

Veritas Preparatory Academy

A Great Hearts Academy



Athletic Department Handbook

2016-17

Athletic Department Handbook: Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Sports Offered..... | 3 |
| Participation Fees..... | 3 |
| <i>Tax Credit Program.....</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Scholarship Program.....</i> | <i>4</i> |
| Eligibility..... | 4 |
| <i>Academic Eligibility Requirements.....</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Attendance Eligibility Requirements.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Outside Participation & Club Sports Eligibility Requirements.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Paperwork Eligibility Requirements.....</i> | <i>5</i> |
| <i>Out-Of-Season Sports Eligibility Policy.....</i> | <i>6</i> |
| <i>Summer Program Eligibility.....</i> | <i>6</i> |
| Behavior Expectations..... | 6 |
| <i>Behavior During Athletic Contest.....</i> | <i>6</i> |
| <i>Harassment & Hazing.....</i> | <i>7</i> |
| <i>Parent Code of Conduct.....</i> | <i>7</i> |
| <i>Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior.....</i> | <i>7</i> |
| Grievance Procedure..... | 8 |
| Student-Athlete Attendance..... | 9 |
| <i>Lateness.....</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Academic & Holiday Breaks.....</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Religious Holidays.....</i> | <i>10</i> |
| <i>Conference Week & Project Week.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Early Dismissal.....</i> | <i>11</i> |
| Care of Athletic Equipment & Uniforms..... | 11 |
| Heat & Hydration Guidelines..... | 12 |
| Care & Treatment of Injuries..... | 12 |
| Transportation & Traveling Policies..... | 14 |
| <i>VPA Provided Transportation.....</i> | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Parent Organized Carpools.....</i> | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Student Drivers.....</i> | <i>14</i> |
| <i>Out-of-Town Transportation.....</i> | <i>15</i> |
| Trophies & Awards..... | 15 |

Sports Offered

Fall Sports: August through October

| | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Middle School Girls Volleyball | High School Girls Volleyball |
| Middle School Tackle Football | High School Tackle Football |
| Middle School Boys/Girls Cross Country | High School Boys/Girls Cross Country |
| Middle School CO-ED Golf | High School CO-ED Swim |
| Middle School CO-ED Swim | |

Winter Sports: November through February

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Middle School Baseball | High School Boys/Girls Basketball |
| Middle School Softball | High School Boys/Girls Soccer |
| Middle School Boys/Girls Soccer | |

Spring Sports: February through April

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Middle School Boys/Girls Basketball | High School Baseball |
| Middle School Boys/Girls Track | High School Softball |
| Middle School CO-ED Tennis | High School Boys/Girls Tennis |
| | High School Boys/Girls Track |
| | High School Boys/Girls Golf |

Participation Fees

All sports require a flat fee (\$240 for Middle School and \$285 for High School) for each sport a student chooses to play. The athletic fee pays for supplies, rented venues, equipment, coaches, tournaments, and the like. The athletic department at VPA is a self-supporting program through income from fees and tax credits. In addition, it should be noted that participation fees are equalized across programs so that such fees are not a factor for families or athletes in choosing between programs. **The fee for any sport must be paid no later than the 2nd Friday after the season start date (i.e. Fall, Winter, Spring sport seasons).**

Tax Credit Program

Families can use the Arizona extra-curricular tax credit program to give to the athletic department. Information on how the tax credit works may be obtained from the Great Hearts Development Director. The school asks families to pay participation fees and make tax credit donations as well, since the tax credit donation program is the primary system for subsidizing the VPA athletic program. Less than half of the athletics budget is maintained through participation fees; if the tax credit campaign were to fall short of its goal, the school would have to more than double participation fees to maintain the program.

Scholarship Program

The Fee Scholarship Program outlined in the Family Handbook is hereby adopted in its entirety for those athletes and/or families that desire fee relief.

Each extra-curricular activity will have a fee associated with it, commensurate with the cost per participant to operate the program. These fees are not voluntary, but required. The fee must be paid prior to the student joining the extra-curricular program.

Veritas Preparatory Academy does not want to exclude any student from participation due to financial hardship. However, the administration of the school is not in a position to determine fairly which families should receive full or partial fee waivers.

