



# **Athletic Handbook for Covington City Public Schools**

## **2019-2020**

**Covington City Public Schools  
340 East Walnut Street  
Covington, Virginia 24426**

**[www.covington.k12.va.us](http://www.covington.k12.va.us)**

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Dear Athletes, Parents, and Guardians:

We are pleased that you have chosen to participate in the Covington City Schools' athletic program. Our programs offer a wide array of athletic choices that will help you build your physical skills and abilities and gain an understanding of the meaning of "team." It is common knowledge that sports can create lifelong friendships and life lessons. We hope you will as well!

Other students respect the student-athletes as they represent the school system. Athletes are leaders on the field and on the court. Sportsmanship, academics, and fair play will be stressed while you participate in athletics at Covington City Public Schools.

Be a leader. Be a role model. Be a good citizen.

Have a great athletic season!

Covington High School Administration & Athletic Department

Covington City Public Schools offers athletic/academic activity opportunities for students in grades 8 through 12 on junior varsity and varsity teams. Middle school teams are also offered for students in grades 7 through 8. Covington City Public Schools currently offers the following activities for fall, winter, and spring.

	<b><u>FALL</u></b>	<b><u>WINTER</u></b>	<b><u>SPRING</u></b>
<b>High School</b>	Cheerleading Cross Country Boys & Girls Football Golf – Boys & Girls Volleyball – Girls	Basketball – Boys & Girls Cheerleading Indoor Track Wrestling Scholastic Bowl	Baseball Soccer – Boys & Girls Softball Track – Boys & Girls
<b>Middle School</b>	Volleyball – Girls	Basketball – Boys	Track – Boys & Girls

Covington High School competes as a member of the Virginia High School League (VHSL), the state governing body for interscholastic athletics and activities. Membership in the VHSL allows our teams to compete for conference, regional, and state championships, when available. For interscholastic athletic competition, schools are grouped by enrollment. More information can be found at the VHSL website [www.vhsl.org](http://www.vhsl.org).

### **Classification System:**

Covington High School – Class 1A, Region 1C, Pioneer District  
School Colors: Navy & Vegas Gold

### **Pioneer District**

Bath County  
Covington  
Craig County  
Eastern Montgomery  
Highland  
Narrows  
Parry McCluer

### **Region 1C**

Pioneer District Schools plus...  
Auburn  
Bland  
Galax  
George Wythe

Covington High School Athletic Schedule can be found at:

[www.pioneerdistrictva.org](http://www.pioneerdistrictva.org)

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## Introduction

### Mission Statement

The mission of Covington City Public Schools Athletic Program is to prepare student-athletes physically, mentally, emotionally, and academically for lifelong participation in sports and activities.

### Statement of Philosophy

CCPS believes that athletic participation promotes perseverance, thinking under pressure, loyalty, physical well-being, emotional stability, and teamwork. We believe that athletes should be successful students who are recognized for their contributions to our school. We believe that athletic participation is an important part of the middle and high school experience and we encourage all students to become part of the athletics and activities offered by CCPS.

We understand that participation on an athletic team demands a level of commitment that involves both dedication and sacrifice. This is required of not only our student-athletes, but also of our coaches and parents. We believe that parent support is critical for the success of our athletic programs.

### Athletic Department Goals

- To support the role of athletics as a vital part of the education process.
- To support our school's belief in the development of the whole person; spirit, mind and body, through athletic competition.
- To supplement the academic programs of study.
- To provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of responsibility and learn leadership, organization, and team participation skills.
- To conduct a sports program in accordance with the letter and spirit of the rules and regulations of our school system, District, Region, and VHSL.

### Statements

- With those goals in mind, the student-athletes, coaches, parents, and administration will work together to abide by the rules and regulations of the athletic programs and activities.
- Participation in athletics and activities is a privilege that must be continuously earned by student-athletes and coaches.
- By adhering to these goals and standards of conduct, we will maintain the best possible climate for personal growth, spirited competition, and loyal community support.
- Zero code of conduct infractions by coaches will be tolerated.

## **CCPS School Board Policies & Procedures**

The Covington City School Board is committed to nondiscrimination with regard to sex, gender, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law. This commitment prevails in all of its policies and practices concerning staff, students, educational programs and services, and individuals and entities with whom the Board does business.

### **Academic Requirements and College Planning**

- All student-athletes should follow the academic recommendations and requirements for the specific diploma they wish to achieve upon high school graduation. These requirements can be found in the CCPS Covington High School student handbook.
- Selecting a college and making career plans are two of the most important decisions to be made by a high school student and his/her parents or guardians. While the student and his/her parents or guardians are the most important part of this process, guidance counselors, teachers, and coaches can help.
- A total team effort of these individuals will achieve the best results.
- If you think you might want to play a sport in college or even pursue an athletic scholarship start your preparation early. The following information can serve as a guide in the process of selecting a college or university and preparing for college athletic participation. For more information, a student and his/her parents or guardians should meet with the school guidance counselor. A student athlete interested in attending college and participating in a sport should obtain a copy of "Making Sure You Are Eligible to Participate in College Sports" from the guidance office.

#### **Grades 9 and 10**

- Develop a sports resume of athletic achievements including news clippings
- Attend sports camps to increase exposure, improve skills, and to gain contest experience
- Participate on high school teams year-round if possible, to gain a wider perspective and a more impressive resume

#### **Grade 11**

- Develop a list of perspective schools with the help of your guidance counselor and coach
- Take a strong academic load that is not only challenging, but also meets the NCAA requirements
- Make your best effort in school and get the highest-grade point average (GPA) possible
- Continue to develop your athletic resume
- Obtain literature and visit colleges you may be interested in attending
- Work with your coach to evaluate your athletic skills to determine a realistic level of competition
- Attend sports camps during the summer
- Meet with your guidance counselor regarding your interests and the recruitment process
- Attend financial aid seminars and fill out appropriate financial aid forms.

