibility Requirement

In October 1997, the School Board approved new standards for participation in high school interscholastic activities in grades 8-12. The new standards are part of the school division's ongoing initiative to raise the level of student achievement. The standards are consistent with those in several surrounding school systems and with the school division's determination to provide the kind of education that will prepare our students for the highly complex world of tomorrow.

The 2.0 Eligibility Requirement was implemented during the first semester of the 1998-1999 school year when all ninth-grade, tenth-grade, eleventh- grade, and twelfth-grade students were eligible if they met the Virginia High School League and Chesapeake 2.0 Eligibility rules. Beginning with the second semester of the 1998-1999 school year and thereafter, a VHSL activity participant must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA average prior to initial participation, regardless of when initial participation begins.

First time incoming 9th grade students will be exempt from the 2.0 GPA requirement for the fall semester. These students must establish a 2.0 GPA by the spring semester of the 9th grade year to maintain VHSL eligibility. Incoming 9th grade students must meet VHSL eligibility under rule 28A-5-2, exception (1). First time incoming 9th grade students that gain eligibility under this provision must attend mandatory study-hall (two days per week) during their sport season. Also, under this provision, an eighth-grade student competing at the sub-varsity level must have maintained a 2.0 GPA for the semester or the year prior to participation. After the first semester of the 1998-1999 school year, any student entering a VHSL/Chesapeake activity and establishing eligibility for the first time must have maintained a 2.0 GPA for the previous semester or have maintained a 2.0 cumulative GPA.

***A VHSL activities participant is allowed only one probationary semester after initial eligibility has been established and the student fails to meet the 2.0 GPA.*** The probationary period is defined as the semester following a semester in which a participant falls below the 2.0 GPA requirement and meets the VHSL eligibility requirements. As well as meeting the requirements established by the Chesapeake School Board, all participants in VHSL sanctioned activities must also meet eligibility requirements as set forth by the VHSL and found in Section 28 of the VHSL Handbook.

Activities covered under the Chesapeake 2.0 Eligibility Requirement of the VHSL include Baseball, Basketball, Cheerleading, Creative Writing, Cross- Country, Debate, Field Hockey, Football, Forensics, Golf, Gymnastics, Publications (Yearbook), Scholastic Bowl, Soccer, Softball, Swimming, Tennis, Theater Festivals, Track, Volleyball, and Wrestling.

## Study Hall Requirement

A VHSL activity participant who is in a probationary semester will be required to attend study hall a minimum of 90 minutes per week. The study hall will meet after school a minimum of 135 minutes per week. Emphasis in the study hall will be placed on providing an environment where students can study and complete work assigned and on providing tutoring assistance. Students should check with coaches on the study hall schedules. ***Probationary students who fail to attend the required study hall will not be allowed to participate in any Chesapeake/VHSL activities.***

*\*Exception to Date of Eligibility Determination for Winter Athletes:*

- 1. This exception applies to a VHSL activities participant serving their probationary semester during the first semester.*
- 2. A VHSL activities participant who is serving a first semester probationary period will be able to complete the entire regular and post-season for the winter sports season. In addition, the VHSL activities participant must meet all eligibility requirements of the VHSL.*

## VHSL Eligibility

All participants in VHSL sanctioned activities must meet individual eligibility requirements as set forth by the VHSL and found in Section 28 of the [VHSL Handbook](#).

## Collegiate Eligibility

Parents and students need to become familiar with collegiate eligibility standards at the beginning of the ninth grade. Helpful information is available through the "NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete" or visit their website at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org). Please talk to your child's coach, school counselor, or athletic director.

## Team and Sport Specific Information

Each sport has its unique requirements and risks. To ensure your understanding of these requirements prior to your child's participating in the sport, the school conducts a parent meeting before the beginning of practice each sports season.

In addition to meeting the physical and academic requirements and completing the required paperwork, each athlete must follow the specific rules and regulations governing each sport. A clear understanding ensures a cooperative relationship among athletes, parents, and coaches. Each coach discusses the unique aspects of the particular sport he/she coaches.

If you have questions regarding a particular sport, contact your child's school.

## Parent/Coach Communication

### **Parent Coach Relationship**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the others and provide a greater benefit to student athletes. As parents, when your children



become involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

#### Communications You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach

- Philosophy of the coach
- General expectations
- Locations and times of all practices and contests
- Team requirements, special equipment, strength, and conditioning programs
- Procedure if your child is injured during participation
- Team rules, guidelines, and consequences for infractions
- Lettering criteria
- Team selection process

#### Communication Coaches Expect From Athlete/Parents

- Concerns related to your child's general welfare
- Notification of any schedule conflicts in advance
- Notification of illness or injury as soon as possible

#### Appropriate Concerns To Discuss With Coaches

- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you hope. Coaches are professionals. They make decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all student-athletes involved. As you have seen from the previous list, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those listed below, must be left up to the discretion of the coach.

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and player or coach and parent. These conferences are encouraged. It is important that all parties involved have a clear understanding of the other person's position.

