LCS LYNCHBURG CITY SCHOOLS



STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK

Revised September 2026

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**The Lynchburg City Schools student-athlete Handbook serves as a Handbook for both middle and high school athletics per LCS Policy JFCB-RZ.*

1. INTRODUCTION & PHILOSOPHY

Lynchburg City Schools (LCS) considers competitive athletics an integral component of the educational mission, directly supporting the division's commitment to "Growth, Opportunity, and Success." The LCS Athletic Program is designed to provide a balanced experience, fostering excellence in both academics and athletics. Participation develops critical life skills, including teamwork, perseverance, accountability, leadership, and time management. The program's primary objective is to facilitate the development of life-long habits of fitness, self-discipline, sportsmanship, and personal growth.

The focus is on participation, skill improvement, and ethical competition within the framework established by the Lynchburg City School Board. Participation in LCS school athletics should bring honor to the student-athletes, their school, and the community. School athletic programs prepare students with foundational skills, a higher level of play, and an understanding of commitment, while also developing camaraderie through teamwork and shared experiences, life-skills, and discipline. By creating a strong and cohesive pipeline, middle school sports create a more seamless transition and a more unified program for high school athletics.

By aligning middle school and high school coaches on philosophy and culture, younger players can see how the skills they are learning will apply to the high school level, creating a smoother transition. This structured environment helps prepare students for the challenges of balancing academics with extracurriculars, encouraging them to set goals and understand the dedication required to succeed

Based on current educational and athletic development research, secondary school athletics are vital because they:

- **Enhance Student Engagement:** Student-athletes are generally more engaged in school, leading to higher levels of academic achievement.
- **Promote Social Cohesion:** Athletics create positive social connections, bridging racial, socio-economic, and ethnic divides.
- **Support Physical and Cognitive Development:** Vigorous physical activity is universally acknowledged as essential for adolescent health and provides positive outlets for competitive energy.

2. ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

To the LCS Student-Athlete

Membership on a LCS interscholastic team is a privilege that carries significant responsibility. As a student-athlete, your conduct reflects directly upon your community, your school, your teammates, and yourself.

The Student-Athlete is expected to:

1. **Exhibit Sportsmanship:** Be courteous to officials and opposing teams. Compete with integrity, demonstrating modesty in success and graciousness in defeat.
2. **Maintain Composure:** Never engage in fights, confrontations, or unsportsmanlike conduct. Immediately follow the instruction of officials and coaches.
3. **Prioritize Academics:** Maintain satisfactory scholastic standing, demonstrating loyalty to the division's mission.
4. **Observe Rules:** Strictly understand and observe the rules of the game, team rules, and all LCS and VHSL eligibility standards.

5. **Maintain Fitness:** Conscientiously adhere to all team and training rules, including standards for physical fitness, dress, and grooming for contests and travel.

6. **Respect Integrity:** Accept the judgment of officials without question and respect the facilities of host schools.

Note: Specific team rules, which supplement this handbook, will be provided by individual coaches at the beginning of each season.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians play a critical role in supporting the student-athlete and the athletic program.

The Parent/Guardian is expected to:

1. **Support Essential Well-being:** Facilitate access to nutritious and substantial meals (e.g., ensuring use of school programs, and offering confidential guidance on food assistance resources) to ensure consistent fuel. Further, educate student-athletes on optimal sleep hygiene (8.5 to 9.5 hours per night) and provide time management tools to help balance obligations.

2. **Exhibit Sportsmanship:** Model self-control and promote sportsmanlike behavior when attending all games (home and away) and practices, regardless of the outcome.

   LCS is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and orderly environment at all school-sponsored events and activities. LCS reserves the right to remove (eject) any individual whose conduct is deemed disruptive, threatening, unsafe, or in violation of VHSL or Division policies, school rules, or applicable laws. Individuals who fail to correct inappropriate behavior after being warned, or whose conduct warrants immediate action, may be ejected from the premises without refund or further notice. LCS further reserves the right to prohibit individuals from attending future school-sponsored events and activities for a designated period of time. Repeated violations or serious misconduct may result in an extended ban of up to one calendar year. Continued or egregious violations may result in a permanent prohibition from attending all Division events and activities. All decisions regarding removal and restrictions on attendance shall be made at the discretion of LCS and/or school administrators.

3. **Communicate Appropriately:** Lynchburg City Schools values respectful and professional communication among student-athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, and school personnel.

   Athletic concerns should first be addressed with the coach at a mutually agreed-upon time. Discussions should not occur immediately before, during, or after practices or contests. LCS follows the 24-Hour Rule, encouraging parents/guardians and student-athletes to wait at least 24 hours after a contest before discussing concerns to promote respectful and productive communication.

   Communication should occur through school division approved communication platforms as designated by the coach or school. If a concern cannot be resolved with the coach, it should be referred to the school's athletic director following the established chain of communication.

4. **Ensure Compliance:** Read the Lynchburg City Schools student-athlete Handbook and the LCS Code of Conduct forms through RankOne and submit electronic signatures to ensure prompt compliance with attendance and academic requirements. Ensure their child's compliance with athletic attendance requirements and expectations. This is to include prompt arrival to and prompt departure from practices and games or school-sponsored functions.

