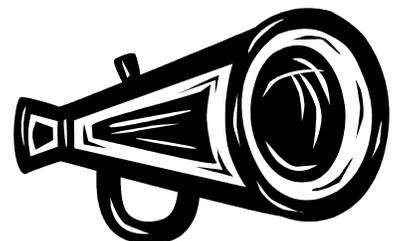


# Student Athletic Handbook



Loudoun County Public Schools  
Revised April 2012



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# STUDENT ATHLETIC HANDBOOK

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. To the Parent

This publication is presented to you because your son or daughter has indicated a desire to participate in interscholastic athletics, and you have expressed your willingness to permit him or her to participate. By supporting policies that govern school competition and the conduct and training for school athletes, then parents, team members and coaches can maintain a sports program with positive opportunities and experiences which foster the personal growth of all team members.

We in the athletic department believe that a properly managed sports program helps meet students' need for self-expression, mental alertness, and physical growth. Our obligation is to maintain a sound program to further students' emotional and physical maturity. The staff is committed to provide adequate equipment and facilities, well-trained coaches, and fair contests with skilled officials.

Students who enlist in one of our sports programs make choices and commitments to certain responsibilities: self-discipline, self-denial, prescribed training habits. To remain on the squad, all students are expected to comply with the rules of training and conduct, to discipline their minds and bodies for rigorous competition, **to attend all practices and contests**, and to recognize the rights of other team members.

Through communicating to you and team members the specific policies necessary for a well-organized sports program, the members of the athletic department ask you to join in a community of support for a sports program characterized by the willingness of all participants to reject mediocrity and demonstrate excellence.

\*\*\*\*\*

Freshman and junior varsity athletics in Loudoun County provide the opportunity for a healthy and desirable attitude towards athletic participation. The program presents an environment in which students can begin to learn all of the positive elements that can be gained by participation in sports.

Freshman and junior varsity athletics provide the opportunity for students to prepare for participation on the varsity teams. Learning and refining skills, sportsmanship, strategy, teamwork, competition, conditioning and maturity are necessary for athletes to advance to higher levels of competition.

Although participation by students is highly desirable, there are no guarantees that all athletes will participate in all games. Playing time for athletes is the sole decision of the Head Coach and his/her staff. Coaches are encouraged to give each student the opportunity to participate in as many games as practical.

The varsity athletic program in Loudoun County encourages each team and school to represent itself at the highest possible standard at every level of competition.

The varsity athletic program is intended to provide those students possessing a high degree of skill and talent in sports the opportunity to perform in the sport of their choice.

The varsity athletic program is seen as not only a program benefiting a specific group of athletes, but as a program which also provides an opportunity for all students to enjoy athletics as spectators. It is through the athletic program that much of a school's spirit is generated.

### **SPECIAL PERMISSION AND HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY**

Parents need to be advised that special permissions granted by Loudoun County Public Schools may affect a student's athletic eligibility in accordance with Virginia High School League rules and regulations.

If your son/daughter plans on participating in athletics you should contact the school's athletic department prior to enrolling to determine eligibility. Official enrollment in a school is defined as official registration and attendance in classes for at least three school days or engaging in a contest, regardless of whether or not the student has officially registered in the school or attended classes.

Special Permissions are considered a transfer by the VHSL and students must meet the established criteria in order to participate in athletics.

### **VHSL TRANSFER RULE**

A student shall not have enrolled in one high school and subsequently transferred to and enrolled in another high school without a corresponding change in the residence of his/her parents, parent, or guardian.

A student who has established his/her eligibility at a school other than the one serving the school district in which his/her parents reside must comply with one of the exceptions in 28-6-2 to establish his/her eligibility if he/she returns to the school serving the school district in which his/her parents reside.

It is important that parents contact the athletic department at the school to ensure eligibility requirements are met prior to enrolling.

## **Guidelines for Parents to Discuss Concerns with the Coach**

- Call the coach to set up an appointment.
- If the coach cannot be reached, call the Athletic Director. He/she will set up the meeting for you and the coach.
- Please **DO NOT** attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice.  
These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach.  
Meetings of this nature usually do not promote a positive resolution.  
Please use the **24 HOUR RULE**.

### **THE NEXT STEP**

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

- Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation.
- At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

### **Examples of concerns to discuss with the coaching staff?**

- Treatment of your child.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

It may be difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you expect. Coaches are professionals. They make decisions based on what they believe to be the best for the team and for all student-athletes involved. Parents should understand that the decision on playing time, team strategy and play selection are the sole discretion of the Head Coach and his staff.

### **WE ARE THEIR ROLE MODELS!**

The critical factor in determining whether your child has a positive experience is the quality of their adult leaders – their parent and coach.

## **PARENT – COACH RELATIONSHIP**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult roles. By establishing an understanding of each role, we are better able to accept the actions of each other and provide a greater benefit to our children. Parents, when your child becomes involved in our program, you have the right to understand what expectations will be placed on your child. This begins with clear communications from the coach of your program.

### **COMMUNICATIONS TO EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILD’S COACH**

1. Team requirements, special equipment, strength and conditioning programs.
2. Procedure if your child is injured during participation.
3. Game/practice schedule and updates.
4. Team rules, guidelines and consequences for infractions.
5. Team selection process.

### **COMMUNICATIONS COACHES EXPECT FROM ATHLETES/PARENTS**

1. Any concerns expressed **DIRECTLY** to the coach.
2. Advance notification of any schedule conflicts.
3. Advanced notification of illness or injury – when possible.

It is the goal of everyone that each high school student-athlete will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there may be times when things do not go the way you and your child wish. When this occurs, discussion with the coach is encouraged. It is the first and most integral step to understanding and resolution.

## B. To the Athlete

Being a member of a Loudoun County Public Schools athletic team is the fulfillment of a goal. The attainment of this goal carries with it certain traditions and responsibilities that must be maintained. A great athletic tradition is not built overnight; it takes the hard work of many people over many years. As a member of an interscholastic squad of your high school, you have inherited a wonderful tradition: a tradition to win with honor. You are challenged to uphold this tradition and to bring honor to our athletes, our school, and our community.

It will not be easy to contribute to such a great athletic tradition. When you wear the colors of your school, we assume that you not only understand our traditions, but also are willing to demonstrate the responsibilities that go with them.

1. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOURSELF:** These important responsibilities are to broaden yourself and to develop strength of character. You owe it to yourself to get the greatest possible good from your high school experiences. Your academic studies and your participation in other extracurricular activities, as well as in sports, prepare you for your life as an adult.
2. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO YOUR SCHOOL:** Another responsibility you assume as a squad member is to maintain the reputation of your school. Your high school cannot maintain its position as having an outstanding school unless you represent it well. **Athletes are required to attend all practices and games except as noted on page 15, Section VII, c.**  
By participating in athletics to the maximum of your ability, you are contributing to the reputation of your school.  
You assume a leadership role when you are on the athletic squad. The student body and citizens of the community know you. You are on stage; the spotlight is on you. The student body, the community and other communities judge our school by your conduct and attitudes, both on and off the field. Because of this leadership role, you can contribute greatly to positive school spirit and community pride. Make Loudoun County Public Schools proud of you and your community proud of your school by representing them through positive performance and high character.
3. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHERS:** When you have met all the training rules, have practiced to the best of your ability every day, and have played the game "all out," you have your self-respect, and your family can be justly proud of you.  
The younger students in the Loudoun County Public Schools system are watching you. They will copy you in many ways. Do not do anything to let them down. Set good examples for them.

## II. ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

### A. Statement of Philosophy

The Loudoun County Public Schools Athletic Program provides a variety of experiences to aid in the development of favorable habits and attitudes in students that will prepare them for adult life in a democratic society.

The interscholastic athletic program is conducted in accordance with existing School Board policies, rules and regulations and in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity.

### B. Athletic Goal and Objectives

OUR GOAL - The student athlete shall become a more effective citizen in a democratic society.

OUR SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES - The student athlete shall learn:

1. **To work with others** - In a democratic society a person must develop self-discipline, respect for authority, and the spirit of hard work and sacrifice. **The team and its objectives must be placed higher than personal desires.**
2. **To be successful** - Society is very competitive. Learning to accept defeat comes by striving to win with earnest dedication and developing a desire to excel.
3. **To develop sportsmanship** - By accepting defeat with grace and dignity a person learns to treat others as he/she would like to be treated. Through participation in athletics a student may develop desirable social traits, including emotional control, honesty, cooperation and dependability.
4. **To improve** - Setting a goal and working to achieve it is characteristic of good citizens. An athlete establishes personal goals to enhance skills and works to meet them.
5. **To enjoy athletics** - Athletes must enjoy participation, acknowledge all of the personal rewards to be derived from athletics, and give sufficiently of themselves to preserve and improve the school's sports program. Good citizens appreciate the pleasures of their society and nation.

6. **To develop desirable personal health habits** - To be an active, contributing citizen, it is important to obtain a high degree of physical fitness through exercise and good health habits and to develop the desire to maintain this level of physical fitness after formal competition has been completed. Fit individuals are better able to contribute to society.

### **III. GOVERNANCES**

#### **A. The School Board**

The School Board is responsible for interpreting the needs of the community and school and developing policies in accordance with state statutes and mandates and in accordance with the education needs of the Loudoun County students.

#### **B. The Virginia High School League**

All Loudoun County schools are voluntary members of the Virginia High School League and compete with member schools. As a member school district, the secondary schools of Loudoun County agree to abide by and enforce all rules and regulations promulgated by the League.

The primary role of the Virginia High School League is to maintain rules and regulations that ensure equity in competition for the student athletes and a balance with other educational programs.

#### **C. The National Federation of State High School Associations**

The National Federation consists of the fifty individual state high school athletic and/or activities associations. The purposes of the Federation are to serve, protect and enhance the interstate activity interests of the high schools belonging to state associations; to assist in those activities of the state associations which can best be operated on a nationwide scale; to sponsor meetings, publications and activities which will permit each state association to profit by the experience of all other member associations; and to coordinate the work to minimize duplication.

#### **D. The Athletic League/District**

Loudoun County Schools are members of the Dulles, Liberty and Cedar Run Districts. The Districts were established for the primary purpose of promoting selected interscholastic activities among member schools.

These districts were established to encourage member schools to improve their co-curricular program in athletics. These district memberships facilitate the arranging of schedules, equalizing competition, and conducting district meets, and determining championships. The districts provide Loudoun County Public Schools the opportunity for competition without excessive travel and with schools of similar size and athletic philosophy.

**Member schools are:**

**DULLES DISTRICT - AA**

Briar Woods H. S.  
Dominion H.S.  
Heritage H.S.  
John Champe H.S.  
Loudoun County H.S.  
Loudoun Valley H.S.  
Park View H.S.  
Potomac Falls H.S.  
Tuscarora H.S.  
Woodgrove H.S.

**LIBERTY DISTRICT - AAA**

Stone Bridge H. S.

**CEDAR RUN DISTRICT - AAA**

Broad Run H.S.  
Freedom H.S.

**IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION**

**A. Physical Examination**

A yearly physical examination is required. The VHSL physical form must be completed by the physician and submitted to the athletic department **prior** to participation. The physical covers all sports for the entire school year provided the examination occurred after May 1 of the preceding season. A physical is required for all in-season and out-of-season sport-specific activities. This form will be kept on file in the athletic office.

**B. Emergency Medical Authorization**

Each athlete's parents shall complete an Emergency Medical Authorization Card giving permission for treatment by a physician or hospital when the parent(s) are not available. The card will be available at all practices and contests.

**C. Parental Acknowledgment of Athletic and Training Rules**

Each parent or guardian shall read the training rules form and certify that they understand the athletic eligibility rules and policies of the school district. This signed document will be filed in the athletic director's office. Refusal to sign the training rules will result in student's ineligibility to participate. See appendix for a copy of this form.

#### **D. Insurance**

The school district does not carry insurance to cover student athletic injuries. Parents sign an acknowledgment form stating they have purchased "Student Accident Insurance" for their athlete or possess a family insurance plan and have signed the insurance notification form.

#### **E. Concussion Protocol – Information and Signature Page**

An information sheet regarding concussions and their long-term and short-term effects will be provided by LCPS. The student athlete and a parent/guardian shall read this material and sign the form, stating that they understand the dangers of concussions and the treatment plan that will be followed by our Athletic Trainers. See appendix G for treatment plan and signature page.

#### **F. Scholastic Eligibility**

In order to participate on a Loudoun County Public School athletic team, each athlete must have satisfied all of the scholastic eligibility requirements prior to participation.

#### **G. Risk of Participation**

All athletes and parents must realize the risk of serious injury, which may be a result of athletic participation. Loudoun County Public Schools will use the following safeguards to make every effort to eliminate injury:

1. A mandatory parent/athlete meeting prior to the first contest of the season to explain fully the athletic policies and to advise, caution, and warn parents/athletes of the potential for injury
2. A continuing education program for coaches to learn the most up-to-date techniques and skills to be taught in their sport

#### **H. Financial Obligations and Equipment**

1. **Uniforms** - In general, uniforms are provided to all athletes. However, in some cases the athletes must purchase certain items. Such items become the personal property of the student.
2. **Equipment** - All athletes are responsible for the proper care and security of equipment issued to them. School-furnished equipment is to be worn only for contests and practice. Students must pay for all equipment not returned in good condition at the end of the season.
3. LCPS will furnish NOCSAE (National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) approved helmets for football, lacrosse, baseball and

softball. All helmets are inspected for safety. **All participants must wear school issued helmets.**

4. **Athletic Fee** – Each student athlete will be required to pay a fee of \$100 for each high school team of which he/she is a member. This fee must be paid prior to the first official contest in order for the student to participate.  
\* Those students who have qualified for free or reduced lunch will be exempt from this fee.

