

Athletics & Activities Handbook

The Henry County School Board recognizes the value of extracurricular activities in the educational process and the values that students develop when they have the opportunity to participate in an organized activity outside of the classroom.

Participants and responsible adults involved in School Board approved extracurricular activities are expected to demonstrate the same level of responsibility and behavior at practice and competitions as is expected in the classroom. The School Board further encourages the development and promotion of sportsmanship, ethics and integrity in all phases of the educational process and in all segments of the community, including administrators, participants, adult supervisors, parents, fans, spirit groups and support/booster groups.

-School Board Policy JFCB
July, 2006

The Henry County School Board does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, religion, disability, or national origin in its employment practices or educational programs and activities. The Administrator for Special Education is designated as coordinator of non-discrimination for access to and implementation of programs for students under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Human Resources Administrator is designated as coordinator for non-discrimination regarding personnel matters under Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. No person shall be denied employment solely because of any impairment which is unrelated to the ability to engage in activities involved in the position or program for which application has been made.

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Mission Statement for Henry County Athletics

Henry County Public Schools is committed to the overall health, character and well-being of each student. Extra-curricular activities are essential to the promotion of these ideals. Henry County Public Schools strives to provide opportunities for students through athletics and activities that bolster integrity, honesty, sportsmanship, innovation, teamwork, dedication and endurance.

Participants are involved in experiences that contribute to the development of both physical and mental wellness. Being involved in an extracurricular activity is a privilege, not a right. Henry County Public Schools strives to make each activity a quality experience for all participants and we reserve the right to revoke this privilege of participation when a student does not conduct him/herself in an acceptable manner or represent our community and school in a positive light.

Assumption of Risk

After school activities may result in situations where participants are at risk of physical injury. Coaches, staff and students exercise care in practices and games and take necessary precautions but this risk remains. It is critical student participants understand these risks and they adhere to all precautions and safety directions from their coach/advisor. These are developed in an attempt to minimize injuries.

Extra-Curricular Offerings:

	Middle School	High School
Fall Activities	Football, Volleyball	Football, Volleyball, Boys Cross Country, Golf, Girls Cross Country, Sideline Cheerleading, Competition Cheerleading, One-Act Theatre, Scholastic Bowl
Winter Activities	Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball	Wrestling, Boys & Girls Basketball, Swimming, Indoor Track, Sideline Cheerleading, Forensics, Scholastic Bowl
Spring Activities	Baseball, Girls Soccer, Boys Track, Girls Track, Boys Soccer, Softball	Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Softball, Baseball, Boys Track, Girls Track, Boys Tennis, Girls Tennis

Participation Requirements:

- A valid physical must be on file with the school that includes proof of insurance.
- Pledge form (including concussion info) signed by parent/guardian and student. The pledge form will be signed once in middle school and once in high school.

Middle School Sports Participation:

Henry County Public Schools offer sports at the middle school level in the following areas: football, volleyball, girls and boys basketball, girls and boys soccer, softball, baseball, and track & field. Current 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who meet eligibility requirements are allowed to participate at the middle school level.

Academics

Any student who does not pass their required classes during the current grading period will be suspended from competition until the mid-term grades are reviewed by Administration. If the student is passing their required classes at the mid-term, he/she may be reinstated to the team. This decision is made by the Principal at the end of the 6 weeks for high school and at the end of the semester/year for middle school.

In addition to this policy, students participating at the high school and middle school level must also comply with the Virginia High School League semester eligibility requirements outlined in Section 28-4-1 Scholarship Rule. Semester grades for high school, final grades for middle school and then quarter grades.

Grade	Required Classes to pass	Grading Period
Ninth - Twelfth	3 out of 4 classes	6 weeks
Sixth - Eighth	*4 out of 6 classes *Math and English must be passed	Semester

Attendance Requirement

All participants must be in school for the entire school day to be eligible for participation. Exceptions will follow the HCPS attendance policy regarding absences.

Out-of-School Suspension

Any participant assigned out-of-school suspension will be ineligible during the assigned suspension period. In addition, they may receive further discipline from the Principal, Athletic Director, or the Coach including temporary or permanent suspension from the team.

In-School Suspension

Given that any extra-curricular activities are privileges, any participant assigned to in-school suspension will be ineligible for practice or play on the day(s) they serve their in-school suspension.

