WILLIAMSBURG
JAMES CITY COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EST. 1955

2026-27 High School Student Athletic Handbook

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WJCC Schools VHSL Sponsored Activities

Fall Sports

- Cheerleading - Varsity & JV
- Cross Country - Boys & Girls
- Field Hockey - Varsity & JV
- Football - Varsity & JV
- Golf - Boys & Girls
- Volleyball - Girls Varsity & JV
- One Act Play
- E-sports

Winter Sports

- Cheerleading - Varsity Sideline
- Basketball - Boys & Girls Varsity & JV
- Swimming - Boys & Girls Varsity
- Indoor Track - Boys & Girls Varsity
- Wrestling - Varsity
- Forensics
- Debate
- Scholastic Bowl

Spring Sports

- Baseball - Varsity & JV
- Outdoor Track - Boys & Girls
- Soccer - Boys & Girls Varsity & JV
- Softball - Varsity & JV
- Tennis - Boys & Girls
- E-Sports

Code of Conduct for Spectators

Participation in athletics is a privilege—not a right—that provides student-athletes with the opportunity to grow athletically, academically, emotionally, physically, and socially. All stakeholders must view athletic participation and competition as a lifelong learning experience. Good sportsmanship is required, not only of the division's student athletes and coaches, but also of all persons who support and attend athletic-related events. Spectators, including parents, are expected to exhibit courteous behavior at all times toward all participants, coaches, officials, staff, and fellow spectators. Persons who engage in inappropriate behavior are subject to immediate removal from the event, the event premises, and possible additional attendance restrictions. The School Board empowers principals, athletic directors, and coaches to always enforce the good sportsmanship code.

The Athletics Mission

The overall objective of athletics programs within Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools is to provide an opportunity for student participation in properly supervised and controlled activities under the guidelines established by the Virginia High School League (VHSL), the Bay Rivers District and the Williamsburg-James City County School Board. The school division's athletics programs will encourage and support broad participation from as many students as possible, with teams competing on an equitable basis with other schools without sacrificing academics, sportsmanship, scholarship, general welfare, or the health of the school and student.

Our Beliefs

The Williamsburg-James City County School Division believes that:

- athletics is a partnership among students, parents, and school personnel;
- athletics help foster success in an honest and sportsmanlike manner;
- athletics provide experiences that mirror events students will face in the real world, and helps students prepare for adulthood;
- student athletes should represent the highest ideals of any school;
- student athletes should balance athletic participation and academic responsibility.

Requirements and Responsibilities

Academic Requirements

1. VHSL Scholarship Rule – Students must pass five courses each year. The Williamsburg James City County School Division encourages student athletes to take a minimum of six classes each year. Credit for summer school is applied to the semester or year it follows. Audit or retake classes in which credit was earned are not counted towards eligibility.
2. Athletic eligibility is determined on the date each semester ends as determined by the school board. No student can become eligible midway through a season.
3. A player must attend school for at least three (3) blocks of the day to be eligible to practice or participate in a VHSL event that day. Extenuating circumstances may be considered by the athletic department or principal.
4. A student has four years of eligibility. One year of athletic eligibility shall be defined as participation in a sport in a given academic year. All students entering the ninth grade are automatically eligible for their fall semester. A student athlete's eligibility "clock" begins upon entry into the 9th grade and runs four consecutive years.
5. The building principal will decide on the specific eligibility of students with disabilities and those enrolled in special programs such as New Horizons and the Governor's School.
6. Seniors must be enrolled in any combination of classes that equals three credits each semester to maintain eligibility.

Athletic Fee

Student athletes are required to pay the athletic fee prior to the first game.

Behavior Requirements

Student athletes are required to follow the behavior requirements established for all students in Williamsburg-James City County Schools in accordance with School Board Policy JGC. Because of the leadership status afforded athletes by their peers, coaches will require higher behavior standards. Participation in practices and games, and continued membership on a team depends largely on the student athlete's behavior. Principals, athletic directors and coaches will decide appropriate disciplinary actions for their student athletes.

From the time a student becomes a WJCC student athlete, they are a student athlete 365 days per year. Any student athlete who self-reports an inappropriate behavior that may include a legal charge or complaint, conviction, deferred disposition, or any other student handbook violation to the school athletic director before the school's notification of the offense will be granted favorable consideration in determining any imposed athletic consequence.

The WJCC Discipline Policy and consequences issued by principals may have additional impact on a student's participation in athletics or any other co-curricular activity.

Consequences of Misbehavior

Student athletes who violate the WJCC Student Code of Conduct in the student handbook, the Behavior and Responsibility Pledge, or violations of law may, at the discretion of the principal, incur penalties that impact athletic participation.

Any student athlete identified through the legal system who has been arrested and/or charged of a crime either in or out of school shall not be eligible for the next competitive event, current sports team and/or the next sport season in which the student athlete would participate for a period of time to be determined by the principal.

Whether in or out of school, student athletes shall not smoke, chew, use, or have in their possession tobacco, vaping, or alcohol products. The penalty for such use or behavior may be suspension from athletic participation for a time to be determined by the principal. Any student athlete suspended for violating the WJCC Schools' drug and alcohol policy (Policy and Procedure Code: JFCF), or who is suspended for any serious disciplinary violation, shall be suspended from the next competitive event, current sports team, and/or the next sports season in which the student athlete would participate for a period of time to be determined by the principal.

Any suspension (in-school (ISS) or out-of-school (OSS) means a student is also prohibited from participating in any athletic practice and/or contest during the suspension. If the suspension is in place on a Friday, the student athlete is prohibited from participating in any practice and/or contests during the weekend. Students placed in an alternative setting due to disciplinary action are prohibited from participating in athletics. Any student athlete who receives a second ISS suspension during his/her sports season may be dismissed from the team for the remainder of the season. Any student athlete who receives a second OSS suspension during the season will be dismissed from the team. These consequences will be enforced in conjunction with the VHSL Handbook, which, depending on the specific case, may add additional consequences per VHSL rules and regulations.