#### **I. Eligibility of Athletes**

In order for a student to participate on a Loudoun County Public School athletic team, each athlete must have satisfied all of the scholastic eligibility requirements prior to participation. These regulations state that all athletes:

Cannot receive money or awards for playing,

Cannot sign a contract to play professional sports while they still maintain high school eligibility,

Cannot be 19 on or before August 1st of the current year,

Must pass five courses the previous semester and be currently taking five courses.

Must not have more than a total of eight consecutive semesters of eligibility after he/she enters the 9th grade for the first time,

Must abide by the school training rules,

May not repeat courses for eligibility purposes for which credit has been previously awarded,

Must report to school by 9:15 a.m. in order to participate in an athletic activity or practice on any given day and must remain in school that entire day. Exceptions may be made for doctor or dental appointments or reasons excused by the principal. (A doctor/dental note is required for this exception.),

Eighth grade students who become 14 years of age by September 1 are eligible for sub-varsity athletics (including pre-season and post-season conditioning programs) at the high school they would attend.

Any student that is academically ineligible for the winter sports tryouts will remain ineligible for the entire winter season.

Any student granted special permission must meet the criteria specified on page 2 of this handbook.

**J.**

**SPORT SEASON STARTING PRACTICE DATES  
2012-2013**

**Fall Sports**

Cheerleading, Monday, July 30

Football, July 30

Boys and Girls Cross Country, July 30

Girls Volleyball, July 30

Golf, July 30

**Winter Sports**

Boys Basketball/Girls Basketball, Monday, November 5

Swimming, November 5

Cheerleading, November 5

Gymnastics, November 5

Wrestling, November 5

**Spring Sports**

Baseball (Boys), Tuesday, February 19

Boys Soccer/ Girls Soccer February 19

Softball (Girls), February 19

Boys Tennis/ Girls Tennis February 19

Boys Track/ Girls Track February 19

Boys Lacrosse/ Girls Lacrosse February 19

## V. ATHLETIC CODES OF CONDUCT

### A. Conduct of Athletes

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the athletic department. The community, school administrators and the coaching staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program of athletics. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

All athletes shall abide by a code of ethics, which will earn them the honor and respect that participation and competition in the interscholastic program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct, such as, but not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality, violations of law, use of racial epithets or discriminatory remarks of any kind tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the athletic programs and will not be tolerated.

**All athletes shall understand the definition of hazing, refrain from involvement in hazing, and report any incidents to the coach and Athletic Director immediately.**

Hazing means to recklessly or intentionally endanger the health or safety of a student or to inflict bodily injury on a student in connection with or for the purpose of initiation, admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a club, organization, association, fraternity, sorority or student body regardless of whether the student so endangered or injured participated voluntarily in the relevant activity. Section 18.2-56 of the Code of Virginia prohibits hazing and imposes Class 1 misdemeanor penalty for anyone found guilty of this violation.

The following are examples of conduct which constitutes hazing. This list is not meant to be exhaustive or to limit the school's ability to discipline any conduct which it determines to be inappropriate.

1. Subtle hazing includes initiations and the like which manipulate, coerce, or in other respects seek to deny the rights of the individuals. Typically this involves psychological pressures on an individual to agree to certain action in order to be more fully accepted, whether or not performance of this action has any bearing on actual membership status.
2. Harassment hazing involves actions which cause mental anguish or physical discomfort. Typically, this involves persistent physical or verbal actions which threaten, irritate, demeans, or inflict pain.

3. Hazardous hazing includes action which endangers life or mental health, which have the potential of causing bodily injury or which subject a person to severe mental stress.

The following list is provided for the purposes of clarifying what actions constitute an act of hazing. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Assigning pranks such as stealing, painting objects, harassing another group or club.
2. Modifying one's appearance such as partial or total haircuts, shaving of eyebrows, tattoos, and drawing on skin with magic markers.
3. Engaging in public stunts and buffoonery.
4. Consumption of undesired foods or liquids.
5. Apparel which embarrasses or which is lewd.
6. Playing games where the loser must perform some humiliating action.
7. Agreeing to do demeaning tasks for others (servitude).

## **B. Individual Coach's Rules**

Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations with the approval of the athletic director for their respective sports. These rules pertaining to a particular sport must be given by the coach in writing to all team members and explained fully at the start of the season. Penalties for violation of team rules will also be in writing and shall be administered by the coach. Copies of all additional team rules by coaches are on file in the athletic director's office.

## **C. Disciplinary Report during the Sport Season**

Parents are required to pursue issues involving athletics within the appropriate administrative channels. The first point of contact in such matters should be the coach followed, if necessary, by the Athletic Director.

The head coach, in each sport, must keep a notebook of disciplinary actions taken (if any) on each athlete during the course of the season. The purpose of this notebook is to provide the Athletic Director with times, dates, and the nature of problems. This data can be used as supporting documentation should it become necessary to recommend an athlete's suspension or dismissal.

- a. Anytime during the course of a sport season when a student athlete's behavior reaches a point of formal discipline short of dismissal from the team, the coach **must make telephone contact** with the parent and notify the Athletic Director. If telephone contact cannot be made, a letter must be sent to the parent with a copy to the athletic director.

- b. In the event that it becomes necessary to dismiss an athlete from a team, the following procedures are to be followed:

The coach will communicate with the Athletic Director to give the reason for recommending the athlete's dismissal from the team, with the exception of training rule violations which will be investigated directly by the Athletic Director or his/her designee.

The Athletic Director will inform the athlete, explain the charges, and hear the athlete's response to the charges. The Athletic Director or his/her designee will take a written statement from the student athlete.

The Athletic Director or his/her designee will make contact with the parent.

The Athletic Director will then make a decision. If the athlete is to be dismissed, the student and the parents of the athlete will be notified in writing.

The parent(s)/guardian or the student athlete, if 18 years or older, may request a review, by the principal, of the decision of the athletic department within five (5) business days. The request for review will require the following:

1. The written request must be presented to the principal within five (5) business days of the initial ruling.
2. The principal shall render a decision in writing within five (5) business days, to the student and his/her parents or guardian.

In the event that the athletic director is unavailable and circumstances warrant prompt action on a recommendation for dismissal of an athlete, the Principal shall designate an Assistant Principal or the Assistant Athletic Director to act in place of the Athletic Director. In such an instance where the Principal must handle the situation, any review shall be conducted by the Director of High School Education.