#### **Grade 12**

- Request and return college applications as early as possible. Pay attention to application deadlines. Work closely with school guidance counselor to be familiar with the application process.
- Complete and return financial aid forms paying close attention to deadlines
- Continue to keep your athletic resume updated
- Re-take SAT or ACT tests if necessary
- Contact college coaches to express interest in their school athletic program. Include your athletic resume and other pertinent information
- Request your high school coach to write letters of recommendations to the colleges you have applied to and be familiar with the NCAA Clearinghouse/eligibility requirements.

### **Student Conduct**

1. Decisions concerning an athlete's eligibility to participate in the athletic programs will be made by the local school administration subject to VHSL rules and regulations.
2. All athletes are to abide by all school rules for student conduct and conduct themselves at all times in a manner that brings credit to themselves as athletes and as a representative of CCPS. The principal reserves the right to remove any athlete not representing high standards for the school system.
3. Any athlete who becomes involved in a situation which is detrimental to the team and/or school can expect disciplinary action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and discipline matrix. An athlete who is suspended from school is not eligible to practice, play, or attend sporting events. Suspension for fighting will carry an additional two game suspension upon returning to school. Parents can appeal the additional two games to the Athletic Director if they feel that there were extenuating circumstances.
4. Any athlete who has been charged with any felony will be removed from the team until disposition of the charges. If any athlete is found guilty of a felony, he/she will be removed from the team for 60 days or the end of the sports season, whichever is longer. Misdemeanor charges will be reviewed on a case by case basis and outcomes could affect participation in athletics.
5. Any athlete in possession or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other illegal substances or paraphernalia will be removed from the team for 60 days or end of the sports season, whichever is longer. This means that he/she cannot attend practice, travel, or attend banquets with their team. These athletes will not be nominated for end of the season awards in that sport. Athletes are always subject to suspension or expulsion from school as well.
6. Any athlete with tobacco products (including e-cigarettes, hookah, JUUL, etc.) in their possession will be suspended from 2 games for the first offense and must attend a class on the dangers of vaping, tobacco products (i.e. Community Services Board) and will be removed from the team if there is a second offense. These athletes will not be nominated for end of the season awards in that sport. Athletes are always subject to suspension or expulsion from school as well.
7. Any athlete involved in a fight during competition will sit out a two-game suspension upon returning to school. If the athlete misses two games during their out of school suspension from school, he/she will sit out two additional games upon returning to school (i.e. a total of 4 games). If that athlete is involved in another fight during the season, he/she will be removed from the team. Suspension for fighting will carry an additional two game suspension upon returning to school after the school suspension is served. Parents can appeal the additional two games to the Athletic Director if they feel there were extenuating circumstances.
8. Hazing or bullying will not be tolerated and will result in removal from the team for the remainder of the season.
9. Disrespect during practice: this behavior will not be tolerated, and any further occurrences of this behavior may result in a meeting with player, parent/guardian, coach(es), administrator(s), and/or Athletic Directors. This may result in dismissal from the team and could carry over to each sport season that school calendar year.
10. Vandalism or Theft: any VHSL participant who vandalizes and/or steals school property will be dismissed from the team immediately.
11. Any athlete who has received a disciplinary consequence of In-School Suspension, Out-of-School Suspension, and/or who have been referred to law enforcement or court services MUST report the incident to the coach immediately. The coach will present the facts to the Athletic Director and/or administrator who will determine eligibility. Playing time and athletic eligibility may be affected.
12. Following an out-of-school suspension, an athletic panel of head coaches and administration will meet when any VHSL participant is suspended from school. The individual case will be reviewed by the panel and the Administration to determine if the participant will be allowed to remain in the activity or on the team. Any VHSL participant suspended from school one-four days will have: one activity/game suspension upon his/her return from suspension and will make-up all conditioning. Any VHSL participant suspended from school five-eight days or more will have: a two activity/game suspension upon his/her return from suspension and will make-up all conditioning. Any VHSL participant suspended (OSS) twice during any activity season will automatically be dismissed from the team. Fighting (regardless of days suspended) will result in a two-game suspension upon return to school.
13. An athlete must be in school for at least 50% of the school day to be eligible to participate in an athletic activity including practices and games (2 out of 4 full blocks). It is expected that all athletes be in school for the entire school day. Individual exceptions such as documented family emergencies, pre-arranged family trips, medical or dental appointments, school field trips, college visits, court appearances, and other



absences that are pre-approved by the Athletic Director and/or principal are accepted. In-school suspension does not count as attendance for the purposes of this rule. The discovery of a violation of any of these attendance/eligibility rules after the contest or event will result in suspension from participation in the next athletic event or contest date. Repeated absences or early dismissals from school will affect participation and ultimately an athlete's membership on the team.