Any student athlete referred to the School Board for a disciplinary hearing will be prohibited from participating in any school-sponsored athletic activity until after the hearing. Following the hearing, additional disciplinary measures may be taken by the principal and/or athletic director.

Hazing occurs when an act is committed against a student or a student is coerced into committing an act that creates a substantial risk of harm to the student, or to any third party, in order for the student to be initiated into, or affiliated, with any group, club, athletics team, grade level, activity or organization. Participation in any hazing shall result in consequences.

Abuse of any portion of the Behavior and Responsibility Pledge herein and all student-eligibility requirements may result in one or more of the following actions by the coach and/or principal:

- Suspension of the student athlete from the team for one or more games,
- Removal of the student athlete from the team for the remainder of the sports season,
- Forfeiture of award(s) for the particular sport,
- Restriction or prohibition from any further interscholastic competition,
- Other appropriate disciplinary actions deemed necessary and appropriate by the athletic director or school principal.

Administrators will notify the athletic director of any behavior concerns during a student athlete's off-season. An administrator, athletic director, the coach/sponsor, and the counselor may require intervention for a student athlete who demonstrates a need for increased supervision.

The WJCC Discipline Policy and consequences issued by the administration may also affect a student's participation in athletics or any other extracurricular activity.

Any student athlete who does not abide by established team rules communicated by the coaching staff may be suspended or dismissed from the team.

Parent/Coach Communication

Parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we can accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your child becomes involved in a WJCC program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Coaches are granted broad discretion and autonomy over general team matters, including team rules, roster selection, participation, playing time, selection of starting athletes, recognition of athletes, and recommendations for award recipients.

It may be difficult to accept that your child is not playing as much as you expect. Coaches are professionals. They make decisions based on what they believe to be the best for the team and for all student athletes involved.

Examples of concerns to discuss with the coaching staff

- Treatment of your child
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child's behavior

If there is a concern to discuss with the coach:

- The student athlete should talk to the coach
- The parent should set up a meeting with the coach
- If the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution, the parent communication form should be completed, and a telephone call should be made to set up an appointment with the athletic director to discuss your concerns

Game and Practice Attendance

Student athletes must be present for all school competitive events, regular season, postseason, and make-up games. Exceptions are not made for vacations, Saturdays, or other sports activities. Prior to the start of each season, the coach will determine the official schedule of out-of-district competitions for their respective team.

There are no consequences for student athletes who miss a practice or game due to school-sponsored trips or other academic activities required by the school. For optional school trips, the coach may determine if any consequence is required.

For all other missed games or practices, the consequence is at the discretion of the coach; in such cases, consequences may include dismissal from the team.

Sportsmanship

WJCC student athletes are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship during practices and competitive events. Technical ejections are addressed by VHSL regulations.

Consequences of Poor Sportsmanship:

1. When a student athlete is removed by a coach, ejected by a referee, or the unsportsmanlike act is witnessed by the athletic director or principal, the consequences will follow VHSL Sportsmanship Rule 27-11-1.
    1. Gross unsportsmanlike conduct, such as fighting (including throwing punches as an instigator, in retaliation, or intentionally kicking or stomping an opponent), biting or aggressive physical contact:
        - First Offense - the student will be declared ineligible from contests totaling a minimum of 30% of the total contest limitations for that sport (a player shall be ineligible for the team's scheduled contests until the suspension is completed).
        - Second Offense – the student will be declared ineligible for the remainder of the sports season.
    2. Profanity and other forms of inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated. Profanity directed at a game official will result in a suspension from contests totaling a minimum of 20% of the total contest limitations for that sport.
    3. Any coach, team personnel and/or contestant who confronts or addresses a coach, contestant or official using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expressions will be disqualified for the contest and will be ineligible from contests totaling a minimum of 30% of the total contest limitations for that sport and/or subsequent contests until penalties and education/ restorative interventions are completed (VHSL 27-16-1)
    4. Student athletes who leave the bench area and become actively involved in an altercation will result in a suspension from contests totaling a minimum of 20% of the total contest limitations for that sport.
    5. Repeated offenses of unsportsmanlike behavior may result in suspension from the team at the principal's discretion.

Transfer Eligibility

WJCC Athletic Transfer Process

28A-7-1 VHSL TRANSFER RULE-The student shall not have 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. The original residence must be abandoned as a residence, that is sold, rented, or otherwise disposed of as a residence, and must not be used as a residence by the immediate family. The entire family must make the change and take with them the household goods and furniture appropriate to the circumstances. The change must be made with the intent that it is permanent. The sending and receiving VHSL school principals are required to complete and file the VHSL Transfer Form, acknowledging that to the best of their knowledge the student has met all aspects of the transfer rule or its exceptions. Home instruction does not constitute enrollment in a public school. Home schooling is a process through which Virginia Code compulsory education requirements may be met, as is private schooling. Home schooling is the equivalent of school enrollment for Transfer Rule purposes and determining whether the student has met Scholarship Rule requirements of having passed five academic subjects recognized by the Virginia Department of Education in the most recent prior semester.

Williamsburg-James City County Schools Student Transfer Practice

- When the athletic director fills out the MEL (Master Eligibility List) and sees there is a transfer student from one of the other division high schools, they will request the student's transcript and check the family's address.
- The receiving school will then fill out the VHSL Principal's transfer form and send it to the exiting school.
- Things the receiving athletic director may ask for to verify the move:
    a. New driver's license with new address
    b. Voter ID registration
    c. Possible Social Worker home visit

The school division is committed to ensuring that all transfers are made in accordance with VHSL regulations.

