

**CULPEPER COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**STUDENT-ATHLETE
HANDBOOK
2017-2018**

**Culpeper County High School
Eastern View High School
Culpeper Middle School
Floyd T. Binns Middle School**

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Culpeper County Student-Athlete Handbook 2017-2018

The Privilege of Athletic Participation

Being a member of an athletic team is a privilege. Any student who elects to participate in athletics is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and sacrifice. Being a member of a team requires responsible behavior, personal accountability, and the willingness to sacrifice individual goals for the good of the team. All athletes are expected to conduct themselves in an acceptable manner and to represent our community and school in a positive way. It is expected that athletes will maintain high academic standards and exceptional attitudes and behavior both in and outside of the classroom.

Student Athlete Pledge Not to Use Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs, etc.

As part of the privilege of athletic participation, per School Board Policy JFCF BR-1, all student-athletes must sign a pledge to not use alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, illegal drugs, athletic performance enhancement and anabolic steroids on or off school property at any time. Harmful substances include, but are not limited to: alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, illegal drugs, athletic performance enhancement and anabolic steroids. To assist student-athletes in resisting the use of harmful substances, the pledge requires students to submit to random drug testing for these substances. A student-athlete becomes eligible for drug testing upon being listed on the Middle School Team Roster List for middle school students and the Virginia High School League (VHSL) Master Eligibility List for high school students. Student-athletes will remain eligible for testing through the end of the sport season. In the event a student ceases to participate or withdraws from an athletic team, he or she will no longer be subject to random drug tests during that sport season. If the student-athlete refuses to be tested or attempts to tamper with or assist others in tampering with the sample, the athlete will be dropped from the team, absent extenuating circumstances. Consequences for violations of the pledge are detailed on page 3 of the handbook.

Eligibility Rules

Only students eligible under Virginia High School League (VHSL) policies and regulations may participate on interscholastic sports teams in Culpeper County Public Schools. VHSL eligibility rules and Culpeper County Public Schools require a student athlete to:

- Be a regular bona fide student in good standing of the school he/she represents. The student shall be enrolled in the last four years of high school. Once a student enrolls into the ninth grade, their athletic eligibility "clock" begins. Each student has the next eight consecutive semesters to compete in VHSL activities.
- The student shall have been regularly enrolled in the school which he/she represents no later than the fifteenth school day of the semester.
- Be currently enrolled in not fewer than three block classes for credit which can be used for graduation.
- Have passed 3 of 4 credit courses during the immediately preceding semester, or earning at least "5 points" under VHSL regulations
- Not to have turned nineteen years of age on or before the first day of August of the school year in which he/she wishes to compete.
- 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. A student athlete can achieve a change of residency by court order without penalty of eligibility.
- Be an amateur at all times while competing. An amateur athlete is an athlete who engages in VHSL athletics solely for the educational, physical, mental, and social benefits he/she derives there from, and to whom VHSL athletics are nothing more than an avocation.
- Fully and accurately complete an *Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Examination Form* prior to becoming a member of any sponsored VHSL athletic team.
- Because high school winter sports compete in both the fall and spring semesters, student-athletes must have passed the required number of courses for the previous spring semester in order to try-out for a winter sports team. Winter sports athletes must pass the required number of courses for the fall semester in order to maintain their eligibility for the full season.
- Middle school student-athletes must have passed 4 of 5 courses in the preceding spring semester to be eligible to play a fall sport. Middle school student-athletes must have passed 4 of 5 courses for the first 9 weeks grading period to be eligible to play a winter sport.
- Middle school students must be in good standing and passing 4 of 5 courses to participate in off-season activities for any Culpeper County Public Schools athletic team.
- Middle school students aged 15 or older on or before August 1st are not eligible for middle school sports, but may try out for high school sports.

- High school students aged 19 or older on or before August 1st are not eligible for high school sports.

Additional Eligibility Requirements by Culpeper County Public Schools:

- No student-athlete can participate in any independent athletic team in which practices or competitions conflict with the activities of school teams. The athlete can be a member of such teams if no conflict occurs.
- Student-athletes cannot try-out for a team or participate in offseason activities unless 1) The student has a valid VHSL physical on file with the AD; 2) the student agrees to the *Student-Athlete Pledge Program*; 3) both the parent and the student sign the acknowledgement page agreeing to follow the policies and regulations stated in the CCPS Student-Athlete Handbook.
- Once a student-athlete is on a team roster, the student-athlete and parent must attend a mandatory meeting with the Activities Director and athletic trainers in which the policies and regulations related to athletics are discussed. Payment of athletic fees is expected at this meeting. Failure of the student and parent to attend this meeting will result in removal from the team.