Parental appeals beyond the Principal level shall be directed to the Deputy Superintendent and will follow provisions of School Board Policy 8-29, Exclusion from Extracurricular Activities.

## **VI. VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE SCHOLASTIC REQUIREMENTS**

- A. For the first semester, the student must be currently enrolled 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 of the immediately preceding semester for schools that certify credit on a semester basis.
- B. For the second semester, the student must be currently enrolled 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 semester.

## **VII. BASIC ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

### **A. Participation**

An athlete may participate in only one school sponsored sport per season.

### **B. Equipment**

School equipment checked out by the student/athlete is his/her responsibility. He/she is expected to keep it clean and in good condition. Loss of any equipment is the athlete's financial obligation.

### **C. Missing Practice and/or Game**

An athlete should always consult his/her coach before missing a practice or a game. Missing a practice or a game without prior approval of the coach, athletic director or principal will result in an unexcused absence and possible disciplinary action.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence, an athlete may be dismissed from the team.

- Unexcused absences 1-3 may result in possible disciplinary action, as deemed appropriate by the coach or the Athletic Director.



The bus driver has the authority to maintain proper discipline while on the bus. Additionally, the bus driver makes the final decision on route of travel, and is responsible for assuring all transportation procedures are followed.

1. Athletes will remain with their squad and under the supervision of the coach when attending away contests.
2. Athletes that miss the bus will not be allowed to participate in the contest unless there are extenuating circumstances.
3. All regular school bus rules will be followed.
4. Dress must be appropriate.

**E. College Recruitment Policy**

1. Selecting a college and making career plans are two of the most important decisions to be made by high school student-athletes and their parents. The student-athlete and his/her parents must mitigate the efforts, assert themselves, and work primarily on their own behalf.
2. In the event an athlete should be contacted personally by a college recruiter, he/she has an obligation to work through his/her coach and the athletic department. The coach should be informed of such a contact as soon as possible. College recruitment information is available in the athletic office. NCAA standards are available in the athletic director's office.
3. Since 1994-95, students must go through the NCAA Eligibility Center. Applications for this process are located in the guidance office or may be processed online at: [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net).

**F. Conflicts in Extracurricular Activities**

The athletic department recognizes that each student should have the opportunity for a broad range of experiences in the area of extracurricular activities, and to this end, will attempt to schedule events in a manner to minimize conflicts.

An individual student who attempts to participate in several extracurricular activities will, undoubtedly, be in a position of a conflict of obligations.

Students have the responsibility to reduce the likelihood of frequent conflicts by being cautious about joining too many organizations. If it becomes obvious that a student cannot fulfill the obligation of a school activity, he/she should withdraw from that activity.

When a conflict arises, the sponsors/coaches will attempt to work out a solution. If a solution cannot be found, the principal will make the decision based on the following considerations:

1. The relative importance of each event to the school
2. The importance of each event to the student
3. The relative contribution the student can make
4. When each event was scheduled
5. Input from parents

Once the decision has been made and the student has followed that decision, he/she will not be penalized in any way by either faculty sponsor/coach.

#### **G. Attendance**

1. Each school will follow established Loudoun County Public Schools team rules regarding practice schedules and excused and unexcused absences from practice. Students are expected to abide by these rules established for each team and are **required to attend all practices and games**. In order to participate in an athletic activity or practice on any given day, an athlete or manager must report to school by 9:15 a.m. and must remain in school that entire day. Exceptions may be made for doctor or dental appointments or reasons excused by the principal or his/her designee.

#### **H. Release from Class**

Athletes must see their teacher the day before the classes they will miss because of an athletic contest. All work shall be made up at the convenience of the teacher.

#### **I. Grooming and Dress Policy**

A member of an athletic team is expected to be well groomed. Appearance, expression and actions always influence people's opinions of athletes, the team, and the school. Once a member of a squad, the athlete has made a choice to uphold certain standards expected of athletes in this community.

**J. Vacations Policy**

It is the expectation of the athletic department that athletes make a commitment to a team when they tryout.

**Athletes are required to attend all practices/games.** Vacations by athletic team members during a sport season are discouraged and each day missed may be considered an unexcused absence.

**K. Squad Selection and Cutting Policies**

Choosing the members of athletic squads is the sole responsibility of the coaches of those squads.

Prior to trying out, the coach shall provide the following information to all candidates for the team: dates of try-out period, criteria used to select the team, practice commitment for the team members, and game commitments. When a squad cut becomes necessary, all coaches must conduct a minimum of three (3) days of tryouts, beginning no earlier than the first allowable tryout date stated in the Virginia High School League Handbook. **It is the responsibility of each candidate to attend each of these tryout days.** All students trying out for the team will be informed by a letter if he/she did or did not make the squad. No cut list will be posted. Coaches will discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport or other areas in the activities program.

**L. Promotion to Varsity Squad**

Athletes on a sub-varsity squad may be moved up to the varsity squad for regular-season and post-season varsity games, pending approval by the Athletic Director.

### **M. Reporting an Injury**

All injuries which occur while participating in athletics should be reported by the athlete to the athletic trainer and coach. If the injury requires medical attention by a doctor or treatment center, an injury report form must be completed. Once a physician treats an athlete, the athlete must obtain the doctor's permission in writing to return to the activity.

### **N. Locker Room Regulations**

1. Roughhousing and throwing towels or other objects are not allowed in the locker room. Hazing of other players is not allowed.
2. All showers must be turned off. The last person to leave the shower room is expected to check all showers.
3. No one except coaches and assigned players are allowed in the locker room.
4. No **glass** containers are permitted in locker rooms.
5. All spiked or cleated shoes must be put on and taken off outside of the locker room in extreme or muddy weather conditions. No metal or hard plastic spikes or cleats are allowed in any other part of the school building.
6. Athletes are required to secure their own personal items. Incidents of theft should be reported to the Athletic Director and the school will conduct an investigation.

### **O. Weight Room Regulations**

1. Shirts and shoes are required at all times. Tank tops are acceptable.
2. **No student** is to be alone in the weight room.
3. All students **must** be under the supervision of the instructor or coach assigned.
4. Lifters **must** work with a partner.
5. All weights must be replaced on racks **immediately** following use.

6. All students must work with the instructor to determine personal limits.
7. Lifts must be done **correctly**. It is better to use lighter weights for correct lifting than heavier weights and run the risk of injury.
8. Proper stretching exercises are used for warm-up.
9. No student may chew gum or eat candy while lifting.
10. No food or drinks are allowed inside weight room.
11. Horseplay and profanity are **prohibited**.
12. Equipment must not be abused. Any equipment that is broken must be reported to the athletic director immediately.
13. Eighth graders are allowed to participate in the high school pre-season or post-season program activities, provided they meet the LCPS age requirement. All other 8<sup>th</sup> graders become eligible upon meeting requirements for promotion to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **VIII. ATHLETIC AWARDS POLICY**

Requirements for earning a letter have been established. Athletes are to be informed of these requirements prior to the season. These requirements will add more meaning and significance to earning a letter and prevent many problems that arise after the awards program.

