

BEDFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**310 South Bridge Street
Bedford, VA 24523**



Athletic and Activity Requirements, Responsibilities, and Required Signatures 2023-2024

WELCOME

July 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

Welcome to the 2023-2024 sports season. We are pleased that you are interested in interscholastic sports and believe that participation in such activities provides students with a wealth of opportunities and experiences.

Interscholastic sports are sponsored and regulated by the Bedford County School Board and the Virginia High School League. Because a student who participates in interscholastic sports is voluntarily making a choice of self-discipline and potential risk, both agencies have assumed the responsibility for making policies to promote fair and safe training and play.

This publication is designed to communicate basic school policies and procedures to students and parents. The Athletic/Activities Administrator at your school can give you more detailed information related to any specific question or circumstance. Please carefully read all sections of information in this document and return the completed signature page as directed by the designated coach/sponsor.

We also ask that you support our interscholastic program through your presence at events and by encouraging our students to give their best efforts and to represent their schools well. We ask that you rally behind your school in an enthusiastic and supportive manner while demonstrating dignified sportsmanship at all times. Even though our enthusiasm may take us to heights of energy and emotion, we must remember we are here for the students and community, and we must show courteous behavior on and off the competition areas and in the stands.

We look forward to an exciting year and greatly appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Bergin". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Dr. Marc Bergin
Superintendent

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OBJECTIVES

Demonstrate success by:

- developing self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice
- putting forth maximum effort continually
- working toward individual and team improvement

Demonstrate good sportsmanship by:

- accepting success and defeat graciously
- treating others as one would like to be treated
- being coachable and following the coach's suggestions
- acknowledging the mental and emotional benefits that comes from extracurricular activities

REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY

Participation in interscholastic competition (JV and Varsity) is governed by regulations of the Virginia High School League (VHSL). The following requirements for students in grades 6 through 12 must be met in Bedford County Public Schools:

1. A student must satisfactorily complete the equivalent of the five courses in which he/she was enrolled in the previous semester and have continuous enrollment in five classes for the school year. Students entering the 6th grade or 9th grade for the first time are automatically eligible for the first semester of that academic school year.
2. The student shall not have reached the age of 19 on or before the first day of August in the school year in which he or she wishes to compete.
3. The student should not be enrolled in school for more than 10 semesters (5 years) beginning with the eighth grade year.
4. Students must have a current physical form (one dated after May 1 of the current school year) in order to participate in all athletic activities (e.g., out-of-season practice, conditioning, practices, and contests). This requirement also applies to Marching Band.
5. Students must submit to the school a completed Parental Consent Verification Form found on page 13 of this document.
6. Students who are not eligible based on above guidelines may serve as a manager to a team as determined by the coach but may not participate in-season practice or competitions. Students must be on the Master Eligibility List (High School) or team roster (Middle School) to participate during in-season team practice. (These requirements also apply to club team sports governed by Bedford County Public Schools)

RISK OF INJURY AND ILLNESS

Participation in an interscholastic sport can be a dangerous activity involving many risks of injury, illness, or death. Injuries include, but are not limited to, serious neck and spinal injuries that may result in complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, serious injury to virtually all internal organs, bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons, and other aspects of the body and serious impairment to the general health and well-being of the student. Illness may include bacterial or viral infections including, but not limited to, COVID-19. The dangers and risks of participating in interscholastic athletics may result not only in serious injury, but also in serious limitations to future abilities to earn a living and to engage in social and recreational activities. BCPS reserves the right to adjust and implement precautionary methods as necessary to decrease the risk of exposure for our staff, students and spectators. Failure by a student and/or family member to follow the plan may result in immediate removal from the sport/activity and possible suspension from future activities.

Due to these dangers, it is important to comply with the instructions of the coaching staff and to encourage the necessity of following the advice of physicians and the sports medicine staff concerning the treatment and rehabilitation of any injury that may be sustained while participating in interscholastic sports.

Note: All BCPS Sideline and Competition Cheerleading Teams follow NFHS (National Federation of State High Schools) Spirit Rules. This includes Middle School Cheerleading Teams.

MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION IN ABSENCE OF PARENT

If an injury occurs, appropriate steps are taken by the coaching staff and certified Athletic Trainers. Parental contact will be sought. In the absence of a parent, attending physicians will treat an athlete for necessary medical or minor surgical care and/or x-ray examinations. In the event that an athlete becomes unconscious or mentally unable to make a sound, reasonable decision, the decision for necessary major surgery or medical treatment will be made by the attending physician.