Transportation

All athletes must ride school division vehicles to and from athletic events that are held off school grounds when transportation is provided by the school division. In an emergency, which includes injury, illness, family problems, and an unusual academic situation, only a parent/guardian may secure permission from the coach to transport their child. Identification will be required by the coach. Under no circumstances will a student athlete be allowed to leave with another student.

Head coaches may require all student athletes to ride the bus with the team as part of team expectations. Failure to comply with this policy will result in immediate suspension of the student athlete from the team pending a meeting with the athletic director. On special occasions parents/guardians may request in writing, to the principal at least 48 hours before the activity, permission to transport their own child to or from an athletic event. Parents/guardians may only transport their child to an event.

Athletic Uniforms

Sports uniforms are selected by the athletic director and coach with the principal's approval. Any change of style must be approved by the Athletic Committee.

Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) - VHSL Policy

28B-2-4 Name, image and Likeness (NIL)-Students may receive compensation for the commercialization of their own name, image and likeness (NIL). Common NIL activities include, but are not limited to commercials, product endorsements, personal appearances, autograph sessions, merchandise or apparel sales, group licensing, and acting as a social media influencer. Schools and teams may not use NIL opportunities to incentivize a student's enrollment at a school or membership on a team. A student may not receive compensation, endorsements, or gifts of monetary value for Intellectual Property of the VHSL or any member school. Intellectual Property includes, but is not limited to, a school's district's, region's and VHSL name, uniform, mascot, and logo.

(a) This provision is not intended to restrict the right of any student and their family to engage in NIL activities for financial gain, except as prohibited by this guidance.

(b) Student athletes are prohibited from engaging in the following while participating in NIL activities.

- Making any reference to a school team, school, district, region, or VHSL.
- Appearing in the uniform of the student's school. Students may not utilize the marks, logos, etc. of their school team or any school's team during NIL activities.

- Endorsing or promoting goods or service of any third-party NIL partner during school-based team activities and events, including but not limited to wearing third-party apparel, displaying a third-party logo or brand, and displaying insignia or identifying mark unless it is part of the standard school uniform for that sport. (c) Students may not engage in any NIL activities involving, displaying, or endorsing the following categories of products and services:
    - Adult entertainment products and services
    - Alcohol products
    - Tobacco and electronic smoking products and devices
    - Opioids and prescription pharmaceuticals
    - Controlled dangerous substances
    - Casinos and gambling, including sports betting
    - Weapons, fi rearms and ammunition

(c) No school or anyone employed by or affiliated with a member school, including booster clubs, coaches, administrators, alumni, or an NIL Collective*, may solicit, arrange, or negotiate compensation for a student's NIL, other than their own child.

(d) Students must notify the Principal or Athletic Director in writing of the student's school upon entering into any type of NIL contract within 72 hours of entering into the contract

*NIL Collective: A group of alumni, supporters parents, or other people who form a corporation, limited liability company, partnership, non-profit organization foundation, or other entity to provide NIL opportunities to student athletes of a specific school.

28B-2-5 Penalty: A pupil who has lost his/her amateur standing through violation of this rule shall be ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition. Such student may be reinstated as an amateur by the Executive Committee, provided his/her principal requests in writing his/ her reinstatement as an amateur and certifies that the student has not during that one-year period violated this rule, and that the student is not now under contract to, or owned by, any professional athletic organization.

Other Rules and Regulations

For teams making roster cuts, student athletes are required to attend tryouts. Exceptions to this rule include new students who were not enrolled during tryouts, specific medical conditions, and athletes who have not completed their school sports season that precedes the tryout period. (Medical documentation may be required by the athletic director.)

No student may join a team during the season unless they are returning from an injury, or the student moves into the district.

Student athletes must pass a physical examination and submit a completed VHSL physician's certificate and parental consent form as required by the VHSL before trying out for an athletic team. Providing or offering false information regarding an athlete's physical condition shall result in suspension from VHSL activities for that school year. Sports physicals last for 14 months, and a new VHSL physical form must be completed and turned in to your school's athletic department prior to the expiration date of the current physical form. If not updated prior to the expiration date, the student athlete will be ineligible to participate.

Students must have satisfactory medical insurance before participation is allowed. WJCC Schools provides information about supplemental and/or student accident insurance. For more information, contact the athletic director or principal.

Parents must consent to allow the physician(s), athletic trainers, and other health care provider(s) selected by the school to perform a pre-participation examination and to provide treatment for any injury or condition resulting from participating in school athletics/ activities during the school year. Parental permission is expected for the team physician(s) or health care provider(s) to share appropriate information concerning their child. Shared information is relevant to participation in athletics and activities with coaches and other school personnel as deemed necessary for the safety of the student.

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, and students may not participate in other sports and activities until equipment obligations are met. Students will not be permitted to participate in any other sport until all fees are paid.

Student athletes may not participate in more than one sport during a sports season unless the student athlete has approval of the two coaches, and the two coaches have met with and received approval from the athletic director. Student athletes who are given permission will be monitored academically on a more frequent basis to assess their success maintaining dual participation status.

Any student athlete who quits or is dismissed from a team after tryouts may not play for another team or participate in any preseason conditioning until the end of the current season.

A sports night event will be held at the conclusion of each sports season to honor the students who have participated in a VHSL activity. All student athletes are encouraged to attend and celebrate with their teammates.

Middle school students may not participate on high school athletic teams, due to an existing middle school athletic program of activities.

Middle school student athletes may travel to their zone school for conditioning after the VHSL dead period in the Spring. These students are responsible for transportation to the high school but have the option to ride that respective school's activity bus home.

Vacation Breaks

Student athletes need time to take a short vacation with their families during the Winter or Spring Break. Student athletes who have no travel plans during the break should attend practice.

