



# Athletics

## Rules and Information

**Middle School and  
High School  
League Participants**

# **Rules for Middle School and Virginia High School League Participants**

## **School Board Policy 7.06**

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**To be eligible to represent your school in any VHSL athletic contest, you –**

1. Must be a regular bona fide student in good standing of the school you represent;
2. Must be enrolled in the last 4 years of high school;
3. Must have enrolled no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the current semester;
4. For the first semester, must be currently enrolled in no fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation immediately preceding year or the immediately preceding semester for schools that certify credits on a semester basis;
5. For the second semester, must be currently enrolled in no fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation and have passed five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation the immediately preceding semester;
6. Must sit out all VHSL competition for 365 consecutive calendar days following a school transfer unless the transfer corresponded with a family move;
7. Must not have reached your 19<sup>th</sup> birthday on or before the first day of August of the current school year;
8. Must not, after entering the ninth grade for the first time, have enrolled in or been eligible for enrollment in high school no more than eight consecutive semesters;
9. Must have submitted to your principal before any kind of participation, including tryouts or practice as a member of any school athletic team, an Athletic Participation/ Parent Consent/Physical Examination form, completely filled in and properly attesting that you have been examined during this school year and found to be physically fit for athletic competition and that your parents consent to your participation; and
10. Must not be in violation of VHSL Amateur, Awards, All-Star, or College Team Rules.

Check with your Principal or Athletic Director for interpretation and exemptions provided under VHSL Rules.

A team meeting shall be held prior to the beginning of each season to discuss safety, team rules and rule changes.

# Rules for Middle School and Virginia High School League Participants

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[Adapted from the Virginia High School League Handbook, 1996-97]

(Roanoke County Public School Policy 7.06)

## The participant shall:

1. Be courteous to visiting teams and officials.
2. Play hard and to the limit of ability, regardless of discouragement. The true athlete does not give up nor does he/she quarrel, cheat, gripe, 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 confrontation.
4. Be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat. A true sportsman does not offer excuses for losing.
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 decision as a good sportsman.
11. Respect the facilities of host schools and the trust entailed in being a guest.

## Specific Rules to Observe

- A. **Training:** In order to achieve the ultimate goal of maximum effort and efficiency, athletes must get proper rest, eat right and train effectively. The use of any form of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, stimulants, steroids, other illegal substances and other substances used improperly as defined in Roanoke County Public Schools Substance Use Policy 3.22 and Tobacco 3.29 is prohibited.

The use, possession and/or distribution of any of these substances may lead to dismissal from the team. This rule applies for the full duration of the specific sport season and is inclusive of out-of-school events, which occur during the season. The use of illegal substances will lead to a referral to the Student Assistance Program (SAP) and proceedings in accordance with the Roanoke County Public Schools Board Policy for VHSL participants and training rules (7.06) as well as Substance Use Policy (3.22). Training rules

apply during a specific sport season. Authority is not given out of season except for school violations when the student is under the supervision of schools.

**Disregarding the training rules will lead to disciplinary action by the head coach, which may consist of a conference, warning, suspension, or dismissal. The head coach must review recommendations for suspension and dismissals with the principal before arriving at a final decision. However, upon the occurrence of a substance use policy violation, the principal and head coach must follow procedures according to Roanoke County Public Schools Board Policy for VHSL participants and training rules (7.6) and make a referral to the SAP.**

- B. **Punctuality:** Athletes are expected to arrive at practices and games on time as well as depart for practices, games and other meetings at the established times.
- C. **Attendance:** Attendance is required at practices, games and all called meetings except for the excused absences documented by parents and/or physicians. An athlete may not participate in a game, practice or scrimmage held on a school day unless that student has attended a minimum of one-half of scheduled classes. If an Athlete leaves school early because of illness, the student may not participate in an athletic event that evening. The principal may, under extenuating circumstances, make exceptions to these rules.
- D. **Absences:** The coach/school shall be called in the first half of the day when an athlete is home ill or must be out of school. Parents may be required to verify the reason the athlete is absent.
- E. **Truancy:** The athlete, when truant from school, will be treated as a regular student and will be subject to school and school board policies, which prevent him/her from participating in games or practices.
- F. **Travel with team:** Athletes must travel with their respective teams according to school arrangements unless the athletic director or coach specifically approves permission. In any event, this permission must conform to school board policy.
- G. **Reporting of injuries:** Athletes must report known injuries to the coach immediately and seek attention from the trainer or medical doctor as soon as possible as needed. The coach will follow recommendations of the Roanoke County trainer and/or doctor. The Roanoke County trainer and/or doctor determine when the athlete may participate again.
- H. **Concussion Management:** In order to participate in any VHSL activity, each student athlete and parent/guardian shall review, on an annual basis, information on concussions, provided by the school division in Policy 7.31.
- I. **Attendance at parties:** Athletes are discouraged from attending non-chaperoned parties and other events where illegal substances may be used

and abused. Athletes who, in their sport season, do attend such events and are found to have in their possession and/or participated in use, abuse and/or distribution of substances are subject to consequences outlined in this policy. Athletes who participate in the use or abuse of substances are subject to team training rules and will be disciplined, up to and including dismissal from the team. The athlete will be referred to the Student Assistance Program.

