

**Virginia Home School Athletic Association
(VHSAA) Handbook
Revised 6-9-17**



Contents

Section I: Purpose of VHSAA	3
Section II - Requirements to Form a Team	4
Registration	4
Rosters.....	4
Player Eligibility	5
Prohibition Regarding Recruiting	5
Requirement to Submit Schedules	6
Tournaments	7
Officials.....	7
Section III - Competition Rules for Regular Season and Tournament	8
Standings and Tie Breakers:	8
Sanctioned Game Rules	8
Tournament Regulations	9
Appendix A: The Coach's Code of Ethics	10
Appendix B: VHSAA Rules of Behavior	11

Section I: Purpose of VHSAA

Virginia Home School Athletic Association (VHSAA) shall establish leagues and tournaments for traditional, competitive middle school and high school sports for home schooled students within the Commonwealth of Virginia. The goal is to promote home school athletics across the state – in as many areas as possible in order to promote alternatives to public sports programs.

To download official league forms please go to :

Website: <http://www.vhsaa.net>

Correspondence to the VHSAA office (to mail forms and checks) :

Email : thementzerfamily@yahoo.com

Mailing address: **VHSAA**
PO BOX 471
Chesterfield, VA 23832

For the year 2017-18, the following representatives will be the VHSAA Officers:

- Jack Harrell, President
- Wendi Mentzer, Secretary
- Eric Seymour, Treasurer
- Garrett Hatch, Boardmember
- Rich Mills, Boardmember

Current State Tournament Sports:

Boys:

Basketball

Girls:

Basketball

Volleyball

Other Sports include:

Boys

Soccer

Baseball

Football

Flag Football

Tennis

Cross Country

Track

Girls

Soccer

Tennis

Cross Country

Track

Section II - Requirements to Form a Team

Registration

Registration will require completing and submitting an Organizational Intent Form and payment of annual admin fee. VHSAA will review and approve said forms.

Organizations must submit an Organizational Intent Form. The following information will be submitted:

- 1) A list of contacts for the team to include email and cell phone number. A single primary representative must be included. The primary representative will be the contact point between the home school association and VHSAA. You are encouraged to include contact information for the head coach of each participating team.
- 2) An agreement to abide by league rules including codes of conduct.
- 3) Intended teams from organization that will be competing for the upcoming seasons

Intent forms and admin fee will be due on July 31 of each year. Each organization's annual admin fee will be \$100. This will cover registration for all sports from July 1 of the current year through June 30 of the following year.

Note: Failure to return registration by the designated deadline could result in removal from the league and disqualification from tournaments. Any fees received after July 31st will be accessed a late fee of \$50.00.

When approved, a team will join the league and upon receipt of the team's annual administration fee and Intent Form, it will become a member of VHSAA.

Rosters

For each sport enlisted, the organization must submit a roster which includes name, date of birth, and jersey number of each student on that team. If numbers have not been assigned at the time of the deadline, please make that known. Roster deadlines list below.

In order for a team to compete in conference games/matches, a roster must be filled out. The master list will be accessible on the website.

Rosters must be submitted by the normal roster deadline schedule:

Fall Sports (Volleyball/Boys Soccer)– August 15

Winter Sports(Basketball) – November 15

Spring Sports(Girls Soccer) – April 1

New players may be added up until:

- a) Fall sports – Sep. 15
- b) Winter sports – Jan. 10
- c) Spring sports – April 30

Any games played with players who are ineligible will be considered a forfeited loss (15-0 score for basketball, 5-0 for soccer, and 3-0 in volleyball).

Player Eligibility

Athletes must be actively homeschooled in compliance with Virginia law. Evidence of properly filed “Notice of Intent” to homeschool may be requested.

With the advent of students being dual enrolled at a local community college/secondary school, the definition of a home schooled student has evolved slightly. This may happen with older students. In order for a player to be eligible, he must not have graduated from an organization’s program or been recognized as a high school graduate.

Age requirements for each level of play:

- Middle School – must be no older than 14 as of August 1 of the current school year
- Junior Varsity – must be no older than 16 as of August 1 of the current school year
- Varsity – must be no older than 18 as of August 1 of the current school year

Participation on a college team terminates VHSAA eligibility.

Any exception must be appealed to and approved by the Board.

Prohibition Regarding Recruiting

It is never appropriate to “poach” players from other home school teams – especially those who are also in the association. There are times where families need a fresh start, and that should never keep a student on a team where they are not comfortable. The reality is that each organization has its own philosophy and students and families respond differently to various approaches. That said, the onus should always be on the family of the student to seek out another organization and not the representative of another organization.

Coaches found to be engaged in encouraging league players to leave their team will be suspended for a period of one calendar year. A second offense will result in a three-year suspension.

