

## Activities Guide for High School Students and Parents



### General Standards for Participation in Interscholastic Activities

**PURPOSE:** The Activities Guide for Students and Parents is a condensed guide with information necessary to effectively understand and participate in the activities program in Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS).

The information provided in this guide is representative of the rules and policies that govern athletic/activity participation in PWCS as provided by the Virginia High School League Rules and PWCS policies and regulations.

Additional questions can be answered by contacting the school's administration or refer to the school division's website at [www.pwcs.edu](http://www.pwcs.edu), and view the Student's "Code of Behavior" and Policies and Regulations sites. For more information, contact the Office of Health, Physical Education, Driver Education, Athletics, and JROTC at 703-791-7353.

### ATHLETIC/ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY

**Concussion Policy - As of July 1, 2011, Prince William County School Board's concussion policy will go into effect requiring student and parent participation in concussion training before the student may participate in the season.** In order to participate in any extracurricular athletic activity, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall attend, on an annual basis (every 12 months), concussion training provided by the School Division. After having reviewed materials describing the short- and long-term health effects of concussions, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall sign a statement acknowledging attendance in concussion training and understanding of such information. (Refer to Regulation 759-1)

#### ENROLLMENT

The student shall be officially enrolled as required by Virginia School laws and be a **regular Bona Fide student** as defined by the Virginia High School League (VHSL). A **regular** student is considered a fulltime student who is in regular attendance and is carrying a schedule of subjects which, if successfully completed, will render him/her scholastically eligible for the ensuing semester. The student shall have been regularly enrolled no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the semester.

#### SCHOLARSHIP RULE

The student shall be enrolled for the first and second semester in not fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation and have passed five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation the immediately preceding year or the immediately preceding semester.

#### SEMESTER RULE

The student shall not have been enrolled in the last four years of high school for a period of eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the semester in which he/she was enrolled for the first time in the ninth grade. The eight consecutive semesters shall be counted continuously from that point, regardless of whether or not he/she remains continuously enrolled in school.

#### SCHOLARSHIP AND ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

A student must be enrolled in not fewer than five courses offered for credit that can be used to meet graduation requirements and have passed five classes offered for credit from the previous semester. Prince William County high school students participating in interscholastic athletics, cheerleading, marching band, dance, step, and drill team must pass five subjects and earn a "C" or better in two subjects at the end of the first semester, at the end of the school year, and at the end of the first and third nine weeks. This regulation applies to practices as well as games. The student may not practice, participate, or accompany the team during the ineligible period. (Refer to Regulation 640.2 and 648-1)

#### AGE

Student shall not have reached the age of 19 on or before the first day of August of the school year in which he/she wishes to compete.

## **STUDENT PARTICIPATION**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Each student is required to attend school and classes regularly. Any student who is absent the day of any activity cannot participate in that event. On the day of an event (game or practice), a student must attend school for at least one half of the day, three and one half hours of the instructional day. In the case of a weekend interscholastic contest, attendance in school Friday applies to the above statement. In the case of extenuating circumstances, the school administration may waive this rule.

### **STUDENT TRANSFERS**

Any student that has enrolled in one high school and subsequently enrolls in another high school without a corresponding change of residence of his/her parents, parent, or guardian will be ineligible for VHSL activities for 365 days. Parents of students who transfer may request in writing, a waiver by the Superintendent when the transfer is a result of a decision by Prince William County Public School staff. All waiver requests will be reviewed for approval on a case by case basis.

### **ACTIVITY INSURANCE AND PARENTAL PERMISSION**

Every candidate for an interscholastic athletic team must provide proof of parental permission. Parents are strongly encouraged to have insurance covering possible accident or injury in school-sponsored games, practice sessions, and travel to and from contests. Such coverage may be provided through the purchase of Scholastic Accident Insurance or by providing proof of similar or superior coverage. Schools do not provide insurance for participating students.

(The football insurance option available through the school system, if selected, will cover students participating in football only. Insurance for school time and other sports must be purchased separately.)

### **EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITY**

It is the responsibility of the student/athlete to maintain and return all equipment and uniforms issued to them. Parents will be financially responsible for any equipment or uniforms that are lost, stolen, or misplaced during the time the student/athlete is responsible for them. The price of replacing these items shall be the actual cost to the school for purchasing new replacement items. Until any charges for lost equipment have been paid, the student shall be placed on the school's obligations list.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

All students who are traveling to and from a school sponsored activity shall use school approved transportation. Students may **not** ride home from an away game site with anyone except the legal guardian or parent. Release of a student to a parent is left to the school's discretion.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP**

The coach/sponsor, in cooperation with school administration, shall be responsible for deciding appropriate punishment for violations of rules and regulations governing participation on athletic teams and extracurricular activities.

### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Admission to interscholastic events in Prince William County entitles spectators to enjoy a competitive exhibition of skills in an educational setting. We ask that spectators give the student athletes positive encouragements and support. Inappropriate and unacceptable behavior may lead to the removal of the spectator(s). Prince William County Public Schools encourages an atmosphere of sportsmanship and support for all athletes. (Refer to Regulations 648-7 and 648-7.1)

### **CONDUCT INELIGIBILITY**

If a student is declared ineligible for violations of the rules and regulations governing participation activities and transfers to another Prince William County Public School, that student will remain ineligible for the remainder of that school year.