- J. **Lettering and awards:** Athletes will be given the requirements for lettering in each sport and will be provided information on awards that are to be given and the criteria for each. Each athlete must meet all requirements.
- K. **Communication:** Parents, coaches and athletes must maintain open lines of communication.
- L. **Misdemeanor/Felony Charges or Conviction:** As team members, participants in VHSL activities represent the school, students, community and the Roanoke County School Division. VHSL participants charged with or convicted of a misdemeanor may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from the team at the discretion of the principal.

VHSL participants charged with or convicted of a felony will be referred to the superintendent, or designee, for determination of eligibility. If determined to be eligible, such participants may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from the team at the discretion of the principal.

Participants must report, to the athletic director or principal, any misdemeanors or felony arrests or convictions within 24 hours while participating in any VHSL sport, and must report any misdemeanor or felony charges within a 12 month period as of the date of signing the student conduct code prior to the start of the sport season. Failure to report such charges or providing misinformation on the athletic conduct code agreement may be grounds for dismissal from the team.

## **Consequences for Violation of Athletic/Training Policy 7.6**

### **Substance Use (Non Tobacco)**

#### **1. Initial steps as mandated by school board policy:**

- A. In the event that the substance use violation occurs on school property, in a school vehicle, at any school-sponsored event, going to and from school or while participating in school-sanctioned activities and involves the above-mentioned substances then the Substance Use Policy 3.22 shall be followed.
- B. If the substance use violation did not occur during any of the above mentioned conditions then the consequences for substance use under this policy (7.06) shall be followed.
- C. Parents will be contacted and informed.

D. Parents will attend a conference with the SAP Counselor and/or Core Team members.

2. **Consequence Options:**

A. The student will receive a suspension from the squad for a period of twelve (12) calendar months from the date of the offense.

OR

B. The building administrator may reduce the suspension from the squad to thirty (30) calendar day(s) if :

1. the student agrees to participate in the Student Assistance Program (SAP) and satisfactorily follow the recommendations made by the Student Assistance Program Core Team and,
2. the student agrees to complete a drug urine screen within two (2) business days from the date of the contract. The expense of such service is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian(s).
3. Additionally, if the student has previously been found to have violated Policy 3.22 or 7.06AR (i.e. a second offense), the student agrees to complete an evaluation for alcohol and other drug abuse within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of the contract. The expense of such service(s) is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian(s).
4. Release the evaluation and urine drug screen to the SAP Coordinator and thereafter complete periodic urine screens for up to one year from the date of the contract and release the results of the test to the SAP Coordinator. The expense of such services is the responsibility of the parent/guardian(s).
5. If recommended by the substance evaluation and with the consent of the student's parent/guardian(s), the student will participate in a substance abuse treatment program. The expense of such services will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian(s).
6. Parent/guardian(s) and student will complete the two-session parent/student educational program on substance use/abuse coordinated by the SAP.
7. The student-athlete may continue to participate in practice without the opportunity to attend contests/games.
8. An event occurring at the end of a season shall carry over to the following season. (Season as designated by the VHSL). Any remaining calendar days would be picked up at that time.

***Failure on the part of the parent/guardian(s) and/or students to comply with any of the conditions agreed upon in conjunction with the Student Assistance Program representative(s) will result in a recommendation of the full one-year suspension from the team or squad.***

# MRSA Prevention in Athletic Settings

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## Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

Cases of MRSA continue to be identified in the community.

MRSA is a type of infection caused by Staph bacteria that is resistant to some common antibiotics such as penicillin. **While** most cases have involved athletes, cases involving non-athletes have also occurred. Skin infections such as abscesses and boils are the most common form of this infection.



The infected area usually starts out as a small bump resembling a pimple, which becomes redder and often develops pus drainage.

*Staphylococcus* bacteria (or *Staph*) are commonly carried on the skin or in the nose of healthy individuals. *Staph* and MRSA are spread by close contact either through direct physical contact with an infected individual or by touching objects (e.g. towels, sheets, wound dressings, clothes, or sports equipment) contaminated with the bacteria.

In most cases, MRSA infections are mild and can be treated successfully with proper hygiene and the appropriate antibiotics. If left untreated, MRSA can progress to a life-threatening infection and become difficult to treat because there are fewer effective antibiotics available at this stage of the illness.

