



Norfolk Public Schools

The cornerstone of a proudly diverse community

2025-2026

ATHLETIC HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS AND ATHLETES

**A Guide to Citizenship Standards,
Participation Pledge for
Extracurricular Activities, Athletic
Insurance and NCAA Requirements**

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Introduction

The purpose of the Norfolk Public Schools' *Athletic Handbook for Parents and Athletes* is to inform parents and athletes of the policies governing athletics.

This booklet contains information on:

- ❖ Citizenship Standards/Participation Pledge for Extra-Curricular Activities
- ❖ Insurance
- ❖ VHSL Rules and Policies including the Eligibility Falsification Penalty
- ❖ Athletic Participation/Parental Consent Form/VHSL Physical Examination Form
- ❖ Collegiate Eligibility Requirements
- ❖ NCAA Core Courses
- ❖ Team Policies and Sports Specific Information
- ❖ Student Pledge and Parental Statement of Understanding
- ❖ "C" Average Policy – 2.0 GPA (Grade Point Average)
- ❖ Transportation – Use of Personal Vehicle
- ❖ Norfolk Public Schools Concussion Policy

The parental pre-season meeting will address the following topics:

- ❖ Insurance Coverage and Claims Handling
- ❖ VHSL Rules
- ❖ Athletic Participation and Parental Consent
- ❖ Physical Examination
- ❖ NCAA Requirements
- ❖ Academic Eligibility
- ❖ Injury Treatment and Return to Practice
- ❖ Sports Specific Information
- ❖ "C" Average Policy – 2.0 GPA (Grade Point Average)
- ❖ Training Expectations
- ❖ Concussion Management

If you have questions concerning this handbook or the preseason meetings, contact your child's school or the Norfolk Public Schools Office of Athletics at 757-628-3910 ext. 21173.

**High School Athletic Program
2025-2026**

Season	Boys	Girls
FALL Jul 31 – Dec 13	*Football Cross Country Golf – July 28 Volleyball	Volleyball Cross Country *Cheerleading *Field Hockey
WINTER Nov 10 – Mar 14	*Basketball Indoor Track Wrestling Swimming	*Basketball Indoor Track Swimming *Cheerleading
SPRING Feb 23 – Jun 13	*Baseball Soccer Track & Field Tennis	*Softball Soccer Track & Field Tennis

Scholastic Activities

Season	Boys	Girls
FALL Nov 8 – Dec 13	One Act Play (B.T. Washington & Lake Taylor)	One Act Play (B.T. Washington & Lake Taylor)
WINTER Feb 7 – Apr 25	One Act Play (Granby, Maury & Norview) Forensics Debate (Club) Scholastic Bowl	One Act Play (Granby, Maury & Norview) Forensics Debate (Club) Scholastic Bowl

*Indicates varsity and junior varsity programs

School	Principal	Athletic Director	Phone Number
Granby	Thomas Smigiel	Chris Harris	451-4121
Lake Taylor	Latesha Wade-Jenkins	Bobby Pannenbacker	892-3203
Maury	Karen Berg	Thomas Staples	628-3357
Norview	Tori Jacobs-Sumbry	Thomas Adams	852-4503
B.T.Washington	Matthew Mason	Oronde Andrews	628-3587

Office of Athletics

Senior Coordinator: Mr. Stephen Suttmiller
Telephone Number: 757-628-3910 ext. 21173
Fax Number: 757-628-3454

Teacher Specialist, Athletics: Mrs. Christine Snyder

Dr. James Pohl, Superintendent of Schools

Web Address: www.nps.k12.va.us/athletics.htm

VHSL Web Address: www.vhsl.org

High Schools Schedules: www.easterndistrictva.org

B.T. Washington: [Booker Washington.RSchoolTeams.com](http://BookerWashington.RSchoolTeams.com)

Granby High: GranbyHS.RSchoolTeams.com

Lake Taylor High: LakeTaylor.RSchoolTeams.com

Maury High: MauryHS.RSchoolTeams.com

Norview High: NorviewHS.RSchoolTeams.com

Middle School Athletic Program 2025-2026

Season	Boys	Girls	Co-Ed
FALL 8/13*- 10/29	Football* Baseball	Softball	Cheerleading* Tennis XC**: 10/6 – 11/13
WINTER I 10/20- 12/10	Volleyball	Volleyball	Scholastic Bowl Competitive Cheer
WINTER II 2/2 – 4/2	Basketball Soccer	Basketball Soccer	Forensics Sideline Cheer
SPRING 3/30 – 5/21	Wrestling Track	Field Hockey Track	