   Parents and/or Guardians must grant permission, including a signed medical release form for student-athletes to participate in athletics and submit an Emergency Medical Form in addition to a valid VHSL physical. The signed form must be submitted to the coach or athletic director and the form must accompany the group on any trip away from the school building, including home events held at off-campus locations.

3. ELIGIBILITY & CONDUCT

Academic Eligibility Requirements

The purpose of these requirements is to reinforce the value of academic effort and provide a clear incentive for performance improvement.

- **Participation Requirement:**
    - *Middle School Students*: Students may not have an in-progress grade lower than a "D" in two of their classes to remain eligible for interscholastic athletic participation.
    - *High School Students*: To be academically eligible for Virginia High School League (VHSL) activities. Students must also pass five subjects the preceding semester. Eligibility also requires being a bona fide student in good standing
- **Study Hall Procedure:** Any student-athlete, middle or high school student, receiving a grade of a 'D+' (69 and below%) in any subject on an interim or report card while in season, shall be immediately assigned to the after school Athletic Study Hall. The student-athlete will remain in study hall until the next grading period (interim, weekly report, or report card) shows that all grades are a 'C-' or better (70 or above).

Sportsmanship

Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship during all practices, contests, scrimmages, jamborees, benefit games, team activities, and school-sponsored events. Sportsmanship is the ethical framework and standard of conduct that defines the honorable pursuit of victory through respect, integrity, fairness, responsibility, caring, and good citizenship.

Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to, taunting, disrespectful behavior, inappropriate gestures, abusive language, profanity, fighting, inciting spectators, or conduct that brings discredit upon the student-athlete, team, school, or division.

Consequences for Unsportsmanlike Conduct may include but are not limited to:

1. Student-athletes who are ejected or removed from a contest by a game official shall be subject to all penalties and suspensions prescribed by the Virginia High School League (VHSL).
2. Student-athletes who direct profanity, abusive language, or inappropriate conduct toward a game official shall receive a minimum two-contest suspension in accordance with VHSL regulations. Additional disciplinary action may be imposed by the coach, athletic director, principal, athletics coordinator, or division administration. If the student-athlete is not participating in an athletic season at the time the suspension is imposed, the suspension shall be served during the next sport season in which the student-athlete participates.
3. Student-athletes who engage in fighting, including throwing punches as an instigator or in retaliation, intentionally kicking or stomping an opponent, biting, or engaging in other aggressive physical contact, shall be subject to the penalties established by VHSL regulations. LCS reserves the right to impose additional disciplinary measures when warranted by the severity of the conduct and in accordance with applicable school division policies and administrative review.

4. Student-athletes who leave the bench or team area and become actively involved in an altercation shall be subject to penalties established by VHSL regulations. LCS reserves the right to impose additional disciplinary measures when warranted by the severity of the conduct and in accordance with applicable school division policies and administrative review.

5. Student-athletes assessed two technical fouls during a contest shall be considered to have committed a sportsmanship violation and shall be subject to the penalties prescribed by VHSL regulations.

6. Repeated incidents of unsportsmanlike conduct may result in additional disciplinary action, including suspension from contests, suspension from team activities, removal from leadership positions, or dismissal from the team.

7. The athletic director, principal, athletics coordinator, or other authorized school officials may impose additional disciplinary measures when conduct violates school division policies, team rules, or standards of conduct.

8. Any appeal of an ejection or suspension shall be handled in accordance with applicable VHSL procedures and timelines.

All contests shall be conducted in accordance with current National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) playing rules as adopted by the Virginia High School League unless otherwise modified by the VHSL

LCS Student-Athlete Code of Conduct

Participation is a privilege, revocable for improper conduct at school or in the community. Each student-athlete and parent is required to sign the LCS Code of Conduct form in order to be eligible for participation.

No student-athlete will be allowed to try out for a team or participate with a team until outstanding obligations (including the return of equipment/uniforms from other interscholastic teams) have been met to the satisfaction of the building principal and/or athletic director. Additionally, all required athletic forms (physical examination and code of conduct agreement) must be completed before an athlete is allowed to participate in interscholastic activities.

Other Key Regulations

- **Physical Examination:** A student-athlete must provide a completed physical examination form, signed by a doctor, parent/guardian, and student, conducted after May 1st for the succeeding school year. Participation in any try-out, practice, or out of season workout is prohibited without a valid physical and all other required prerequisite paperwork.

- **Final Rosters:** Final team rosters must be submitted to the athletic director within three business days following the conclusion of the final tryout date. All student-athletes are required to have a formal, in-person, legitimate, tryout. In order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, private or individual tryouts are not permitted. No student-athlete may be added to a roster after the deadline unless the individual is an eligible transfer who meets all school, district, and state requirements. Eligible transfers who meet all school, district, and state requirements will be permitted to participate in a formal tryout in which the varsity head coach and athletic director for their respective school will be required to be a part of. Any student that receives disciplinary action from the school division from the start of tryouts will not be permitted to participate for the duration of the respective season. No student-managers are eligible to participate with an athletic team in any conditioning, practice, game, or competition. All student-managers will be held to the same expectations as rostered student-athletes.