1. Winter Break: Starting with the last day of school before the start of the Winter Break and extending until December 27th at 4:00 p.m., student athletes will not be required to attend any practices or non-district games.
2. Spring Break: Starting with the last day of school before the Spring Break and extending until the Thursday of the break at 4:00 p.m., student athletes will not be required to attend any practices or non-district games.
3. Summer Break: The last day of school until the day before the first day of the official start of fall practice is defined as summer break. Once practice starts in the fall, all student athletes are required to attend all practices and games.

For more information on Virginia High School League Policies and Procedures, please visit www.vhsl.org

Williamsburg-James City County School Division is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination based upon race, color national origin, religion, sex, disability and age in the administration of any of its educational programs, activities, or with respect to employment. Inquiries regarding this policy should be directed to Title IX/Section 504 Compliance Coordinator, Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools, and P.O. Box 8783, Williamsburg, VA 23187. (Phone: (757) 253-6777) Persons with disabilities, who require accommodation in the application, testing and/or interview process should contact the Human Resources Department.

Activity Buses

Schedule and Rules

1. Activity buses run 4:30 to 4:45 p.m. during the season, except on special days (i.e., half days and before holidays).
2. Coaches must not expect the buses to wait.
3. If a coach holds practice in the afternoon, he or she is responsible for his student athletes until they board the bus.
4. If a student athlete is going to ride the activity bus, the student athlete must not leave school property and return. The coach responsible is required to report this to the administrator. The student athlete will face disciplinary action by the principal or designee.

Activity Bus Passes

1. In-season student athletes will receive a pass that can/will be used for the Activity Bus. Additional passes will be available from the security office.
2. Any student athlete capable of riding the 4:30 p.m. bus must do so. "Hanging out" until later, will not be allowed and will be reason for suspension from activities.

Advanced Play

Tournament Expenses

1. Any team or student athlete that advances to a state tournament will have their lodging and travel paid for by the athletic department.
2. State Tournaments:
    a. Travel and housing will be provided by the athletic department.
    b. All teams regardless of advanced play status will be expected to participate in a fundraiser if they have monetary requests beyond what has been budgeted for them.
3. Expenses will be paid only for those student athletes who have earned the right to advance to a tournament.
4. Expenses will only be paid for regular personnel associated with the team. The number of coaches and managers traveling will be determined by the athletic director and head coach.

Academic and Behavioral Assessments

1. Coaches will monitor the academic and behavioral assessment of student athletes by their teachers. Coaches may use monitor sheets every two weeks.
2. Study halls will be held for teams practicing late. Study hall schedules will be provided to the athletic office at the beginning of each season.
3. Students' academic progress will be evaluated in the second week of each nine weeks.
4. Students not showing adequate progress or improvement will be referred for academic remediation.

Attendance

School attendance is critical to learning. Because student athletes have great demands on their time, attendance will be monitored to facilitate success. The attendance office will notify the athletic director when a student athlete has had excessive absences during the school year. The principal (or his/her designee), athletic director, coach/sponsor, and counselor may decide on a course of intervention to help improve a student athlete's absenteeism.

Student athletes who are tardy the day after an athletic contest (excused or unexcused) more than two times will be suspended from the next game.

1. Students must be in school for at least three blocks in order to participate in a practice or event.
2. If a student has more than three unexcused absences during the season of participation, a review meeting will be held involving the student athlete, the parent(s), the athletic director, the head coach, and school administration. Due to this meeting, eligibility for athletics may be temporarily removed. Further unexcused absences during or after the meeting or period of ineligibility may result in the student-athlete being removed from the team.
3. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the athletic director and/or principal. At no time is the coach to waive the mandatory attendance rule on his/her own.

Concussion Procedures

Concussions sometimes occur among athletes in competitive sports programs. At WJCC Schools, careful protocols are utilized, including the use of baseline neurocognitive software, to guide management of head injuries. The following will provide background information on concussions and describe the protocols followed at WJCC Schools.

PLEASE NOTE: If a student athlete is suffering from any signs and/or symptoms of concussion resulting from a blow to the head, the student athlete MUST report to the school's athletics trainers or a physician as soon as possible. The sooner a proper diagnosis can be made, the sooner healing can begin.

Definition of a Concussion

A concussion is a brain injury that is characterized by an onset of impairment of cognitive and/or physical functioning and can be caused by a blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head (i.e., a helmet to the head, being knocked to the ground). A concussion can occur with or without a loss of consciousness, and proper management is essential to the immediate safety and long-term future of the injured individual. Concussion occurs from forces applied directly or indirectly to the skull that results in the rapid acceleration and deceleration of the brain. The sudden change in cerebral velocity elicits neuronal shearing, which produces changes in the ionic balance and metabolism. When accompanied by clinical signs and symptoms, changes at the cellular level are commonly referred to as mild traumatic brain injury or concussion. NATA defines concussion as a trauma-induced alteration in mental status that may or may not involve loss of consciousness.

It is imperative that the brain has enough time to heal in order to prevent any further trauma or permanent damage.

Major signs (observable behaviors) that may be or may not present with concussions

- Appears to be dazed or stunned
- Is confused about time, date, and/or location
- Is unable to remember what he/she did prior to or after the injury
- Has altered balance
- Is slow to answer questions
- Displays a personality change
- Has altered sleep patterns: is unable to fall asleep or feels like he/she always wants to sleep
- Is vomiting
- Experiences loss of consciousness (not present in all concussions)

Major symptoms (experienced and reported by the athlete) that may or may not be present with concussions

- Headache
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Double of fuzzy vision or any other visual altercation
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slow
- Feeling “foggy” or in a “funk”
- Difficulty in concentrating when reading, listening, or speaking
- Extreme fatigue

Management of a Concussion

Proper management of a concussion is the best form of prevention of serious injury. Most important is prevention of Second Impact Syndrome – a catastrophic increase in intracranial pressure leading to massive brain swelling, herniation and potentially death. This syndrome occurs in athletes up to 14 days post-concussion and when a student athlete returns to competition before the complete resolution of symptoms. Therefore, the following concussion protocols are utilized at WJCC Schools:

1. A student athlete suspected by the coach, athletic trainer, or team physician of sustaining a concussion or brain injury in a practice or game shall be removed from the activity at that time.
2. A student athlete who has been removed from play, evaluated, and suspected to have a concussion or brain injury shall not return to play that same day nor until:
    a. Evaluated by an appropriate licensed health care provider and
    b. In receipt of written clearance to return to play from such licensed health care provider. Student athletes diagnosed with a concussion will go through a return-to-learn protocol prior to return to play protocol before returning to a full return to athletic participation. It is necessary that all parties, including school staff members comply with these protocols outlined in the Acute Concussion Evaluation (ACE) Care Plan.