*Football & Cheer Begin 8/13, all other fall sports begin 8/20

School	Principal	Athletic Director	School Number	Athletic Dir. Office Number
Azalea	Tammi Hinton	Janet Kennon	531-3000	531-3012
Blair	OPEN	Kurt Straub	628-2400	628-2402
Lakewood	Romanda Hannigan	Tim Maynard	628-2477	628-2468
Lake Taylor	Melanie Patterson	Brett Jones	892-3230	892-3232
Northside	Letisha Lawrence	Audra Gardenhire	531-3150	531-3143
Norview	Melissa McFarland-Bryant	Jonathan Lynch	852-4600	852-4578
Ruffner	Tracey Flemmings	Melissa Castle	628-3466	628-2448

Senior Coordinator: Mr. Stephen Suttmiller
 Telephone: 757-628-3910 ext. 21173
 Fax Number: 757-628-3454

Teacher Specialist, Athletics: Mrs. Christine Snyder

Web Address: www.nps.k12.va.us/athletics.htm

Calendar of Events ***July 2025 – June 2026***

July 6/22-7/6 Summer Dead Period 7/27-8/10 Fall Dead Period 7/31 Start of HS Football & Cheer	January 5 Return to School 15 Beginning of 2 nd Semester 19 MLK Day/NPS Closed
August 4 Start of HS FH, VB, XC 15 MS Fall Season Begins 18 First Day of School	February 2 MS Winter II Season Begins 16 President's Day/NPS Closed 22-3/8 Spring Dead Period 23 HS Spring Sports Begin
September 1 Labor Day/NPS Closed	March 30 MS Spring Season Begins
October 20 MS Winter I Season Begins	April 6-10 Spring Break
November 9-23 Winter Dead Period 10 HS Winter Sports Begin 11 NPS Closed 26-28 Thanksgiving Break	May 25 Memorial Day/NPS Closed 29 Last Day for Students
December 12/22-1/4 Winter Break	June 13 End of VHSL Spring Sports 18 Juneteenth Observance/NPS Closed

Norfolk Public Schools Mission

The mission of Norfolk Public Schools, the cornerstone of a proudly diverse community, is to ensure that all students maximize their academic potential, develop skills for lifelong learning and are successful contributors to a global society, as distinguished by:

- Courageous advocacy for all students
- Family and community investment
- Data-driven personalized learning
- Strong and effective leadership teams
- Shared responsibility for teaching and learning
- Access to rigorous and rewarding college and career readiness opportunities

Norfolk Public Schools Goals

Norfolk Public Schools is on a mission to ensure that all students maximize their academic potential, develop skills for lifelong learning and become successful contributors to a global society. We believe Norfolk Public Schools is the cornerstone of a proudly diverse community with highly qualified teachers and staff dedicated to providing diverse teaching and learning opportunities for all students.

Athletic Department Philosophy

The coaching staff of Norfolk Public Schools is dedicated to the development of the total student athlete. Both the physical and psychological growth of each person is conscientiously considered when planning and implementing our athletic program.

Our professional staff is aware of the individual needs of our students as well as the social implications of being able to work as a member of a team. Dedicated students are given the opportunity through extensive training, excellent equipment, and good coaching to reach their maximum potential.

Participants and responsible adults involved in school board approved extracurricular activities are expected to demonstrate the same level of responsibility and behavior at practice and competitions as is expected in the classroom. The school board further encourages the development and

promotion of sportsmanship, ethics and integrity not only for athletes but also for administrators, adult supervisors, parents, fans, spirit groups and support/booster groups.

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

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

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

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

Norfolk Public School's 2.0 Grade Point Average (Gpa) Requirements:

High School

1. All incoming first time 9th graders will be eligible to participate in VHSL athletics and activities during 9th grade, **second semester** the student athlete must 3 out of 4 4x4 scheduled courses in the preceding semester to remain eligible.
2. GPA will be based on all courses taken for credit.
3. GPA will be based on the following:
 - Fall/Winter Student Athletes - year long courses from preceding year.
 - Cumulative GPA
 - Spring Student Athletes – semester 1 GPA or cumulative GPA
4. The grading scale shall be the current scale used by NPS, including weighted classes.
5. Summer school shall count two ways:
 - a. In the event a student must repeat a course, he/she shall be allowed to take the highest grade and average into yearly grades.