### **Responsibilities of the Athlete and/or Coach**

- Physicals – All athletes must have a completed VHSL Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physician's Certificate Form on file at the school before they may participate. A physical must be dated after May 1 to be used for any sport during the next school year. One physical dated after May 1st is good for the entire school year until June 30. Athletes must also have an annual concussion education form on file in the Athletic Training office along with the VHSL physical form.
- Insurance - It is recommended that all athletes have primary insurance coverage (school or private) as noted on the VHSL Physical Exam Form.
- Grade requirements - The VHSL and Covington High School requires an athlete to pass 3 out of 4 block classes each semester to be eligible to participate in any sport. (PM 28A-5-1 SCHOLARSHIP RULE/Block Scheduling (5-94)-When a school offers four classes each semester (block scheduling), students must pass three of these four classes to be eligible the following semester. There is no yearly eligibility option i.e. combine first and second semester passing grades, since this block scheduling is on a "stand alone" semester grade basis).
- Class Attendance - It is the responsibility of the athlete to attend school on a regular basis. An athlete must be in attendance for at least half the school day (2 full blocks for each school day) in order to participate in practice, conditioning programs or a game (unless the absence has been pre-arranged through the attendance office or the office of the athletic directors – i.e. court, doctor, and dental appointment).
- Dress – Athletes are encouraged to dress in an appropriate manner whenever they represent Covington High School.
- Equipment and Uniforms – Once equipment and/or uniforms are issued it becomes the responsibility of the athlete. If any of these items are lost, destroyed, or not returned by the athlete, he/she will be held financially responsible for replacing it. All payments for this equipment must be made at the end of the season to the Coach or Athletic Directors.
- Athletes must return or pay for all equipment from a previous season before participating in any other sports or sports seasons.
- An athlete who begins practice in one sport and is released from the team for any reason other than injury or being "cut" or a circumstance beyond the student's control may NOT participate in any other after school activity - including scorekeeper, student manager, etc. during that same season
- Social Media Guidelines:
  - Participating in athletics at Covington High School is a privilege and should be regarded as such.
  - Inappropriate use of social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and other social media sites will not be tolerated.
  - Student-athletes will not be allowed to use negative or condescending comments on social media.
  - Student-athletes should not have contact with other student-athletes from any other school via social media regarding or relating to athletics or their school systems.

- Any inappropriate behavior regarding social media will be handled immediately by administrative personnel.

### **Other**

- All uniforms and equipment issued to athletes must be returned within a week after the conclusion of the season. Students assume financial responsibility for missing, lost, or damaged equipment or uniforms. The athlete may not participate in the next athletic contest until equipment obligations are met and all fees are paid in full.
- Athletes may not participate in more than one sport during a sports season unless the athlete has approval of the two coaches, and the two coaches have met with and received approval from the Athletic Director. Athletes must determine primary and secondary sport at the beginning of the season. Athletes who are given permission will be monitored academically on a more frequent basis to assess their success maintaining dual participation status.
- For safety reasons, the athletes should not wear necklaces, rings, earrings, other piercings, or watches while training, practicing, or participating in games.
- Locker rooms – Athletes will be respectful of other athletes' property while in the locker rooms. Any disrespect or breaking this rule could affect playing time or participation on an athletic team.
- Overnight Trips – At times, athletic participation may require overnight trips. The trip must be pre-approved by the CCPS School Board.
- Media Release – I understand that by participating in extracurricular activities and sports, that my student's picture and name may be used by media outlets. Also, CCPS photographs athletes and games and those photographs may be used on the CCPS website, Facebook, or Twitter.
- Transportation – Athletic teams will travel on school buses, charter buses, and school vans/cars. Athletes will be released to their parents only to travel home from away games depending on the team rules of the particular coach. The parents may take another athlete home only if the coach has a written note from their parent with the name of the parent who has permission to take the athlete home. A coach reserves the right to require all athletes to ride the bus home from an away athletic event and not ride home with a parent.
- Each individual team will have additional team rules that the athletes will be expected to follow. These rules will be on file and approved by the Athletic Director prior to the season. Any team rule violation must result in the parent and Athletic Director being notified by the coach as soon as possible. Violations of team rules will be handled on a case by case basis by the coach, Athletic Director and/or principal. Parents will be notified of any meetings to discuss the violation.
- Inclement Weather Protocol – When there is no school in session, the following will occur: 1) School board office will notify all parents and students of the decision to call off school; 2) no athletic practices or games will be held on dates when school is called off due to inclement weather; 3) in the event our team is to travel to a school division that is closed for inclement weather, we will not be traveling to that school division to play; 4) in special cases where games must take place before a certain date due to district, region, or state deadlines, the administration and/or superintendent will have the final decision-making privileges regarding athletic events.

### **Tryouts**

Students must meet all eligibility requirements, including having the results of a valid physical examination on file, in order to try out for a CCPS athletic team. Physical examinations must take place after May 1 for the next academic year and run through June 30. Because there is no guarantee a student will make the team, the school does not reimburse a student for any expense associated with trying out – including, but not limited to, the cost of the athletic physical or equipment purchased in anticipation of making the team.

Prospective athletes must follow the tryout procedure set by the coaches. Absences from tryouts for any reason may hinder a student's chances of making the team. Athletes should discuss matters of this type with the coach and Athletic Director and/or Principal. Tryouts are held regardless of holidays or vacations, and candidates are expected to be present for all sessions. Tryouts are held over at least a three-day period. There may be double sessions when school is not in session. Weather conditions may necessitate an indoor format or may extend the tryout period.

After the tryout period, those not progressing will be notified by the coach. Any additional cuts follow the same format for notification. Tryout out for a second, same season sport – after being cut from another one – is allowed at the discretion of the coaches and Athletic Director. Once an athlete leaves a team for another sport, he/she cannot switch back. Before considering switching sports, athletes should meet with the Athletic Director for guidance.