Stepwise Return-to-Learn: a gradual increase of cognitive activities:

Mental Activity	Activity as Each Step	Goal of Each Step
1. Daily activities that do not give the athlete symptoms	Typical daily activities as long as they do not increase symptoms (e.g. reading, texting, screen time). Start with 5-15 minutes at a time and gradually build up.	Gradual return to typical activities
2. School activities	Homework, reading, or other cognitive activities outside of the classroom.	Increase tolerance to cognitive work
3. Return to school part-time	Gradual introductions of schoolwork. May need to start with a partial school day or with increased breaks during the day.	Increase academic activities
4. Return to school full-time	Gradually progress school activities until a full day can be tolerated.	Return to full academic activities and catch up on missed work

Stepwise Return-to-Play: a return to one’s baseline preseason testing level will be necessary before return to play progression begins:

Rehabilitation Stage	Functional Exercise	Objective
1. Symptom-limited activity	Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms	Gradual reintroduction of work/ school activities
2. Light aerobic exercise	Walking or stationary cycling at slow to medium pace	Increase heart rate
3. Sport-specific exercise	Running or skating drills. No head impact activities	Add movement
4. Non-contact drills	Harder training drills, e.g., passing drills. May start progressive resistance training.	Exercise, coordination, and increased thinking
5. Full contact practice	Following medical clearance, participate in normal training activities.	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
6. Return to play/sport	Normal game play	

Each step lasts at least 24 hours. If any symptoms worsen while exercising, the student athlete should go back to the previous step after being symptom-free for 24 hours. Resistance training should only be added in phase 3 or 4 at the earliest.

An student athlete with a history of multiple concussions may be recommended to see a physician for further evaluation before participation.

Parents are encouraged to report out-of-school concussions to the athletic director or trainer for the student athlete's safety.

More information on concussions can be obtained from one of the WJCC Schools athletic trainers.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

To participate in an extracurricular physical activity, each student athlete and the student athletes' parent or guardian shall review, on an annual basis, information on sudden cardiac arrest provided by the local school division. After reviewing the materials, , each student athlete and the student athletes' parent or guardian shall sign a statement acknowledging receipt of such information. Schools will distribute to and collect forms annually from each student athlete and his or her parent/guardian with appropriate signatures prior to participation in extracurricular physical activity.

WJCC Schools shall train coaches annually on best-practice protocols regarding sudden cardiac arrest awareness and prevention. All coaches will be trained in CPR/AED and Emergency First Aid, and an AED will be available during all sporting events, including on the field during competitions and practices.

Definitions

When used in this Regulation, unless otherwise specifically defined where used, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

A. **Automated External Defibrillator (AED)** is a medical device designed to analyze heart rhythm and, if appropriate, deliver an electrical shock to individuals experiencing ventricular fibrillation (a type of arrythmia) to restore a normal heart rhythm.

B. **Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA)** is a medical emergency that occurs when the heart stops beating effectively. Many factors, including electrical or structural problems in the heart can cause sudden cardiac arrest. Many of the causes of cardiac arrest are not recognized or diagnosed until the individual begins to experience adverse symptoms.

C. **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)** is an emergency, life-saving procedure performed when someone's heart stops beating.

D. **Commotio cordis** describes a rare phenomenon in which blunt trauma to the chest causes an abnormal heart rhythm (ventricular fibrillation) that can lead to SCA.

E. **Emergency Action Plan (EAP)** is a written document outlining emergency response procedures specific to the athletic venue.

F. **A heart attack** is a medical emergency that occurs when blood flow to the heart has stopped due to a blockage in an artery supplying blood to the heart. This lack of blood flow causes heart muscle tissue to die, which can lead to cardiac arrest.

G. **The appropriate licensed health care provider** is a physician (e.g., M.D., D.O.) licensed by the Virginia Board of Medicine, or a nurse practitioner licensed by the Virginia State Board of Nursing who is experienced in evaluating cardiovascular conditions.

Removal from and Return to Extracurricular Physical Activity

A student athlete experiencing and/or reporting any of the signs or symptoms associated with SCA to a coach, athletic trainer, or team physician in a practice or competition shall be removed immediately from the activity. A student athlete who has been removed from play, evaluated, and suspected to be at risk of or experiencing SCA shall not return to play that same day nor until (i) evaluated by an appropriate licensed health care provider as defined by the Board of Education, and (ii) in receipt of written clearance to return to play from such licensed health care provider. The licensed health care provider evaluating student athletes may be a volunteer.

Causes of Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Sudden cardiac arrest is caused by several structural and electrical diseases of the heart. These conditions predispose an individual to have an abnormal rhythm that can be fatal if not treated within a few minutes. Most conditions responsible for SCA in children are inherited. Other possible causes of SCA are a sudden blunt non-penetrating blow to the chest and the use/abuse of recreational or performance-enhancing drugs and/or energy drinks.

How Common is Sudden Cardiac Arrest in the United States?