Athletic Participation Fee

Culpeper County Public Schools has implemented an athletic participation fee of \$100 per student for participation on each high school team and \$90 per student for each middle school team. These monies are used to pay the costs associated with operating athletic teams including court and field maintenance, transportation costs, and pay for game officials. Once notified, parents or students will pay the Athletic Participation Fee in full at the appointed date, time, and place for their sport. If approved by the Principal or designee (usually the Activities Director), payments may be made in installments or a school service agreement can be developed whereby the parent or student-athlete agrees to perform a service to the school of 10 hours for high school students and 9 hours for middle school students in lieu of payment. ***If parent or student does not pay the fee, make payments or complete the service as scheduled, the student-athlete cannot play in an inter-school competition.*** Please note coaches are forbidden from collecting fees from parents or students or advocating to the Principal or Activities Director on behalf of any student-athlete to receive a school service agreement.

Expectations for Conduct at School and in the Community

The participation in school athletics should elicit great pride for the student, family, school, and community members. This sense of pride requires high standards of conduct for student-athletes as not to bring shame or embarrassment to themselves, their family, school, or community. The following are standards of conduct and sportsmanship which must be maintained in order to remain eligible for participation in interscholastic athletics in Culpeper County Public Schools. The signatures of both the student-athlete and a parent/guardian indicate that each is aware of these expectations. Before a student-athlete is permitted to participate on an athletic team, both the student-athlete and the parent/guardian must acknowledge their understanding of these expectations by signing the athletic code of conduct form and returning it to either a coach or the Activities Director. (This form can be found at the back of this handbook, or may be obtained from the coach or Activities Director.)

Suspension or Prohibition from Participation in Athletics

The following are examples, but not limited to, reasons that may result in the suspension of a student-athlete. The length of suspension is determined by the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Activities Director according to Culpeper County Public School Discipline Guidelines and VHSL regulations.

- Excessive unexcused absences or tardiness to school which results in the filing of truancy by the School Division's Attendance Officer as outlined in the Culpeper County Public Schools Student/Parent Handbook section entitled "Attendance Policy". **Student-athletes are expected to attend school all day in order to participate in any sports practice, game, or event. Any exceptions to this policy will require approval of the Activities Director or Principal.**
- Ejection from a contest by an official, coach, or Activities Director for unsportsmanlike or other inappropriate behavior.
- An out of school suspension (OSS) issued by the school administration for a violation(s) of the *Culpeper County Public Schools Student Code of Conduct* will result in the student-athlete being prohibited from participating in any team activity during the suspension from school. Suspensions from school during the season will also result in a game/match suspension based on the formula below. *These suspensions are counted as cumulative during the season.* Example: The student-athlete receives a 3 day OSS on the first offense and will miss 1 game/match suspension, but if there is a second offense and receives another 3 day OSS, the student-athlete will miss the next 2 games/matches (6 OSS days total during the season= 2 game/match)

If the game/match occurs during the suspension from school, that game/match will count; if no game/match occurred during the suspension, the student-athlete will return to practice, but will not be able to attend the next game/match.

1-3 day(s) out school suspension (OSS) cumulative = 1 game/match suspension;

4-9 days OSS= 2 game/match suspension;

10 days or more cumulative OSS = removal from team and a 45 school day suspension from all social activities to include participation or attendance at any extracurricular event. **The student-athlete will have to meet with the school's Activity Director for reinstatement to "good standing" in order to try-out for an athletic team after serving the 45 school day social suspension.**

- The assignment of a student-athlete to in-school suspension (ISS) for 3 cumulative full days during the season will require a mandatory meeting of the coach, athlete, and parent before an athlete can return to a competition or practice. Upon the 4th or subsequent assignment to in-school suspension, the student-athlete will be suspended from attending competition equal to the number of days above 3 assigned to in-school suspension.

Example: The student-athlete accumulates 5 days of ISS, the student-athlete cannot attend 2 games/matches. (5 days is 2 days above 3)

- Cumulative infractions of team rules as documented by the coach and presented to the Activities Director for action.
- Engaging in hazing is prohibited, hazing is defined as any act, whether physical, mental, emotional or psychological, which subjects another individual voluntarily or involuntarily to anything that may abuse, mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass, or intimidate him/her. Examples of hazing include, but are not limited to, any type of initiation or other event and/or activity where there is an expectation of individuals joining a particular team to participate in behavior designed to humiliate, degrade, or abuse them regardless of the individual's willingness to participate. ***Student-athletes engaging in hazing are subject to school disciplinary action depending upon the type of hazing involved. Law enforcement will be notified when hazing results in significant harm to the individual or damage to property.***
- A major violation(s) or cumulative minor violations of the Student Code of Conduct while participating in an athletic-related activity (while in locker rooms, during practices, competitions, games, travel, team meetings, ceremonies, etc.) may result in a long-term ban from participation in athletics or being present at an athletic-related activity as a spectator as determined through the disciplinary process.

Student Arrests

In the event that police arrest a student-athlete, for acts occurring on or off school property the Activities Director or Principal will conduct an investigation to determine the circumstances of the arrest. If the arrest is for acts involving weapons, gang activity, distribution of drugs, or a crime that is a felony, the student-athlete is suspended from participation in any team activity pending the outcome of the judicial proceedings. If the student is found guilty or accepts a plea or diversion, the student-athlete will be suspended from participation in any athletic team activity or attendance at an athletic event for 45 school days after reinstatement to regular school attendance, the finding of guilt, or acceptance of plea or diversion, whichever occurs last.