Special athletic awards may be given to those teams who win their district championship, regional championship, and/or state championship. The coach and the athletic director will determine the type of award.

### **A. Varsity Letter Requirements**

The varsity award shall be presented to an athlete who satisfies the participation requirements, completes all team obligations and receives the recommendation of the coach.

**B. Lettering Criteria That Pertain to All Sports**

1. An athlete who moves from one level of competition to another will letter at the level of the highest competition, provided the athlete has met lettering requirements.
2. A coach will have the prerogative to award a letter to a senior who has not met the seasonal requirements.
3. Any athlete who was a starter or played regularly and was thereafter injured may be awarded a letter, if in the coach's judgment, he/she would have met the lettering requirements.
4. The athlete must complete the season in good standing with the school and coach.
5. Athletes are required to attend all practices unless there is an excused absence approved by the coach. The athlete must finish the season as a team member in good standing.
6. Athletes should realize that they are representing their school and community and shall conduct themselves in such a manner that they are an asset to the school and community.
7. Adherence to all training rules is required.

**C. Specific Criteria in Meeting the Requirements for a Letter**

1. Football – Play in ½ of all Varsity regular season contests and must finish the season as a team member in good standing.
2. Basketball - Play in ½ of all Varsity regular season contests and must finish the season as a team member in good standing.
3. Volleyball - Play in ½ of all Varsity regular season contests and must finish the season as a team member in good standing.
4. Soccer - Play in ½ of all Varsity regular season contests and must finish the season as a team member in good standing.
5. Baseball - Play in ½ of all Varsity regular season contests or 1/3 of all Varsity regular season contests if a pitcher only and must finish the season as a team member in good standing.

6. Softball - Play in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Varsity regular season contests or  $\frac{1}{3}$  of all Varsity regular season contests if a pitcher only and must finish the season as a team member in good standing.
7. Lacrosse - Play in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Varsity regular season contests and must finish the season as a team member in good standing.
8. Cheerleading – Make the Varsity Squad and finish the season as a team member in good standing.

**D. Team/Individual Sports:**

1. Cross Country – Finish in the top 10 for your school in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Varsity regular season meets or qualify for the District Tournament and must finish the season as a member in good standing.
2. Wrestling – Compete in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all regular Varsity matches or qualify for the District Tournament and must finish the season as a member in good standing.
3. Track – Score team point(s) in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Regular season Varsity meets or qualify for the District Tournament and must finish the season as a member in good standing.
4. Golf – Compete in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Varsity regular season matches as a member of the top 6 or qualify for the District Tournament and must finish the season as a member in good standing.
5. Tennis – Compete in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Varsity regular season matches as a member of the top 6 singles or the top 3 doubles or qualify for the District Tournament and must finish the season as a member in good standing.
6. Gymnastics – Compete in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Varsity regular season meets or qualify for the District Tournament and must finish the season as a member in good standing.
7. Swim – Compete in  $\frac{1}{2}$  of all Varsity regular season meets and finish in the top 2 for your school or qualify for the District Tournament and must finish the season as a member in good standing.

## **E. Special Situations**

- Manager--Be present at all practices and games and must fulfill the duties assigned by the coach.
- Two Years in Same Sport--Any athlete, who has participated in the same sport during his 11th and 12th grades and did not meet the specific requirements for a letter, may be recommended for a letter by his coach.
- At times, cases will arise which must be decided on the basis of extenuating circumstances. In such cases, the coach may recommend that a letter may be awarded.
- The student athlete must be a member in good standing with the team through the end of the last official contest.

## **IX. ATHLETIC CODE**

### **A. General Information**

1. Interscholastic athletic department training rules are available in the office of the Athletic Director and on the LCPS athletic webpage.
2. Interscholastic athletic department training rules apply to interscholastic sports for boys, interscholastic sports for girls, interscholastic cheerleaders, and all interscholastic personnel including managers, student athletic trainers, and statisticians.
3. The athletic departments of Loudoun County Public Schools are eager to have parents of athletes know the regulations governing their son's or daughter's participation. All interscholastic athletic squads will be required to have parents' night programs for the following purposes:
  - a. Introduction of the coaching staff.
  - b. Explanation of athletic sport policies for a given sport by the head coach.
  - c. Explanation of training rules by the coach.

## **X. ACTIVITY BUSES**

Activity bus transportation may be provided in accordance with each individual high school. Student athletes should check with his/her individual school to determine the activity bus schedule set by their school.

# APPENDIX A

## LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRAINING RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

**All rules become effective for each sport season the first day of tryouts through the last official contest date.**

1. Decisions concerning an athlete's or manager's eligibility to participate in the athletic program will be made by the local school administration subject to Virginia High School League Rules and Regulations.
2. All athletes and managers are to abide by all school rules for student conduct; they are to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that brings credit to themselves as athletes and as representatives of Loudoun County Schools.
3. The athlete must report athletic injuries to the coach or Athletic Trainer immediately upon occurrence. Failure to report injuries will result in the athlete's parents assuming responsibility.
4. Athletes and managers must travel to and from contests with their team, unless prior approval is given by the coach or local school administration.
5. All students are expected to abide by the rules established by Loudoun County Public Schools regarding practice schedules and excused and unexcused absences from practice.
6. Any athlete or manager who is participating in the athletic program and who becomes involved in a situation which is detrimental to the team and/or school can expect disciplinary action, in accordance with school rules for behavior of student, deemed appropriate by the coach and local school administration.
7. In order to participate in an athletic activity or practice on any given day, an athlete or manager must report to school by 9:15 a.m. and must remain in school that entire day. Exceptions may be made for doctor or dental appointments or reasons excused by the principal. (A doctor/dental note is required for this exception.)
8. Any athlete or manager serving suspension or in-school restriction for violation of school rules will be ineligible to practice or play in a scheduled event on the day or days he/she is serving the punishment, including Saturdays.
9. Any athlete or manager who uses or possesses tobacco, drugs, or alcohol during a sports season will be dismissed from the team.
10. Any athlete or manager may resign from a team anytime before the final squad is selected without sacrificing his or her availability to participate for any other sport during the sports season if the other sport has not secured its roster.
11. When an athlete or manager resigns or is dismissed from a team after the first game, match or meet, he or she will be ineligible to participate in sport specific out-of-season instructional activities until the team from which he or she resigned or was dismissed has concluded all regular season activities. Students may attend weight-lifting sessions and conditioning open to the general school population.
12. Any athlete who is ejected from a game by an official during the regular season will automatically be suspended for at least one subsequent game. The coach and administration may take additional disciplinary measures in accordance with school rules. If the disqualification occurs in the final contest of the season (including playoffs and tournaments), the penalty shall carry over to the next sports season for students who are seniors in eligibility or to the next school year for underclassmen. A second violation in the same sport shall carry a minimum two-contest suspension.
13. An athlete may not participate in more than one sport per season.