Incident Suspension Policy

Any participant who becomes involved in an investigation by school administration will not be allowed to participate in practices or games while the investigation is ongoing.

Dismissal/Quitting

Any student who is dismissed from/or quits a team is ineligible to participate in another sport until that season ends. Students are also ineligible to participate in pre-season conditioning workouts, including open gym, until the end of that season. Appeals can only be granted by the Principal.

Equipment Distribution/Return

All equipment distributed to a student becomes the responsibility of the student until it is returned. Lost, stolen or damaged items are the responsibility of the student and the student will be held financially accountable for those items.

Communication Expectations

Coaches are expected to clearly communicate expectations, team requirements and their coaching philosophy. Parents and students are expected to communicate concerns, scheduling conflicts, illnesses and injuries.

Topics of conversation that are discouraged include playing time, team strategy, play calling and other students. These items are non-negotiable and will not be discussed. Additionally, it is inappropriate to approach a coach/sponsor before or after a contest or competition. The following steps are suggested to discuss concerns with a coach/sponsor:

- Preferably the student athlete and parent arrange a meeting with the coach to discuss concerns.
- If a desirable outcome cannot be reached, set up a meeting with the Athletic Director.

If you feel that the meeting with a coach/sponsor and an Athletic Director did not result in a reasonable explanation, you call and set up a meeting with the Principal to discuss the issue.

Sportsmanship

From the Virginia High School League Handbook:

27-13-8

The Spectator Should:

- (1) Realize that he/she represents the school just as definitely as does the member of a team and, therefore, has an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through this behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.
- (2) Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by approving and applauding good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.
- (3) Recognize that since the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the players through the medium of contests, victory or defeat is in reality of secondary importance.
- (4) Treat visiting teams and officials as guests, extending to them every courtesy.
- (5) Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
- (6) Respect the judgment and integrity of officials, realizing that their decisions are based upon game conditions as they observe them.

The Athlete Should:

- (1) Be courteous to visiting teams and officials.
- (2) Play hard and to the limit of his/her ability, regardless of discouragement. The true athlete does not give up nor does he/she quarrel, cheat, bet or grandstand.
- (3) Retain his/her composure at all times and never leave the bench or enter the playing field/court to engage in a fight.
- (4) Be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat. A true sportsman does not offer excuses for failures.
- (5) Maintain a high degree of physical fitness by observing team and training rules conscientiously.
- (6) Demonstrate loyalty to the school by maintaining a satisfactory scholastic standing and by participating in or supporting other school activities.
- (7) Play for the love of the game.
- (8) Understand and observe the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
- (9) Set a high standard of personal cleanliness.
- (10) Respect the integrity and judgment of officials and accept their decisions without questions.
- (11) Respect the facilities of host schools and the trust entailed in being a guest.

The Coach Should:

- (1) Exemplify behavior that is representative of the educational staff of the school and a credit to the teaching profession.
- (2) Demonstrate high ideals, good habits and desirable attitudes in personal behavior and demand the same standards of the players.
- (3) Emphasize to his/her players and bench personnel the importance of proper sideline behavior and the necessity of restraining from entering the playing field/court to engage in a fight.
- (4) Recognize that the purpose of competition is to promote the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being of the individual players and that the most important values of competition are derived from

playing the game fairly.

(5) Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.

(6) Maintain self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without public display of emotion or of dissatisfaction with the officials.

(7) Cooperate with the school principal in the planning, scheduling and conduct of sports activities.

(8) Employ accepted educational methods in coaching; giving all players an opportunity to use and develop initiative, leadership and judgment.

(9) Pay close attention to the physical condition and well-being of players, refusing to jeopardize the health of an individual for the sake of improving his team's chances to win.

(10) Teach athletes that it is better to lose fairly than win unfairly.

(11) Discourage gambling, profanity, abusive language and similar violations of the true sportsman's code.

(12) Refuse to disparage an opponent, an official or others associated with sports activities and discourage gossip and questionable rumors concerning them.

(13) Properly supervise student athletes under his/her immediate care and specifically observe a coach's responsibilities in conjunction with district and state contests.