Violations of the Student-Athlete Pledge

Per School Board Policy JFCF SR-2, the refusal to sign the *Student-Athlete Pledge* to not use prohibited substances by the student-athlete or the parent/guardian(s) to participate will preclude the student-athletes further participation in athletics at the school.

First Violation: When the principal or his/her designee confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the following will take place:

1. The student-athlete shall be suspended from play for a period equivalent to that number of contests representing 20 percent of the total number of VHSL contest limitations for each sport to be played during the regular season. (Any fraction of the calculation will be dropped.) The penalty will be applied to the immediate next contest(s) including playoffs, and/or to the next sport season in which the student athlete normally participates within 365 calendar days. During the suspension period, the student will be able to attend practices and contests; however, the student will not be permitted to dress in team uniform for contests. This does not apply to out of school suspension days as a result of School Board Policy JFCI-R1.
2. Student-Athletes and parents will have 2 business days to agree to participation in the *Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program* or choose to be removed from the team.
3. To participate in the *Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program*, the parent/guardian(s) will contact the Executive Director of Student Services within 5 school days of the suspension start date.
4. The student-athlete must also agree to have a Substance Abuse Assessment completed by an outside agency within 15 calendar days of the suspension at the parent/guardian(s) expense. Follow through with the Substance Abuse Assessment is the responsibility of the student-athlete and parent/guardian(s). The Executive Director of Student Services will provide referrals to agencies that provide Substance Abuse Assessments.
5. The student-athlete must agree to have a multi-panel follow-up drug screening after 30 calendar days of the suspension start date at the parent/guardian(s) expense.

Second Violation: When the principal or his/her designee confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the following will take place:

1. A second violation occurring within the same school year, even if in another sport or activity, will permanently exclude the student from all athletic activities for the remainder of the school year. (If less than 20 percent of the total number of VHSL contest limitations scheduled to be played during the regular season remains, the suspension will carry over to the next sport season in which the student normally participates.)
2. A second violation occurring in a separate school year from the first violation will require the student/athlete to be suspended from play for a period equivalent to 20 percent of the total number of VHSL contest limitations for each sport to be played during the regular season. (Any fraction of the calculation will be dropped.) The penalty will be applied to the immediate next contest(s) including playoffs, and/or to the next sport season in which the student athlete normally participates within the current school year. During the suspension period, the student will be able to attend practices and contests; however, the student will not be permitted to dress in team uniform for contests or competitive events. This does not apply to out of school suspension days as a result of school board policy JFCI-R1.
3. Student-Athletes and parents will have 2 business days to agree to participation in the *Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program* or choose to be removed from the team.
4. To participate in the *Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program*, the parent/guardian(s) will contact the Executive Director of Student Services within 5 school days of the suspension start date.
5. The student-athlete must also agree to have a Substance Abuse Assessment completed by an outside agency within 15 calendar days of the suspension at the parent/guardian(s) expense. Follow through with the Substance Abuse Assessment is the responsibility of the student-athlete and parent/guardian(s). The Executive Director of Student Services will provide referrals to agencies that provide Substance Abuse Assessments.
6. The student-athlete must agree to have a multi-panel follow-up drug screening after 30 calendar days of the suspension start date at the parent/guardian(s) expense.

Third Violation: When the principal or his/her designee confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the following will take place: 1. A student-athlete who is found responsible for a third violation during their VHSL eligibility is ineligible to participate in all athletic activities for 12 consecutive months from the date of suspension.

Failure to meet the Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program requirements as directed or within established timelines will result in removal from the team.

Appealing a Suspension/Dismissal

If the parent of a student-athlete chooses to appeal a suspension or dismissal from a team by the Activities Director, a request for appeal must be made in writing to the Principal within 5 school days of the preceding action. The Principal or designee will call a meeting with the student-athlete, and his/her parents, Activities Director, and the coach. After the appeal is heard, the Principal or designee will render a decision within five (5) school days. *The decision of the Principal is final.*

Quitting a Team

A student-athlete is considered to have quit a team when (1) he/she either verbally or in writing expresses to the coach that he/she has quit, or (2) he/she misses three consecutive unexcused days of practices or games. Once the student-athlete has quit a team, he/she may not participate on another athletic team during that season without first receiving permission from the Activities Director. Once a student-athlete quits a team, all opportunities for awards for that sport in that season are forfeited.