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**Athletes, managers, and parents must sign and return this form to the coach.**

I have received a hard copy\_\_\_\_/online version\_\_\_\_ of the Athletic Handbook. I have read, understand and agree to abide by the Loudoun County Public School's rules and regulations for students participating in high school athletic activities. As the parent/guardian, I agree to cooperate with school officials in managing my child's conduct while participating in athletics.

Student (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Student (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Revised: 4/24/2012

APPENDIX B

**Loudoun County Public Schools**

21000 Education Court, Ashburn, Virginia 20148



**LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**DISTRIBUTION AND FITTING OF ATHLETIC PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

**Protective equipment distributed by LCPS should fit the participant and be free from cracks, tears or other defects. To ensure compliance, the following procedures are recommended:**

1. All equipment should be inspected prior to distribution.
2. Athletic Directors/Coaches or others who distribute protective equipment should be given specific instructions from the manufacturer/distributor on the safe and proper method of fitting equipment.
  3. When equipment is distributed your staff should document in writing the identification number of the piece of equipment issued to the student and that it is in good condition. Proper documentation includes the identification number, the student's name, date issued and signature of the staff member who distributed the equipment.
  4. Students should be notified not to modify any equipment. This warning can be read to the student when the equipment is issued and documented by noting in a log when warnings were read and who read them. NOTE: If a student modifies equipment and an injury occurs, the school can effectively demonstrate that it complied with its responsibilities.
  5. Headgears for sports such as football,, baseball, softball and lacrosse should be inspected to ensure that National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) WARNINGS are visible and proper.
  6. Ensure that the re-conditioner of headgears and other protective equipment is NOCSAE approved.
  7. Follow the manufacturer's suggested guidelines for proper installation, maintenance, inspections and repair.
  8. Equipment should be checked occasionally during its use by the student to be sure it continues to be safe and useable.
  9. Equipment may be issued to student athletic team candidates for use in attending specialized sports camps. Please utilize the following Athletic Equipment Loan Acknowledgement form.

**APPENDIX C**

**ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT LOAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**



**Loudoun County Public Schools**  
21000 Education Court, Ashburn, Virginia 20148

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child has expressed a desire to participate in an extracurricular independent sports camp outside the auspices and supervision of Loudoun County Public Schools. Your child has further expressed the need to utilize school owned protective equipment in order to participate in the independent sports camp.

There are inherent risks of injury in sports activities including death, serious neck and spinal injuries (i.e. paralysis or brain damage) and serious injury or impairment to other aspects of the student's body, general health, or well being. Loudoun County Public Schools will not be responsible for any liability or injury to the student as a result of the use of school owned sports protective equipment.

Furthermore, school owned equipment issued to your child for participation is his or her responsibility. The equipment must not be altered or modified and must be returned promptly upon request. Reimbursement from the student will be expected for loss or destruction of equipment beyond ordinary wear and tear.

**Please sign below acknowledging your understanding of the risks involved with participation and the athletic equipment loan agreement.** We hope your child will have a safe, successful and rewarding athletic experience.

<b>Student's Name &amp; Address:</b>		<b>Date of Loan:</b>	<b>Expected Date of Return:</b>
<b>Type of Equipment:</b>		<b>Brand &amp; Identification #:</b>	
<b>Equipment Condition:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good
<b>Was equipment inspected and fit properly for student?</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<b>Initial here:</b>
<b>Warning Labels Visible on Equipment?</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**AGREEMENT TO UTILIZE LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS' PROPERTY:**  
**Athletic Equipment Loan Acknowledgement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (*participant's printed name*) understand that there may be serious risks of injury involved in participation in various sports camps and agree to save and keep harmless Loudoun County Public Schools and all of its employees from and against any and all liability arising out of, or injury in any way connected with, the use of school owned sports equipment. I also agree to be responsible for any modification, damage, loss, or destruction to the loaned sports equipment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Participant's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date Signed*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent or Guardian Signature, if Minor participant*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date Signed*

## **APPENDIX D**

### **National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)**

## **POSITION STATEMENT ON ANABOLIC STEROIDS**

### **EXISTING POLICIES/STANDS**

The NFHS strongly opposes the use of anabolic steroids and other performance-enhancing substances by high school student-athletes. Such use violates legal, ethical and competitive equity standards, and imposes unreasonable long-term health risks. The NFHS supports prohibitions by educational institutions, amateur and professional organizations and governmental regulators on the use of anabolic steroids and other controlled substances, except as specifically prescribed by physicians for therapeutic purposes.

### **BACKGROUND**

Anabolic, androgenic steroids (AAS) are synthetic derivatives of the male hormone testosterone. Natural testosterone regulates, promotes and maintains physical and sexual development, primarily in the male, but with effects in the female as well. Like testosterone, AAS have both an anabolic effect (increase in muscle tissue) and an androgenic effect (masculinizing effects that boys experience during puberty). No AAS is purely anabolic. As a result, the use of AAS won't lead to muscle growth without also leading to other unintended, undesirable side effects.

According to national surveys, the use of AAS among high school students has been decreasing since about 2001. There are no national studies that measure the extent of AAS use by high school student-athletes, although some states publish statewide prevalence data. Nearly one-third of high-school age steroid users do not participate in organized athletics and are taking AAS primarily to modify their physical appearance. Athletes who use AAS do so for two main reasons: 1) to gain strength and 2) to recover more quickly from injury.

AAS are controlled substances and are illegal to use or possess without a prescription from a physician for a legitimate medical diagnosis. Some AAS are used by veterinarians to treat pigs, horses and cows. In humans, medical uses of AAS include weight gain in wasting diseases such as HIV-infection or muscular dystrophy, absent gonadal function in males, and metastatic breast cancer in women. AAS should not be confused with corticosteroids, which are steroids that doctors prescribe for medical conditions such as asthma and inflammation. AAS are prohibited by all sports governing organizations.

### **FACTS ABOUT ANABOLIC STEROIDS**

- Anabolic steroids are controlled substances and are illegal to possess or sell without a prescription for a legitimate medical condition by the prescribing physician.
- Androstenedione, norandrostenedione and other similar prohormones, at one time available over the counter as dietary supplements, are now defined as controlled anabolic steroids.
- Athletes who have injected anabolic steroids in high school have tested positive in collegiate drug tests – months after they stopped injecting.
- Athletes who have injected anabolic steroids are at greater risk for infections, HIV and hepatitis.