- b. New classes shall be added to yearly grades.
6. Transfer students shall be eligible until the end of the first grading period (9 weeks), at which time, they shall meet the 2.0 GPA required by N.S If a student is transferring from a school system which has a requirement for participation in place, the student shall meet the NPS requirement from the first day of enrollment and VHSL standards.
7. Students shall have one appeal or probation period during their middle school (8th grade only) and one appeal or probation period during their high school eligibility (10th, 11th or 12th grade only) if they fall below the minimum GPA requirement and meet VHSL standards.
8. Students who are special education classified and other students whose eligibility must be determined according to applicable Federal and State laws, who fall below the 2.0 average, will be examined on an individual basis. Waivers shall only be granted by the superintendent or his designee. Special education students, who request a waiver, must be making standard progress in those courses taken as determined by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Middle School

1. Academics

All first-time 6th graders are eligible to participate in athletics and activities for fall and the winter 1 season. At the conclusion of the **first semester**, they must have a 2.0 or higher GPA. 7th and 8th graders must meet Norfolk Public Schools' policy that they have a 2.0 or higher GPA for the previous semester and must have passed 5 out of 8 courses from the previous year.

2. 8th Grade Participation

All eligible 8th grade student athletes may participate in sports at the middle school level. 8th grade students that are over aged (August 1, 2010) and have a 2.0 can participate at their home zoned High School at the J. V. level. Additionally, 8th graders may compete in their home zoned High School JV programs in the following sports -

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Field Hockey
- Softball

- Wrestling
- *Sideline Cheer (*Basketball only, upon the completion of the middle school season)

3. Specialty Schools - Athletic Participation Opportunities for 2025-2026.

Academy of International Studies at Rosemont

a. Lake Taylor MS: all 6th-8th graders would participate at Lake Taylor School.

* Transportation will be provided by Norfolk Public Schools.

b. Home zoned school: Parent must provide their own transportation to home zoned school.

Southside STEM Academy

a. Ruffner MS: all 6th-8th graders would participate at Ruffner Academy.

* Transportation will be provided by Norfolk Public Schools.

b. Home zoned school: Parents must provide their own transportation to home zoned school.

Crossroads

a. Academy for Discovery at Lakewood*

* Transportation will be provided by Norfolk Public Schools.

b. Home zoned school: Parents must provide their own transportation to home zoned school.

Ghent Elementary

a. Blair MS*

*Transportation will be provided by Norfolk Public Schools.

b. Home zoned school: Parents must provide their own transportation to home zoned school.

Change of Semester

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

- For 2025-2026 Students must have passed 5 out of 8 OR 3 out of 4 4x4 scheduled classes at the change of the semester.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For Middle School Appeal:

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

For High School Appeal:

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

Policy On Sex Discrimination: Norfolk Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities.

Any complaints of an alleged Title IX violation of the Education Amendments of 1972 will be investigated. Title IX states:

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

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

Procedures For Filing Title IX Complaint:

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

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

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

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

Student Athletes and Parents who are interested in playing College Athletics need to visit the NCAA Eligibility Page. Go to the Norfolk Public School Website for all the necessary information.

Citizenship Standards/Participation Pledge for Extracurricular Activities

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

Purpose

To provide a minimum citizenship standard among all Norfolk Public Schools (including middle schools) for participation.

To encourage the importance of a sense of responsibility to the community.

To foster good citizenship among participants.

To recognize those students who have demonstrated the ability to comply with the standards of participation.

Sanctions

Violation of the Citizenship Standards/Participation Pledge by any VHSL team member will result in mandatory disciplinary action by the school's coach or administration.

Consequences for violation of the Citizenship Standards/Participation Pledge are separate and apart from those that may be administered by school officials under Norfolk Public Schools policy, VHSL rules, Eastern District rules, and the "Code of Student Conduct Handbook."

Appeal Procedure

Students and/or parents/guardians may appeal actions taken pursuant to this policy. The coach, in conjunction with the athletic director, may suspend students from activities. After having given them the right to be heard, the suspension may be appealed to the principal.

Decisions rendered under this policy may not be appealed beyond the principal. The principal's decision will be final. The administration will

send a written decision to the parent/guardian within two days of the appeal hearing.