NON-PRESCRIPTION AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Non-prescription or prescription medications can be administered by the Athletic Trainer, coaches or a school administrator. These staff members are trained annually in administering medication procedures. Student athletes with medical concerns should provide the necessary medical documentation and supplies to participate.

ATHLETES AND ANABOLIC STEROIDS

The *Code of Virginia* mandates that any student athletes who have been found to have used anabolic steroids will be ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletic competitions for two school years (§ 22.1-276.3, *Code of Virginia*).

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, use or being under the influence of alcohol, anabolic steroids, or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or other controlled substance as defined in the Drug Control Act of Chapter 34 of Title 54.1 of the *Code of Virginia* and as defined in 21 USC section 812, imitation controlled substances or drug paraphernalia while on school property, while going to and from school, or while engaged in or attending any school-sponsored or school approved activity or event, is prohibited and will result in an automatic recommendation of expulsion from school. Any student athlete who uses or possesses drugs or alcohol at school or who is charged with the possession or use of drugs or alcohol, while in-season, in the community will be dismissed from their current team.

STUDENT- ATHLETE CONCUSSIONS DURING EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES POLICY

Bedford County Public Schools 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.*

Post-Concussion Syndrome: *is a complex disorder in which various symptoms- such as headaches and dizziness-last for weeks and sometimes months after the injury that caused the concussion.*

Licensed Health Care Provider: *a physician, physician assistant, athletic trainer, or osteopath 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.*

Return to learn: *instructional modifications that support a controlled, progressive increase in cognitive activities while the student recovers from a brain injury (i.e., concussion) allowing the student to participate in classroom activities and learn without worsening symptoms and potentially delaying healing.*

1. Bedford County Public Schools Concussion Management Team
 - a. The Bedford County Public Schools Concussion Management Team (“CMT”) shall be appointed by the Superintendent of Schools and shall consist of a school administrator, an athletic administrator, a licensed healthcare 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 school division. 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 review protocols annually.
2. 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.
3. Required Training for Student-Athletes and Parent/Guardian:
 - a. Prior to participating in any extra-curricular 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 extra-curricular physical activities for a calendar year.
4. Removal from Extra-curricular 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.

- 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.
 - e. Permanent Removal option: Any BCPS student that incurs three post-concussion syndrome(s) with symptomatic presentation of neuro-cognitive concerns lasting up to six weeks or longer or who sustains three concussions in a year must have an advisement and clearance conference with designated school staff before returning to school activities. The purpose of the meeting is to review the medical and school information to determine if further restrictions or prohibition in physical activities from athletics are required for the safety of the student.
5. Return To Play Protocol
- a. No student-athlete shall be allowed to return to extra-curricular 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 three calendar days after the student-athlete has been symptom free for 24 hours.
 - b. The athletic trainer or coach of a student-athlete may elect not to allow a student-athlete to return to extra-curricular physical activities, even after the production of written medical release from the student-athlete's licensed health care provider, if the athletic trainer or coach observes signs and symptoms of sports-related concussions. If the student-athlete's athletic trainer or coach makes such a decision, he/she 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 extra-curricular physical activities.
6. 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.
7. Helmet Replacement and Reconditioning
- a. All helmets used in school physical activities must conform to the National Operations Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment and certified as conforming by the manufacturer at the time of purchase.

Reconditioned helmets that have been purchased must be recertified as conforming to the National Operations Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment

HEAT RELATED ILLNESS

All forms of heat illness affect countless student athletes each school year. In some cases, the results can be catastrophic. It is therefore vital to recognize the signs and symptoms of each kind of heat illness and to have a prevention plan in place.

Risk Factors

Heat Exhaustion

- Exercising in hot and humid environment (air temp > 91°F/33°C)
- Inadequate fluid intake before or during exercise resulting in dehydration
- Inappropriate work to rest ratios with too much work compared to rest breaks
- Body mass index > 27 kg/m²

Heat Stroke

- Intrinsic Factors which may impact the risk of heat stroke for student-athletes
 - History of heat-related illness
 - Inadequate heat acclimatization
 - Low overall fitness level
 - Overweight or obese
 - Inadequate hydration
 - Lack of sleep
 - Fever
 - Stomach illness
 - Highly motivated/ultra-competitive personality
 - Pre-pubescent individuals
- Extrinsic Factors which may impact the risk of heat stroke for student-athletes
 - Intense or prolonged exercise with minimal breaks
 - Repeated/prolonged exposure to high temperature/humidity/sun
 - Elevated Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)
 - Inappropriate work/rest ratios based on intensity
 - Wearing dark-colored or heavy-weight clothing
 - Wearing protective equipment
 - Poor overall fitness
 - Peer or organizational pressure
 - Lack of education and awareness of heat illness risk factors among coaches, athletes, and medical staff
 - Absence of an emergency action plan (EAP) and/or policies and procedures to manage heat-related illness
 - No or limited access to fluids or breaks during practice
 - Delay in recognition of signs and symptoms associated with exertional heat stroke (EHS)