## **POTENTIAL NEGATIVE SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE USE OF ANABOLIC STEROIDS**

- Decreased eventual height if consumed before growth plates have fused in pre-pubertal youngsters
- Secondary sex characteristic changes
- Increased acne
- Growth of body/facial hair in girls
- Loss of hair in boys
- Permanent voice-lowering in girls
- Violent, combative behavior
- Sexual dysfunction and impotence
- Mood swings, loss of sleep, paranoia
- Depression upon stopping use
- Organ damage and death from heavy use

## **PREVENTING ATHLETES FROM TAKING ANABOLIC STEROIDS**

- School personnel, coaches and parents can reduce steroid abuse by speaking out against such use.
- Talk with your athletes about frustrations they may have about how they look or how they are performing in their sport. Help them establish healthy expectations of their bodies.
- Talk to athletes about realistic performance standards.
- Focus on proper nutrition and hydration. Work with a registered dietician to develop a plan for appropriate weight gain and/or weight loss.
- Don't trust Internet marketing messages about quick fixes.
- Restrict athletes' access to environments where steroid use might occur and to people who are involved with anabolic steroids.
- Don't subscribe to publications such as muscle magazines that depict unrealistic pictures of men and women.
- Help athletes understand that using anabolic steroids not only is illegal but also is cheating.
- Consider initiating a formal performance-enhancing, drug-education program to educate athletes and deter use.

## **References:**

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**Revised and Approved in April 2009**

## APPENDIX E

### National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

## POSITION STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF ENERGY DRINKS BY YOUNG ATHLETES

**Background:** Energy drinks have become increasingly popular among adolescents and young adults in recent years. In 2006, nearly 500 new brands were introduced to the market place, and over 7 million adolescents reported that they had consumed an energy drink. These beverages are particularly popular among young athletes who see the consumption of energy drinks as a quick and easy way to maximize athletic and academic performance.

#### **The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee's position on energy drinks:**

The NFHS SMAC strongly recommends that:

- 1) Water and appropriate sports drinks should be used for rehydration as outlined in the NFHS Document "**Position Statement and Recommendations for Hydration to Minimize the Risk for Dehydration and Heat Illness.**"
- 2) Energy drinks should not be used for hydration.
- 3) Information about the absence of benefit and the presence of potential risk associated with energy drinks should be widely shared among all individuals who interact with young athletes.
- 4) Energy drinks should not be consumed by athletes who are dehydrated.
- 5) Energy drinks should not be consumed without prior medical approval, by athletes taking over the counter or prescription medications.

**WARNING:** There is no regulatory control over energy drinks, thus their content and purity cannot be insured. This may lead to adverse side-effects, potentially harmful interactions with prescription medications (particularly stimulant medications used to treat ADHD), or positive drug tests.

#### **Frequently Asked Questions**

##### **What is an energy drink?**

●An energy drink is a beverage marketed to both athletes and the general public as a quick and easy means of relieving fatigue and improving performance. In addition to water, nearly all energy drinks contain carbohydrates and caffeine as their main ingredients. The carbohydrates provide nutrient energy while the caffeine acts as a stimulant to the central nervous system.

##### **What are the differences between an energy drink and a sports drink?**

●Sports drinks are designed to provide re-hydration during or after athletic activity. While contents vary, most sports drinks contain a 6-8% carbohydrate solution and a mixture of electrolytes. The carbohydrate and electrolyte concentrations are formulated to allow maximal absorption of the fluid by the gastrointestinal tract.

●Energy drinks contain a higher concentration of carbohydrate (usually 9-10%), and thus a larger number of calories than sports drinks. They also contain high amounts of caffeine and, in some cases, other nutritional supplements. **Energy drinks are not designed to re-hydrate athletes during activity and should not be used in such circumstances.**

### **What ingredients are found in energy drinks?**

- Carbohydrates- Most energy drinks have from 18g to 25 g of carbohydrate per 8 ounces. The high carbohydrate concentration will impede absorption of fluid in the gastrointestinal tract.
- Caffeine- Nearly all energy drinks contain some amount of “natural” or synthetic caffeine. The caffeine concentration may range from the equivalent to an 8 ounce cup of coffee (85mg) to more than twice that amount.
- Herbs- Many energy drinks include herbal forms of caffeine such as guarana seeds, kola nuts, and Yerba mate leaves, in addition to synthetic caffeine. The “performance enhancing” effects and health benefits of other herbs like Astragalus, Echinacea, Ginko biloba, ginseng, and countless other herbs have not been well established by scientific studies.
- Vitamins- Athletes with even reasonably good diets should be assured that they are not at risk for vitamin deficiency and do not need supplementation. There is no evidence to suggest that vitamin supplementation improves athletic performance. Female athletes may benefit from iron and calcium supplementation, but these are more easily and inexpensively obtained in pill form rather than energy drinks.
- Protein and amino acids- Only a small amount of protein is used as fuel for exercise. Carbohydrates are utilized as the primary fuel source. No scientific evidence exists to support claims that amino acids enhance athletic performance. Protein, and the amino acids which compose it, are available less expensively in food.
- Other ingredients- With the hundreds of energy drink brands that are available, the potential ingredients which they may contain are virtually unlimited. Possible additions include pyruvate, creatine, carnitine, medium-chain triglycerides, and even oxygen.

### **What are the possible effects of using energy drinks?**

- Central nervous system- Caffeine often has the effect of making a person feel “energized.” Studies have shown some performance-enhancing benefits from caffeine at high doses (6mg/kg of body weight). Such high doses of caffeine may produce light headedness, tremor, impaired sleep and difficulty with fine motor control, and may exceed drug testing caffeine thresholds.
- Gastrointestinal system- The high concentrations of carbohydrates found in energy drinks may delay gastric emptying, resulting in a feeling of being bloated. Abdominal cramping may also occur. Both carbohydrates and caffeine in the high concentrations found in most energy drinks can cause diarrhea.
- Dehydration- Energy drinks should not be used for the purposes of hydration or re-hydration. The high carbohydrate concentration results in slow absorption from the gastrointestinal tract and may cause diarrhea. Caffeine acts as a diuretic and, therefore, results in increased fluid loss.
- Positive drug tests- Like all nutritional supplements, there is little or no regulatory oversight of energy drinks. The purity of the products cannot be assured and it is possible that they may contain banned substances.