- **School Suspension and Attendance:**

    - Any student-athlete who receives three one-day out of school suspensions during a single athletic season shall be ineligible for participation in athletics for the remainder of that season.

- Any student receiving an out of school suspension resulting in a total of 3 or more days will be ineligible for participation for the duration of that athletic season.
- Students assigned to Fort Hill Community School (FHCS) for disciplinary purposes will be ineligible for participation for the duration of that athletic season.
- Students assigned In-School Suspension (ISS) or Restorative Suspension Center (RSC) may not attend team conditioning, team activities, practices, games, events, until they have fulfilled the entirety of their assignment.
- Repeated or egregious offenses may accelerate disciplinary actions, including dismissal from the identified team.
- A student-athlete serving In-School Suspension (ISS), Out-of-School Suspension (OSS), Restorative Suspension Center (RSC), Fort Hill Community School (FHCS), or any other disciplinary assignment shall not be permitted to participate in athletic tryouts during the period of the disciplinary assignment. A student-athlete attending the Restorative Academy Secondary (RAS) is eligible to participate in school athletics, events, and school activities.
- Tryout periods will not be extended, modified, or rescheduled to accommodate students who are ineligible to participate due to disciplinary consequences. Students who are unable to complete the established tryout process during the designated tryout period because of a disciplinary assignment shall not be eligible for team selection or participation for that sport season.
- To be eligible for practice or a contest on a given day, the student-athlete must attend at least one-half (50%) of their scheduled classes.
- A student-athlete who appeals an Out-of-School Suspension and is permitted to attend classes in person during the appeal process may participate in athletic events during the review period.
    - A student-athlete who appeals an Out-of-School Suspension but is not permitted to attend classes in person during the appeal process shall not participate in athletic events until the suspension appeal has been resolved.

4. TRANSPORTATION

All student-athletes are expected to travel to and from away contests with their team. Any request for an exception due to an extenuating circumstance must be communicated in advance and approved by the school's athletic director and principal (or their designee). Written documentation supporting the request must be submitted using the Lynchburg City Schools School Sponsored Event Transportation Waiver and Release Form. This process is intended for extenuating circumstances only and should not be used for routine transportation preferences or convenience.

student-athletes are expected to abide by the regular school bus behavior regulations and LCS Policy JFCC during athletic trips. A student-athlete will be held responsible for any damage they incur to a bus. The school will be responsible for initiating the calls for repair of any damage sustained by the Lynchburg City Schools bus through student-athlete carelessness or student-athlete vandalism. The parent or student-athlete is responsible for the cost of the repairs pursuant to School Board Policy.

Return Travel: Student-athletes are expected to return to their school with their team following all away contests and school-sponsored athletic events. Requests for an alternate mode of transportation following an event will be considered only in extenuating circumstances and must be communicated and approved in advance by the school's athletic director and principal (or their designee). Written documentation must be submitted using the Lynchburg City Schools School Sponsored Event Transportation Waiver and Release Form.

The head coach retains the authority to require all student-athletes to return with the team when it is determined to be in the best interest of student safety, team supervision, scheduling, or program operations. Approval of an alternate transportation request does not obligate a coach to release a student-athlete from team travel.

Transportation exceptions are intended for verified extenuating circumstances and are not to be used as a matter of routine convenience. Lynchburg City Schools expects student-athletes to travel to and from athletic events with their team whenever possible to promote appropriate supervision, team unity, and the responsible use of school transportation resources

Coach supervision of student-athletes on LCS Transportation is required to and from any team event. This supervision must be provided by the head coach and/or an assistant coach employed by LCS for their respective teams.

Following home athletic events/activities and upon return to the school from away events, student-athletes are required to have timely and appropriate transportation arranged for their departure. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring transportation is available and students are picked up within a reasonable timeframe after the conclusion of events. Repeated failure to provide timely transportation may result in a meeting with the student-athlete, parent/guardian, coach, and athletic director. At the discretion of the athletic director, continued transportation concerns may result in the student-athlete being removed from the team.

Personal Vehicle Transportation of Student-Athletes

Coaches and athletic staff members are not to transport student-athletes in personal vehicles. When personal vehicle transportation occurs, it is voluntary and undertaken at the individual's own discretion and risk. Coaches and staff members who transport student-athletes in personal vehicles are responsible for complying with all applicable laws, school division policies, and safety requirements.

5. **SOCIAL MEDIA POSITION** STATEMENT

Social media technologies have many benefits in our world; however, they can also be disruptive when inappropriate social media postings occur. Using these communication tools in an inappropriate manner can have negative consequences, especially if unkind words or threats are used with the intent to hurt others.

The Lynchburg City School Division Athletics Departments recognize and support student-athletes' and coaches' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of social networks. In this context the student-athlete and coach must remember that participating in athletics is a privilege, not a right.