Signs and Symptoms of Different Heat Illnesses

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are a type of exercise-related muscle cramps characterized by painful cramping usually occurring in the arms and legs. Heat cramps may be caused by exercising in hot or humid environments, dehydration, or excess sodium and electrolyte loss commonly associated with exercise in those environments. While not a medical emergency, heat cramps may be confused with a more serious condition, exertional sickling.

Signs and Symptoms

- Visible cramping in part or all of the muscle (group)
- Localized pain
- Dehydration
- Thirst

- Sweating
- Fatigue

Treatment

- Rest
- Passive stretching
- Rehydration using a high sodium/carbohydrate beverage

Heat Syncope

Heat syncope often occurs in unfit or heat-unacclimatized people who stand for a long period of time in the heat or during sudden changes in posture (moving from sitting to standing) in the heat. This condition is often attributed to dehydration, venous pooling of blood, and low blood pressure. Heat syncope often occurs in the first five days of unaccustomed heat exposure, before blood volume expands and cardiovascular adaptations are complete, and in those with heart disease or taking diuretics.

Signs and Symptoms

- Dizziness
- Tunnel vision
- Pale or clammy skin
- Decreased pulse rate

Treatment

- Move to a shaded or cool, indoor area
- Monitor vital signs
- Allow to rest lying on their back
- Elevate legs above heart
- Cool with cold towels, cold water immersion
- Rehydrate
- The student-athlete can return to activity following a period of rest, fluid replacement, and once symptoms have resolved and other medical conditions have been ruled out. Medical clearance is advised prior to returning to activity.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is the inability to effectively exercise in the heat, secondary to a combination of factors, including cardiovascular insufficiency, low blood pressure, energy depletion, and central fatigue. This condition is manifested by an elevated core body temperature, usually less than 105 degrees F, and is often associated with a high rate or volume of skin blood flow, heavy sweating, and dehydration. It often occurs in hot or humid (or both) conditions, but it can also occur in normal environmental conditions with intense physical activity. Heat exhaustion occurs most often in individuals who are heat-unacclimatized or dehydrated.

Signs and Symptoms

- Excessive fatigue
- Syncope
- Collapse
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Lightheadedness
- Low blood pressure

Treatment

- Remove equipment and clothing to facilitate cooling
- Move to a cool, shaded, or indoor area
- Cool with cold towels and fans, cold water immersion
- Monitor vital signs
- Allow to rest lying on the back and elevate legs above heart

- Activate EMS if no signs of improvement within 30 minutes
- The student-athlete should rest and hydrate for at least 24-48 hours before returning to play. The return to play process should include gradual increases in exercise intensity and duration. Medical clearance is strongly recommended.

Exertional Heat Stroke (EHS)- Medical Emergency

Exertional heat stroke is the most severe heat illness and is characterized by neurological impairment combined with a core body temperature above 105 degrees. This condition is a product of the body's heat production due to exercise and or inhibited heat loss. While exertional heat illness most often occurs in hot, humid weather, it can also present due to intense physical activity in the absence of extreme environmental conditions. The risks of morbidity and mortality increase the longer that an athlete's body temperature remains elevated above 105 degrees, while the risk of morbidity and mortality is greatly reduced if body temperature is lowered promptly after onset.

Signs and Symptoms

- Central nervous system dysfunction
- Core body temperature above 105 degrees
- Disorientation
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Loss of balance
- Staggering
- Irritability
- Irrational or unusual behavior
- Apathy
- Aggressiveness
- Hysteria
- Delirium
- Collapse
- Loss of consciousness
- Coma
- Hot, sweaty skin
- Hot, dry skin
- Dehydration
- Hypotension
- Hyperventilation

Treatment

- Medical emergency - activate EMS per emergency action plan
- Remove excess clothing and equipment
- Cold water immersion until core body temperature reaches 102 degrees
- A student-athlete reporting signs or symptoms associated with a heat-related illness to a coach, athletic trainer, or team physician in a practice or game shall be removed from the activity at that time. A student-athlete who has been removed from play, evaluated, and suspected to be at risk of or experiencing heat stroke shall not return to play that same day. The specific treatment and any return to activity requirements will depend on the condition. A student-athlete experiencing heat stroke and referred to a physician by school staff shall not return to play until the student-athlete is evaluated by and receives written clearance to return to physical activity by an appropriate licensed health care provider as determined by the Virginia Board of Education. The licensed health care provider evaluating student-athletes may be a volunteer.