There is some overlapping of sports seasons. Students who are participating in previous seasons' sport may not quit that sport to practice in another. There is no penalty or disadvantage in the second sport because of this rule. Tryout periods must be extended for candidates involved in another CCPS athletic team whose season has not yet been completed. Tryout periods must be extended for candidates who are returning after a significant injury, candidate not enrolled as a CCPS student during the initial tryout period but, upon enrolling meets all eligibility requirements and/or the number of participants in a given sport drops below an acceptable level. The principal and/or Athletic Director approves player selection decisions made by the coach. Candidates have the opportunity to hear from the coach his or her rationale for the selection. Parents seeking further information may contact the coach with an Athletic Administrator present. However, the coach will only discuss that parent's child and no other student-athlete. Candidates and their parents must respect the decisions of the coach. Any inappropriate language or behavior directed toward the coach by the candidate or their parent or guardian may result in the candidate being suspended from further athletic participation.

A “drop” is defined as a decision by a student-athlete, parent, or guardian that the student will no longer participate in the sport for the remainder of the season. When dropping from a team, an athlete must discuss the situation with the coach before the drop is finalized. Once finalized, all equipment that was issued must be returned in good condition within a week from dropping from the team. Dropping from a team is a drastic step that disrupts much of the work the team accomplished up to that point. An athlete and his or her parent or guardian should consult with the coach prior to making this decision. A student may not drop from a sport that conducted tryouts and subsequent cuts, and then participate in another sport.

### **Communication**

- Communication expected from parents:
  - Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance of the date in question
  - Specific concerns with regard to a coach's philosophy, actions, and/or expectations
  - Disclosure of other issues as they apply to your child's participation on the team
  - Any concerns should be expressed DIRECTLY to the head coach of the team in the presence of the Athletic Director. Please call Covington High School and schedule a meeting (540-965-1410). This meeting should not occur after a game and/or contest but should be scheduled for a specific time.
  - It is appropriate to discuss treatment of your child, ways to help your child improve, and concerns about your child's behavior. However, it is inappropriate to discuss playing time, team strategy (i.e. play calling), and other student-athletes.
- Communication expected from coach:
  - Philosophy of coaching
  - Expectations the coach has for all student-athletes in the athletic program
  - Locations and times of all practices and contests
  - Team requirements, i.e. practices, fees, special equipment, and off-season conditioning
  - Procedure should a student-athlete be injured during participation
  - Discipline that may result in dismissal of student-athletes from a team

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR VHSL PARTICIPATION**

#### **Virginia High School League**

The Virginia High School League (VHSL) is the governing body for Virginia interscholastic athletics. All rules and regulations governing high school athletes and athletics are legislated by this organization. A complete text of these regulations is available from the school Athletic Director or can be found at [www.vhsl.org](http://www.vhsl.org).

### **VHSL INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS**

**(VHSL HANDBOOK, SECTION 28)**  
**GENERAL RULES APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS**

**28A-2-1 BONA FIDE STUDENT RULE**

- (1) The student shall be a regular bona fide student in good standing of the school which he/she represents.
- (2) Any student who is under penalty of suspension, or whose character or conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon his/her school, is not considered in good standing.

**28-4-1 GRADE RULE**

The student shall be enrolled in the last four years of high school.

- (1) 8<sup>th</sup> graders may only participate on the sub-varsity level for one year prior to entering the ninth grade.
- (2) 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who passed five eighth grade subjects the past school year (see note following (28-5-1) (6) and reached the age of fifteen on or before the first day of August may compete on the varsity level.

**28A-3-1 ENROLLMENT RULE**

The student shall have been regularly enrolled in the school which he/she represents no later than the fifteenth day of the semester.

**28A-5-1 SCHOLARSHIP RULE**

The student shall:

- A) For the first semester be currently enrolled in no 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 immediate preceding year or the immediate preceding semester for schools that certify credit on a semester basis; and
- B) For the second semester be currently enrolled in no 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 immediate preceding semester.

NOTE: Credit for courses must be recognized by the State Department of Education. Such credit is to be awarded for the semester in which the work is scheduled to be completed. Credit for summer school work must be applied on the immediate preceding semester or year. Courses for non-credit cannot be used toward the five-subject pass rule.

**28A-5-2 EXCEPTIONS**

- (4) A special education student who is working toward a special diploma must make standard progress as determined by the student's IEP.
- (5) A special education student who is working toward a standard diploma must take and pass the equivalent of five subjects in accordance with any IEP modifications. If the IEP Committee determines that a special education student working toward a standard diploma should take fewer than five subjects, he/she must pass those subjects mandated by their IEP.

**28A-1-1 AGE RULE**

The 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.

**28A-7-1 TRANSFER RULE**

The student shall not have been 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 in cases of changes in court ordered custody that involve transfers within a school or between contiguous school divisions, the lesser of ONE SEMESTER or 90 DAY PENALTY OF INELIGIBILITY will be in effect from the date of the transfer.

**28A-7-3 INTERPRETATIONS**

- (7) Residence is defined as the domicile on an individual, meaning that the individual lives in a locality with the intent to make it a fixed and permanent home. Domicile requires more than bodily presence as an inhabitant in a given place: it requires bodily presence and an intention to make such place a fixed and permanent home. Other indicia of domicile include automobile registration, voter registration and the reporting of mailing address change to

the appropriate agencies, such as the post office, utility companies, creditors and employers. Under no circumstances can a family or student participant have two residences for eligibility purposes. It is the obligation of the school to know the complete residence status of each student and to see that all comply with these requirements. Any change in residence must be bona fide. Determination of what constitutes a bona fide change of residence depends upon the facts of each case, but in order for a change of residence to be considered bona fide at least the following facts must exist:

- (1) The original residence must be abandoned as a residence; that is sold, rented or disposed of as a residence, and must not be used as residence by any member of the family.
- (2) The entire family must make the change and take with them the household goods and furniture appropriate to the circumstance.
- (3) The change must be made with the intent that is permanent.