Individual Team Rules

Often a coach will develop additional expectations and rules specific to their team. (These rules cannot conflict with division or school policies.) These expectations may come in the form of rules for appropriate dress, attendance and tardiness to practice, respect, teamwork, conditioning, attitude, or participation in team activities. The coach has the authority to administer penalties for violations of team rules. These specific team rules and penalties must be approved by the Activities Director and a copy will be kept on file in the athletic director's office. Once approved by the Activities Director, these rules will act as an extension of the division's Athletic Code of Conduct. Student athletes and their parent/guardian need to become familiar with the team rules for their specific team. The coach will present all team rules and expectations to student-athletes and their parents/guardians in writing at the first team informational meeting. It is expected that the student-athlete and the parents/guardian will sign an acknowledgement to indicate their understanding of these rules and their willingness to adhere to the rules.

Expectations for Sportsmanship

Under the Virginia High School League (VHSL) rules and regulations, student-athletes are to act in a manner consistent with the rules and ethics of their sport. As stated in the VHSL handbook:

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 or she quarrel, cheat, bet or grandstand.
- (3) Retain his or 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.
- (12) Prohibition of displays of gross signs of poor sportsmanship. Athletes are not allowed to harass game officials, the opposition, or spectators. Athletes that are ejected are required to serve a suspension according to VHSL guidelines.
- (13) Prohibition on laying of hands or attempt to lay hands on an official. Any such act by an athlete will result in a one year suspension from VHSL and possible legal actions by the school or appropriate governing bodies.

Injury Insurance

Participation in athletic activities carries risk of injury. Student-athletes are expected to have medical insurance coverage through their parents, or if eligible, through Medicaid. Student injury insurance can be purchased by parents through *American Advantage Marketing Group, Inc.* The premiums range from \$18 - \$124 per month depending upon the coverage needed.

For athletes participating on teams under the Virginia High School League, there is catastrophic injury insurance coverage for all athletes. The Virginia High School League's catastrophic injury insurance does not apply to off-season practices or trainings. More information is available from the school Activities Director on these insurance plans.

Use of Medications at Practice or Competitions

Culpeper County Public Schools policy prohibits students from possessing and self-administering prescription or over-the-counter medications while on school property or at school related events off campus. Student-athletes may only possess or self-administer medications when a health plan is required from their physician, and with written authorization by a parent. Health plans must be on file with the school nurse.

Parents of student-athletes will have to bring medications to the school nurse for administering prior to the end of the school day (before 3:30) or parents must come to administer the medications to their child at practice or competition. Coaches are prohibited from administering medications to athletes. (Unless an emergency exists requiring immediate action to prevent death or serious injury.)

**Culpeper County Public Schools
Expectations of Conduct for Parents/Guardians of Student-Athletes**

Interscholastic sports programs play an important role in promoting the physical, social and emotional development of youth. It is therefore essential for parents, coaches, and officials to encourage student-athletes to embrace the values of good sportsmanship. Moreover, adults attending school sports events need to be models of good sportsmanship and need to lead by example by demonstrating respect for others and self-control.

As a parent/guardian of a student-athlete in Culpeper County Public Schools, I therefore pledge to be responsible for my words and actions while attending school sports events and I shall conform my behavior to the following code of conduct:

1. I will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
2. I will not engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety or well-being of any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
3. I will not use or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while attending a school sports event.
4. I will not engage in the use of profanity or use derogatory language towards any coach, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
5. I will treat all coaches, parents, players, participants, officials or other attendees with respect.
6. I will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse aimed at any coach, parent, player, participant, official, or any other attendee.
7. I will not initiate an act of aggression with any coach, parent, player, participant, official or any other attendee.
8. I will honor the judgments and decisions of game officials.
9. I will honor the authority of the coaches to make judgments and decisions regarding the participation of my child to include membership on the team, assigned position, playing time, training and practice techniques.
10. I will bring any concerns about the conduct of a coach or their application of school policies to my child directly to the coach or the school's Activities Director.
11. I will support my child in their athletic pursuits by reinforcing the tenets of the code of conduct for athletes.
12. I understand that coaches are employed by the school board and are prohibited from receiving payment from other parties for coaching or conditioning my child during the sports season.

Disciplinary actions for parent/guardians who violate these expectations include:

- A verbal warning issued by a coach, Activities Director, Principal, or school administrator.
- A written warning issued by an Activities Director, Principal or school administrator.
- An immediate ejection from the school sports event as issued by the Activities Director, Principal, or school administrator, or game official.
- Prohibition from attending any number of sports events in which Culpeper County Public Schools teams are participating as issued by the Division Superintendent or designee.

Student-Athlete Drug Testing Procedures

The drug testing policy is not designed to be academically punitive, but to ensure the student's health while participating in athletics.

- A. Sample random selection with replacement will be used for the drug testing process.
- B. A Third Party Administrator (TPA) will be contracted to conduct all testing and will be responsible for the random selection with replacement and testing process.
- C. Testing will be performed on a sample population equating to 10% of the total population of student-athletes, per school, per sports season (Fall, Winter, Spring). The number of testing sessions may vary.
- D. A copy of the Middle School Team Roster List and the Virginia High School League (VHSL) Master Eligibility List, identifying athletes for every sport, per sports season, will be used to determine who will be eligible for testing. For the purpose of confidentiality, athletes will be identified by a unique number as designated by the school.
- E. Drug testing will be performed by collecting a urine sample.