The department can offer payment plans as well as possible reduction in fee(s).

Refunds

Athletic refunds will be allowed to families if requested to the Athletic Director within the following timeframes:

- ❖ Sports that divide into multiple teams, example: JV/varsity
 - no refunds after 2 scheduled practice after teams are divided.
- ❖ Single team sports; no cuts or division of teams
 - no refunds after five scheduled practices.

Eligibility

In order to participate in junior high and high school athletics, student-athletes at Veritas Preparatory Academy (VPA) must meet both Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) and VPA eligibility requirements. Eligibility is a complex issue and questions regarding eligibility status should be directed to the VPA Athletic Director for clarification.

Academic Eligibility Requirements (No pass – no play)

- Student-athletes must be enrolled at VPA in six classes, and maintain satisfactory progress toward graduation throughout each semester.
- Student-athletes must receive a passing grade (minimum of a C-) in all subjects. Eligibility checks will be conducted periodically by the athletic department in order to determine the academic eligibility status of all student-athletes.
- Student-athletes must meet VPA behavior standards in order to be eligible for athletics.

A student-athlete in danger of becoming academically ineligible should consult with his or her instructor(s) in order to determine action necessary to retain eligibility. Once determined academically ineligible, opportunities to regain eligibility are available through a collaborative effort involving the student, parent, teacher, and athletic director.

Academically ineligible student-athletes may participate in practice sessions and attend team meetings, but **may not participate in contest** until eligibility is regained. Ineligible student-athletes may not miss classroom instructional time in order to travel to away athletic contests. If a student fails any course in a quarter, he/she will be suspended from all VPA extracurricular activities for the following quarter.

Attendance Eligibility Requirements

- Student-athletes must attend a minimum of one-half of their classes during the school day in order to participate in practice or competition. In the case of extenuating circumstances, school administration may grant relief from this requirement.
- Student-athletes must attend 90% of the total school days in any given semester.

Outside Participation & Club Sports Eligibility Requirements

A **high school** student-athlete who is a member of a VPA athletic team **may NOT** practice with or participate/compete on any other group, club, organization, or association team in that sport during the VPA season of competition. Season of competition begins on the first date of the first VPA game, and concludes on the last date of the final VPA game. During any given athletic season, a student-athlete who plays a particular sport for VPA may not play that sport for any other team. **Middle school** student-athletes are not held to the same restriction. VPA coaching staff will neither encourage nor discourage such activities for junior high school student-athletes.

Paperwork Eligibility Requirements (No paperwork – no play)

In order to be eligible to participate on a VPA athletic team, student-athletes must have all of the necessary documents listed below completed and on file with the VPA athletic department. Coaches will be notified by the athletic department when student-athletes have completed and turned in all necessary paperwork and are cleared for participation. Athletic participation paperwork packets, which include a checklist and blank copies of **all necessary documents, are available online at www.veritasprepathletics.com** or for pickup from the VPA athletic department.

- VPA Athletics Online Registration www.registermyathlete.com
- Proof of Insurance (included in the online registration)
- Emergency Contact/Medical Information (included in the online registration)
- Annual Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation & Examination AIA Form 15.7-A and B. The physical examination for the following school year should be performed on or after March 1st and is valid for one school year. The medical examiner must be a doctor of medicine (M.D.), an osteopathic physician (D.O.), a certified registered nurse practitioner licensed to practice (N.P.), or a certified physician's assistant (PA-C).
- Mild Traumatic Brain Injury/Concussion AIA Form 15.7-C.
- AIA Brainbook Course Completion Certificate (High School Only)
- Participation fee paid (See page 4 for further details)

Out-Of-Season Sports Eligibility Policy

An out-of-season sport (as described in the AIA Bylaws) is prohibited from any type of formal team practice or competition with the exception of weight training. Players may participate in a sport of their choosing outside the officially designated AIA season of sport. However, VPA coaches, trainers, Athletic Department staff, and faculty members are prohibited from participating or facilitating any type of out-of-season team activity. (NOTE: There is an exception for “open gyms” found in AIA Bylaw 17.5.