Prevention Plan for Heat Illnesses

Heat illnesses can largely be prevented if each parent, athlete, and school takes proactive approaches. While an on-the-field plan is imperative, it is equally important to begin the prevention at home. Here are some steps that will greatly reduce the risk of heat illnesses. Students should remember the following:

- Recognize and respond to early warning signs of dehydration
- Drink EARLY and OFTEN prior to your practices and games
- An appropriate goal is to drink one gallon of water each day

- Avoid soda and other caffeinated beverages
- Check your weight before and after practice
- Replace fluids after practice (e.g., 16 ounces per pound lost)
- Eat properly prior to coming to practices and games
- ACCLIMATIZE – In preparation for the season, exercise in the heat to allow your body to get used to exertion in the heat
- Notify the medical or coaching staff when you feel like heat illness symptoms are occurring

Training

Training will be extended to all coaches, employees, and staff who are engaged in activities that could put themselves or the students they supervise at risk of exertional heat injuries. Each coach in BCPS shall complete, annually, the NFHS online Heat Illness Prevention course.

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is not a heart attack. It is an abnormality in the heart's electrical system that abruptly stops the heartbeat resulting in no blood flow to the brain and vital organs. Sudden cardiac arrest can affect all students, in all sports or activities, and at all age levels. Sudden cardiac death in young athletes is rare. About 100 such deaths are reported in the United States each year. Exercise can be a trigger for sudden cardiac arrest in individuals with an abnormal heart condition. The majority of activity-related cardiac arrests are due to congenital (inherited) heart defects. However, SCA may also occur after a person experiences an illness that has caused inflammation to the heart or after a direct blow to the chest. Conditions associated with SCA are frequently, but not always, identified during annual checkups or preparticipation sports physical exams. Individuals with a family history of SCA or other risk factors or warning signs (below) should be evaluated by a physician for cardiac abnormalities diagnosed by an EKG or echocardiogram or referred to a cardiologist.

Sudden cardiac arrest is more common in:

- males than females
- in football and basketball than other sports
- in Black athletes than in other races or ethnic groups

Risk Factors

- Sudden weakness
- Family history of known heart abnormalities or sudden death before the age of 40
- Specific family history of long QT Syndrome, Brugada Syndrome, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, or arrhythmogenic right ventricular dysplasia
- Family members with unexplained fainting, seizures, drowning or near drowning, or car accidents
- Known structural heart abnormality, repaired or unrepaired
- Use of drugs, such as cocaine, inhalants, recreational drugs, excessive energy drinks, or performance-enhancing supplements

Warning Signs and Symptoms

- Dizziness or lightheadedness when exercising
- Fainting or seizure, especially during or right after exercise
- Fainting repeatedly or with excitement or startle
- Excessive shortness of breath during exercise not related to asthma
- Racing, or fluttering heart palpitations or irregular heartbeat
- Repeated dizziness or lightheadedness
- Chest pain or discomfort during or after exercise
- Excessive, unexpected fatigue during or after exercise

Treatment

A student-athlete who is experiencing symptoms that may lead to sudden cardiac arrest must be immediately removed from play. A student-athlete who is removed from play shall not return to play until the student-athlete is evaluated by and receives written clearance to return to physical activity by an appropriate licensed health care provider as determined by the Virginia Board of Education. The licensed health care provider evaluating student-athletes may be a volunteer.

If an athlete collapses, assume it is a sudden cardiac arrest until proven otherwise. The most important factor

determining whether a person survives sudden cardiac arrest is how quickly they receive a shock from an automated external defibrillator (AED). A few minutes delay can be the difference between life and death.

