

Activities Guide for High School Students and Parents



General Standards for Participation in Interscholastic Activities

PURPOSE: The Activities Guide for Students and Parents is a condensed pamphlet with information necessary to effectively understand and participate in the activities program in Prince William County.

The pamphlet includes a collection of information pertaining to state and county procedures and regulations. Additional reference on the administration of interscholastic activities will be found in the Virginia High School League Handbook and the Prince William County Public Schools Interscholastic Activity Handbook. Copies of these documents are available in each high school.

There may be questions that arise which may not be covered in this brochure. This pamphlet is only a guide. Only open communication among the coaching staff, activities directors, parents, students and school administrators will ensure an effective activity program.



ELIGIBILITY

ENROLLMENT

The students shall be officially registered as required by Virginia school laws and an attending member of a Virginia High School League (VHSL) school. They may request only the school in which they are registered and it is anticipated that they will complete their graduation requirements.

AGE

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

SEMESTER RULE

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

STUDENT CONDUCT

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

CONDUCT INELIGIBILITY

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

EJECTION

Students ejected from a scheduled contest by an official of the contest may not participate on the next playing date of that same activity. This includes post-season play of that activity.

SQUAD MEMBERSHIP

The coach of each sport is responsible for the determination of squad membership. A senior is not eligible for junior varsity competition in any sport with the exception of wrestling.

OUTSIDE TEAM MEMBERSHIP

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

TRANSFER

A student attending a high school without the benefit of residing within the school's attendance area and/or without special permission of the Transfer Committee is ineligible. Any student transferring from other school districts must have an official transcript on file prior to participating in contests.

RECRUITING STATEMENT

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

AMATEUR STATUS

A student who represents a school in an interscholastic sport shall be an amateur in that sport. An amateur athlete is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social, and benefits derived pleasurable.

ATTENDANCE

Each student is required to attend school and classes regularly. Any student who is absent the day of any activity cannot participate in that event. On the day of an event (game or practice) a student must attend school for at least one half of the day (10:30 AM). In the case of a weekend interscholastic contest, attendance in school Friday applies to the above statement. In the case of extenuating circumstances, the school administration may waive this rule.

ACTIVITY INSURANCE AND PARENTAL PERMISSION

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

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

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Student extracurricular activities are in integral part of school life and are used as a means of developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations, as well as knowledge and skills. The activities often require as much careful planning and supervision as student experiences in the academic subject area; however, care must be taken that these activities do not take precedence over subject matter areas, but remain as supplemental activities to the basic courses of study.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY - Continued

While it is desirable that students participate in such activities to the extent that they further their educational development, it is of paramount importance that such participation shall not jeopardize a student's academic achievement nor exploit their time and talents. Grades used to determine eligibility will be those recorded on the report card earned while attending a county school or as a result of transferring from a non-county school.

GRADE STANDARD FOR ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY

The student must pass five subjects and earn a "C" or better in two subjects.

The student may not practice, participate, or accompany the team during the ineligible period.

AWARDS

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

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

SUBSTANCE ABUSE, TOBACCO, AND WEAPONS POLICY

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

HAZING

Hazing in any form shall not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the organization.

EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITY

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

TRANSPORTATION

All students who are traveling to and from a school sponsored activity shall use school approved transportation.

LIMITS OF PARTICIPATION

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

ALL STAR GAMES

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

SPORTSMANSHIP

Admission to interscholastic events in Prince William County entitles spectators to enjoy a competitive exhibition of skills in an educational setting. We ask that spectators give the student athletes positive encouragements and support. Booming, taunting, or intimidating the officials and opponents is inappropriate and unacceptable and can lead to removal of spectator(s). Prince William County Public Schools encourages an atmosphere of sportsmanship and support for all athletes.

OUT-OF-SEASON PRACTICE

Member schools and coaches shall confine all organized or formal practices for a contestant or a team to the seasonal limitations. Any individual, group, or gathering that has assembled for the purpose of instruction and is under the direction of any member of the school coaching staff shall constitute a violation.

This does not apply to recreation programs sponsored by governmental agencies and civic organizations when approved by member schools. The program must be open to everyone in the community served and shall not be limited to varsity or junior varsity athletes from a specified school.

A school is permitted to organize and supervise conditioning programs to include weight lifting, running, and exercising as long as the program is general in nature and includes exercises designed to promote physical fitness. No school shall issue equipment designed for a specific sport for this type of program. These conditioning programs must be open to all members of the student body.

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOLS
Rules and Regulations Governing Participation
On Athletic Teams and Extracurricular Activities

Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Extracurricular Activity: _____

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

- II. **Rules of Conduct:** All activity participants are responsible for appropriate conduct as defined in the Prince William County Public Schools **Code of Behavior** and the rules established by their organization's constitution during the entire term of the activity. Violations may include but are not restricted to:
 1. Use of alcohol, drugs, or controlled dangerous substances (except by physician's prescription and notification of advisor).
 2. Possession of weapons.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: In accordance with the Code of Behavior, violation will result in immediate suspension for a minimum of thirty calendar days from participation in all school activities (teams, clubs, and all other school-sponsored activities), including practice. Whether suspended from school or not, coaches and/or sponsors, with the approval of the school administration, may suspend students from participation in school-sponsored activities for violations of the rules of the team, club, or activity regarding prohibited substances.

3. Use of tobacco.
4. Exceeding the allotted number of absences or tardiness to announced meetings, activities, etc.
5. Violation of the rules and regulations listed in the Prince William **County Code of Behavior**.
6. Failure to comply with program expectations.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violations of rules of conduct 3, 4, 5, or 6 will result in disciplinary action ranging from a conference to suspension to dismissal from the organization.

7. Misconduct or misbehavior which results in "out of school" suspension.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violation of the rule of conduct 7 will result in disciplinary action that will include suspension from the games missed and the next eligible event when the student returns, or possible dismissal from the organization.

8. Conduct, which results in conviction of non-traffic related class 1 or class 2 misdemeanor.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violation of the rule of conduct 8 will result in dismissal from all activities for the period of one year following the date of the conviction.

9. Fighting during interscholastic activities. This includes closely following an opposing player during a disturbance; making taunting gestures or sounds; baiting; punching whether the punch lands or not; pushing; wrestling in a contest other than wrestling; or tackling an opponent outside a legal play situation.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS: Violation of the rule of conduct 9 will result in a two game suspension from the next scheduled game. The same penalty applies to any member of the playing squad who leaves the bench during a fight. The Virginia High School League fines the student athlete.

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

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

School Board

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Prince William County

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Providing A World-Class Education

The Prince William County Public School Division does not discriminate in employment or in its educational programs and activities against qualified individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, age, veteran status, or disability.