#### **28A-7-2 TRANSFER RULE EXCEPTIONS**

A student shall become eligible for interscholastic competition after he/she has completed 365 days of attendance at the high school which he/she transferred, immediately preceding the semester for which the student desires to become eligible. For the purpose of this rule, the transferring of student must have been regularly enrolled in the school in which he/she wishes to establish eligibility no later than the fifteenth day of the first of two consecutive semesters, unless he/she is granted a waiver of the Enrollment Rule by the district committee. For the purposes of this rule the student's eligibility or ineligibility shall be determined on the first day of the school year and on the first calendar day following the end of the first semester according to the school board adopted calendar. Students who qualify under the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act may be eligible under the Transfer Rule. In cases of court-ordered custody, a copy of the appropriate legal custody document shall be submitted to the Executive Director for review and approval. Approval is contingent upon the receiving school's principal attesting that there is no evidence that the transfer was for athletic and/or activity purposes. A student, 18 years of age or older, who would be subject to a transfer of custody if he/she were less than 18 years of age may petition the Executive Director through the student's principal for eligibility and the Executive Director has authority to grant such eligibility immediately.

#### **28A-6-1 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.

#### **28B-2-1 AMATEUR RULE**

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

#### **28B-3-1 ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION / PARENTAL CONSENT / PHYSICAL EXAMINATION RULE**

The student shall have submitted to the principal of his/her school, prior to becoming a member of any school athletic squad or team, League Form No. 2 (Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Examination Form), completely filled in and properly signed, attesting that he/she has been examined and found to be physically fit for athletic competition, and that his/her parents' consent to his/her participation.

#### **28B-4-1 AWARDS RULE**

Students may accept awards presented or approved by the student's school. Outside agencies or organizations which desire to present awards or recognitions to students for achievement in some phrase of the League program when such awards are open competitively to the students of more than one school must first secure the permission of the Executive Director.

#### **28B-6-1 INDEPENDENT TEAM RULE**

During the sports season for the relevant sport, a student may, while a member of a school squad or team engaged in interscholastic sports become a member of or participate with an organized team in the same sport which is independent of the school's control so long as such participation does not conflict with the scheduled activities of the school squad or team. No school or student shall be declared ineligible for participation in interscholastic sports

because of participation by a student as a member of an organized team in the same sport which is independent of the school's control during the sports season for the relevant sports.

### **30-5-3 SPECIFIC PENALTY FOR GIVING FALSE INFORMATION**

If a student or his/her parent(s) or guardian gives false information, written or verbal, that affects his/her eligibility upon entering and/or during his/her eight semesters of eligibility, relating to his/her residence, eligibility or any other aspects of these rules and regulations, the student shall become deemed ineligible at any VHSL school for a period of one year from the date the information is certified as being false.

### **27-11-1 SPORTSMANSHIP RULE**

Member schools are required to conduct all their relations with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship. Acts, which are prima facie evidence of failure to abide by this rule, are those, which are noted below, and others of a similar nature, which transgress the usually accepted code for good sportsmanship. All incidents of conduct that are violations of the Sportsmanship Rule must be reported to the Virginia High School League.

### **28-14-1 DUE PROCESS RULE**

Whenever a principal has information that a student who wants to represent to school in a League-sponsored activity may be ineligible to do so because of failure to qualify under one or more of the individual eligibility regulations in Section 28 of the Handbook, he/she shall promptly conduct an informal hearing within three working days to resolve the question. The student shall be entitled to be present at the hearing and to offer information about his/her eligibility. If, subsequent to the hearing, the principal determines that the student is ineligible, he/she shall inform the student by letter of his/her ineligibility and the specific individual eligibility regulations involved. Excluding those exceptions listed under 28-14-2, the student or parent may appeal the principal's declaration of ineligibility to the District Committee by writing to the district chairman. The District Committee shall review the case within five working days after receiving notice of the appeal. The student shall be entitled to be present at the District Committee hearing and to offer information about his/her eligibility. The District Committee may set aside a rule only for these specific cases: Enrollment Rule 28-3-2 (2), Scholarship Rule 28-4-2 (3) and Transfer Rule 28-6-2 (13). All other decisions of the District Committee shall be recommendations only. Any decision of the District Committee may be appealed by the student, parent or member school principal to the Executive Director and subsequent levels of appeal in accordance with Section 33 of the Handbook. Whenever a District Committee or an inter-district committee as information that a student previously certified as eligible by the principal may not be eligible because of failure to qualify under one or more of the individual eligibility regulations in Section 28 of the Handbook, the committee shall promptly, within five working days, conduct an informal hearing to resolve the question. The student and the principal shall be entitled to be present and to offer information about the case, and the District Committee shall consult the Executive Director as required in Section 20-3-1 of the Handbook. The District Committee may set aside a rule only for these specific cases: Enrollment Rule 28-3-2 (2), Scholarship Rule 28-4-2 (3) and Transfer Rule 28-6-3 (14). All other decisions of the District Committee shall be recommendations only. If subsequent to the hearing, the committee determines that the student is ineligible, it shall notify the student and the principal of the ineligibility and the specific individual eligibility regulations involved. The student, parent or member school principal, in keeping with Section 33 of the handbook, may appeal the committee's decision to the Executive Director and subsequent levels of appeal in accordance with Section 33 of the Handbook.

### **28-14-2**

Exceptions – A student who is denied participation in League activities (a) because of local rules authorized in Section 27-1-10, or (b) because of any rule or regulations of any local school board or division superintendent.