Summer Program Eligibility

Many VPA athletes desire to improve their athletic performance and abilities in the off-season. To facilitate the desire of these athletes to improve, most of VPA’s high school coaches set up camps, clinics, or summer programs to take advantage of the AIA’s summer windows. While participation in such programs are never mandatory (although coaches may set out natural consequences for athletes that fail to participate) serious athletes generally take advantage of these programs. Note that summer programs are run separately from the regular season programs and as such will require their own eligibility clearance, participation fee, and paperwork.

Behavior Expectations

Veritas Preparatory Academy student-athletes represent far more than simply the athletic teams of which they are members. When in uniform, student-athletes embody the ideals of Veritas Preparatory Academy and are expected to behave, at all times, in a manner that makes VPA students, staff, and families proud. The privilege of being a student-athlete comes with added responsibility. Student-athletes are expected at all times to exemplify the qualities of excellent character, good sportsmanship, and respectful interactions with officials, teachers, administrators, parents, coaches, teammates, and opponents. All student-athletes should go forward in the pursuit of victory with honor.

Behavior During Athletic Contest

Student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times, whether they are directly involved in a contest or seated on the bench. Officials, opponents, and spectators should always be treated respectfully, even when emotions run high during particularly critical moments in a game. Win or lose, it is considered good sportsmanship at the conclusion of athletic competition to shake an opponent’s hand and to thank the officials for their efforts. Behavior on the bench and within the contest often influences spectators’ reactions to the calls of the officials. VPA student-athletes should always strive to set good examples for teammates and spectators by treating officials and opponents respectfully, exercising self-control by resisting the impulse to argue, taunt, or make inappropriate gestures. Student-athletes should always gracefully accept both victory and defeat.

Harassment & Hazing

Abusive or humiliating harassment and/or hazing are strictly prohibited within the Veritas Preparatory Academy family. These are unacceptable practices in any athletic, extracurricular, or academic endeavors. Student-athletes who engage in any type of harassment and/or hazing activity can expect to be severely disciplined.

Parent Code of Conduct

1. **Attend your child's games as often as possible.** There is little your child will remember more from their school athletics experience than the support of his/her parents. The surest way to show your support is game attendance, both home and away.
2. **Be involved in a positive way in the athletics program.** Cheer for all the players on the team. Help with fundraising; assist with logistics. If you are ever unsure of how you can help, ask the coach or athletic director.
3. **DO NOT speak negatively about the coach in front of your child.** The worst thing a parent can do is take pot shots at the coach. Instead, support your child's coach and stand behind their decisions even when they are unpopular with your player. If you have a question or concern about a coach's policies or actions, please talk to the coach directly or utilize the grievance procedure outlined in this handbook.
4. **DO NOT shout advice to your child during a game,** but DO shout encouragement!
5. **DO NOT harass the referees.** Parents that loudly harass the referees are an embarrassment to their child, the team, and the school. Referees may ask school administrators to remove fans that harass them in an unsportsmanlike manner. If you are asked to leave a facility by a referee, you will be required to meet with the Athletic Director and Headmaster before being allowed to attend further VPA games.
6. **DO NOT harass the opposing team's players or coach(s).** The other team should be considered "off limits" at ALL times. As in number 5 above, fans who conduct themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner may be asked by the referees and/or administrators to leave the facility. Parents who are removed will be required to meet with the Athletic Director and Headmaster before attending further VPA games.
7. VPA coaches have open door policies to discuss any concerns their athletes may have regarding their struggle to succeed. **Allow your child the growth opportunity to work out any issue he/she may have, including play time, directly with his/her coach.**

Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior

Veritas Preparatory Academy student-athletes who behave inappropriately should expect to suffer negative consequences for their actions. Coaches and school administrators will meet to discuss the severity of the infraction, and to agree upon appropriate consequences

for the student-athlete's behavior. Depending upon the nature of the infraction, consequences may include a warning, detention, suspension, loss of participation privileges for a specified period of time, or dismissal from the team. Student-athletes who are dismissed from a team for behavior violations forfeit their certificate/letter/pin award and risk the loss of participation privileges during the following athletic season.