With this in mind any online postings must be consistent with federal and state laws, as well as team, school, school division rules and regulations (including those listed below). Specifically prohibited behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Sexually explicit, profane, lewd, indecent, illegal or defamatory language/actions.
- Derogatory language regarding school personnel or other students.
- Comments designed to harass or bully students and/or school personnel.
- Nude, sexually-oriented, or indecent photos, images or altered pictures.
- Distribution of hard copies of posts on school property.
- Re-communication on campus of the content of the posts.

LCS Communication Systems

Any authorized or unauthorized use in school or out of school of computer software, computer networks, telecommunications devices, information technology, and related technologies, which disrupts or interferes with the educational process in any manner is prohibited and may result in removal from the team or activity and other action as chosen by the principal, athletic directors, athletics coordinator, deputy superintendent, and superintendent.

6. **GAME, PRACTICE, TRYOUT** ATTENDANCE

All coaches are required to conduct formal tryouts for their respective athletic programs prior to finalizing team rosters. Delayed tryouts due to athletic or extracurricular commitments will be given opportunities to participate in a formal tryout. Students who are actively participating in another school-sponsored athletic team whose season extends due to postseason or playoff competition will be granted the opportunity for a delayed tryout once their current season has concluded. Likewise, students participating in a school-sponsored extracurricular activity that conflicts with the designated tryout period may be considered for a delayed tryout. Further any student who has been formally diagnosed with an injury by a medical professional will be given an opportunity to try out once they have been cleared by a medical professional. All delayed tryouts must be coordinated with the coach, varsity head coach, and athletic administration and be conducted within one week of their prior commitment's completion in a manner consistent with the established team selection procedures. No tryout will be permitted to occur on a Saturday or Sunday without the approval of the school's athletic director and principal.

Student-athletes are expected to be present for all competitive events, regular season, post-season, and make-up games.

There are no consequences for student-athletes who miss a practice or game due to medical appointments, school-sponsored trips, academic activities required by the school, or other extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the coach and/or athletic administration. Student-athletes and their families are expected to communicate anticipated absences with the coach as soon as reasonably possible.

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.

Any student(s) that is unable to attend designated tryout date(s) due to out of school suspension will not be granted a supplemental tryout opportunity and will be deemed ineligible to participate. Any student-athlete who receives an out-of-school suspension totaling three (3) or more school days during an athletic season will be ineligible to participate in the remainder of that athletic season. If the student-athlete is participating in an in-season sport at the time of the suspension, the student-athlete will be dismissed from the respective team for the remainder of the season

Participation Following Withdrawal from an In-Season Sport

To promote commitment to teammates and discourage student-athletes from voluntarily leaving one in-season sport to immediately participate in another athletic activity or out-of-season program, any student-athlete who voluntarily quits or is removed from an in-season sport for disciplinary or non-medical reasons shall not be permitted to participate in out-of-season conditioning, practices, workouts, open gyms, skill development sessions, or other team activities until the regular season of the sport from which they withdrew has concluded.

This provision is intended to support team commitment and program integrity and is not intended to penalize student-athletes who are unable to continue participation due to circumstances beyond their control.

Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to documented medical conditions or injuries, verified family emergencies, safety concerns, school-directed program changes, or other circumstances deemed appropriate by school administration.

A student-athlete or parent/guardian may submit a written request for an exception to the school's athletic director. The request shall be reviewed by the principal (or designee), athletic director, and division athletics coordinator. The review shall consider the specific circumstances of the request and determine whether an exception is warranted. The final decision regarding the exception request shall be communicated to the student-athlete and parent/guardian.

All coaches are required to record daily attendance for all tryouts, practices, competitions, etc.

Rest Period Between Consecutive Sports

A rest period will be provided for any student transitioning directly from one sport to another. For example, a student moving from a fall sport to a winter sport will receive a rest period upon request by an athlete, coach, athletic director, or athletic trainer.

Once the rest period has been completed, the student will be granted a multi-day tryout to be evaluated by the respective coach.

VHSL Dead Period Compliance

All Lynchburg City Schools (LCS) athletic programs participating in Virginia High School League (VHSL) activities shall comply with all VHSL designated dead periods as established annually by the VHSL. Middle School athletic programs will also comply with all VHSL designated dead periods.

During VHSL-designated dead periods, no coach, volunteer coach, athletic department staff member, or other school representative shall organize, supervise, conduct, direct, or participate in any team-related athletic activity involving student-athletes. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, practices, conditioning sessions, weight training supervised by coaches, open gyms, open fields, team meetings, school-sponsored camps or clinics, skill instruction, and any other organized team activity unless specifically permitted under current VHSL rules and regulations.

Student-athletes may participate in individual physical activity during dead periods; however, such participation must be voluntary, may not be organized or supervised by school coaches or athletic personnel, and must otherwise comply with all applicable VHSL regulations.

Failure to adhere to VHSL dead period requirements may result in disciplinary action and/or penalties imposed by the VHSL and/or Lynchburg City Schools.

All coaches are responsible for remaining informed of current VHSL dead period dates and ensuring full compliance with all applicable VHSL rules, regulations, and bylaws.