Participant's Pledge

A precondition of his/her participation in extracurricular activities, students must sign the "Participation Pledge." The signature on the pledge indicates a commitment to abide by the conditions of _____ High School's extracurricular participation policy and to remain free of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs. The parent's signature on the pledge indicates that the parents have read and understood the pledge.

Definitions

Extracurricular Activities. Those events that do not fall within the scope of the regular curriculum and are sanctioned by the School Board of the City of Norfolk, students do not receive credit.

Co-Curricular Activities. Activities that are outside of the classroom but complement the regular curriculum. Students receive grades for activities, such as band and chorus.

May. As used in this policy statement, indicates the act of granting or denying permission.

Might. As used in this policy statement, indicates the possibility of action being taken.

Norfolk Public Schools Hazing Policy

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

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

JJAC-R. REGULATION OF STUDENT-ATHLETE CONCUSSIONS DURING EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Pursuant to Virginia Code § 22.1-271.5 and § 22.1-271.6, Norfolk Public Schools will utilize the following procedures regarding the identification and handling of suspected concussions in student-athletes to ensure that student-athletes who sustain concussions are properly diagnosed, given adequate time to heal, and are comprehensively supported until they 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. A concussion can be difficult to diagnose, and failing to recognize the signs and symptoms in a timely fashion can have dire consequences.

Licensed health care provider (LHCP) means 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 means participate in a nonmedically supervised practice or athletic competition.

Concussion Management Policy Committee

- A. The Norfolk Public Schools Concussion Management Policy Committee ("CMPC") will be appointed by the Superintendent of School and will be comprised of the following members: a school administrator; an athletic administrator; an Athletic Trainer, a Concussion Specialist; a coach; a parent/guardian; a student-athlete; and any such person the Superintendent determines will assist the CMPC.
- B. The CMPC will develop concussion training materials for school personnel, volunteers, student-athletes, and parents/guardians of student-athletes. The CMPC will also develop concussion reporting, management, and review protocols for the school division. The CMPC will maintain a record of all incidents where a student-athlete has been removed from a game, competition, or practice sessions because he/she has been suspected of sustaining a concussion.
- C. The CMPC will meet at least once per year and will evaluate the division's training materials, concussion reporting, management, and review protocols[.]

- D. Each school offering school sponsored extracurricular athletic activities will have a designated Concussion Team. The Concussion Team will be comprised of the following individuals: Principal; Athletic Trainer; Athletic Director; School Nurse; School Counselor; School Psychologist (when available); Student-athlete's Teachers.

Prerequisites to Participation in Extracurricular Athletic Activities

- A. Preseason Neurocognitive Testing
 - 1. High School Student-Athletes: All prospective high school student-athletes must undergo preseason neurocognitive testing in order to participate in school sponsored Virginia High School League athletics. The neurocognitive test will provide each student-athlete with baseline data concerning normal brain functioning. The initial neurocognitive test will be given twice during the four (4) year eligibility period for high school student-athletes (9th grade and 11th grade or for any student that transfers in and has not taken an initial neuro-cognitive test).
- B. Annual Review of Concussion Information
 - 1. In order to participate in any extracurricular athletic activity, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent/ guardian must review annually concussion information provided by the Norfolk Public Schools. Among other things, the concussion information will describe the short- and long-term health effects of concussions.
 - 2. After reviewing the concussion information, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent/guardian must sign a statement acknowledging receipt and review of the concussion information.
 - 3. The signed statements acknowledging the receipt of concussion management training materials will be valid between May 1st – June 30th of the subsequent year, and will satisfy the concussion management training requirements for all of a student-athlete's extracurricular physical activities during that period.