F. Testing will take place at each school by the TPA.

G. Students will remain under school supervision until an adequate sample can be provided. If a student has not provided a reliable sample by the end of the school day, then the student will be ineligible to participate in the remaining portion of that sports season absent extenuating circumstances.

H. The TPA will provide testing materials, testers and a Medical Review Officer (MRO).

I. In the event of a positive test result, the MRO will make direct contact with the parent/guardian to resolve any extenuating circumstances, medical or other, that may have contributed to an inability to provide a sample, or a positive test result. Culpeper County Public Schools will not be involved in resolving positive testing results.

J. After all testing and test results have been verified, the final report will be provided by the TPA to the Superintendent/Designee.

K. The Superintendent/Designee will provide the results to each school's principal.

Positive Test Results: In the event the final report has identified any failures to provide a sample, or verified positive test results, the TPA will contact the Superintendent/Designee and then the Superintendent/Designee will notify the Principal. The Principal will contact the parent/guardian and a conference will be scheduled to present the test results to the parent/guardian. For positive results, the Culpeper County Schools Pledge Program will be enforced, per School Board Policy JFCF-SR2, Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Policy. For positive results for the use of anabolic steroids, an athlete will also be ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletic competition for two years per School Board Policy JFC-R1, Standards of Student Conduct. A failure to provide a sample will be considered a positive test result unless there are extenuating medical circumstances that physically prevent a student from providing a sample.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality of test results must be maintained at all levels including the TPA, the School Board, the Superintendent, the Principal, the Athletic Director, and the coach. No penalties or restrictions will be placed on a student's participation in any other non-athletic activities. Results will not be placed in the student's cumulative records. The substances commonly tested for, but not limited to, are: alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, illegal drugs, athletic performance enhancement and anabolic steroids.

Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program

Student-Athletes who violate their pledge to not use harmful substances are required to participate in the *Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program*. Participation in athletics in Culpeper County Public Schools is a privilege and is contingent upon successful completion of the program.

The components and requirements of the *Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program* are:

- 1) To assess student-athletes by a certified substance abuse counselor to determine their individual risk factors for continued use of harmful substances. This assessment is to be completed within 15 days of enrollment in the program. A parent may choose their own certified substance abuse counselor at their expense with prior approval from the Executive Director of Student Services. Parents can choose to use Culpeper County's OPTIONS program for this assessment at no expense. Students will complete two (2) hours of community service through OPTIONS to pay for the assessment.
- 2) To participate in the *Substance Abuse Program* through OPTIONS, in which students receive group counseling and educational information on the harmful physical, mental, and social effects of using substances to include, but not limited to: tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, anabolic steroids, and improper use of prescription or over-the-counter medications. Students will perform three (3) hours of community service to pay for the OPTIONS group counseling and education program.
- 3) To inform parents and school officials as to the use of harmful substances by the student-athlete by completing a multi-panel urine screening 30 days after entering the *Student-Athlete Substance Abuse Program*. This screening must be completed by a professional third party at the parent's expense with results coming to the Executive Director of Student Services. (The test must be consistent with the one used by the schools.) This screening can be completed by OPTIONS at their cost to the parent. *A positive test for harmful substances will be considered a second violation of the pledge.*
- 4) Sign a "consent to exchange information" form to allow Culpeper County Public School officials and

OPTIONS or another approved certified substance abuse counselor to share information about your child regarding components of the program.

- 5) If your child is unable to meet the timeline requirements of the program for any reason, your child will be suspended from participation in all current and future C.C.P.S. athletics until such time the program's requirements are met.

Culpeper County Public Schools Concussion Information

What is a concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain. It occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. The resulting injury to the brain changes how the brain functions in a normal manner. The signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up immediately after the injury or may not appear for hours or days after the injury. Concussions can have serious long-term health effects, and even a seemingly mild injury can be serious. A major concern with any concussion is returning to play too soon. Having a second concussion before healing can take place from the initial or previous concussion can lead to serious and potentially fatal health conditions.

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

Signs and symptoms of a concussion are typically noticed right after the injury, but some might not be recognized until days after the injury.

Symptoms of a concussion may or may not include, but are not limited to:

Dazed look, vacant stare, slowed/incoherent body movements and/or reaction time, difficulty concentrating/remembering, fatigue/low energy, lethargy, unusual behavior/mood changes (depression, overly emotional, aggressive, sad, restless, irritable, etc), confusion, amnesia, headache, pressure in head, feeling slowed down/in a fog, "don't feel right," nausea, ringing in ears, dizziness, poor/blurry vision, sensitivity to sounds and/or light, balance/coordination problems, lack of sustained attention or concentration, sleep disturbances.

The individual may or may not have lost consciousness.

What should be done if a concussion is suspected?

1. Immediately remove the student-athlete from practice or game.
2. Seek medical attention right away.
3. Do not allow the student to return to play until proper medical clearance and return to play guidelines have been followed. The permission for return to play will come from the appropriate health care professional or professionals.