Student cardiac arrest is the number one cause of death for adults in the United States. There are about 350,000 cardiac arrests outside of hospitals each year. About 2,000 patients under the age of 25 die of SCA each year. It is the #1 cause of death for student athletes.

Warning Signs of SCA	Emergency Response to SCA
• Fainting or seizures during exercise • Unexplained shortness of breath • Dizziness • Extreme fatigue • Chest pains • Racing heart • SCA should be suspected in any athlete who has collapsed and is unresponsive.	• Act immediately; time is most critical to increase survival rates. • Recognize the warning signs of SCA • Call 911 immediately and activate EMS • Administer CPR • Use Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

Ignoring such symptoms and continuing to play/practice could be catastrophic and can result in sudden cardiac death. Taking these warning symptoms seriously and seeking timely appropriate medical care can prevent serious and possibly fatal consequences. These symptoms can be unclear in student athletes since people often confuse these warning signs with physical exhaustion. Sudden cardiac arrest can be prevented if the underlying causes can be diagnosed and treated.

What are the Risks of Practicing or Playing After Experiencing These Symptoms?

There are risks associated with continuing to practice or play after experiencing these symptoms. When the heart stops, so does the blood that flows to the brain and other vital organs. Death or permanent brain damage can occur in just a few minutes. Most people who experience SCA die from it.

Prevention

Preventing SCA in student athletes begins with an annual pre-participation exam intended to identify any underlying medical conditions that may predispose a student to SCA and/or students who may be at risk for SCA based on family medical history. Preventing SCA also requires that student athletes and their families be familiar with the warning signs of SCA and understand the importance of reporting the presence of any warning signs to a coach, athletic trainer, parent/guardian, and/or family medical provider. It is important that you carefully and accurately complete the personal history and heart health questions on the current "VHSL Athletic Participation/Parental/Consent/Physical Examination Form" available at https://www.vhsl.org/forms.

Sudden Heat Illness

Education and Training

The School Division will ensure that the school staff have training in the recognition of heat-related illness signs, symptoms, and risk factors and in the prevention of heat-related illness.

Student athletes and their parents/guardians will be informed of the nature and risk of heat-related illness, how to recognize the signs of heat-related illness, and how to prevent heat-related illness.

Definitions

When used in this Regulation, unless otherwise specifically defined where used, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

A. **Heat-related illness** is a general term describing a few medical conditions associated with dehydration, poor acclimatization, and exposure to or prolonged exercise in hot and humid environments.

B. **Heat acclimatization** describes a complex series of changes occurring within the body in response to heat stress over one to two weeks. Adaptations in heat tolerance that come from gradually increasing the intensity or duration of work performed in hot settings allow the body to better cope with activity in hot and humid environments.

C. **Heat cramps** are a type of exercise-related muscle cramp characterized by painful cramping usually occurring in the arms and legs. Heat cramps may be caused by exercising in hot or humid environments, dehydration, or excess sodium and electrolyte loss commonly associated with exercise in those environments. While not a medical emergency, heat cramps may be confused with a more serious condition, exertional sickling.

D. **Heat exhaustion** is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through excessive sweating.

E. **Heat stroke** is the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature, the body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Heat stroke can cause permanent disability, or death is the person does not receive emergency treatment.

F. **Heat syncope** refers to fainting (syncope) episodes experienced by individuals exercising in hot and humid environments and results from a temporary decrease in blood flow to the brain causing a brief loss of consciousness. Factors that contribute to heat syncope

include dehydration and lack of acclimatization.

G. While not a heat-related illness, **exertional sickling** is associated with intense exercise in hot and/or humid conditions, particularly with individuals who may be poorly acclimatized or deconditioned and may be confused with heat cramps. Exertional sickling is a medical emergency in which the red blood cells of a person carrying the sickle cell trait change shape (sickle) leading to decreased blood flow. This decrease in blood flow can lead to a breakdown of muscle tissue and cell death, a condition known as fulminant rhabdomyolysis.

Heat Stroke	Heat Exhaustion	Heat Syncope	Heat Cramps	Heat Cramps vs. Exertional Sickling
Rectal temperature greater than 105F Irrational behavior, irritability, or emotional instability Altered consciousness. Disorientation Dizziness Headache Confusion Nausea or vomiting Diarrhea Collapse Staggering or sluggish feeling	Fatigue Nausea Fainting Weakness Vomiting Dizziness/ lightheadedness Pale Chills Diarrhea Irritability Headache	Dizziness/ lightheadedness Weakness Loss of consciousness Tunnel vision	Dehydration Fatigue Painful, involuntary muscle spasms	Pain associated with cramping usually occurs in a specific area, whereas pain associated with exertional sickling is more generalized. Cramping muscles appear tight and will "lock up." With exertional sickling, muscles become weak, leading the individual to try to push through the experience. Cramping generally occurs during or after activity. Exertional sickling typically occurs within the first 30 minutes of an intense workout.

Risk Factors for Heat-Related Illnesses

- Heat Exhaustion
- Exercising in hot and humid environment (air temperature over 91F/33C)
- Inadequate fluid intake before or during exercise resulting in dehydration.
- Inappropriate work to rest ratios with too much work compared to rest breaks.
- Body mass index over 27 kg/m^2
- Heat Stroke
- Intrinsic Factors
  - History of heat-related illness
  - Inadequate heat acclimatization
  - Low overall fitness level
  - Overweight or obese
  - Inadequate hydration
  - Lack of sleep
  - Fever
  - Stomach illness
  - Highly motivated/ultra-competitive personality
  - Pre-pubescent individuals
- Extrinsic Factors
  - Intense of prolonged exercise with minimal breaks
  - Repeated/prolonged exposure to high temperature/ humidity/sun.
  - Elevated Wet Bulb Globe temperature (WBGT)
  - Inappropriate work/rest ratio based on intensity.
  - Wearing dark colored or heavy-weight clothing
  - Wearing protective equipment
  - Poor overall fitness
  - Peer or organizational pressure
  - Lack of education and awareness of heat illness risk factors among coaches, athletes, and medical staff
  - Absence of an emergency action plan (EAP) and/or policies and procedures to manage heat-related illness.
  - No or limited access to fluids or breaks during practice.
  - Delay in recognition of signs and symptoms associated with exertional heat stroke (EHS)

Prevention and Management

The School Division will ensure each school has staff trained in the management of heat-related illnesses, including adherence to VHSL Heat Guidelines and the development of Emergency Action Plans.