- Immediate activation of EMS
- Early CPR with an emphasis on chest compressions
- Immediate use of the onsite AED
- Integrated post-cardiac arrest care

Prevention

Daily physical activity, proper nutrition, and adequate sleep are all important aspects of lifelong health. Additionally, parents can assist in reducing risk factors and supporting emergency readiness by:

- Ensuring your child has a thorough preseason screening exam prior to participation in an organized athletic activity
- Asking if your school and the site of competition have automated external defibrillators (AEDs) that are close by and properly maintained
- Asking if your child's coach is CPR/AED certified
- Becoming CPR/AED certified yourself
- Ensuring your child is not using any non-prescribed stimulants or performance-enhancing drugs
- Being aware that the inappropriate use of prescription medications, energy drinks, or vaping increases risk
- Encouraging your child to be honest and report symptoms of chest discomfort, unusual shortness of breath, racing or irregular heartbeat, or feeling faint

Training

All BCPS coaches must complete the NFHS Sudden Cardiac Arrest Course annually. This course will help coaches learn and recognize the warning signs and symptoms of Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Also included are guidelines for what to do in the critical moments after an individual suddenly collapses in order to save their life, such as calling 9-1-1, starting chest compressions, and sending for an automated external defibrillator (AED).

INSURANCE INFORMATION

All students are covered by school insurance. If there is an accident, parents are required to file the claim through their family health insurance first. If all costs are not covered, then the remainder can be filed through the school insurance. If there is no family insurance, the school insurance can be filed first.

COMPOSITION of TEAMS

Bedford County has three levels of sports teams that are under the direction of the division's middle and high schools. The Middle School teams are composed of 6th, 7th and 8th grade students that attend the division's three middle schools. The Junior Varsity teams are composed of 8th, 9th, and 10th grade students in the division. The Varsity teams are composed of 9th-12th grade students in the division. If a team or activity requires tryouts due to a limited roster, then the coach/sponsor shall develop a selection rubric. **A coach/sponsor's selection of team members may be appealed to the Athletic/Activities Director in writing within 5 school days of the announcement of team members. The decision of the Athletic/Activities Director which shall be rendered within 5 school days of the appeal shall be final.**

CONDUCT

Students must be in good standing with their school at all times. Once students become a member of a team, students have made a choice to uphold certain expected standards in the school and community. It is important that students' behavior be above reproach in all the following areas:

Competition – Students, parents and families should be sportsmanlike in defeat and modest in victory. Students should always be courteous and congratulate the opponents after the contest, whether in defeat or victory.

Classroom – Students should be diligent with their school work. Students must plan their schedules so that they give sufficient time and energy to their studies to ensure acceptable, if not exemplary, grades.

Campus – Student athletes should be role models on campus. Students involved in extra/co-curricular activities should exhibit leadership qualities. No incidents of cheating, lying, stealing, fighting, smoking, or being physically/verbally abusive to other persons will be tolerated. Students are not allowed to participate in after-school activities on the day assigned to in-school suspension. Students suspended from school or assigned to an alternative education program, will not be allowed to participate in extra/co-curricular activities during the suspension period.

Energy Drinks Energy drinks are not allowed during the school day, or sold during school sponsored activities. Energy drinks are defined as; any product primarily sold as an energy boost, it is usually a carbonated beverage that contains caffeine and other stimulants along with herbal ingredients that end in (ine) or when the purpose is to increase energy and mental alertness. Some examples are: red bull, monster, vault, AMP, 5 hour, full throttle, etc. As a result energy drink possession and consumption is prohibited (27-15-1 VHSL Rule).

Equipment The student shall accept the responsibility for all equipment issued and to provide for its proper cleaning and care, safe storage, maintenance, and return. Students may not participate in any further activities including graduation until they have returned or paid for all issued equipment. Issued equipment may be worn at practices and on contest days only.

Participation A student who begins practice in a sport and is released by a coach or quits for any reason after the first official contest may not participate in any other sport or conditioning program during the same sport season.

Tobacco The use of tobacco and tobacco products by student athletes is prohibited and participants who use tobacco will be subject to disciplinary action by the school and coaching staff. Examples of these products include cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, E-cigarettes, and Juules.

Transportation When traveling, all team members and managers are to ride to and from the contest on school provided transportation unless prior written arrangements are made with the Athletic/Activities Director or coach for extenuating circumstances.

Additional Rules Additional rules of acceptable conduct and training may be set by the head coach/sponsor or the principal at any time to maintain the integrity of the team.

EXTRA/CO-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION POLICY

Participation in before and after school extra/co-curricular activities is a privilege extended to students and not a right and is dependent upon compliance with all applicable rules and regulations.

The rules and regulations of the Virginia High School League (VHSL) shall also apply to the VHSL-covered activities and athletics including club team sports as well as middle school sports governed by Bedford County Public Schools.