Response to Suspected Concussion

- C. Signs of Concussion
 - 1. Appears dazed or stunned

2. Is confused about assignments
3. Forgets instruction
4. Is unsure of the game, score, or opponent
5. Moves clumsily
6. Answer questions slowly
7. Loses consciousness (even briefly)
8. Shows changes in mood, behavior, or personality
9. Cannot recall events prior to hit or fall
10. Cannot recall events after hit or fall

D. Symptoms of Concussion

1. Headache
2. Nausea or vomiting
3. Balance problems or dizziness
4. Sensitivity to light
5. Sensitivity to noise
6. Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
7. Concentration or memory problems
8. Confusion

E. Mandatory Removal From Activity Upon Suspicion of Concussion

1. When a coach, athletic trainer, or team physician suspects that a student-athlete has sustained a concussion or brain injury in either a practice session or a game, the school official must remove the student-athlete from the activity immediately. School officials must not allow such student-athlete to return to play that same day.
2. School officials must not allow a student-athlete removed from play because of a suspected concussion or brain injury to return to play until they have satisfied each of the following:
 - a. A Licensed Athletic Trainer and/or concussion specialist has evaluated the student-athlete; and,
 - b. School officials receive a written clearance to return to play from a LHCP.
 - c. A Licensed Athletic Trainer has completed the Norfolk Public Schools Concussion Clearance Checklist.

F. Evaluation of Student-Athlete with Suspected Concussion

1. When a student-athlete is removed from play because of a suspected concussion or brain injury, a LHCP or properly trained individual, if available, will evaluate the student-athlete at the time of injury utilizing the Sideline Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT6, or ChildSCAT6 if 12 or under) or appropriate neurocognitive assessment. These assessment tools measure immediate neurocognitive effects, records symptoms, and assesses orientation, memory, concentration, delayed recall, balance and coordination of the injured student-athlete.
2. The determination of whether a student-athlete removed from play is suspected of having sustained a concussion will be the sole determination of the LHCP or other properly trained individual. Such determination is final and may not be overruled by another LHCP 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/guardian of the student-athlete.
3. 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.

Academic Accommodations During Recovery From Concussion

- G. The academic needs of a student-athlete who has sustained a concussion may need to be adjusted during recovery from the injury. School principals must be informed when a student-athlete has sustained a concussion.
 1. Upon receiving confirmation that a student-athlete has sustained a concussion, the school's athletic trainer must advise the school principal of the injury. The school's principal will then notify student-athlete's school counselor and teachers of any accommodations that are required during the student-athlete's recovery period.
 2. When a student-athlete's concussion symptoms appear after an athletic event, while out of the presence of school officials, the parent/guardian of the student-athlete must advise the principal of the concussion and any accommodations the student requires during the recovery period.
- H. Return to Learn Protocol
 1. The concussion team within each school will be notified of the injury, and possible cognitive and academic issues that may be experienced by a student-athlete
 2. Upon the injured student-athlete's return to the classroom, the treating Athletic Trainer and/or appropriate licensed healthcare provider, will

determine if any temporary academic adjustments/accommodations are necessary to facilitate a gradual full participation in academic activities. If applicable, these adjustments will be communicated to the schools' concussion team, including the principal.

3. Student-Athletes shall return to full academic participation in the classroom prior to returning to athletic participation. Instances of post-concussion syndrome will be examined on a case by case basis.

Protocol for Return to Play

- A. No student-athlete will be allowed to participate in any athletic event, practice session or training on the same day he/she is injured when he/she:
 1. Exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors attributable to a concussion; or
 2. Has been diagnosed with a concussion.
- B. No student-athlete will be allowed to return to participation in an athletic event, practice session or training on the days after he/she sustains a concussion unless all of the following conditions have been met:
 1. The student-athlete no longer exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, at rest or with exertion;
 2. The student-athlete is asymptomatic and/or has returned to symptom baseline during, or following periods of supervised exercise that is gradually intensifying, and he/she has undergone a post injury neurocognitive testing (if available), at the discretion of the LHCP, to determine whether the student-athlete is ready to proceed to final stage of the Graduated Return to Play Guidelines;
 3. The student-athlete must complete successfully all stages of the Graduated return To Play Protocol after he/she has been diagnosed with a concussion;
 4. A Licensed Athletic Trainer completes concussion clearance checklist including written medical release which certifies that (i) the Licensed Athletic Trainer 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 successfully completed all stages of the Graduated Return to Play Protocol; and
 5. All Norfolk Public Schools student-athletes (high school and middle school) with a suspected concussion, as deemed necessary per *Norfolk Public Schools Athletics Concussion Referral Procedures*, must have a written clearance to return to play issued by a physician who is trained in concussion management

- C. 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 LHCP, if the coach observes signs and symptoms of sports-related concussions. If the student-athlete's coach makes such a decision, the coach will 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.

Helmet Replacement and Reconditioning

- A. All helmets used in school athletic 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 recertified as conforming to the NOCSAE by the reconditioner.