If you have any questions concerning concussions or the return to play policy, you may contact the athletic trainer at your school.

What should the athlete know about playing with a concussion?

Teach athletes it's not smart to play with a concussion. Rest is the key after a concussion. Sometimes athletes, parents, and other school or league officials wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let your athlete convince you that they're just fine.

What are the risks of returning to activity too soon after sustaining a concussion?

Long term life threatening injuries such as Second Impact Syndrome can and do occur. If an athlete has a concussion, their brain needs time to heal. Don't let them return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating and managing concussions, says they are symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first can be fatal.

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of a concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often under report symptoms of injuries, and concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete's safety.

Home Instructions for Concussions

If your child has sustained a concussion please be aware of the following important recommendations:

If any of the following problems develop, seek medical attention:

Difficulty remembering recent events or meaningful facts (amnesia) ~ Severe headache ~ Post-concussion symptoms that worsen or increase in number ~ Stiffening of the neck ~ Mental confusion or feeling of strangeness/constant fogginess ~ Nausea ~ Irritability ~ Changes in emotional status/mood swings ~ Abnormal drowsiness or sleepiness ~ Dizziness, poor balance, or unsteadiness walking or standing ~ Loss of appetite ~ Continued ringing in the ears ~ Slurring of speech ~ Cranial nerve deficits (problems with vision, taste, hearing, speech, smell) ~ Sensory problems (decreased sensation, numbness, tingling)

If any of the following appear, contact Emergency Medical Services immediately:

Blood or yellowish/clear fluid from nose or ears ~ Vomiting ~ Alterations in breathing patterns ~ Increase/Decrease or Irregularity in blood pressure or pulse ~ Double or blurred vision or extreme sensitivity to light (photophobia) ~ Unequal, dilated or nonreactive pupils ~ Convulsions or seizures ~ Weakness in either arm or leg ~ Unequal pupils or uncontrolled eye movements ~ Decrease in level of consciousness or loss of consciousness ~ Any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, such as spine or skull fracture or bleeding ~ Mental status changes: lethargy, confusion, or agitation ~ Seizure activity.

Things that are OK to do:

- ❖ Use ice packs on head or neck as needed for comfort
- ❖ Eat a light diet
- ❖ Go to sleep (rest is very important)
- ❖ Check athlete's pulse and respirations while they are sleeping

Things that should NOT be allowed:

- ❖ Drive (do not allow until the athlete experiences NO dizziness, or trouble with attention or concentration while turning head)
- ❖ Eat spicy foods
- ❖ Watch TV
- ❖ Listen to music using ear devices or talk on telephone
- ❖ Read
- ❖ Use a computer
- ❖ Play video games
- ❖ Expose individual to bright lights or loud noises
- ❖ Drink alcohol
- ❖ Any strenuous activity or sports
- ❖ School attendance until symptom free
- ❖ Ibuprofen, Advil or Tylenol for the first 24-48 hours to avoid “masking” the signs and symptoms of a concussion

Things there is no need to do:

- ❖ Check eyes with a flashlight
- ❖ Wake them up every hour
- ❖ Test reflexes
- ❖ Set alarm clock (“Kill the Clock” to allow them to sleep and awake naturally)

Student-Athlete Concussions During Extracurricular Activities (Policy JJAC)

The Culpeper County School Board desires the safe return to activity for all student-athletes participating in extracurricular physical activities following an injury, but particularly after a concussion. The goal of this policy is to ensure (i) that coaches, school staff, volunteers, student-athletes, and their parents or guardian are aware of the short-term and long term effects of concussions; (ii) that concussed student-athletes are identified, removed from

play immediately, and referred appropriately; and (iii) that concussed student-athletes are returned to play only after receiving appropriate medical care, given adequate time to heal, and are symptom free.

Definitions

Concussion: a brain injury that is characterized by an onset of impairment of cognitive and/or physical functioning, and is caused by a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head (i.e., a helmet to the head, being knocked to the ground). A concussion can occur with or without a loss of consciousness, and proper management is essential to the immediate safety and long-term future of the injured individual.

Licensed Health Care Provider: a physician, physician assistant, osteopath or athletic trainer licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine; a neuropsychologist licensed by the Board of Psychology; or a nurse practitioner licensed by the Virginia State Board of Nursing.

Return to Play: to participate in a non-medically supervised practice, game, or athletic competition.

I. Culpeper County Concussion Management Team

- a. The Culpeper County Concussion Management Team (CMT) shall be appointed by the superintendent and shall consist of a school administrator, an athletic administrator, a licensed health care provider, a coach, a parent or guardian of a student-athlete, a student-athlete and any such other person the superintendent determines will assist the CMT in its actions.
- b. The CMT shall develop concussion training materials for school personnel, volunteers, student-athletes and parents of student-athletes. The CMT shall also develop concussion reporting, management and review protocols for the Culpeper County. The CMT shall maintain a record of all incidents where a student-athlete has been removed from a game, competition or practice because he or she has been suspected of sustaining a concussion.
- c. The CMT shall meet at least once per semester and shall evaluate the division's training materials, concussion reporting, management, and to review protocols.