8th Graders Playing Up

Eighth-grade student-athletes must be identified by the varsity head coach and invited to participate in the junior varsity (JV) tryout process. The middle school athletic director must be notified of any eighth-grade student-athlete who is invited to try out for a JV team.

Any eighth-grade student-athlete identified by the sport-specific varsity coach must also participate in the middle school team tryout process. The middle school tryout will occur after the JV tryout invitation to allow the student-athlete and their family to make an informed decision regarding the appropriate level of participation.

Once a student-athlete selects the level at which they will participate, that decision is final for the season.

Eighth-grade student-athletes may try out only for the high school to which they are zoned. Participation at the high school level requires formal approval through the established review process.

Tryouts for middle school athletic teams are scheduled to take place after the completion of high school athletic tryouts. Any extension of tryout dates by either the middle school or high school team must receive prior approval from both the designated school's athletic director and the Lynchburg City Schools (LCS) athletics coordinator. The approval or denial of all requests will be communicated in writing.

After School Procedures

Each school shall establish designated areas where student-athletes are required to report before and/or after practices, games, or other team activities. These locations are intended to ensure appropriate supervision, maintain student safety, and provide clear expectations for athletes during times when they are not actively participating in athletic activities. Prior to the start of each athletic season, schools must identify and document the specific reporting locations, room numbers, and expected report and dismissal times for each athletic team. Athletic directors and coaches are responsible for communicating these designated reporting locations and procedures to student-athletes and relevant staff. Student-athletes are expected to report to the assigned location at the designated time unless otherwise directed by a coach or school administrator. Failure to follow established reporting procedures may result in disciplinary or team-related consequences consistent with school and division policies.

For practices scheduled on holidays, school breaks, convocation days, parent-teacher conference days, student orientation days, or professional learning/work days, all practice times and durations shall be determined at the discretion of the building principal/athletic director.

No practices, games or competitions will take place on Sundays unless the designated schools athletic director has gone through the VHSL approval process and it has received approval by the LCS Superintendent.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

All communications between schools, school administrators, athletic directors, coaches, student-athletes (when appropriate and in accordance with school and division policy), and parents will be done through LCS approved communication platforms. Utilizing LCS approved communication platforms as the sole communication platform ensures:

- Consistent messaging across all stakeholders
- Proper documentation and record retention
- Transparency in communication
- Timely dissemination of important information

Expectations

- Family involvement is key to the success of our student-athletes,so parents and guardians are encouraged to stay connected with team coaches
- Staff members are required to post all updates, announcements, schedule changes, and important notifications through LCS approved communication platforms communication platform
- Direct communication with students via personal phone numbers, text messages, personal email accounts, or social media platforms is not permitted for official program business.
- In emergency situations, communication may be supplemented by school-approved channels as directed by administration.

Failure to adhere to this communication protocol by LCS employees may result in disciplinary action up to and including recommendation for dismissal consistent with Board policy.

8. **PARENT/GUARDIAN CONCERNS** & **ISSUE RESOLUTION** PROCEDURE

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a clear, consistent process for parents and guardians to raise concerns regarding athletic programs, coaching, student participation, or other issues. This ensures concerns are addressed in a professional, timely, and fair manner while maintaining positive relationships and upholding the integrity of all athletic programs. This procedure applies to all student-athletes, parents/guardians, coaches, and athletic staff in the school division.

Procedure

Step 1: Direct Communication with the Coach

1. Parents/guardians should first address concerns directly with the coach responsible for the team or program.
2. Contact should be made in a professional and respectful manner, ideally via email or scheduled meeting.
3. The parent/guardian should:
    - Clearly describe the concern or issue.
    - Provide specific examples or observations, if applicable.
    - Avoid discussing concerns publicly or via social media.

Goal: Encourage open communication and resolution at the team level.

Step 2: Contact the School Athletic Director (AD)

1. If the concern is not resolved after speaking with the coach, the parent/guardian may contact the school's athletic director (AD).
2. The AD will:
    - Review the concern with the coach and parent/guardian.
    - Facilitate a meeting if necessary, which may include the student-athlete.
    - Document any discussion or meeting with the parent in the Infinite Campus Contact Log.
    - Document the concern and steps taken for resolution.
3. The AD will aim to provide a response within 3-5 business days of receiving the concern.

Step 3: Contact the School Principal

1. If the concern is not resolved after speaking with the coach, the parent/guardian may contact the school principal.
2. The principal will:
    - Review the concern and discuss it with the coach and parent/guardian.
    - Facilitate a meeting if necessary, which may include the student-athlete.
    - Document any discussion or meeting in the Infinite Campus Contact Log.
    - Document the concern and any steps taken to resolve it.
3. The principal will aim to provide a response within 3-5 business days of receiving the concern.

Step 4: Contact the Division Athletics Coordinator

1. If the issue remains unresolved after working with the school athletic director and principal, the school's athletic director and principal will contact the division athletics coordinator via email.
2. The division athletics coordinator will:
    - Review the concern, including all documentation from prior steps.
    - Meet with relevant parties (ADs, principal, coaches, parents and possibly student-athletes).

- Provide recommendations for resolution in alignment with division policies and procedures, VHSL regulations, and the best interest of the student-athlete.