### **27-11-2**

Includes failure to control spectators attending contests as a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule.

### **27-11-4**

Harassment of contest officials by a coach or a coach's ejection constitutes a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule.

### **27-13-4**

Failure of a school to use every measure necessary to ensure proper conduct of faculty, students, and spectators constitutes a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule.

**27-11-5**

Failure of a school to use every means at its disposal to impress upon its faculty, student body, team members, coaching staff and officials the values of sportsmanship in the preparation for, and the conduct and management of, interscholastic contests.

**27-11-6**

Players and coaches who are ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct and are ineligible for the team's next contest must be reported to the VHSL office.

**STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is our belief that athletics provides an opportunity for the development of athletic skills, physical conditioning, good health, and positive character building. We believe that every athlete in CCPS should strive toward the following:

- To develop the skills necessary to participate competently in the games and demonstrate knowledge of the strategies of the game
- To demonstrate a level of physical fitness, conditioning and healthy eating habits to participate competently in games
- To recognize the necessity to abstain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs in order to achieve the benefits of participating in interscholastic athletics
- To recognize that character counts and to strive to be dependable, committed, respectful of others, truthful, and a good teammate. This includes but is not limited to the use of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat.
- To accept responsibility for the consequences of one's actions and do not make excuses or blame others
- To accept winning and losing graciously by congratulating the opponent and not displaying negative behaviors
- To refrain from "trash talk" and taunting with opponents or teammates
- To set good examples for teammates, younger athletes, fans, and the community
- Must finish the athletic season including post-season play (any athlete who chooses to quit a team or not finish a season may not be nominated for post-season awards or receive a letter for participation)

**COACH'S CODE**

The Athletic Director and Coaches are leaders, dedicated to more than X's and O's of competition. As leaders and role models to our student-athletes, CCPS coaches and Athletic Director will:

- Exemplify the highest character as a role model for our athletes and recognize the importance of the self-image of both the athletes and the team
- Establish with athletes that they are students first and success in the classroom is expected
- Establish realistic goals and vision for each season and communicate them with their athletes and parents
- Create a set of training rules that reflect the positive value of discipline, character, and abstaining from the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
- Build and maintain ethical relationships with coaches, parents, and administrators
- Strive for excellence in coaching skills and techniques through professional improvement
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat
- Encourage young athletes to pursue multiple sports as this will improve their athletic abilities in all sports as well as enhance college applications
- Demonstrate the highest standards of sportsmanship at all times
- Use social media in a professional manner and refrain from any derogatory comments or posts on social media regarding any other person
- Practice good sportsmanship in every athletic contest so that his or her behavior will not lead to being ejected from games or disciplined by the school system
- If a coach wants to plan a significant trip that requires a great deal of fundraising, this trip must be pre-approved by Principal, Athletic Director, and School Board 18 months in advance.

**PARENT'S CODE**

Parents play an important role in the development of the student athletes in CCPS and the success of our program. Therefore, we expect parents to do the following:

- Be a positive role model through their action to make sure that their child has the best possible experience in athletics
- Show respect for opposing players, coaches, spectators, and officials
- Parents are not allowed on the playing field or court during or after a CCPS athletic event
- Any parent that enters the field of play (including after the game unless invited by a member of the coaching staff), will lose their privilege of attending athletic events for the rest of the season
- Do not attempt to instruct any student-athlete before, during, or after a contest as this might be in conflict with the coach's plans
- Take time to talk with coaches in an appropriate manner, including proper time and place, if there is a concern
- Be sure to follow the designated chain of command (Coach, Athletic Director, Principal)
- If an athlete has issues with playing time, he/she should speak to the coach and ask for ways to increase playing time. A coach will not discuss playing time, other players, or coaching decisions with parents.
- Reinforce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug-free policies by refraining from the use of any such substances before or during an athletic event
- Help student-athlete learn that success is experienced in the development of their skills and that they can feel good about themselves, win or lose

**Disclaimer:** Any situations not listed or overlooked in this handbook or the Covington High School student handbook will be addressed by a meeting with player, parent/guardian, coach(es), Athletic Director, and/or administration. Consequences will be established and an addendum may be made to the handbook. Any VHSL participant or coach who is ejected from a game or activity could be dismissed from the activity in which he/she is participating.

**Participant Discipline Policy:** ALL VHSL PARTICIPANTS MUST BE IN GOOD STANDING WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND ALL OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO PARTICIPATE IN VHSL ACTIVITIES. COACHES WILL DEVELOP RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR HIS OR HER SPORT. PARTICIPANTS WILL FOLLOW THE RULES AND PROCEDURES; OTHERWISE, CONSEQUENCES WILL RESULT AS STATED.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

### **Athletic Training Program**

It is well documented that injury is reduced and performance enhanced when health, fitness and safety training are supported. The Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC) is responsible for providing not only emergency care to injured athletes, but also provide injury prevention, rehabilitation, and reconditioning of athletic injuries. While the role of the ATC is not to take the place of the family physician, the ATC can act as a liaison between the athletes, coaches, parents and medical community, as well as carry out the direction of a physician regarding care and rehabilitation after an injury. Physician Response forms and Medical Information Release forms are available to help encourage appropriate communication between the treating physician and the ATC regarding a student athlete's injury or condition. CCPS requires the ATC to be informed of all injuries and conditions that impact the participation status of a student athlete.

### **Blood Drives**

For safety reasons, athletes whose sport is in season are advised not to donate blood on practice or contest days.

### **Conditioning**

The athletic department provides information for training and conditioning appropriate to the sport. A weight room is available to meet training requirements (High Schools). The athletic department provides appropriate supervision. Courses and training times, as available, are posted in the school.