Alcohol/Drug Policy

It is the goal of the Athletic Department, its coaching staff, athletic trainers, and administrators that all student-athletes are drug, tobacco and alcohol free at all times! The abuse of alcohol and illicit use of drugs can be detrimental to the physical and mental well-being of student-athletes, no matter when such use should occur during the school year. Use or abuse of alcohol and use of drugs can seriously interfere with the performance of students and athletes. This behavior can also be extremely injurious to student-athletes and their teammates, particularly when participating in athletic competition or practice.

The Henry County School Board has issued the following guidelines/consequences concerning the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Violations of the Athletic Code of Conduct will result in the following:

- First Offense - 30-day suspension from competition (30 calendar days)
- Second Offense - 90-day suspension from competition (90 calendar days)
- Third Offense - 365-day suspension from practice and competition
- Fourth Offense - Suspended from participation for the remainder of their high school career

Participants and parents must understand that these violations apply to the student's entire secondary school career. For example, if the first offense occurs in the 9th grade year and a second violation occurs in the junior year, the result would be the 90-day suspension during junior year.

Examples of Violations:

- refusing to take an alcohol breathalyzer
- attending a party where alcohol is served
- possession or consumption of alcohol/illegal drugs

Any athlete removed from the team will forfeit any school-sponsored awards for that activity.

Reinstatement to the team, if at all or at what level following such a suspension, is at the complete discretion of school administration.

Concussion Procedures

The Virginia High School League (VHSL) established guidelines effective July 20, 2011 that all coaches, athletes and parents of athletes be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Signed documentation must be on file by the first practice date or the student athlete will not be allowed to participate until signed documentation has been received.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head.

<i>Signs Observed</i>	<i>Symptoms reported by the Athlete</i>
Appears dazed or stunned Confused Forgets plays Unsure of game, score or opponent Moves clumsily Answers questions slowly Loses consciousness Shows behavior or personality changes Can't recall events prior to Can't recall events after hit	Headache Nausea and/or vomiting Balance problems or dizziness Double or fuzzy vision Sensitivity to light or noise Feeling sluggish Feeling groggy or foggy Concentration or memory problems Confusion

Removal from extracurricular physical activities:

- A student athlete suspected by a coach, 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 referred for further treatment if necessary.
- A student athlete who has been removed from play, evaluated and suspected to have sustained a concussion shall not return to play the same day.
- 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, coach or properly trained individual conducting the assessment. Such determination is final and may not be overruled.

- The coach of a student athlete may elect not to return the student athlete to play, even after an assessment determines the student athlete is no longer suspected of sustaining a concussion.

Return to Play:

1. No student athlete shall be allowed to return to extracurricular physical activities (practices, games, competitions) until the student athlete presents" a written medical release from his/her health care provider. The release shall certify that:
 - a. The provider is aware of the current medical guidance on concussions evolution and management;
 - b. The student athlete no longer exhibits signs and symptoms or behaviors: and
 - c. The student athlete has successfully completed a progressive return to sports program which shall last a minimum of five (5) calendar days.
2. The coach may elect to not allow the student athlete to return to physical activities (even after receiving a medical release) if the coach observes signs or symptoms of a concussion. If the coach makes this decision, the coach must relay his observations and concerns to the parent/guardian of the student athlete within 24 hours.

Game Admittance

All in-season athletes participating in a sport must pay to enter other sports contests. Only the JV team of the corresponding sport is allowed in free. Henry County **employees** are admitted free of charge upon showing their Henry County Employee badge. This does not include family members or other guests of the employee. Henry County Volunteer Badges are not accepted. Children under the age of 5 are also admitted free of charge to all events. [Children 14 and under are admitted free to middle school events only.]

Web Site Information

Henry County Public Schools strives to keep parents and community members informed of events, performances, schedules, changes, and cancellations with regards to our extra-curricular activities. We encourage you to sign up to receive email and/or text message notifications about schedule changes. You can do this by following the directions below:

- www.piedmontdistrictva.org
- Click on your school (for middle school the high school you will attend)
- Click on the “Notify Me” button on the right side of the page
- Follow the onscreen prompts to enter your information

You can also visit each schools’ webpage to find out information about events happening at that school.