Enrollment

To be eligible to participate in VHSL extra/co-curricular activities, a student participant must be currently enrolled as a full-time student in Bedford County Public Schools at the time of the extra/co-curricular activity season.

Home Instruction does not constitute enrollment in a public school. Students who reside within Bedford County and have been granted approval for Home Instruction are not eligible for participation in extra/co-curricular activities sponsored by Bedford County Public Schools.

Students who have been granted approval for Home Instruction and part-time enrollment must meet the requirements of Policy JECB: Admission of Nonpublic Students for Part-time Enrollment and the VHSL to participate in extra/co-curricular activities.

Any student approved for Homebound Instruction may not participate in or attend any extra/co-curricular practice and/or contest until they have been removed from Homebound Instruction and have returned to school, or with medical clearance through an Event Participation Request and approval through the student's 504/IEP or medical care team.

Bona Fide Student in Good Standing

To be eligible to participate, a student must NOT:

- a. be under any suspension or expulsion for any school-related activity (A student shall not be eligible for participation until the next calendar day after the last day of the in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or assignment to the alternative school), or
- b. be of such character or exhibit such conduct to reflect discredit upon their organization, and/or school.

This includes, but is not limited to, students who are charged for certain criminal acts that occur on school property or at school-sponsored events that must be reported to local law enforcement authorities by the principal/designee (§ 22.1-279.3:1) or for certain criminal acts that occur in the community that must be reported to the principal/designee and superintendent/designee (§ 22.1-279.3:1). Students charged with crimes of this nature will be suspended from activities until the disposition of charges. A student who is found guilty, "not innocent," or the equivalent on such charges, will also be assigned the following consequences:

First offense - an additional 30 calendar days suspension from all activities, following the disposition of charges.

Second offense - suspension for 365 calendar days from all activities, following the disposition of charges.

When a student's case is taken under advisement by the court, the student may return to an eligibility status on a probation basis except in cases where the student is charged with a felony. A student who is charged with a felony and whose case is placed under advisement by the court will remain ineligible to participate in extra/co-curricular activities until the final disposition of the charges. Should the student be later found guilty at the time of the deferred disposition, the student will face the consequences outlined above (e.g., 30 days suspension for the first offense, 365 days suspension for the second offense).

Pursuant to § 22.1-276.3, a student-athlete will be ineligible for two school years to participate in interscholastic athletic competition, if it has been determined by the school principal and division superintendent that the student used anabolic steroids during the training period immediately preceding or during the sports season of the athletic team unless such steroid was prescribed by a licensed physician for a medical condition.

The student or parent must report the incident to the coach/sponsor. A student has 3 school days to report or the student will be ineligible for 365 days from the incident. The coach/sponsor will present the facts as known to the athletic/activities director who will consult with the principal to determine participation eligibility.

School Attendance

Students must attend at least half of the school day on the day of a competition or activity to be eligible to participate in extra/co-curricular activities on that day. Exceptions may be approved by the principal/designee.

For schools on a six-period day schedule, a half-day constitutes at least three periods. For schools on an alternating block schedule, a half-day constitutes at least two periods. For schools on a seven-period day schedule, a half-day

constitutes at least four periods. Bedford County students enrolled in a division sponsored Early College program shall follow the college schedule.

Student Conduct

Student participants are expected to abide by all School Board policies, including the Code of Student Conduct, and school rules. In addition, the superintendent/designee, principal, or coach/sponsor may implement team/activity rules applicable to participants.

Disciplinary action taken by the coach/sponsor for violation of School Board policy, school rules, or team/activity rules may range from a conference with the student for the violation to removal from the team/activity depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

A coach/sponsor's decision to suspend or remove a student participant from the team/activity may be appealed to the athletic/activities director within 5 school days of the decision. **The decision of the athletic/activities director, which shall be rendered within 5 school days of the appeal, shall be final.**

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATIONS

Participation in athletics is a privilege, not a right. If students abuse this privilege by being in non-compliance with expected academic, training and/or conduct expectations, disciplinary action will be taken. Team rules which are provided by each coach will be followed.

Student athletes are encouraged ***not*** to use a public forum to express displeasure toward their team, teammates, teachers, or their school. Using a public forum in this manner is also a violation of sportsmanship rules. Student athletes should be aware that civil liability can result from words written in a public forum that are derogatory of others. Team rules relating to sportsmanship will be enforced.

Discipline Procedure and Appeals

Student participants are expected to abide by all School Board policies, including the *Code of Student Conduct*, and school rules. In addition, each coach/sponsor may implement Team/Activity Rules applicable to participants.