Training Required for Personnel and Volunteers

- A. Norfolk Public Schools ensures that school staff, coaches, athletic trainers, team physicians, volunteers, parents and student-athletes will receive current concussion management training and education annually regarding the following matters:
 - 1. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a concussion;
 - 2. Strategies to reduce the risk of concussions;
 - 3. Obtaining proper medical treatment for student-athletes suspected of having a concussion; and
 - 4. Safely returning student-athletes to an athletic event, practice session or training.
- B. In its annual concussion management training and education, Norfolk Public Schools will utilize materials and resources that are obtained from nationally recognized sources.
- C. The Norfolk Public Schools Concussion Policy Management Team will ensure that concussion management training is current and consistent with best practice protocols.
- D. The athletic directors at each school and the CPMT will maintain a written record of the names and dates of completion for all persons that received the annual concussion management training mandated under this Concussion Management Policy and Regulation.

- E. Each school will ensure that no person is allowed to coach or advise a student-athlete in any practice session, game, or competition that has not completed the school's concussion management training within the previous twelve months.
- F. _____

Legal Ref.:

Virginia Code § 22.1-271.5 and § 22.1-271.6.

Adopted by the Norfolk City School Board July 16, 2014.

Revised:

June 13, 2014

Concussion Clearance Checklist

Name _____ **DOI:** _____

No student shall be cleared for full athletic participation after sustaining a concussion until all of the below items are checked off and signed by an athletic trainer

- ☐ **Parent Notification** Date: _____
- ☐ **Concussion Team Notification** Date: _____
- Return to school form
 - School Nurse Form
 - School Psychologist Form
 - Return to Learn Survey
 - Academic Accommodations (If/when applicable)

→ Physician Referral Required per Guidelines?

☐ Yes Date: _____ ☐ No

If yes:

- ☐ Clearance Note from Concussion Specialist/Physician, releasing athlete to be supervised by school athletic trainer Date: _____

- ☐ **Return To Learn Protocol** Date: _____
- ☐ **Return To Play Progression** Completion Date: _____
- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Stage 6 |
- ☐ **Sway Post-injury test** Date Returned to Baseline: _____
- ☐ **Clearance letter issued by Athletic Trainer** Date: _____

Signature of Athletic Trainer _____



Norfolk Public Schools
NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED. GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE.

Sportsmanship Pledge Student and Parental Statement of Understanding

As a participant in the extracurricular activities program
at _____, I pledge to remain free of alcohol,

School Name

tobacco, and illegal drugs and to exhibit good citizenship at all times. I
understand that violation of the _____

(School Name)

extracurricular participation policy and/or Norfolk Public Schools Code of
Student Conduct Regulation, VHSL, or Eastern District Rules might result
in my exclusion from the extracurricular activities by decision of the
coach (with the right to appeal to the principal).

Section I: To be completed by the student.

NAME _____ Club/Sport _____

(Please Print)

Signature _____ Date _____

Section II: To be completed by parent/guardian

*My signature indicates that I have read and understand the
_____ participation pledge and policies*

(School Name)

*governing scholastic athletics in Norfolk Public Schools through the pre-
season meeting, the "Norfolk Public Schools Athletic Handbook for Parents
and Athletes," (which can be reviewed online at nps.k12.va.us/athletics)
and/or by general explanation. My signature, grants permission for the
student's participation.*

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Address: _____

Virginia High School League, Inc. Eligibility Falsification Penalty

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

Adopted by VHSL: March 15, 1991

Athletic Participation Insurance

Each year millions of youngsters benefit from participation in interscholastic sports nationwide. Norfolk Public Schools is no exception and has developed a proud tradition of offering its students the opportunity to compete in most major sports.

Although extremely infrequent, serious injuries and death can occur, especially in the contact sports. This threat necessitates that the school system provide a reasonable level of accident insurance for all participants. Today, however, no available policy fully covers every contingency. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that each parent or guardian understand the scope of School Board insurance protection and weigh the risk prior to releasing their youngster to participate.

Coverage under the Norfolk Public Schools program is characterized as "full excess coverage." It is secondary to existing health or accident coverage. R&C noted as coverage refers to Reasonable and Customary.

In the event a major catastrophe was encountered, medical bills beyond the excess coverage levels indicated will be submitted to the excess insurance provider under the Virginia High School League Catastrophic Injury Plan.