3. The Division athletics coordinator will respond within 3-7 business days.

Step 5: Superintendent/Designee for Final Review

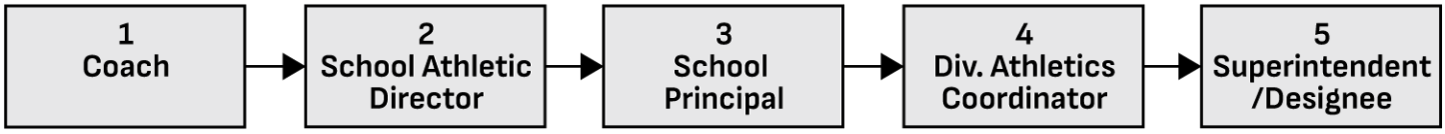
1. If a resolution cannot be reached at the division level, the parent/guardian may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent or their designee.
2. The Superintendent will:
   - Review all documentation and previous steps.
   - Provide a final decision in accordance with division policy and applicable regulations.

Additional Guidelines

- All parties are expected to communicate respectfully and professionally.
- Concerns regarding safety, harassment, or illegal activity should be reported immediately to the AD or school administration and follow division reporting policies.
- The procedure emphasizes resolution through proper channels rather than public or social media complaints.
- Documentation of all steps should be maintained to ensure transparency and accountability.

Flow Summary

Athletic Protocol & Decision Making Process - Following The Chain Of Command



1. **Coach:** Initial communication, issues, or proposals begin here. Discusses with individual athletes & teams.
2. **School Athletic Director:** Reviews and coordinates all school athletics. Approves or advances to principal.
3. **School Principal:** Provides school-wide leadership & administration. Approves or moves to district level.
4. **Division Athletics Coordinator:** Coordinates all school athletics across the division. Sets consistent standards & schedules.
5. **Superintendent/Designee** (Final Review): Overall district leadership & authority. Gives final approval or decision.

Following the chain of command ensures fair, timely, and informed decisions for our student-athletes, teams, and school community.

9. **VHSL TRANSFER** POLICY

Lynchburg City Schools is a member of the Virginia High School League (VHSL) and complies with all VHSL Rules and Regulations governing interscholastic athletics.

Student-athletes who transfer within Lynchburg City Schools or from another Virginia school division may not be immediately eligible for interscholastic athletic participation at the receiving school. Eligibility shall be determined in accordance with current VHSL transfer regulations and applicable exceptions.

Generally, a student who transfers from one VHSL member school to another, participates at the receiving school, and subsequently returns to the original school during the same school year shall be ineligible for 365 days from the date of enrollment at the receiving school, regardless of any subsequent parental or guardian move, unless otherwise permitted by VHSL Rules and Regulations.

Any transfer student certified for athletic participation shall have an official transcript or other acceptable academic records on file at the receiving school.

10. UNIFORMS/EQUIPMENT

All uniforms and equipment issued to student-athletes must be returned within one week after the conclusion of the season. Student-athletes assume financial responsibility for missing, lost, or damaged equipment or uniforms, and students may not participate in another sport or activity until equipment obligations are met. Students will not be permitted to participate in any other sport until all fees are paid.

All uniforms must be returned to the coach immediately upon the completion of their respective season. Any student-athlete that does not return their LCS school issued uniform and/or any equipment issued by LCS, their guardian will be held accountable financially to replace these items.

Appropriate Athletic Attire & Appearance Expectations

Student-athletes are expected to arrive at and participate in all school-sponsored athletic activities wearing appropriate, school-ready attire that reflects the LCS Code of Conduct, professionalism, safety, and respect. This expectation applies to practices, conditioning sessions, competitions, team activities, athletic events, and athletic travel.

Student-athletes shall report prepared with appropriate practice attire, uniforms, warm-up clothing, and any required equipment. Clothing worn before, during, and after athletic activities shall be appropriate for a school-sponsored event and shall not create a safety concern or conflict with Lynchburg City Schools policies.

Student-athletes shall maintain appropriate coverage at all times and shall not be shirtless or remove or replace clothing in a manner that exposes the torso, chest, back, or other areas reasonably considered private while in public or shared areas, including sidelines, fields, courts, benches, hallways, team areas, or other common spaces. Expectations regarding changing into and out of athletic attire are outlined in the Uniform Changing Procedure.

Coaches may establish reasonable team-specific attire expectations that are consistent with division policies and shall communicate those expectations before the season. Coaches are responsible for consistently reinforcing and enforcing this procedure.

Failure to comply with this procedure may result in corrective action in accordance with team, athletic department, and Lynchburg City Schools disciplinary expectations.

Uniform Changing Procedure

To protect student-athlete privacy, safety, and dignity, all student-athletes shall change into or out of athletic uniforms only in designated private or enclosed areas, such as locker rooms, restrooms, team rooms, or other approved changing facilities. When private changing facilities are unavailable at an athletic venue, student-athletes should arrive dressed for participation or wait until they return to school or another approved private location to change, unless an emergency or medical circumstance requires otherwise.