Disciplinary action taken by the coach/sponsor for violation of School Board policy, school rules, or Team/Activity rules may range from a conference with the student for the violation to removal from the team/activity depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

A coach/sponsor's decision to suspend or remove a student participant from the team/activity may be appealed to the Athletic/Activities Director within 5 school days of the decision. **The decision of the Athletic/Activities Director, which shall be rendered within 5 school days of the appeal, shall be final.**

Use of Hate Speech, Ethnically or Racially Insensitive Expressions VHSL Regulation 27-16-1

Any coach, team personnel and/or contestant who confronts or addresses a coach, contestant or official using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expressions, will be disqualified for the contest and will be ineligible from contests totaling a minimum of 30% of the total contest limitations for that sport and/or subsequent contests until penalties and educational/restorative interventions are completed.

Procedure

1. A school is expected to inform the League Office regarding any alleged incident involving the use of hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expressions, within two working days after the school administration becomes aware of the incident.
2. A copy of the report will be transmitted to the principal of each school(s) involved.

3. Within five working days of receiving the report, each principal concerned shall file a response or provide information concerning the incident to the League office.
4. A VHSL committee consisting of three or four principals, athletic directors, and coaches will review the incident report and response from each school(s) involved. Following the completion of the review, the committee will make a recommendation to the VHSL Executive Director and/or designee for action.

Penalties

The following represents degrees of VHSL discipline which will be referred to in interpreting a violation of using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression.

1. Ejection - Any coach, team personnel and/or contestant who confronts or addresses a coach, contestant, or official using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression, will be disqualified for the remainder of the contest.
2. Player/Coach Suspension - Any coach, team personnel and/or contestant who is ejected from a contest for using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression, will be ineligible from contests totaling a minimum of 30% of the total contest limitations for that sport. If a coach or player commits a second offense, he/she will be ineligible for the remainder of that sport/activity season.
3. School Warning - A school's program may be placed on warning status for a one-year period of time by a Sportsmanship Committee for repeated infractions of using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression.
4. School Probation - Probation is a more severe penalty, based on repeated offenses with-in a two-year period of time by the same program or cumulative warnings over a period of time within the school. A school or program on probation may not enter any play-off toward a district, regional, or state championship nor may the school enter any sanctioned event.
5. School Suspension – A school suspended from the League may not compete in interscholastic competition of any kind with a member of the League or a school that is a member of another state associated with the National Federation of State High School Associations.
6. School Fine – A fine not to exceed \$1,000 may be levied with or without any other penalty on a school. Failure to report violations involving the use of hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression, will result in a fine per occurrence.

Appeals

A decision may be appealed to a Sportsmanship Committee.

CO-CURRICULAR/EXTRA-CURRICULAR SCHEDULING CONFLICT GUIDELINES

This guideline is designed to address scheduling conflicts students who participate in both co-curricular and extra-curricular after-school events may encounter. For the purpose of this guideline, the term co-curricular means complementing but not part of the regular class curriculum (e.g., band or chorus concert). There are times when students may be assigned a grade as a part of the co-curricular activity (e.g., student participation grade for being a part of the band concert). The term extra-curricular means outside the normal curriculum (e.g., football, cheerleading, or swimming). Grades are not associated with extra-curricular events.

The Athletic/Activities Director will maintain a School Master Event Calendar. As a part of the scheduling process, the Athletic/Activities Director will try to avoid scheduling extra-curricular and co-curricular events simultaneously (e.g., a game/match at the same time as a band/chorus concert).

While the Athletic/Activities Director will try to avoid a scheduling conflict, there may be instances where a conflict cannot be avoided. If a scheduling conflict exists for a student, the school Athletic/Activities Director, co-curricular sponsor and extra-curricular sponsor will work collaboratively with the student and the student's parents to support the student's ability to participate in both co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to the greatest degree possible.

Upon the student's or parent's request, the Athletic/Activities Director will be available to assist the student with scheduling conflict communications to both sponsors.

If a scheduling conflict cannot be avoided and a student is scheduled to participate in after-school events simultaneously, the parent is to make both activity sponsors aware of the conflict. If possible, the activity sponsors will make allowances for the student to participate in both activities (e.g., attending only the portion of the band or chorus concert that requires the student's participation).

If it is not possible for the student to attend partial events and the co-curricular after-school activity involves a student participation grade, then the co-curricular activity supervisor will provide the student with an alternative assignment that will take the place of the participation grade.