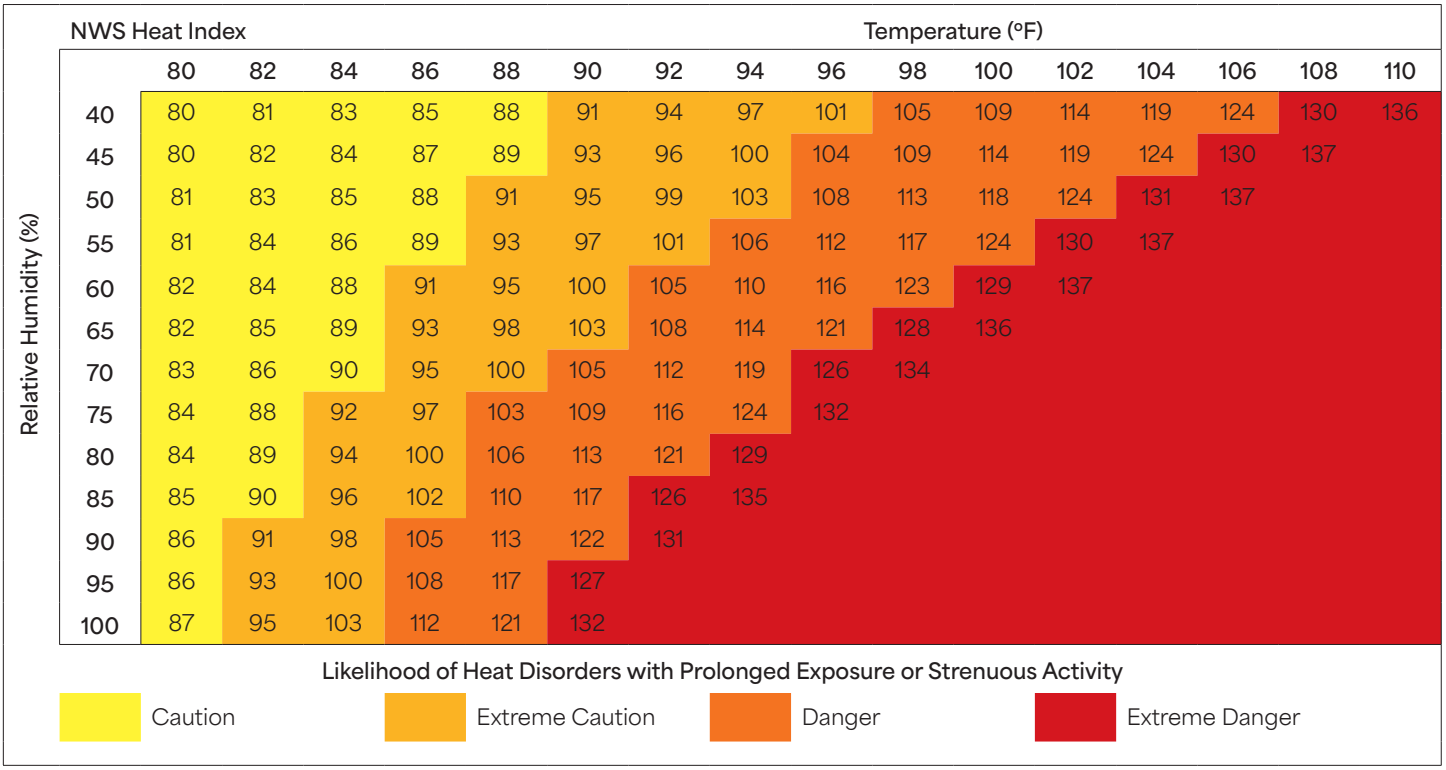
Activities, including practices and competitions, should be modified when environmental conditions are extreme, including modifications for those wearing protective equipment. The Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WGBT) is the recommended method for assessing

environmental conditions and is used to determine the nature of any modifications. In certain cases, heat index may be used if WGBT is not available.

Wet Bulb Temperature (WBT) and Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) Participation Recommendations

Level	WBT	WBGT	Duration	Fluid Consumption	Practices
1	<66F	<80F	3 hours maximum	Insist that adequate fluid be ingested	Full gear; minimum of 2 water breaks per hour
2	66.0-74.9F	80.0-82.4F	3 hours maximum	Insist that 4-6oz fluid be ingested every 20 minutes	Full gear; minimum of 3 water breaks per hour
3	75.0-76.9F	82.5-84.9F	3 hours maximum	Insist that 6-8 oz fluid be ingested every 20 minutes	Remove helmets unless active in drill; monitor athletes, rest as needed.
4	77.0-78.9F	85.0-87.4F	3 hours maximum, every 45 minutes of work --> 15 minutes of rest each hour	Insist that 8-10 oz fluid be ingested every 15 minutes	No equipment during non-contact drills; remove helmet unless active in drill, remove pads when teaching or non-contact portions of practice exceed 10 minutes in length
5	79.0-80.9F	87.5-89.9F	3 hours maximum every 45 minutes of work --> 20 minutes of rest each hour	Insist that 8-10 oz fluid be ingested every 15 minutes	Shirt and shorts only, no helmets or equipment; reduce intensity of activity, no equipment or helmets
6	81.0+F	90.0+F	NO OUTDOOR PRACTICES, SCRIMMAGES, or COMPETITIONS	Re-hydrate 24 oz for every pound of body weight loss per day.	Practices conducted indoors must follow the Heat Policy