Student-athletes shall not change clothing in public or semi-public areas, including but not limited to sidelines, fields, courts, dugouts, benches, bleachers, parking lots, hallways, or other open areas. For the purposes of this procedure, "changing" includes removing or replacing clothing in a manner that exposes the torso, chest, back, or other areas that would reasonably be considered private.

Limited exceptions may be made for medical treatment, emergency situations, or when directed by a licensed athletic trainer or school administrator. In all cases, reasonable efforts shall be made to preserve the student-athlete's privacy and dignity.

Failure to comply with this procedure may result in corrective action in accordance with team, athletic department, and Lynchburg City Schools disciplinary expectations.

11. MEDICAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The health, safety, and well-being of student-athletes are a priority of Lynchburg City Schools (LCS). All athletic programs shall operate in accordance with applicable Lynchburg City School Board policies and regulations, Virginia High School League (VHSL) rules and regulations, the Code of Virginia, guidance issued by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Medical care provided within the athletic program shall also be consistent with the professional standards of practice applicable to licensed healthcare providers, including applicable regulations of the Virginia Board of Medicine. Athletic department personnel are expected to comply with all division-approved medical policies, emergency procedures, and safety protocols.

The information below provides an overview of key medical policies applicable to interscholastic athletics. Detailed procedures are maintained in division policies, administrative regulations, Emergency Action Plans (EAPs), Cardiac Emergency Response Plans (CERPs), and the Lynchburg City Schools Athletic Training Standard Operating Procedures.

Concussion Management

Lynchburg City Schools is committed to the prevention, recognition, evaluation, and proper management of sport-related concussions.

All coaches, student-athletes, parents/guardians, athletic trainers, administrators, and other applicable personnel shall comply with applicable LCS policy, Virginia code, and VHSL guidelines.

Any student-athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion or brain injury shall be immediately removed from participation and shall not return to athletic activity until all applicable division procedures have been followed and written medical clearance has been provided by an appropriately licensed healthcare provider in accordance with Virginia law and LCS policy. Return-to-learn and return-to-play decisions shall follow established division procedures and applicable medical guidance.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Lynchburg City Schools recognizes the importance of early identification and appropriate management of symptoms associated with sudden cardiac arrest.

All athletic programs shall comply with LCS policy, Virginia code, and VHSL guidelines.

Student-athletes exhibiting signs or symptoms that may indicate sudden cardiac arrest shall be immediately removed from participation and shall not return until evaluated and medically cleared in accordance with applicable law and division policy. Required education and acknowledgement forms shall be completed as required by Virginia law.

Athletic Trainers

Lynchburg City Schools recognizes certified athletic trainers as licensed healthcare professionals who provide medical services within the scope of their professional education, licensure, certification, and applicable law.

Athletic trainers employed by or providing services to Lynchburg City Schools shall perform their duties in accordance with:

- Virginia Board of Medicine laws and regulations;
- Applicable provisions of the Code of Virginia;
- Applicable federal laws and regulations;
- National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) standards and best practices;
- Virginia Athletic Trainers' Association (VATA) guidance, as applicable;
- Virginia High School League (VHSL) requirements; and
- Lynchburg City Schools Athletic Training Standard Operating Procedures.

Athletic trainers shall work collaboratively with supervising physicians, school administrators, coaches, school nurses, emergency medical services, and other healthcare providers to support the health and safety of student-athletes.

12. NAME, IMAGE, LIKENESS (NIL) VHSL POLICY

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, firearms and ammunition

(d) 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.

(e) 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.

13. OTHER RULES & REGULATIONS

Student-athletes are required to attend tryouts. Exceptions to this rule may include new students who were not enrolled during tryouts, student-athletes with specific medical conditions, and student-athletes who have not completed the school sports season that precedes the try-out period (medical documentation may be required by the athletic director).

Student-athletes must pass a physical examination and submit a completed VHSL physician's certificate and parental consent form as required by the Virginia High School League before trying out for an athletic team. Providing or offering false information regarding a student-athlete's physical condition shall result in suspension from VHSL activities for that school year.

Medical Insurance & Injury Reporting

It is strongly recommended that student-athletes have satisfactory medical insurance prior to participation. Lynchburg City Schools (LCS) provides information regarding supplemental and/or accident insurance coverage.

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete and their parent or guardian to report any injury directly related to participation in an LCS-sanctioned athletic event to the school's athletic director and/or athletic trainer. This communication should be provided in writing (email is preferred). Failure to report an injury to the LCS athletics department may hinder the ability to utilize the secondary insurance coverage.

Multi-Sport Seasonal Athletes

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

Participation in Other Athletic Activities Following Withdrawal from a Team

To promote commitment to teammates and discourage student-athletes from voluntarily leaving one team to immediately participate with another athletic program during the same athletic season, any student-athlete who voluntarily quits or is dismissed from a team after the conclusion of tryouts shall not be permitted to participate in out-of-season conditioning, practices, workouts, open gyms, skill development sessions, or other athletic activities for another team until the regular season of the original sport has concluded.