Grievance Procedure

1. **Introduction:** It is VPA's policy to ensure that students and/or parents with a grievance relating to the VPA athletic program can use a procedure which can assist in resolving grievances as quickly and as fairly as possible.
2. **Initial Discussion:** If you or your child has a grievance about athletic policy or its application, you should discuss it informally with the coach involved. It is our hope that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage. ***Grievances or information involving an ongoing or imminent threat to student's wellbeing should be immediately directed to the Athletic Director and Headmaster.***
3. **Stage 1:** If you feel that the matter has not been resolved through initial discussion, the grievance should be submitted in writing to the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director must give a written response within five working days in an endeavor to resolve the matter. This first stage should allow the Athletic Department to resolve the grievance without the involvement of the Headmaster or Board of Directors. The aim should be to resolve issues at the lowest relevant level.
4. **Stage 2:** If the matter is not resolved it may be raised, in writing, with the Vice Headmaster and/or Headmaster, who must respond within five business days. This response may take the form of a letter and/or follow-up meeting with the family, coach, and/or Athletic Director. This meeting will be led by the Vice Headmaster and/or Headmaster. The Headmaster is the acting supervisor of all VPA employees.
5. **Stage 3:** If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of all involved after steps 1 and 2, the grievance may be submitted in writing to the President of the Board of Directors. If the Board understands that stage 1 and 2 were not completed, these may be a requirement prior to further action or hearing of the matter by the Board. Individuals involved are entitled to have a hearing with the grievance committee established annually by the Board of Directors. This committee will formally respond within seven working days of the grievance being received. A response by the committee may include a dismissal of the grievance, a formal reprimand of the coach, Athletic Department, or Headmaster, and/or a directive for staff to develop an additional policy recommendation for Board consideration. If the Board as a whole is convened to address the grievance, all applicable public open public meeting laws will be followed, including prior notice and the right of the employee to request an open meeting or an executive session for the hearing. The Board's decision is final.

Student-Athlete Attendance

Both academic classes and athletic teams suffer from student absences. Just as in-class discussions decrease in fruitfulness when all the students are not there to participate, so do athletic teams decrease in their ability to achieve excellence when players miss practice. Regardless of the reason for missing practice, the individual player misses the opportunity to improve his/her skills and become a better player. Frequent absences from practice are not fair to the student-athlete or their teammates. In order for a sports team to be truly successful, the players must gel as a team. For these reasons, it is imperative that student-athletes attend all practices and games in the sports to which they've committed themselves. Individual student-athletes need to view their commitment to athletic teams as equally important as their commitment to their academic classes. In this commitment, student-athletes need to be constantly improving their skills in order to benefit the team of which they are a part by taking advantage of the practice times offered to them by their coaches.

Attendance at all scheduled practices and games is mandatory, with the possible exception of conflicts with other VPA-sponsored extra-curricular activities. **Choosing to participate in a team sport necessarily means that the student-athlete is choosing against many other worthy endeavors, with the understanding that what they are gaining in return is just as valuable.** VPA student-athletes are expected to honor the commitment their teammates and teammates' parents as well as the commitment that the coaches have for the team. The VPA student-athlete is also making the commitment that his/her academic performance will not suffer due to athletic commitments. As a result, tutoring is not a legitimate excuse for missing practice. Therefore, if a student needs tutoring, he/she must schedule it during non-practice time. It is understood that students sometimes miss school and must make up a test later. If this is the case, the student should schedule the make-up test during non-practice time. If this cannot be done, the absence may be excused. Doctor and dentist appointments should be made immediately before or after school, or on non-practice days. Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule such events around the commitments expressed by coaches at the beginning of the season.

An excused absence will be granted only by the head coach when he/she is notified ahead of time of the absence, including reasons of illness, but in general no absence will be excused when a player selects another activity over the one to which they have already committed him/herself (namely the athletic team they have joined). **Messages are better than nothing, but athletes should strive to *personally* contact their Head Coach.**

Examples of excused absences would be a severe illness, a funeral, or a marriage. Absences for reasons such as these without letting the head coach know, however, would be grounds for an unexcused absence. Other examples of unexcused absences would be forgetting practice equipment, going on a college tour, or tutoring. Two unexcused absences are grounds for dismissal from the team, unless a meeting is set up with the parents, the head coach, the player, and the Athletic Director. One must keep in mind, however, that playing time in the following game might decrease even with an excused absence, as the student is just as ill-prepared for the game as he/she would be with an

unexcused absence. An excused absence does not magically restore to the athlete that which is gained only in practice—an athlete’s game performance does not take reasons for absence into account.