NOTE: Visit NPS Web Page and click on Student Athletic Insurance for complete details.

NOTE

The insurance company reserves the right to modify accident benefits in accordance with School Board Policy without additional

notification to parents. Therefore, verification of coverage on any claim remains the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Parents should contact the school athletic trainer or athletic director if they encounter any problems associated with payment or medical expenses arising out of athletic injuries. Should the school officials be unable to resolve problems arising out of a medical claim of an insured athletic injury, you should call the Norfolk Public Schools Director of Risk Management and Safety at 628-3856.

Athletic Injury Procedures

To help ensure the safety of our student-athletes, the coach, student-athlete and parent/guardian have the responsibility of reporting athletic injuries (or non-athletic related injuries that effect participation) to the athletic trainer at his/her respective school. The school or district based athletic trainer will evaluate injuries and determine a plan of care in coordination with the student-athlete and parent/guardian. When an athlete is injured, the hierarchy of individuals in agreement to determine the playing status will be as follows:

- a. Physician
 - i. Please note: When a student-athlete sees a physician for an injury/illness/condition, a sport clearance letter must be turned in to the Athletic Trainer prior to returning to participation
- b. NPS Athletic trainer
- c. Coach

Participation in Athletics

Ninth graders are encouraged to try out for senior high school sports. All fall sports begin July, winter sports begin in November, and spring sports begin in February. Middle school students (6th, 7th, 8th graders) are encouraged to try out for each sport or activity that is offered in each middle school. Fall sports begin at the start of the school year, Winter I sports begins in late October, Winter 2 sports begin in February and Spring Sports begin in March. Each student must have a physical before participating in the Norfolk Public Schools sports program. The physical may be given by the student's own doctor or by a doctor employed by the senior high school or middle school. Go to the Norfolk Public Schools website for a seasonal physical schedule. The sports physical must be

completed by a physician within the past 14 months and clear the student-athlete to participate in athletics. *Once the physical expires (14 months from the date of the physician's signature), the student-athlete will become ineligible and cannot participate in any capacity until a current physical has been turned into the Athletic Director or Athletic Trainer. This includes during the middle of an athletic season.*

www.nps.k12.va.us/athletics.htm

All student athletes and parents **must** review the Sudden Cardiac Arrest, Concussion & Heat-related Illness Education Forms prior to the start of their season. Each student and parent **must** sign and return the form to the school's athletic director prior to the student athletic practicing or trying out for a team.

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

Athletes are eligible to ride the late bus home after each day's practice. Usually, these buses leave the senior high school from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.

For more specific details, see your high school's athletic director or school counselor, or administrator.

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 mandatory parent meeting before the beginning of practice for 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.

Use of Personal Vehicle for Transportation

When teams need to travel to practices or games, Norfolk Public Schools recommends that a request be made through Norfolk Public Schools Transportation Department.

If a team member or volunteer desires to use their personal vehicle for transportation, they must file with the athletic director, the "*Volunteer Driver Information Form*" prior to travel. On next page is a copy of the "*Volunteer Driver Information Form*."

NORFOLK PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Volunteer Driver Information Form

Re: _____
(School activity for which your vehicle is to be used)

Dear Volunteer Driver:

Norfolk Public Schools appreciates you providing your automobile to assist in the transport of students involved in this school-sponsored activity. While we are grateful, we are also deeply committed to general safety of our students during such activities and must emphasize safety. We cannot overly stress the importance of abiding by all traffic laws and encourage you to pay particular attention to the problems associated with overloading the vehicle, failing to require seat belt use, and speeding. Your responsible action and good defensive driving will ensure the safety of this endeavor.

It is requested that you provide the school with the following information so that proper recordkeeping can be achieved.

To be eligible to volunteer you should have insurance coverage with at least \$50,000.00 per occurrence and \$100,000.00 combined single limit protection. Does your insurance meet this standard? ____ Yes ____ No

Registered owner of the vehicle: _____

Home/office phone number: _____

Licensed volunteer driver of the vehicle: _____

Make of vehicle: _____

Present liability insurance company: _____

I do, hereby, authorize the use of my vehicle for this school-sponsored activity.

_____ Date	_____ Signature of Vehicle Owner
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_____ Date	_____ Signature of vehicle driver (if not the same as owner)
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_____ Date	_____ Principal or designee
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NOTES