### **PLAYER EJECTION**

Students ejected from a scheduled contest by an official of the contest may not participate on the next scheduled playing date, including post-season play of that activity. If the timing of the suspension occurs at the last scheduled game, the suspension will include the schedule games for a new sports season. Students ejected for fighting will miss the next two scheduled events.

### **BULLYING/HAZING**

Bullying consists of any words or actions that harm or threaten another person's body, property, self-esteem, or group acceptance. This includes all oral, written, electronic, or non-verbal forms of ridicule, harassment, and intimidation. Hazing in any form shall not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the organization. (Refer to Regulation 733.01-1)

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE, TOBACCO, AND WEAPONS POLICY**

Students involved in the possession, use or attempted use, receipt or attempted receipt, purchase or attempted purchase, distribution or attempted distribution of drugs (illegal, prescription, and/or over-the-counter), alcohol, inhalant intoxicants, look-alikes, placebos, or paraphernalia who are under the influence of same on school property, or at school-related activities, are subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school and shall be removed from the extracurricular activity for the remainder of the season. Students found in possession or in use of illegal weapons on any school property, going to or from school, or at any school-related activity, regardless of where that activity takes place shall also face removal from the extracurricular activity for the remainder of the season. The use of tobacco products shall result in disciplinary action ranging from a conference to suspension to dismissal from the organization. (Refer to Regulations 735.2 and 775.1)

## **ENERGY DRINKS**

In 2010, the VHSL Executive Committee passed an energy drink policy which is in effect immediately for all VHSL member schools. PWCS supports this policy and will follow the same policy for middle school interscholastic activities. The basics of this policy are as follows:

- A recommendation that athletes not consume energy drinks during participation in any interscholastic practices and competition.
- The penalty for violation of this rule will be established by the Athletic Departments at each of the individual high schools.

Energy drinks are defined as drinks advertised as boosting energy. These drinks do not emphasize energy derived from the calories they contain but rather through a choice of caffeine, vitamins and herbal supplements the manufacturer has combined. Some common examples of energy drinks are Amp, Monster and Red Bull.

Fluid Replacement Drinks or drinks used to replenish body fluid after exercise are defined as drinks that are designed to replace energy and electrolytes, used especially to assist the body in recovering from exercise. Some common examples of fluid replacement drinks are Gatorade and PowerAde.

Soft drinks such as Coke or Pepsi, while not fluid replacement drinks, are not classified as energy drinks.

## **STUDENT MEMBERSHIP**

### **AWARDS**

The minimum criteria for awarding a school activity letter or other similar award must include:

1. The participant must complete the season in good standing;
2. The participant must fulfill all team related obligations;
3. The coach may establish more specific requirements with the approval of the activities director and principal.

### **TEAM MEMBERSHIP**

The coach of each sport is responsible for the determination and implementation of the criteria for team membership. Freshman, sophomores, and juniors are eligible for all levels of competitions. Seniors are not eligible for junior varsity competition in any sport with the exception of wrestling.

### **OUTSIDE TEAM MEMBERSHIP**

The outside participation shall not conflict with the practice or contest schedule of the school including district, regional, and state championship play. Any such absence will be considered unexcused.

### **LIMITS OF PARTICIPATION**

A student who participates in both varsity and junior varsity teams may not play in a number of games that exceeds the maximum number allowed in that sport in a week or season. A student may not compete on both a varsity and junior varsity team on the same day.

### **ALL STAR GAMES**

Students who have completed their eligibility in a sport may participate in no more than one all-star game that sports season prior to graduation from high school.

### **OUT-OF-SEASON PRACTICE**

VHSL has adopted a new out of season practice rule beginning August 1, 2011. This rule allows for districts and regions to provide their own out of season practice guidelines. Prince William County Public Schools will provide a standard out of season rule for all high schools. These guidelines will be available to the public upon final approval.

### **RECRUITING STATEMENT**

Coach or school personnel are not to discuss or otherwise promote transfers or change in residence or residence arrangements with any student, parent, or other person of influence or knowingly permit such activity to take place for the purpose of facilitating activity participation.

## MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOLS

### Rules and Regulations Governing Participation On Athletic Teams and Extracurricular Activities

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Extracurricular Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

The student activities program is voluntary and extracurricular. Participation in middle/high school activities is a privilege and not a right. With this privilege, it is the responsibility of the participant to uphold the standards established by the school. These standards are based in the fundamental premise that the participant is in a position of school leadership and he/she should represent the activity, the school, and the community in the highest manner.

All activity participants are responsible for appropriate conduct as defined in the Prince William County Public Schools **Code of Behavior** and the rules established by their organization's constitution during the entire term of the activity. Any violations may be accompanied by, but are not restricted to the following disciplinary actions:

- A conference;
- Suspension from the game(s) or practice(s);
- Two game suspension;
- Suspension from next eligible event;
- Suspension for a minimum of thirty calendar days from all school activities, including practice;
- Dismissal from organization;
- Dismissal from all activities for a period of one year following the date of the conviction;
- A fine from the Virginia High School League.

**Appeal Procedure:** Disciplinary action will be taken only after the student has had the opportunity to answer charges of the violations, including the right to bring his/her own witnesses before the activity sponsor. Appeals may be made to the principal of the middle/high school with a further appeal to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. Since participation in activities is a privilege and not a right, students who are suspended may not participate during the period of the appeal.

**BY SIGNING THE EMERGENCY PERMISSION FORM FOR ATHLETICS, YOU ARE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED, READ, AND WILL ADHERE TO THE RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING PARTICIPATION ON ATHLETIC TEAMS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.**

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