Penalties for unexcused absences from practices and games are left open for individual head coaches to set. **It will also be up to coaches to decide the deadline for students to join the team.** Most coaches, however, will follow the general guidelines listed below:

Practices: *An unexcused absence from practice may result in that player’s ineligibility for part or all of the next game.*

Games: *Any unexcused absence from a game may result in a one game suspension from participation to be enforced during the next game.*

Lateness

Being late to practice shows disrespect for your coach, your teammates, and your common goals. If such occurs without prior permission from the head coach, the player may experience appropriately related penalties that day in practice. Repeated offenses will be dealt with even more severely and might even result in dismissal from the team. Being late to a game without prior permission from the head coach may result in reduction of playing time according to a schedule set out in that coach’s handbook. As an example: A one-quarter suspension for every 5 minutes a player is late (calculated from the time players were asked to be at the game site to the time of their arrival) would not be considered too harsh for a sport like basketball. Late non-starters may expect significantly less playing time in that game.

Academic & Holiday Breaks

While both players and coaches appreciate the breaks built into the academic schedule, **it is not possible to limit the high school team schedules completely to non-break times.** Both JV & Varsity teams may have practices and games during school breaks and holidays. As a general rule, however, middle school teams will not have practices or games over breaks and holidays. Such games and practices will be communicated by coaches as part of the introduction to their program and are considered to be a normal part of a student-athlete’s commitment to a sport. As such, **these practices and games are mandatory.** High school team members should understand that failure to attend games and practices during breaks, whether excused or unexcused, will generally have a negative impact on playing time, the individual’s progress and the team’s performance.

Religious Holidays

It is the intention of VPA to honor a student athlete’s commitment to his religious obligations. **Athletes should clearly communicate in advance any conflicts in their practice and game schedules with religious holidays.** Coaches should excuse such absences without bias. Conflicts in this area should be directly referred to the Headmaster by the coaching staff.

Conference Week & Project Week

Both middle school and high school teams will generally have practice and game commitments during Project/Conference Week. **Attendance at these games and practices is required.** Upperclassmen must make every effort to schedule their conferences so that they do not interfere with practices or games.

Missing a practice for your semester-end conference without prior permission from an athlete's head coach will be treated no differently than missing a practice for any other unexcused absence. Head coaches are encouraged to excuse such absences if scheduling such a conference around practices and games would constitute a work-related hardship for a student-athlete's parents.

Early Dismissals

It is the intention of the Athletic Department to limit the number of early dismissals required for participation in athletic contests. It is impossible, however, to completely eliminate the need for early dismissals in an interscholastic environment. Early dismissal memos, containing the students to be released and the time of departure from VPA, will be generated by the Athletic Department and distributed via e-mail or hardcopy to all faculty members ideally the school day prior to the release date. Early release information is also on the website under the "Falcon HQ" tab. It is provided for transportation planning; however, it is updated regularly so please check it frequently.

Athletes that are not making satisfactory progress in the classes they would miss may be held out of that contest upon agreement of the parent(s) and faculty member(s) involved. It should be noted that such absences from games may carry consequences at the team level, up to and including suspension from future contests or loss of athletic letter. In all cases athletes are responsible for making up work missed in classes from which they are dismissed early for athletic contests.

Care of Athletic Equipment & Uniforms

Each school year Veritas Preparatory Academy invests thousands of dollars on athletic equipment, uniforms, and supplies. Most of these items are expected to last for several years. It is important that every student-athlete makes an effort to properly use and care for the equipment, uniforms, and supplies provided in order that these items are available for use by student-athletes in following years.