II. Required Concussion Training for School Personnel and Volunteers:

- a. Every coach, assistant coach, school staff, adult volunteer, or other person serving in a coaching or advisory role over student-athletes during games, competitions or practices shall receive training in the signs and symptoms of sports-related concussions, strategies to reduce the risk of concussions, how to seek proper medical treatment for concussions and the process by which a concussed student-athlete may safely return to practice or competition. Each school and the CMT shall maintain a written record of the names and dates of completion for all persons completing the school's concussion training.
- b. Each school shall ensure that no person is allowed to coach or advise a student-athlete in any practice, game, or competition who has not completed the school's concussion training within the previous twelve months.

III. Distribution of Training Materials for Student-Athletes and Parent/Guardian:

- a. Prior to participating in any extracurricular physical activity, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall review concussion training materials developed by the CMT and sign a statement acknowledging receipt of such information. The concussion training materials shall describe the short-and long-term health effects of concussions.
- b. The signed statements acknowledging the receipt of concussion training materials shall be valid for one calendar year and will satisfy the concussion training requirements for all of a student-athlete's extracurricular physical activities for a calendar year.

IV. Removal from Extracurricular Physical Activities

- a. A student-athlete suspected by a student-athlete's coach, athletic 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, if necessary, referred for further treatment. A student-athlete who has been removed from play, evaluated, and suspected to have sustained a concussion shall not return to play that same day.
- b. In determining whether a student-athlete removed from play is suspected of having sustained a concussion, an appropriate licensed health care provider or other properly trained individual, shall evaluate the student-athlete at the time of removal utilizing a standardized concussion sideline assessment instrument (e.g., Sideline Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT-II), the Standardized Assessment of Concussion (SAC), or the Balance Error Scoring System (BESS)).
- c. 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 or other properly trained individual conducting the concussion sideline assessment. Such determination is final and may not be overruled by another licensed health care provider or other properly trained individual, coach, assistant coach, school staff, or other person serving in a coaching or advisory role, the student-athlete or the parent or guardian of the student-athlete.
- d. The coach of a student-athlete may elect not to return the student-athlete to play, even if after the concussion sideline assessment it is determined that the student-athlete is no longer suspected of having sustained a concussion.

V. Return To Play Protocol

- a. No student-athlete shall be allowed to return to extracurricular physical activities, which includes the student-athlete's practices, games or competitions, until the student presents a written medical release from the student-athlete's licensed health care provider. The written medical release shall certify that (i) the provider is aware of the current medical guidance on concussion evaluation and management; (ii) the student-athlete no longer exhibits signs symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion; and (iii) that the student-athlete has successfully completed a progressive return to sports participation program. The length of progressive return to sports participation program shall be determined by the student-athlete's licensed health care provider but shall last a minimum of five calendar days.
- b. The coach of a student-athlete may elect not to allow a student-athlete to return to extracurricular physical activities, even after the production of written medical release from the student-athlete's licensed health care provider, if the coach observes signs and symptoms of sports-related concussions. If the student-athlete's coach makes such a decision, the coach shall communicate the observations and concerns to the student-athlete's parent or guardian within one day of the decision not to allow such student-athlete to return to extracurricular physical activities.

VI. Return to Learn Protocol

- a. School personnel shall be alert to cognitive and academic issues that may be experienced by a student-athlete who has suffered a concussion or other head injury, including (i) difficulty with concentration, organization, and long-term and short-term memory; (ii) sensitivity to bright lights and sounds; and (iii) short-term problems with speech and language, reasoning, planning, and problem solving.
- b. School personnel shall accommodate the gradual return to full participation in academic activities by a student-athlete who has suffered a concussion or other head injury as appropriate, based on the recommendation of the student-athlete's licensed health care provider as to the appropriate amount of time that such student-athlete needs to be away from the classroom.

VII. Helmet Replacement and Reconditioning

- a. All helmets used in school physical activities must conform to the National Operations Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) and certified as conforming by the manufacturer at the time of purchase.
- b. Reconditioned helmets that have been purchased must be re-certified as conforming to the NOCSAE by the reconditioner.

Protocols for Managing Concussions for Student-Athletes

Culpeper County Public Schools has developed a protocol for managing concussions. This policy includes a multi-discipline approach involving athletic trainer clearance, physician referral and clearance, and successful completion of activity progressions related to their sport. The following is an outline of this procedure. Your son/daughter must pass all of these tests in order to return to sport activity after having a concussion.