Heat Index Participation Recommendations



Heat Index	Recommendations
105F +	No outdoor activities
95F to 104F	No equipment (helmets, shoulder pads, etc.) during activity
90F to 94F	Equipment removed as often as possible (during rest breaks, while on sideline, etc.). Careful monitoring for signs of heat illness.
Below 89F	Unrestricted access to water during all practices and competitions; breaks every 20 to 30 minutes.

http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/heat_index.shtml

Removing from and Return to Extracurricular Physical Activity

Early recognition of a student-athlete displaying signs and symptoms of a heat-related illness and prompt response is critical. School staff supervising athletic activities in hot and humid environments should be monitoring student athletes for any signs and symptoms of heat-related illness and should be prepared to immediately cool a student athlete suspected of heat exhaustion or heat stroke with whole-body cold-water immersion, cold water dousing (cold shower), ice towels and/or ice bags, and/or the use of fans. Failure to immediately report a student athlete experiencing signs and symptoms of a heat related illness may delay the medical evaluation of the student athlete, the determination of the cause of the illness, and medical intervention to stabilize the student athlete.

A student athlete exhibiting signs or symptoms associated with a heat-related illness in a practice or competition shall be removed from the activity at that time. A student athlete who has been removed from play, evaluated, and suspected of being at risk of or experiencing heat stroke shall not return to play that same day.

Schools and other organizations sponsoring athletic programs are encouraged to develop comprehensive Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) specific to the athletic environment. These valuable resources are intended to help staff prepare for a wide variety of emergency medical situations that may occur during athletic participation. Individuals experiencing or suspected of experiencing a heat-related illness should be removed from activity immediately. The specific treatment and any return to activity requirements will depend on the condition (i.e., heat cramps, heat syncope, heat exhaustion, heat stroke).

For more information on Virginia High School League Policies and Procedures, please visit www.vhsl.org

Nondiscrimination State

Williamsburg-James City County School Division is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination based upon race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, and age in the administration of any of its educational programs, activities, or with respect to employment. Inquiries regarding this policy should be directed to Title IX/Section 504 Compliance Coordinator, Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools, and P.O. Box 8783, Williamsburg, VA 23187.

(Phone: (757) 253-6777) Persons with disabilities who require accommodation in the application, testing and/or interview process should contact the Human Resources Department.

High School Contact Information

School Name	Main Office	Address	Athletic Director
Jamestown	(757) 229-8051	3751 John Tyler Hwy., Williamsburg, VA 23185	Matthew Moore
Lafayette	(757) 603-6565	4460 Longhill Rd., Williamsburg, VA 23188	Matt McLeod
Warhill	(757) 565-9400	4615 Opportunity Way, Williamsburg, VA 23188	Dan Mullen

WJCC Schools Athletic Pledge

By signing this Pledge, the WJCC student athlete and parent or guardian affirm each has read and understands all the rules, regulations, and expectations listed in the WJCC Athletics Handbook. Further, it is agreed that all athletes must abide by the rules. It also is understood that all parents must attend a mandatory policy meeting to help assure a mutual understanding of the philosophy, conduct, and eligibility expectations.

By signing below, the student athlete and parent are advised that participation in interscholastic practice and competition is dangerous! Furthermore, it is understood that no amount of protective equipment will eliminate potential injury. Even under the safest and most secure conditions, some athletic activity may result in serious and possible fatal injuries. If a student athlete exhibits unusual symptoms, he or she should immediately stop playing and report the conditions to the coach, athletic trainer, and his or her parents. The student athlete will not return to a game or practice until all symptoms are eliminated, and the athlete has received medical clearance. Ignoring this warning may lead to more serious or fatal injury. Remember: anyone deciding to compete in the WJCC Schools Athletic Program does so with a clear understanding of the risk of injury. Additional questions about such risks should be directed to the coach or athletic director prior to participation in practice or competition.

Parents and supporters of WJCC athletics interfering with a game or participants of the game (athletes, coaches, and officials) may result in disciplinary action taken by the WJCC Schools, the Bay Rivers District League, and/or the Virginia High School League. Such actions may be taken against our athletes, our teams, and parent-spectators. Acceptable and appropriate sportsmanship is a fundamental component of our athletic program. Parents are advised to direct questions and concerns about their student athlete to the following individuals: (1) Team Coach; (2) Athletic Director (AD); (3) Principal. Please start with the coach before speaking with the AD or principal.

Parents are not to approach coaches during or after any practice or team competition.

If there is a concern to discuss with the coach:

- The athlete should talk to the coach
- The parent should set up a meeting with the coach
- The parent communication form should be completed, and a telephone call should be made to set up an appointment with the athletic director to discuss your concerns.

Our signatures on the sign-off sheet indicate that we have read and agree to comply with the contents of WJCC conduct, philosophy, and eligibility expectations herein. We agree that the student athlete will attend all practices and games in which his or her high school athletic team participates. This implies that the high school team's activities take precedence over any club, recreational, or non-school events.

Athletic Pledge Acknowledgement

Your signature below indicates that you (student athlete) and your parent/guardian have read the book, understand it, and agree to comply with all regulations as stated in the WJCC High School Athletic Handbook.

Athlete Name (Print name)	Athlete Signature
Parent/Guardian (Print name)	Parent/Guardian Signature
Parent/Guardian Telephone	Parent/Guardian Mobile Phone
Athlete E-Mail Address (Please print)	
Parent/Guardian E-Mail Address (Please print)	Parent Guardian E-Mail Address (Please print)
Date	

Please return this form signed before the first contest of the season. Failure to do so will result in the athlete's inability to participate.

WILLIAMSBURG
JAMES CITY COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EST. 1955