Coaches will assign uniforms, practice gear, and equipment to student-athletes at the beginning of each athletic season. At the conclusion of the season, student-athletes are responsible for the return, in reasonably good condition, of any clothing and equipment assigned to them. Student-athletes who lose, purposely damage, or fail to return athletic clothing, gear, or equipment issued to them but will be required to pay for its repair or replacement. Student-athletes who lose or fail to return uniforms issued to them will lose

the privilege of participating during the next athletic season until the uniform is returned, or the athletic department is reimbursed for the loss. Veritas Preparatory Academy also reserves the right to withhold transferring the records of student-athletes who have not turned in uniforms and/or equipment or owe money for the replacement of said uniform and/ or equipment.

Heat & Hydration Guidelines

In the Valley of the Sun we experience several months of extremely hot weather each year, weather that has the potential to negatively impact the performance and overall health of athletes. Each year the Athletic Department distributes information to its coaches on heat-related illness and proper hydration of athletes. In addition, the Athletic Director monitors a website (weather.com) that posts a daily heat advisory. When this index necessitates, the Athletic Director will communicate to coaches required changes or alterations in their daily practice plans or schedules.

The following suggestions should be followed when conditioning, practicing, or playing during periods of high heat and/or humidity:

- Be aware of the effects of heat on your body. During hot weather, student-athletes should increase fluid intake and wear lightweight clothing in order to prevent heat stroke and heat exhaustion.
- Student-athletes should acclimate their bodies to hot weather activity gradually by working out in moderate sessions during the early morning or early evening hours when it is coolest outdoors.
- The most important safeguard against heat-related illness is sufficient replacement of fluids. Student-athletes should rest in shaded areas during breaks provided by their coaches and drink fluids during their rest periods. During periods of intense physical activity, electrolytes lost through perspiration must be replaced. Supplement water intake with sports drinks, and eat salty foods. Student-athletes should never take salt tablets.
- *Important: Energy drinks should **NEVER** be consumed before, during, or after practices, as they can dangerously accelerate heart rates. In addition, creatine use has been known to lead to dehydration and should be avoided at all times.

Care & Treatment of Injuries

All sports carry the inherent risk of serious injury or even death. It is our goal as an institution to take necessary precautions to safeguard against such injuries both in practice and game situations. Despite our best efforts as an institution and coaching staff, injuries to student-athletes may occur. This policy statement is meant to function as a guide in the treatment of injured athletes, not as a policy that suggests that athletic injuries can be eliminated entirely.

The goal of all athletic endeavors is for athletes to be able to compete. Occasionally this goal will best be accomplished when athletes discontinue practicing and/or playing while they recover from an injury. **It is always the responsibility of the athlete to openly communicate injuries with his/her Head Coach and the athletic trainer.** Coaching staffs should in no way discourage athletes from being candid about their injuries. It is an athlete's duty to him/herself and his/her teammates to be honest in the care and treatment of injuries so as to rehabilitate as quickly as possible and be ready to play. Student-athletes must be honest with their coaches, their parents, and themselves as to the extent of their injuries. Although every VPA team is provided with a head coach who is first aid and CPR certified, it should be noted that coaches are not doctors and should not be expected to diagnose injuries nor prescribe treatment for them.

Parents and athletes must keep the Head Coach informed of injuries that are sustained in practices or games. When it is necessary for an athlete and his/her family to consult a physician for the treatment of such injuries, the athlete should find out how long he/she will be unable to participate and what, if any, activities can be done during the rehabilitation period. The athlete should clearly communicate what has been done, and what will be done to heal the injury. Written notes from a physician must be used so that coaches and the Head Coach can be sure of the nature of the injury and the extent to which the athlete may participate. **If at any time a physician pulls an athlete from participation that athlete must receive written clearance from said physician and the Athletic Department prior to returning to practice.** It should be noted that athletes occasionally suffer from more serious injuries—*injuries that immediately prevent them from training or competing*. Any injury related to the following is considered serious in nature and require the immediate cessation of athletic activity and may necessitate a 911 call.

- Neck & Spine injuries
- Head injuries
- Ligament injuries to major joints (elbow, shoulder, knee, ankle, etc.)
- Injuries to vital organs
- Broken bones
- Dislocation of joint(s)

As stated above, **any serious injury (or suspected serious injury) requires immediate cessation of physical activity.** In addition, the coaching staff will immediately contact the athlete's parents. The parents of the seriously injured athlete must seek medical diagnosis, treatment, and eventual physician clearance before he/she may return to team activities.