For a team to be eligible to play in VHSAA sanctioned games, the roster must be comprised of **home schooled students**. A team may appeal for a specific player and it will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any exceptions must be approved by the league.

One possible exception (by successful appeal) to the “home school student” is an area private school player whose current school does NOT have that particular sport available to the student.

Dual eligibility is defined as a player’s ability to play on multiple teams within their organization. For example, an age eligible JV player will be allowed to participate in JV and Varsity games for their team during the season and at any tournament.

Requirement to Submit Schedules

Full conference schedules must be submitted to the league via email per the dates below. All schedules will be posted on the league website. Only required conference games are needed for submission to the league.

Schedules must be submitted by the normal roster deadline schedule:

Fall Sports (Volleyball/Boys Soccer)– August 1

Winter Sports(Basketball) – November 1

Spring Sports(Girls Soccer) – March 15

In order to qualify for tournament play, teams must play a minimum of VHSAA sanctioned games according to their respective level. Varsity teams may play four games against four different teams (one game per team) OR play a total of six games with as few as three teams. Junior varsity boys are required to play four games, and currently there is no minimum required for middle school or JV girls. Games must be played versus any home school organization within the state of Virginia – regardless of association membership. Only two games against an opponent count towards VHSAA tournament qualification.

Without consent of the league, when a host team cancels a game that is not able to be rescheduled, that game will count as a forfeit for the home team. The same rule will apply to an away team. If a game is cancelled due to adverse weather conditions, every effort should be made to reschedule the game. If it becomes impossible to do so, neither team will receive a forfeit for the said game.

All league games must be played within the Commonwealth of Virginia unless it is agreeable to be played elsewhere by both teams involved.

All game results should be posted/mailed within 48 hours of the conclusion of the game. It is the duty of the HOME team to ensure this takes place. Results of each game are required to be sent to the league via email (until there is capability for online submission) at thementzerfamily@yahoo.com.

Tournaments

VHSAA sanctioned State Tournaments must be approved by the Board. At a minimum, there must be at least eight (8) VHSAA qualified teams participating at each level for basketball and volleyball. As soccer and cross-country are added, only four (4) VHSAA qualified teams will need to participate. Invitational tournaments can be held as long as there are four (4) VHSAA qualified teams participating.

Teams are required to have met all requirements of this handbook for VHSAA teams to be eligible for tournaments. Unless approved by VHSAA, the final date for regular season play will be two weeks prior to the tournament.

Tournament fees will be assessed each season depending on venue/location and costs associated with that tournament. Normally, those fees will be posted at the beginning of each sports season.

Once a bid to the tournament is accepted and the fee is paid, there will be no refunds.

There will be no gate admission charged to any spectator of a championship tournament.

Officials

All league games will require certified VHSL referees.

Section III - Competition Rules for Regular Season and Tournament

Standings and Tie Breakers:

(Based on regular season results for VHSAA qualifying games)

Best win/loss percentage

Head to head

Point Spread (capped at 15 plus/minus per regular season game for basketball – 5 goals for soccer)

Number of games played versus home school teams within the state

Coin Toss

Sanctioned Game Rules

Unless VHSAA states otherwise, all rules related to the particular sport will be under the NFHS guidelines. Each coach is encouraged to purchase a current rulebook.

NFHS = *National Federation of State High School Associations*

<http://www.nfhs.org/>

Note: VHSAA has the right to modify the rules in this handbook during the current athletic season should the need arise.

Varsity basketball games consist of four 8 minute quarters plus overtime.

Junior varsity basketball games consist of 7 minute quarters plus overtime.

Middle school basketball games consist of 6 minute quarters plus overtime.

Varsity soccer games consist of two forty minute halves plus a overtime period of 15 minutes. For tournament games only, if the first overtime period ends in a tie, the following 15 minute overtime period(s) will be sudden death.

It is the duty of the home team to facilitate clock management and to provide an official scorekeeper.

Tournament Regulations

Fans are prohibited from playing basketball on the courts during game breaks and between games at VHSAA tournaments. There is to be no use of the basketball court for shooting baskets other than by the teams scheduled to use the court.

Fans are encouraged to sit behind or across from their team's bench if such seating is available.

A player or coach who generates two direct technical fouls or is ejected from a contest will be disqualified from the next tournament game.

Home team will wear white uniforms.

Berating officials after the contest by spectators

Unruly fans will not be tolerated. Fans may be asked to leave at the discretion of the tournament director at sanctioned VHSAA tournaments. At regular season games, this authority belongs to the head coach or the athletic director of the home team.

Bench behavior

The bench area shall be limited to coaches, staff, players on a roster and team personnel as listed on the official roster.