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**Approved October 2008**

## APPENDIX F

### National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC)

## SUPPLEMENTS POSITION STATEMENT

The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) strongly opposes the use of dietary supplements for the purpose of athletic advantage. Research data shows widespread use of dietary supplements by adolescent and high school athletes, despite considerable safety concerns. Dietary supplements are marketed as an easy way to enhance athletic performance, increase energy levels, lose weight, and feel better. It is proven that adolescents are more susceptible to advertising messages and peer pressure, increasing the risk of dietary supplement usage. This can create a culture more concerned about short term performance rather than overall long term health.

The Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994 removed dietary supplements from pre-market regulation by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Thus, many of the substances that can be obtained from nutrition stores and the internet are not subject to the same strict tests and regulations as “over the counter” and prescription medications. The companies that produce dietary supplements do not need to test their safety or effectiveness before they are available to consumers. In fact, dietary supplements cannot be removed from the marketplace unless they present a significant or unreasonable risk of illness or injury.

- **MYTHS** regarding dietary supplements:
  - - If a substance is natural, it must be safe and beneficial.
    - Athletes that consume a well balanced diet still have nutritional deficiencies.
    - Since dietary supplements may be purchased at a store or over the internet, they must be safe and legal.

The NFHS SMAC discourages the use of supplements by athletes due to the lack of published, reproducible scientific research addressing the benefits and documenting long term adverse health effects of the supplements, particularly in the adolescent age group. Dietary supplements should be used only upon the advice of one’s health care provider. School personnel and coaches should never recommend, endorse or encourage the use of any dietary supplement, drug, or medication for performance enhancement.

We recommend that coaches, athletic directors, and school personnel develop strategies that address the growing concerns of using dietary supplements. Such strategies may include conversations with athletes and their parents about the potential dangers of dietary supplement use. Athletes should be encouraged to pursue their goals through hard work and good nutrition, not dietary shortcuts.

- Dietary supplements receive no FDA regulation:
  - There is no guarantee the true amount or concentration of ingredients is listed on the label
  - There is no guarantee the substance is pure, as studies have found lead and arsenic in supplements.

- There may be other compounds not listed on the label in the dietary supplement which may be illegal or banned substances.
- There is minimal evidence that dietary supplements enhance performance for most high school sports.
  - There is even less evidence supporting their use in adolescents.
- In order to help prevent dietary supplement use:
  - School personnel, coaches, and parents should allow for open discussion about supplement use, but strongly encourage optimal nutrition and a well balanced diet.
  - Remind athletes that no supplement is harmless and free from consequences.
  - Remind athletes that there is no short cut to improved performance, it takes hard work.
  - Because they are not regulated, dietary supplements may contain impurities and illegal substances not listed on the label.
  - Adolescents that use dietary supplements are more likely to use steroids, continue usage into adulthood, and to engage in other high risk behaviors like smoking, drinking, and using drugs.

**References:**

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**Revised and Approved April 2009**

## APPENDIX G

### Loudoun County Public Schools Division of Athletics



#### Concussions in High School Sports—Guidelines for Parents, Athletes, & Coaches IMPORTANT INFORMATION—READ CAREFULLY

#### INTRODUCTION:

Effective July 1, 2011, the Code of Virginia will be amended to include Section 22.1-271.5 directing Virginia school divisions to develop and distribute guidelines for policies dealing with concussions in student-athletes, and requiring LCPS to obtain written acknowledgment of information regarding the identification and handling of suspected concussions in student athletes.

#### WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

- A concussion is a brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, face, neck, or body which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull. An athlete **does not** have to lose consciousness to suffer a concussion.

#### CONCUSSION FACTS:

- Concussions occur most frequently in football, but girls' lacrosse, girls' soccer, boys' lacrosse, wrestling and girls' basketball follow closely behind. **All athletes are at risk.**
- Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
- A concussion can affect a student's ability to do schoolwork and other activities.
- An athlete may not return to sports while still having symptoms from a concussion as they are at risk for prolonged symptoms and further injury.
- A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks.
- Most athletes who experience a concussion can recover completely as long as they do not return to play prematurely. The effects of repeated concussions can be cumulative, and after a concussion, there is a period in which the brain is particularly vulnerable to further injury. If an athlete sustains a second concussion during this period, the risk of permanent brain injury increases significantly and the consequences of a seemingly mild second concussion can be very severe, and even result in death (i.e., "second impact syndrome").

#### CONCUSSION SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS, COACHES, AND STUDENTS:

- Athlete appears dazed or stunned.
- Is confused about what to do.
- Forgets plays.
- Is unsure of game, score or opponent.
- Moves clumsily.
- Loses consciousness.
- Shows behavior or personality changes.
- Can't recall events prior to hit.
- Can't recall events after hit.

#### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION:

- Athlete feels Headache or "pressure" in head.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Balance problems or dizziness.
- Double or fuzzy vision.
- Bothered by light or noise.
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy.
- Concentration or memory problems.
- Confusion.

**ACTIONS IF A STUDENT ATHLETE SUFFERS A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION EVENT:**

- Immediately remove the student from play, be it a game or practice.
- Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, an increased risk for further injury, and even a risk of death.
- Have a medical professional diagnose the individual.
- **WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT.**

**WHEN CAN A STUDENT ATHLETE RETURN TO PLAY OR PRACTICE ACTIVITIES?**

- Athletes **may not return to play or practice** on the same day after suffering a concussion.
- Athletes **must be evaluated** by a health care professional and **be cleared** before returning to play or practice.
- Once cleared, the athlete may proceed with activities in a **step-wise fashion** to allow the brain to re-adjust to exertion.

**STEPS THE STUDENT ATHLETE MUST FOLLOW AFTER CLEARANCE BY A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL:**

If symptoms occur during any of the following steps, the **athlete must cease activity** and be **re-evaluated and cleared by their health care provider**.

- **Step 1** – Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight lifting.
- **Step 2** – Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.
- **Step 3** – Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight training can begin.
- **Step 4** – Full contact practice or training.
- **Step 5** – Game play.

**WHAT MUST BE DONE BY STUDENT ATHLETES, PARENTS, AND COACHES?**

- **All parties must** learn to recognize the “Signs and Symptoms” of concussion as listed above.
- Teach student athletes to immediately inform the trainer and coach if they experience such symptoms.
- Teach student athletes to tell the trainer and coach if they suspect that a teammate has a concussion.
- Ask teachers to monitor any decrease in grades or changes in behavior that could indicate a concussion.
- Report concussions to the trainer and coaches to help in monitoring injured athletes as they move to the next sports season.

**REST IS THE BEST TREATMENT FOR A CONCUSSION**

**Please acknowledge your receipt, understanding, and agreement with this important information by signing below.**

<b>I have read, fully understand, and agree to the above Loudoun County Public Schools guidelines regarding Student Athlete Concussions.</b>	
<b>Student Athlete Name (print):</b>	
<b>Student Athlete Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian Name (print):</b>	
<b>Parent/Guardian Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION—READ CAREFULLY**