You can do this by following the directions below:

- www.henry.k12.va.us
- Select “Schools” on the left side of the page
- Choose your school

HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



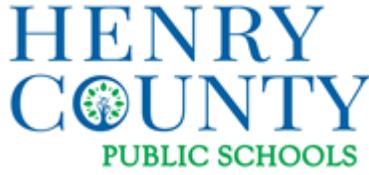
HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PLEDGE PROGRAM

I understand fully that my participation in VHSL-sanctioned, competitive, extracurricular activities and middle school athletics is a privilege. In order to participate, I must be a “student in good standing.” Therefore, I hereby agree to accept and abide by the standards, rules, and regulations set forth by the Henry County School Board and the coaches/sponsors for these activities in order to participate. I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Pledge Program guidelines.

Furthermore, I understand that **any** use, possession, or distribution of alcohol, tobacco, or other illegal or synthetic drugs is strictly prohibited. I pledge not to use, possess, or distribute these substances under any circumstances.

I understand that I may forfeit my privilege to participate in VHSL sanctioned sports/activities as well as Non-VHSL sanctioned activities if I break this pledge.

Your signature will be required on the next to last page of this document stating that you have received, read, understand and will abide by this pledge.



High School Participation Form for Eighth Grade Students

All eighth grade students will be eligible to try out for junior varsity athletic teams and other activities that are available for ninth grade students' participation (Soccer, marching band, etc.) for the current school year if the following guidelines are met and all signatures are secured. * These guidelines are in place to provide all students with opportunities for success and achievement, on and off the field and to ensure there are a sufficient number of athletes to field a junior varsity team or other high school sponsored group.

Sport/Activity: _____

Coach/Sponsor Name: _____

The following signature (high school coach/sponsor) acknowledges that the high school coach/sponsor is planning to include no more than the maximum number of 8th graders listed below. By signing here, the coach/sponsor states that he/she is taking only players who will be necessary for the success of the JV program. Additionally, signature indicates that only players who will receive playing time are being offered the opportunity to play JV.

High School Coach/Sponsor Printed Name

High School Coach/Sponsor Signature

Date

The following signature (high school principal) acknowledges that the high school coach/sponsor has discussed all information indicated above with their coach/sponsor.

High School Principal Printed Name

High School Principal Signature

Date

The number of 8th Grade students playing JV will not exceed _____.

The following signatures (middle school principal and coach/sponsor) acknowledge that if the maximum number of eighth grade students noted above opt to participate at the high school level, this will **not** prevent the middle school from fielding a team/group for the sport/activity noted above.

Middle School Coach/Sponsor Printed Name

Middle School Coach/Sponsor Signature

Date

Middle School Principal Printed Name

Middle School Principal Signature

Date

* No qualified ninth or tenth grade student will be "cut" from a junior varsity team to create an opening for an equally qualified eighth grade student. All eighth grade students who are eligible and receive a spot on any junior varsity athletic team **must** adhere to the same guidelines and expectations as the participating high school students. Special placement students must participate in extracurricular opportunities at the school which they are approved to attend.

Henry County Athletics/Activities Code Signature Page

It is the goal of Henry County Public Schools, our coaches, administrators and faculty that all Henry County students should be drug, tobacco, and alcohol free at all times. A student's opportunity to participate in an extra-curricular activity is a privilege, not a right. Student-participants who represent their school during or beyond the normal school day must be willing to abide by regular school rules and additional guidelines established by the coach/sponsor.

By signing this statement, you, both student and parent, are agreeing that you have a complete understanding of the rules and consequences of the Henry County Activities/Athletic Code and agree to abide by these rules and regulations.

*By signing, you agree that this is binding for your entire middle school/high school career.

Student-Athlete Printed Name

Student-Athlete Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Email

Henry County Athletic Permission Form

STUDENT ATHLETE NAME: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

My son/daughter has permission to ride home with the below named parent/guardian from away sporting events (rather than returning on the bus with the team):

*Students must be transported by a parent/guardian who is at least 21 years of age and possess a valid Virginia Driver’s License and liability insurance.

I relieve Henry County Public Schools of any liability (financial or otherwise) in the event(s) of illness, accident, or other emergency that may occur while transporting my student from athletic events.

Date: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

**Teams that Practice or Play Off-Site
(Due to the location of facilities)**

_____ I give my child permission to drive to practice or to a home game site throughout the season.

I relieve Henry County Public Schools of any liability (financial or otherwise) in the event(s) of illness, accident, or other emergency that may occur while transporting my student from athletic events.

Date: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature: _____