### **Injuries**

The coaching staff aims to reduce the risk of injury by maintaining professional standards; however, as a condition of participating in sports, the athlete and his/her parent or guardian must sign the Acknowledgement of Risk and Insurance Statement on the VHSL physical form. Participation in athletics may result in injury, paralysis or even death. Choosing to participate acknowledges these risks.



The ATC provides first aid and injury assessment. Appropriate measures are taken in the event of an incident, and parents are called, if necessary. The selection of a physician or a facility for follow up treatment or rehabilitation is a personal choice, but consultation with the athletic trainer usually results in better medical decisions.

If an athlete receives an injury that prevents full or customary participation in practice or games, he/she will be placed on the school's "Restricted Activities List". The student may not resume full team activity until cleared to do so by a physician, the school's Certified Athletic Trainer, the coach, the Athletic Director and the parent or guardian. Any of these parties has the authority to restrict an athlete's participation. Athletes must return physicians note to Certified Athletic Trainer for full participation before athlete may resume practice.

### **Nutrition**

The athletic department will: (1) encourage proper nutritional conditioning for the athlete's sport, (2) encourage appropriate diets and hydration for athletic performance, (3) discourage inappropriate diets for weight loss, and (4) discourage inappropriate performance enhancing drugs and activities.

## **ATHLETIC INSURANCE**

Covington City Public Schools has secured a secondary insurance coverage for all student-athletes participating in high school sports. In the event that a claim must be made for this secondary athletic insurance coverage, the student-athlete must contact the Certified Athletic Trainer to begin the process and complete the necessary paperwork to support the claim.

## **CONCUSSION**

### **What is a Concussion?**

A concussion is a brain injury. A concussion can be caused by a blow to the head or body which causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Concussions affect the metabolic processes of the brain. This just means that the chemicals are not reacting with each other the way they should. All concussions are a serious medical concern, even "getting your bell rung." MRI's and CT's are good for ruling out more time sensitive injuries such as bleeding in/around the brain or a skull fracture, however they cannot show a concussion.

- A concussion is a brain injury.
- All concussions are serious.
- Concussions can occur without loss of consciousness.
- Concussions can occur in any sport.

Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show immediately or may not show up for days or weeks later. If an athlete reports any symptoms of a concussion or you recognize any signs, seek medical attention as soon as possible.

### **Observed Signs**

Athlete appears dazed or confused  
Does not understand simple instructions  
No short-term recall  
Cannot recall date, location, sport, name, etc.  
Moves clumsily  
Slow to answer questions, if at all  
Loses consciousness (even briefly)  
Behavior or personality changes  
Cannot recall events pre injury  
Cannot recall events post injury

### **Reported Symptoms**

Complains of headache or pressure  
Nausea or vomiting  
Problems with balance or dizzy  
Double or blurry vision  
Sensitivity to light  
Sensitivity to noise  
Feels sluggish or in a fog  
Concentration or memory problems  
Complains of ringing in the ears

### **Return to Play**

Concussions can be a life-threatening injury and should be treated with care. Some signs and symptoms will resolve immediately others will linger for days or weeks. It is important that the athlete does not return to play before he/she is completely healed from the concussion. If an athlete obtains a second blow to the head before he/she is healed from the initial brain injury, then the possibility of long-term effects is greater and there is a chance of incurring Second Impact Syndrome (SIS). SIS is considered the events that occur after the second concussion which may cause brain swelling, long term effects on brain function and can be fatal. Consideration for return to play should not be considered until the athlete is symptom free. After symptom free athlete may begin a slow progression back to activity as long as no symptoms recur. Standard return to play protocol is 7 days after all symptoms have subsided.

#### **5 Phases to Return to Play**

- Phase 1 – Low impact activity, no resistance training (Ex. Stationary Bike or walking 10-20 minutes)
- Phase 2 – Initiate aerobic activity fundamental to specific sport (Ex. Skating or running, may also begin progressive strength training activities)
- Phase 3 – Begin non-contact sport specific drills (Ex. Dribbling, fielding, batting, etc.)
- Phase 4 – Full Contact in a practice setting
- Phase 5 – May return to practice or play if remains asymptomatic

#### **Repeated Concussions**

After an athlete sustains one concussion, they are more likely to sustain a second one, compared to others that have not been concussed. Repeat concussions, even when mild, can increase the risk of post-concussive symptoms, such as headaches, memory loss, difficulty concentrating, etc.

Please see the following links for more information.

<http://www.nata.org/consumer/headsup.htm>

<http://www.nata.org/statements/position/concussion.pdf>

[http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/high\\_school.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/high_school.html)

#### **NCAA Division I and II Initial-Eligibility Requirements**

<http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/play-division-i-sports>

<http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/play-division-ii-sports>

### **Become a Division III Student-Athlete**

#### **Information for prospective student-athletes and parents**

#### **What Division III has to offer:**

- Division III athletics provides a well-rounded collegiate experience that involves a balance of rigorous academics, competitive athletics, and the opportunity to pursue the multitude of other co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities offered on Division III campuses.
- Division III playing season and eligibility standards minimize conflicts between athletics and academics, allowing student-athletes to focus on their academic programs and the achievement of a degree.
- Division III offers an intense and competitive athletics environment for student-athletes who play for the love of the game, without the obligation of an athletics scholarship.
- Division III athletics departments place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators. The student-athlete's experience is of paramount concern.