VHSL Dead Periods

	<u>2023-2024</u>
Summer	7/2/23-7/8/23
Fall	7/24/23-8/2/23
Winter	11/6/23-11/15/23
Spring	2/19/24-2/28/24



Academic Standards for National Collegiate Athletic Association Eligibility

The NCAA Eligibility Center verifies the academic and amateur status of all high school college bound student-athletes who wish to compete in Division I or II athletics.

College-bound student-athletes who want to practice, compete, and receive athletically related financial aid after their high school graduation and during their first year at a Division I or II school need to meet the following requirements:

Graduate from high school:

- Complete a minimum of 16 core courses for Division I and II.
- Earn a minimum required grade-point average in core courses.
- Earn a qualifying test score on either the ACT or SAT.
- Request final amateurism certification from the NCAA Eligibility Center.

For NCAA Eligibility Please Visit the Following: <http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future>

**Bedford County Schools
Bedford, VA**

**SCHOOL CALENDAR
2023-24**

(Approved 11/10/22)

Dates	Description	Instructional	Professional
Aug. 3-4	New Teacher Orientation		2 (New Teachers)
Aug. 7-11	Teacher Workdays (Open House Aug. 10)		5
Aug. 14	First Day of School		
Sept. 4	Labor Day Holiday (Offices Closed)		
Sept. 25	Professional Development Day (School Closed for Students)		1
Oct. 12	End of 1st 9 weeks	43	
Oct. 16	Professional Development Day (School Closed for Students)		1
Oct. 19	Report Cards Go Home		
Nov. 6	Conference Day (Conferences 12-7) (School Closed for Students)		1
Nov. 7	Election Day (School Closed for Students) Teacher Virtual Workday		1
Nov. 22-24	Thanksgiving Holiday (Offices Closed)		
Dec. 15	End of 2 nd 9 Weeks	40	
Dec. 18 -Jan.1	Winter Holiday (Offices Closed)		
	FIRST SEMESTER TOTALS	83	9
Jan. 2	First Day of Second Semester		
Jan. 10	Report Cards Go Home		
Jan. 15	Martin Luther King Holiday (Offices Closed)		
Feb. 5*	Professional Development Day (School Closed for Students)		1
March 8	End of 3 rd 9 Weeks	47	
March 15	Report Cards Go Home		
April 1-5	Spring Break (Offices Closed April 1-3)		
May 24	Last Day of School	50	
May 25	Graduation		
May 27	Memorial Day (Offices Closed)		
May 28-29	Workdays		2
	SECOND SEMESTER TOTALS	97	3
	TOTAL FOR BOTH SEMESTERS	180	12

The Bedford County Public School Calendar is initially developed around 180 instructional days. Extra instructional time beyond the 990 hour state minimum, however, can be used for early dismissals, late openings, and make-ups. Due to time scheduled beyond state requirements, the first 5 missed days will not be made up. Dates marked by an asterisk (*) above will be used to make up days or hours missed due to inclement weather beyond the first 5. Only in extreme circumstances will days during Thanksgiving, Winter, or Spring Breaks be used for make-up. Every effort will be made to communicate any calendar change to the school community as early as possible as decisions are made.

Examples of reportable offenses:

1. A firearm offense pursuant to Article 4 (§ 18.2-279 et seq.), 5 (§ 18.2-288 et seq.), 6 (§ 18.2-299 et seq.), or 7 (§ 18.2-308 et seq.) of Chapter 7 of Title 18.2;
2. Homicide, pursuant to Article 1 (§ 18.2-30 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2;
3. Felonious assault and bodily wounding, pursuant to Article 4 (§ 18.2-51 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2;
4. Criminal sexual assault, pursuant to Article 7 (§ 18.2-61 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2;
5. Manufacture, sale, gift, distribution or possession of Schedule I or II controlled substances, pursuant to Article 1 (§ 18.2-247 et seq.) of Chapter 7 of Title 18.2;
6. Manufacture, sale or distribution of marijuana or synthetic cannabinoids pursuant to Article 1 (§ 18.2-247 et seq.) of Chapter 7 of Title 18.2;
7. Arson and related crimes, pursuant to Article 1 (§ 18.2-77 et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 18.2;
8. Burglary and related offenses, pursuant to §§ 18.2-89 through 18.2-93;
9. Robbery pursuant to § 18.2-58;
10. Prohibited criminal street gang activity pursuant to § 18.2-46.2;
11. Recruitment of other juveniles for a criminal street gang activity pursuant to § 18.2-46.3;
12. An act of violence by a mob pursuant to § 18.2-42.1.