Appendix A: The Coach's Code of Ethics

The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. An interscholastic program should be designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student-athlete should be treated as though he or she were the coach's own, and his or her welfare should be uppermost at all times. Accordingly, the following guidelines for coaches participating in VHSAA competition agree to the following standards:

The coach shall be aware that he or she has a tremendous influence, for either good or ill, on the education of the student-athlete and, thus, shall never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.

The coach shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession. In all personal contact with student-athletes, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, their state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct.

The coach shall take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.

The coach shall avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with players.

The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of homeschooling.

The coach shall master the contest rules and shall teach them to his or her team members. The coach shall not seek an advantage by circumvention of the spirit or letter of the rules.

The coach shall exert his or her influence to enhance sportsmanship by spectators, both directly and by working closely with cheerleaders, pep club sponsors, booster clubs, and administrators.

The coach shall respect and support contest officials. The coach shall not indulge in conduct which would incite players or spectators against the officials.

Before and after contests, coaches for the competing teams should meet and exchange cordial greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration.

Appendix B: VHSAA Rules of Behavior

Area of Jurisdiction: All VHSAA Coaches, Athletic Program Officials, Parents, and Players agree to the following:

Principle: Virginia Home School Athletic Association is an organization designed to strengthen and support home education. For all coaches, athletes, athletic directors, and fans, the following rules shall always apply:

- 1) All participants of VHSAA teams and programs shall behave in a way which cannot be construed as confrontational or as a verbal assault against any official, league/team official, fan, player, or parent.
- 2) Any league/team official, coach, player, parent, or fan may be subject to disqualification or ejection from VHSAA sanctioned games and tournaments for violation of these Rules of Behavior.
- 3) The National Federation of High Schools makes a distinction between disqualification and ejection. A DISQUALIFICATION is when a coach or player is assigned two (2) technicals or 2 yellow cards in a game for either rough play or improper speech directed toward an official. The results of a DISQUALIFICATION is removal from the game/match in which the second technical is assigned. An EJECTION is an automatic removal even on the first offense. VHSAA is adopting a policy to eject from a competition for any of the following behaviors:

- * Fighting which includes, but is not limited to, combative acts such as:
 - (1) An attempt to strike an opponent with a fist, hands, arms, legs or feet
 - (2) An attempt to punch or kick an opponent, regardless of whether or not contact is made
 - (3) An attempt to instigate a fight by committing an unsportsmanlike act toward an opponent that causes an opponent to retaliate
 - (4) Leaving the bench area to participate in a fight (contact or no contact)
- * Speaking disrespectfully to an official (It is the official's discretion as to whether this a simple technical foul or an ejection offense.)
- * Cursing
- * Biting observed by an official
- * Taunting, baiting or spitting toward an opponent
- * Profanity, directed toward an official or opponent
- * Obscene gestures, including gesturing in such a manner as to intimidate
- * Flagrant Foul for one of the above offenses

An EJECTION carries with it an automatic 2 league GAME/MATCH suspension in addition to the game/match in which the EJECTION occurred. A DISQUALIFICATION (2 yellow cards in soccer/volleyball, 2 direct technical fouls in basketball, etc.) is a simple removal from the present game/match with the player being able to return to the team at their next game/match.

- 4) Additionally VHSAA concludes that any coach who is disqualified from their:
- * 2nd game/match of the season shall receive a 1 game suspension from their team's next VHSAA league game/match
 - * 3rd game/match of the season shall receive a 2 game suspension from their team's next two VHSAA league games/matches
 - * 4th game shall receive a season long suspension. (If this 4th disqualification/ejection occurs at the final game of the season post season tournament, this suspension will be enforced for the next season.) Disqualifications or ejections from non-league games or league games count towards the application of this rule. It is the responsibility of both league teams (in a league game) to report disqualifications and ejections to VHSAA.

5) VHSAA shall enforce a one game suspension for any coach, player, parent or fan who is ejected for physically or verbally assaulting an official during or after a game. The determination of an assault shall be at the discretion of the official unless the officiating agency over rules.

If a parent is ejected from a game/match, it is the responsibility of the homeschool program that the parent or fan is associated with ensures that this individual is not present at the next two league games.

6) Ejections may be appealed to VHSAA provided incontrovertible evidence can be produced to show bias or error on the part of the official(s) involved. The appeal must be reported to the league director or office in writing by certified mail with return receipt requested, or e-mail with return e-mail confirmation within 48 hours of the suspension. Suspensions remain in force while the appeal is being addressed.

7) If one of the ejection offenses from section 3 above is committed by a player or coach after a disqualification, then the ejection penalties shall additionally apply.