- Division III athletics departments are dedicated to offering broad-based programs with a high number and wide range of athletics participation opportunities for both men and women.
- Division III places primary emphasis on regional in-season and conference competition, while also offering 36 national championships annually.
- Division III affords student-athletes the opportunity to discover valuable lessons in teamwork, discipline, perseverance, and leadership, which in turn make student-athletes better students and responsible citizens.
- Division III features student-athletes who are subject to the same admission standards, academic standards, housing, and support services as the general student body. The integration of athletics with the larger institution enables student-athletes to experience all aspects of campus life.
- Division III encourages student-athletes to take advantage of the many opportunities available to them, both within and beyond athletics, so that they may develop their full potential as students, athletes, and citizens.

## **The Fundamentals of Sportsmanship**

### **Gain an understanding and appreciation for the rules of the contest**

The necessity to be well informed is essential. Know the rules. If you are uninformed, refrain from expressing opinions on officials, coaches, or administrative decisions. The spirit of GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP depends on conformance to a rule's intent as well as to the letter of a given rule.

### **Exercise representative behavior at all times**

A prerequisite to GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP requires one to understand his/her prejudices that may become a factor in his/her behavior. The true value of interscholastic competition relies upon everyone exhibiting behavior which is representative of a sound value base. A proper perspective must be maintained if the educational values are to be realized. Your behavior influences others whether you are aware of it or not.

### **Recognize and appreciate skilled performances regardless of affiliation**

Applause for an opponent's good performance displays generosity and is a courtesy that should be regularly practiced. This not only represents GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP but reflects a true awareness of the game by recognizing and acknowledging quality.

### **Exhibit respect for officials**

The officials of any contest are impartial arbitrators who are trained and who perform to the best of their ability. Mistakes by all involved in the contest are a part of the game. We should not rationalize our own poor or unsuccessful performance or behavior by placing responsibility on an official. The rule of GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP is to accept and abide by the decision made. This value is critical for students to learn for later application in life.

### **Display openly a respect for the opponent at all times**

Opponents are guests and should be treated cordially, provided with the best accommodations, and accorded tolerance at all times.

### **Display pride in your actions at every opportunity**

Never allow your ego to interfere with good judgment and your responsibility as a school representative.

Regardless of whether you are an adult, athlete, coach, or official, this value is paramount since it suggests that you care about yourself and how others perceive you.

**SPORTSMANSHIP:  
THE ONLY MISSING PIECE IS YOU!**

**COVINGTON CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Athletic and Extracurricular Activities Policies Acknowledgement Form**  
**Please complete front and back of this document**

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Student Name (Print)

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Sport / Activity

To all students' participation in extracurricular activities and their parents and/or guardians:

The following policies will be in effect for the entire school year. Your signature indicates that you have been made aware of these policies and you agree to abide by them. This form is to be signed and returned to the Athletic Department or Activity Sponsor prior to participation in athletics or extracurricular activities.

A. I have read and understand the Covington City Public School Student and Parent Handbook and I agree to support the student behavior and discipline policies. I understand that all policies, rules and regulations which apply to students in school also apply while they are on the school bus and at school-sponsored activities. I understand that public transportation is a privilege which is provided as long as the rules are not abused.

B. **(Athletes Only)** I have been made aware, read and understand the Communication Plan, Player Code of Conduct, and Rules and Regulations for Interscholastic Participation, which outline the protocol for communication with the coaching staff and administration.

**(Football Only)** Warning; Do not use this helmet to butt, ram or spear an opposing player. This is in violation of the football rules and can result in severe head, brain or neck injury, paralysis or death to you and possible injury to your opponent. There is a risk these injuries may also occur as a result of accidental contact without intent to butt, ram or spear. **NO HELMET CAN PREVENT ALL SUCH INJURIES.**

C. I understand that Covington City Public Schools will not tolerate the improper use of social media (which includes but is not limited to Twitter, Facebook, and cell phone/texting) for use of bullying, hazing, or sending/receiving inappropriate photos, videos or messages. Any of the aforementioned which are deemed to be detrimental to the reputation of Covington City Public Schools shall be subject to administrative actions. These types of behaviors may be deemed to be in violation of the Virginia High School League bona fide student in good standing rule, and may result in further disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the team.

D. I understand that Covington City Public Schools will not tolerate any student use or possession of alcohol or drugs, including any type of tobacco product. As a student in Covington City Public Schools, I have read and understand the rules on drugs, alcohol, and tobacco use. Attendance at any social gathering where the aforementioned items are being consumed or possessed may lead to administrative action which may include dismissal from the team.

E. I understand that Covington City Public Schools will not tolerate any student engaging in hazing or bullying. CCPS policy defines hazing as recklessly and intentionally endangering the health or safety of a student or students, or inflicting bodily harm on a student or students 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 or students so endangered or injured participated voluntarily in the activity. The principal of any school at which the hazing causes bodily injury shall report the hazing incident to the local law enforcement. As a student of Covington City Public Schools, I have read and understand the rules on hazing and bullying.

Any use or possession of alcohol or drugs will result in immediate dismissal from any team, club, or organization (i.e., marching band, athletic teams, color guard, etc.) for the remainder of the season (fall, winter, or spring, as defined by the Virginia High School League calendar) in which the incident occurs, or for thirty (30) days, whichever is longer. The end of the season is defined as the last official contest, including postseason play. Individual team coaches or sponsors may impose additional consequences. Any hazing, bullying, inappropriate use of social media, or sending/receiving inappropriate photos, videos, or messages by students will also result in dismissal from any team, club or organization.

I, \_\_\_\_\_(student name), have read and understand the above policies. I will choose actions that will be in compliance with the VHSL bona fide student in good standing rule and will not endanger the reputation of Covington City Public Schools.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date