1. All athletes who sustain head injuries are required to be evaluated by their primary care physician. They must have a normal physical and neurological exam prior to being permitted to progress to activity. This includes student-athletes who were initially referred to an emergency department.
2. The student-athlete will be monitored daily at school by the Athletic Trainer. His/her teachers will be notified of their injury and what to expect. Accommodations may need to be given according to physician recommendations and observations.
3. The student-athlete must be asymptomatic at rest and with physical exertion.
4. Once cleared to begin activity, the student-athlete will start a progressive step-by-step procedure outlined in the following steps. The progressions will advance at the rate of one step per day. The progressions are:

*No activity until the athlete is symptom free

*Physician clearance to begin activity

***Note – Athlete progression continues as long as the athlete is asymptomatic at current activity level. If the athlete experiences any post-concussion symptoms, he/she will wait 24 hours and start the progressions again at the previous step.**

<u>Physical and Cognitive Rehabilitation Stage</u>	<u>Functional Exercise</u>	<u>Objective</u>
1. No Activity <i>No School</i>	Complete physical and cognitive rest (no practice, no school)	Recovery
2. Light Aerobic Exercise <i>School for Half Day</i>	Walking, Swimming, Stationary Bike; keeping intensity < 70% of maximum predicted Heart Rate	30-40% exertion Increase Heart Rate/Blood Flow
3. Sport-Specific Exercise <i>Full School Day, No Homework</i>	Running Drills	40-60% exertion Add Movement (jogging, lunges, squats, sport specific drills)
4. Non-Contact Training/Drills <i>Full School Day and 30 Minutes of Homework</i>	Progress to more complex training drills; passing drills, shooting, hitting, catching; start resistance training	60-80% exertion Exercise, coordination and cognitive load (running, active warm-up, sport specific drills)
5. Full-Contact Practice <i>Full School Day and 60 minutes of Homework</i>	Following Medical Clearance, participate in normal training activities	80% exertion maintained Restore athlete's confidence, allow coaches to assess playing status, test functional skills in game simulated situations, full practice with additional drills
6. Return to Play <i>Full School Day and 90+ minutes of Homework</i>	Normal Game Play	

5. Upon completion of the return to play protocol, the physician of record must provide a written statement that in the physician's professional judgment it is safe for the athlete to return to play.

6. Once the student-athlete has completed steps 1 through 5, he/she may return to their sport activity with no restrictions.

Information for Treating Physician

Culpeper County Public Schools has developed a protocol for managing concussions. This policy includes a multi-discipline approach involving athletic trainer clearance, physician referral and clearance, and successful completion of activity progressions related to their sport. The following is an outline of this procedure. The injured athlete must complete and successfully pass all of these tests in order to return to sport activity after having a concussion.

1. All athletes who sustain head injuries are required to be evaluated by their primary care physician. They must have a normal physical and neurological exam prior to being permitted to progress to activity. This includes athletes who were initially referred to an emergency department.
2. The student will be monitored daily at school by the athletic trainer and/or school nurse. His/her teachers will be notified of their injury and what to expect. Accommodations may need to be given according to physician recommendations and observations.
3. Physical and Cognitive rest are required until symptoms resolve and then a graded program of exertion before medical clearance and return to play
4. Once cleared to begin activity, the student will start a progressive step-by-step procedure outlined in the Prague statement. The progressions will advance at the rate of one step per day. The progressions are:

<u>Physical and Cognitive Rehabilitation Stage</u>	<u>Functional Exercise</u>	<u>Objective</u>
1. No Activity <i>No School</i>	Complete physical and cognitive rest (no practice, no school)	Recovery
2. Light Aerobic Exercise <i>School for Half Day</i>	Walking, Swimming, Stationary Bike; keeping intensity < 70% of maximum predicted Heart Rate	30-40% exertion Increase Heart Rate/Blood Flow
3. Sport-Specific Exercise <i>Full School Day, No Homework</i>	Running Drills	40-60% exertion Add Movement (jogging, lunges, squats, sport specific drills)
4. Non-Contact Training Drills <i>Full School Day and 30 Minutes of Homework</i>	Progress to more complex training drills; passing drills, shooting, hitting, catching; start resistance training	60-80% exertion Exercise, coordination and cognitive load (running, active warm-up, sport specific drills)
5. Full-Contact Practice <i>Full School Day and 60 minutes of Homework</i>	Following Medical Clearance, participate in normal training activities	80% exertion maintained Restore athlete's confidence, allow coaches to assess playing status, test functional skills in game simulated situations, full practice with additional drills
6. Return to Play <i>Full School Day and 90+ minutes of Homework</i>	Normal Game Play	

McCroly P, et al. Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 3rd International Conference on Concussion in Sport Held in Zurich, November 2008. *Journal of Athletic Training* 2009; 44(4):434-448.

**Note – Athlete progression continues as long as athlete is asymptomatic at current activity level. If the athlete experiences any post-concussion symptoms, he/she will wait 24 hours and start the progressions again at the previous stage.*

5. Upon completion of the return to play protocol, the physician of record must provide a written statement that in the physician's professional judgment it is safe for the athlete to return to play.
6. Once the student has completed steps 1 through 5, he/she may return to their sport activity with no restrictions.