Injured athletes pulled from practice or competition by their physician, the athletic trainer, or their parents must follow the guidelines set below for reinstatement to athletic activities.

1. Athlete is pulled from participation by his/her physician, athletic trainer, or parents.
2. Athletic injury Reports is filed by the coach/athletic trainer with the Athletic Department.

3. Physician Prescribes and oversees rehabilitation of injured athlete.
4. Physician clears athlete with the Athletic Department for return to practice/competition.

Transportation & Travelling Policies

Transportation of student-athletes to and from practices and Metro Phoenix-area games is the responsibility of their families. **Coaches are prohibited from transporting student-athletes in their personal vehicles.** In all circumstances coaches must avoid being alone in a vehicle with a student athlete. Players' families should arrange their own transportation, or may at their option participate in parent-organized carpools. Failure to arrange appropriate transportation for your student -athlete may result in your student athlete being left at VPA.

All athletes must be picked up within fifteen minutes of the conclusion of practice and games. Coaches are under contract until their last athlete is picked up. Continual lateness in this matter steals time from coaches and their families. If your child is left past the fifteen-minute grace period on three separate occasions, they will be dismissed from the team with no refund of the activity fee.

VPA Provided Transportation

Buses, 12-passenger vans, and minivans will be secured by the Athletic Department for transportation to out-of-town games. Student athletes will be required to use VPA-provided transportation both to and from such games when available.

Electronic Entertainment Device Prohibition: Due to the inability to police content in games, music, etc. in modern electronic gadgets, these devices are prohibited on school-sponsored trips. Student athletes should use their time on VPA provided transportation to converse with and get to know their teammates.

Parent-Organized Carpools

Carpools may be organized by parents to share the burden of transporting athletes from home to practice, practice to school, and to in-town games. Please note, however, that VPA does not organize or endorse these carpools and is in no way liable for the actions of parent drivers. Your participation in them is completely at your discretion.

Student Drivers

Students are allowed to transport themselves to and from practices and games in their own vehicles with the permission of their parents as set forth in the VPA Family Handbook. **Student athletes wishing to transport other student athletes must follow the strict policy set forth in the VPA Family Handbook governing this situation.**

Out-of-Town Transportation

As part of participating in interscholastic competition it is often necessary to travel to another school for a contest.

Middle School: Transportation to such games will not be arranged by the Athletic Department, and these participants will rely on non-VPA arranged car pools for transportation to and from these games (Fortunately, our middle school teams play in the Great Hearts Middle School League, which means all of our league games will take place in the Metro Phoenix area).

High School: High school teams are required on a regular basis to compete with high schools in rural Arizona, and VPA is no exception. VPA will provide transportation to such games under the following guidelines:

Charter Bus: VPA will charter a bus for student transportation to games when required by numbers. The typical break-even point is the need to transport more than 30 athletes to a given location. When chartering a bus, VPA relies on local charter bus companies to hire and supervise a qualified driver.

12-Passenger Vans/Minivans: VPA will typically rent 12-passenger vans and minivans for student transportation when transporting less than 30 athletes to a given location. Coaches are required to find responsible drivers from their staff or parent community.

Parent Volunteers: At times it may be necessary to supplement VPA-provided transportation with parent volunteer drivers. This is typically a cost saving measure and can be a great help to the budget of an individual program.

Summer or Holiday Tournaments: The arrangement of summer and holiday tournament transportation is the responsibility of the parents of the participants involved and will typically involve the use of parent volunteer drivers.

All parents who wish to drive athletes to out-of town games in VPA provided or personal vehicles must submit a copy of their valid Arizona driver's license and submit to a preliminary background check (in addition to fingerprint clearance) through the Department of Public Safety.

Trophies & Awards

Outstanding team and individual accomplishments are recognized and celebrated; all eligible participants are awarded their certificates, letters, and pins at the conclusion of each athletic season. Athletic awards night dates and times will be communicated to student-athletes and their families by coaches and the athletic department.

Parents/guardians, siblings, extended family members, and friends are all invited to attend.