#### **If you have a concern to discuss with a coach, you should:**

- Call the coach to set-up an appointment
- Call the athletic director to help set-up the meeting for you if the coach cannot be reached
- Do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice, these can be emotional times for both the parent and coach
- Meetings of this nature usually do not promote positive resolutions

#### **The Next Step:**

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach does not provide a satisfactory resolution?

- Call and set-up an appointment with the athletic director to discuss the situation
- At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined

### **Parent Code**

- Be a positive role model through your own actions to make sure your child has the best athletic experience possible
- Be a “team fan,” as well as a “my kid” fan
- Weigh what your children say; they might slant the truth to their advantage
- Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, and spectators
- Be respectful of all officials’ decisions
- Praise student athletes in their attempt to improve themselves as students, as athletes, and as people
- Gain an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the contest
- Recognize and show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team
- Help your child learn that success is oriented in the development of a skill, whether he or she wins or loses
- If you as a parent have a concern, take time to talk with coaches in an appropriate manner including proper time and place. Be sure to follow the designated chain of command
- Please reinforce our drug and alcohol free policies by refraining from the use of any controlled substance before and during athletic contests or practice
- Remember that a ticket to a school athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest

***Be sensible, responsible, and keep your priorities in order. Participating on a school team is a wonderful opportunity to grow physically, socially, and emotionally.***

## **Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) Information for Student-Athletes and Parents/Guardians**

### **What is sudden cardiac arrest?**

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is a condition in which the heart suddenly stops beating. When that happens, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs. SCA happens to adults as well as students. However, the causes of SCA in students and adults can differ. A student's SCA will likely result from an inherited condition, but an adult's SCA may be caused by inherited or lifestyle issues.

### **What are the causes of SCA?**

SCA is NOT a heart attack. A heart attack may cause SCA, but they are not the same. SCA is caused by several structural and electrical diseases of the heart. These conditions predispose an individual to have an abnormal rhythm that can be fatal if not treated within a few minutes. Other possible causes of SCA are a sudden blunt non-penetrating blow to the chest and the use/abuse of recreational or performance-enhancing drugs and/or energy drinks.

### **How common is SCA in the United States?**

SCA is the #1 cause of death for adults and student-athletes in this country. About 2,000 patients under the age of 25 die of SCA each year.

### **Warning Signs of SCA**

- Fainting or seizures during exercise
- Unexplained shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Extreme fatigue
- Chest pains
- Racing heart
- If an athlete collapses and is unresponsive, SCA should be suspected

### **Emergency Response to SCA**

- Act immediately; time is most critical to increasing survival rates
- Recognize SCA
- Call 911 immediately, and activate Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Administer CPR
- Use Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

### **What are the warning signs of potential heart issues?**

The following conditions need to be further evaluated by your primary care provider:

- Family history of heart disease/cardiac arrest
- Fainting, a seizure, or convulsions during physical activity
- Fainting or a seizure from emotional excitement or distress, or being startled
- Dizziness or lightheadedness, especially during exertion
- Exercise-induced chest pain
- Palpitations awareness of the heart beating, especially if associated with other symptoms such as dizziness
- Extreme tiredness or shortness of breath related to exercise
- History of high blood pressure

### **What would be the risk of neglecting symptoms?**

Ignoring symptoms and continuing to play/practice could be catastrophic and result in sudden cardiac death. The warning symptoms should be taken seriously and seek timely, appropriate medical care that can prevent serious and possibly fatal consequences. The symptoms can be unclear in student-athletes since people often confuse these warning signs with physical exhaustion. SCA can be prevented if the underlying causes can be diagnosed and treated.

### **What are the risks of practicing/playing after experiencing these symptoms?**

There are risks associated with continuing to practice/play after experiencing these symptoms. When the heart stops, so does the blood that flows to the brain and other vital organs. Death or permanent brain damage can occur in just a few minutes.

### **Removal from play/return to play?**

Any student-athlete who shows signs or symptoms of SCA before, during, or after activity must be removed from practice/play. Play includes all athletic activities. Before returning to play, the athlete must be evaluated by a licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner, or cardiologist (heart doctor). The parent/guardian must provide written clearance from medical personnel for the student-athlete to return.

### **How can we minimize the risk of SCA and improve outcomes?**

Medical providers can minimize the risk of SCA by providing appropriate prevention, recognition, and treatment strategies. One important strategy is the requirement for a yearly pre-participation screening evaluation, often called a sports physical, and performed by the athlete's medical provider.

- It is imperative that you carefully and accurately complete the personal history and heart health questions about your family in the "VHSL Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Examination Form" available at [vhsl.org/forms](http://vhsl.org/forms)

You may visit the following sites for more information:

- American Heart Association [heart.org](http://heart.org)
- Parent Heart Watch [parentheartwatch.org](http://parentheartwatch.org)
- Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation [sca-aware.org](http://sca-aware.org)

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*The Chesapeake Public School System is an equal educational opportunity school system. The School Board of the City of Chesapeake also adheres to the principles of equal opportunity in employment and, therefore, prohibits discrimination in terms and conditions of employment on the basis of race, sex, national origin, color, religion, age, or disability.*