### A few guidelines to help prevent and control the spread of MRSA in the community:

Wash hands frequently with soap and water.

Avoid sharing personal items (e.g., towels, washcloths, razors, clothing, or uniforms). An individual who becomes infected should wash all bed linens and clothes in hot water and laundry detergent frequently until the infection has cleared.

Report any suspicious skin sore or boil to your healthcare provider (including the school nurse) immediately.

If you participate in sports involving close personal contact (e.g. wrestling and football), shower with soap immediately after each practice, game, or match.

Non-washable gear (i.e. head protectors), should be wiped down with alcohol after each use.

Athletic equipment such as wrestling or gymnastics mats should be wiped down regularly with an antibacterial solution.

Athletes should receive a total body check prior to any game, match, or tournament.

Individuals with an infection involving drainage (i.e. pus drainage) should be excluded from participation in sporting events and practices until no pus drainage is present, the infected site can be adequately covered with a bandage and clothing, and a physician's release has been obtained.

Any cut or break in the skin should be washed with soap and water and a clean dressing applied on a daily basis.



## Handwashing

Is the single most important  
means of preventing the  
spread of infection.

More information about Community Associated MRSA is available on the CDC's website at <http://www.cdc.gov/>

A Health Communication  
Production of the  
Mecklenburg County  
Health Department  
2A9 Billingsley Rd  
Charlotte, NC 2821 1  
704-336-4700  
[www.meckhealth.org](http://www.meckhealth.org)



# Concussion in Sports – facts for Parents

## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.



## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs of a concussion:

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE	SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headache or “pressure” in head</li><li>• Nausea or vomiting</li><li>• Balance problems or dizziness</li><li>• Double or blurry vision</li><li>• Sensitivity to light</li><li>• Sensitivity to noise</li><li>• Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy</li><li>• Concentration or memory problems</li><li>• Confusion</li><li>• Just “not feeling right” or “feeling down”</li><li>• Sleep changes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appears dazed or stunned</li><li>• Is confused about assignment or position</li><li>• Forgets an instruction</li><li>• Is unsure of game, score, or opponent</li><li>• Moves clumsily</li><li>• Answers questions slowly</li><li>• Loses consciousness (even briefly)</li><li>• Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes</li></ul>

## HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION OR OTHER SERIOUS BRAIN INJURY?

- Ensure that they follow their coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly and be well maintained.
- Wearing a helmet is a must to reduce the risk of a serious brain injury or skull fracture.

- However, helmets are not designed to prevent concussions. There is no “concussion-proof” helmet. So, even with a helmet, it is important for kids and teens to avoid hits to the head.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

**SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY.** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to regular activities, including sports.

### KEEP YOUR CHILD OUT OF PLAY.

Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing— risk a greater chance of having a repeat concussion. Repeat or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

**TELL YOUR CHILD'S COACH ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION.** Coaches should know if your child had a previous concussion. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

### ANGER SIGNS

Be alert for symptoms that worsen over time. Your child or teen should be seen in an emergency department right away if s/he has:

- One pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) larger than the other
- Drowsiness or cannot be awakened
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Difficulty recognizing people or places
- Increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL SAFELY AFTER A CONCUSSION?

Children and teens who return to school after a concussion may need to:

- Take rest breaks as needed
- Spend fewer hours at school
- Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments
- Receive help with schoolwork
- Reduce time spent reading, writing, or on the computer

Talk with your child's teachers, school nurse, coach, speech-language pathologist, or counselor about your child's concussion and symptoms. As your child's symptoms decrease, the extra help or support can be removed gradually.

*It's better to miss one game than the whole season.*

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION** [www.facebook.com/CDCHeadsUp](https://www.facebook.com/CDCHeadsUp)

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion).





Print Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and agree to abide by the rules of Virginia High School League (VHSL). Events that are governed by VHSL include all athletic sports contests, forensics, drama, creative writing and publications, and cheerleading. Students are expected to follow all eligibility requirements and conduct expectations of the VHSL.

Additionally, I have read and agree to uphold local School Board policies regarding personal conduct, on and off the playing field and concussion management (Policy 7.31). This expectation includes agreeing to the consequences for violating the substance use portion of policy 7.06 and policy 3.22 -Substance Use.

I also give permission for the athletic trainer/school nurse to share information with school staff when a student has sustained a concussion.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Sports/Activities the student will participate in:**

- |  |                                       |                                     |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball      | <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor Track | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball    | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer       | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrestling  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheer         | <input type="checkbox"/> Softball     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cross Country | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming     | <input type="checkbox"/> _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Football      | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis       | <input type="checkbox"/> _____      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf          | <input type="checkbox"/> Track        |                                     |

**Return This Form Signed and Completed**

