INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS DRUG TESTING

The Vernon Parish School Board acknowledges that interscholastic athletics are not an essential aspect of the educational process. Therefore, student participation is not an absolute right but a privilege offered to eligible students on an equal opportunity basis and thus is voluntary and not required by school policy or state and/or federal law. However, the nature of interscholastic athletics, together with the societal problems which a student encounters and the confirmed detrimental effects of drugs, requires that reasonable steps be adopted to help protect the health and safety of athletes and to provide the safest environment reasonably available. The following drug testing procedures have been enacted by the Vernon Parish School Board to better assure the student's health, safety, and physical fitness to participate in interscholastic athletics and not to provide a means which may be used to punish participants. The drug testing procedures have been enacted by the Vernon Parish School Board for the following reasons:

1. To help promote the good health and safety of athletes and to test for substance which may impair one's performance or pose a threat to his/her health and safety or the safety of others (i.e. any substance that may be mind-altering, addictive, or illegal, which increases the risk of interscholastic athletic related injury).

2. To meet the requirements of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association.

3. To try to preserve and maintain a positive learning environment for the children who have been committed to the temporary custody of the school and to help prevent secondary student athletes from using drugs.

It is the position of the Vernon Parish School Board that drug testing procedures are embraced by both parents and student participants to help achieve maximum protection of participants without compromise to the student's opportunities to participate safely, fairly and competitively. It is also the position of the Vernon Parish School Board that there are indications that the use and/or abuse of drugs by young people has increased. It is further believed that the effects of drug use by athletes are not visited just upon the users, but upon the entire student body and faculty as the educational process is disrupted and the use of drugs increases the risk of sport-related injury.

Therefore the Vernon Parish School Board authorizes regularly scheduled and random use of urinalysis and breathalyzer drug testing of students who participate in the school's athletic program.

The interscholastic athletics drug testing program is not adopted as a punitive measure. Further, the Vernon Parish School Board does not attempt to regulate the off campus non-school related activities of its students by virtue of this policy. Moreover, it is not the intent of this policy to invade the privacy rights or those affected thereby. Rather, as stated above, the Vernon Parish School Board strives only to
maximize the opportunity to minimize injuries to the students that choose to participate in interscholastic athletics.

All students who participate in interscholastic athletics are subject to the drug testing procedures herein specified. Therefore, the Vernon Parish School Board hereby publicly declares that the administration of drug testing to participants is not and should not be construed as being premised upon suspicion that a particular student is under the influence of any drugs. This program is a mandatory condition for participation by a student in any interscholastic athletics. The test at issue here is only for drugs and not any other health related condition that participants may exhibit.

Therefore, the format for drug testing of interscholastic athletic participants shall be as follows:

A. All interscholastic athletic participants must submit a LHSAA Medical History and a yearly physical examination as prescribed by the Louisiana High School Athletic Athletic Association (LHSAA).

B. All athletes shall be tested on a random basis at such times as may be designated by the authorized personnel. There shall be no less than three (3) random drug tests administered during each school year. No less than ten percent (10%) of each high school's athletes shall be selected for each random drug test.

C. Samples shall be routinely tested for amphetamines, cocaine, and marijuana but may be used to ascertain the presence of other substances such as:
   1. Alcohol
   2. Narcotics and any other miscellaneous compounds that are mind altering, addictive, or illegal defined as "controlled dangerous substances" by law including but not limited to La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §40:961 or the above named substances.

D. Breathalyzer use is encouraged to ensure that participants are not using alcohol and may be used periodically with the entire participating population.

As alluded to earlier, all testing shall be strictly enforced and participation in the testing program is mandatory based upon the fact that the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the participants have freely chosen to permit their child to participate in the interscholastic athletic programs offered by the Vernon Parish School Board. No student shall be tested unless the parent(s) or guardian(s) and the student acknowledge that they have consented to the administration of the tests and waive any claim of invasion of privacy and waive any objection to the necessary action which may be adopted in the implementation of this drug testing program. It shall also be understood that by agreeing to any tests, the parent(s) or guardian(s) and the student authorize the Vernon Parish
School Board to have the drug tests enumerated herein administered as necessary and mandatory aspect for participation in its interscholastic athletic programs. Refusal to sign the attached contracts, and/or to submit to the tests shall constitute immediate notice that the student shall not be permitted to participate or continue to participate in interscholastic athletics offered by the school.

For the protection of the school system in general and the student participants in particular, and to preserve the integrity and validity of the testing program, all tests shall be performed by a professional laboratory to be selected by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. Positive results of any drug testing shall be evidence that substances are present in the student's system. Samples yielding positive results shall be immediately retested by a NIDA approved lab and the results of testing shall be communicated to the parent(s) or guardians and the student affected. In all cases, any parent or guardian shall be permitted to engage in a confidential conference with the principal, principal's designee or Superintendent's designee to discuss the results of any positive test.

Collection procedures shall be as follows:

1. There shall be no advance notice of the test or students to be tested. Athletes will be selected and tested same day, if possible.

2. Students shall remain under school supervision until they can produce an adequate specimen (approximately 30 ml). If they cannot do it in the specified time, one (1) hour, they become ineligible for practice or competition until the next testing date.

3. Substance cut-off levels will be generally the same as those used by the Department of Transportation and National Institute for Drug Abuse Standards.

4. Any specimen registering below 90 or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit shall be rejected. If the lab technician or school authority suspects tampering another specimen must be provided prior to the student’s dismissal.

5. If tampering is proved intentional or a student refuses to take the test he/she shall be dismissed from the test and the tampering or refusal shall be treated as a positive screening result.

6. Any specimen found to be diluted calls for a re-testing at the next available opportunity.

7. A school official shall escort the student(s) to the test site. Students shall bring all books and personal belongings with them. They are not permitted to go to their lockers or out of sight of the school official.
8. Once at the site the student(s) must sign in and immediately provide a specimen or begin drinking water provided by the school.

9. Students must remove all coats, and in the presence of a test administrator of the same sex go behind closed doors to provide a specimen. The technician will wait outside the stall. The toilet will contain a blue dye that prevents the water in the commode from being used to dilute the specimen. The unit may not be flushed until the administrator/technician does it.

10. All specimens will be handled in the prescribed manner dictated by law and professional ethics.

All cost associated with the administration of this drug testing program shall be the sole and exclusive responsibility of the respective high schools, except as hereinafter noted. However, if any student has a confirmed positive test result the student or his/her parent(s) or guardians(s) become responsible for all future cost of testing to remain eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics. Any evaluation or drug counseling which may be mandated as a result of positive tests shall not, under any circumstances, be the responsibility of the high school involved or the Vernon Parish School Board.

The student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be required to submit, along with the drug consent form, a sealed envelope containing a list of medications the student is currently taking and the name, phone number, and address of the physician prescribing the medication. The envelope shall be placed in the specimen bag for the lab, to be used to assist with interpretation results of tests taken.

The following procedures shall be followed upon receipt of a positive result from a drug test:

1. **First Positive:** Both the individual who has tested positive and his/her parent(s) and/or guardian(s) shall be immediately notified according to the procedures specified. Before continued participation may be permitted in the particular program, the student shall submit to drug evaluation in an effort to determine the necessity of drug counseling and/or other treatment, which, if needed shall be at his/her expense. The refusal to participate in the recommended treatment after evaluation or even to the evaluation itself shall constitute disqualification from participation in any interscholastic athletic program. The student must test negative at the end of a 30 day counseling/treatment period before being allowed to resume participation. If a student refuses to be retested at the end of the 30 day period that student is ineligible to participate until he/she submits to a retest and tests negative regardless of the length of time. The 30 day waiting period starts from the point of the test. Students may, during the 30 day counseling/treatment period observe any practices but may not participate in any practices or games or related activities. The principal of the respective high school has to sanction
participation of a student who has tested positive before that student is allowed to return to an athletic event.

2. **Second Positive**: Both the individual who has tested positive and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be immediately notified according to the procedure specified. The athletic participant shall be immediately dismissed and shall be ineligible for participation in any of Vernon Parish School's interscholastic athletics for a period of twelve (12) months.

3. **Third Positive in Eight Semesters**: Any individual who tests positive for a third time during an eight semester period (four years of eligibility) shall be terminated from interscholastic athletics for the remainder of his/her time in high school in Vernon Parish.

All tests shall be received and reviewed by only the Superintendent's designee, principal or his/her designee. The school's athletic director shall be immediately notified. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be immediately notified by the responsible person (the athletic director from the school involved or the principal's designee). Such notification shall be confirmed in writing. The athletic director shall then advise the student as soon as possible. Confidentiality of the test results shall be maintained at all times.

Under no circumstances shall any law enforcement personnel be notified in case of a positive test result. All tests results shall be for school related purposes and addressed in accordance with the terms, provisions and conditions specified herein. A student or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) may request a verification test from the specified testing agency, the cost of which shall be borne by the student and parent(s) or guardian(s) and shall be a test of the same specimen. However, should the student request a verification test from another laboratory or testing agency, the cost of the verification test shall be the responsibility of the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) and shall be administered in accordance with the terms; conditions and provisions of this drug testing policy.

The drug testing specified herein shall be administered on a random basis at least three (3) times every school year to at least ten percent (10%) of each high school's participants.

The principal or his/her designee shall implement guidelines that ensure that the results of any drug tests shall not be used as a basis for any disciplinary action and shall be used only to determine eligibility for interscholastic athletics.

The drug testing policy has not been adopted in lieu of other drug policies or search and seizure regulations previously adopted by the Vernon Parish School Board, the high schools involved, or enacted by law. Rather the drug testing guidelines established herein are to be employed in conjunction with and in addition to other School Board policies which prescribe penalties for the possession of, use of, consumption of, being
under the influence of, and/or distribution of illegal or prohibited substances on school
grounds or at school related functions.

The parent(s) or guardian(s) and the student shall release the Vernon Parish School
Board and the high schools involved, its members (both individually and in their official
capacity) as well as any employee, teacher, principal or other school administrator or
personnel from any liability in connection with this policy, the administration of the testing
procedures and/or test results, any warranties addressing the accuracy of said tests,
and any and all medical or laboratory procedures employed by the referring
laboratory. It is expressly understood the Vernon Parish School Board or the high
schools involved assume no responsibility for the diagnosis or treatment of any disease
or condition that may become known as a result of any laboratory test(s) conducted in
the implementation of this drug testing program.

Official Handbook, Louisiana High School Athletic Association
Board minutes, 8-12-99

Vernon Parish School Board