This provision is intended to support team commitment and program integrity and is not intended to penalize student-athletes who are unable to continue participation due to circumstances beyond their control.

Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to documented medical conditions or injuries, verified family emergencies, safety concerns, school-directed program changes, or other circumstances deemed appropriate by school administration.

A student-athlete or parent/guardian may submit a written request for an exception to the school's athletic director. The request shall be reviewed by appropriate school and Division administrators, which will include the principal (or designee), athletic director, and division athletics coordinator. The review shall consider the specific circumstances of the request, applicable Lynchburg City Schools policies, and Virginia High School League (VHSL) requirements. The final determination regarding the exception request shall be made by the appropriate Division administrator.

14. LEGAL DISCLAIMER & AUTHORITY

The Lynchburg City Schools student-athlete Handbook is an administrative guidance document intended to establish expectations, procedures, and operational practices for the administration of the Division's interscholastic athletic programs. This handbook supplements, but does not replace, applicable federal law; the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia; regulations and guidance of the Virginia Department of Education; Lynchburg City School Board policies, regulations, and administrative procedures; Virginia High School League (VHSL) rules and regulations; National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) playing rules and guidance; and other applicable governing authorities.

In the event of any conflict between this handbook and applicable federal law, Virginia law, School Board policy, administrative regulation, VHSL rules, or any other controlling legal authority, the controlling authority shall govern.

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for the interpretation and administration of this handbook and may issue additional administrative guidance consistent with applicable law, School Board policy, and VHSL requirements.

Nothing contained in this handbook shall be construed to create contractual, employment, or property rights beyond those established by applicable law, School Board policy, or other controlling authority.

Lynchburg City Schools reserves the right to revise, amend, suspend, or rescind any provision of this handbook at any time to ensure continued compliance with changes in law, School Board policy, Virginia Department of Education guidance, VHSL requirements, NFHS standards, or recognized best practices in athletic administration and student safety.

15. REFERENCES

The following references represent professional standards, legal authorities, and best-practice resources consulted in the development of the Lynchburg City Schools student-athlete Handbook. This handbook shall be implemented in accordance with applicable federal law, Virginia law, Virginia High School League rules, and Lynchburg City Schools policies and regulations. In the event of a conflict, governing law, School Board policy, or VHSL requirements shall control.

Federal Laws & Regulations

U.S. Department of Education. (2024). *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. §1232g.*

Commonwealth of Virginia Laws & Regulations

Virginia Code §22.1-271.5. *Guidelines and Policies and Procedures on Concussions in Student-Athletes.*

Virginia Code §22.1-271.7. *Public Middle and High School Student-Athletes; Preparticipation Physical Examination.*

Virginia Code §22.1-271.8. *Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention in Student-Athletes.*

Virginia Code §22.1-271.9. *Cardiac Emergency Response Plans (CERPs) and Athletic Emergency Action Plans (EAPs).*

Virginia Code §22.1-271.10. *Student-Athlete Extreme Heat Safety and Protection.*

Virginia Code §63.2-1509. *Persons Required to Report Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect.*

Lynchburg City Schools Policies & Regulations

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JJAC – Student Concussions.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JJAC-R – Return to Learn Protocol.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JJAFZ – Student-Athlete Sudden Cardiac Arrest.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JJAG – Student-Athlete Extreme Heat Safety and Protection.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy GAE – Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy GAH – School Division Employee Conflict of Interests.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy GBIZ – Staff Gifts and Solicitations.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JFCB – Sportsmanship, Ethics, and Integrity.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JFCC – Student Conduct on Buses.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JFC – Student Conduct.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy GBEZ – Standards of Conduct for Employees.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JFCB-RZ – Interscholastic Athletic Participation.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy IICB-R/IICC-R – Guidelines for Community Resource Persons/School Volunteers.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy GACZ – Lynchburg City Schools Employee Social Media Use Policy.*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy GCBB-R – Regulations for Supplemental Contract Coaches and Extra-Curricular Sponsors*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy EBBA – Emergency First Aid, CPR, and AED Certified Personnel*

Lynchburg City Schools. *Policy JC-RZZ – Regulation: Criteria for Zone Waiver/School Attendance Areas*

Virginia High School League (VHSL)

Virginia High School League. (2026). *Virginia High School League Handbook and Policy Manual: 2026–2027 Edition*. Charlottesville, VA: Virginia High School League.

Virginia High School League. (2026). *Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) Recommendations and Resources.*

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)

Virginia Department of Education. (2018). *Guidelines for Policies on Concussion in Student-Athletes.*

Virginia Department of Education. (2024). *Student-Athlete Safety and Wellness Guidance.*

Virginia Board of Medicine

Virginia Board of Medicine. (2016). *Regulations for Concussion Management in Youth Athletics.*

Virginia Board of Medicine. *Applicable Regulations and Guidance Related to Athletic Training and Sports Medicine Practice.*

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

National Federation of State High School Associations. (2023). *Heat Illness Prevention Guidelines.*

National Federation of State High School Associations. *Sports Medicine Handbook.*

National Federation of State High School Associations Sports Medicine Advisory Committee. *Position Statements and Recommendations.*

National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA)

National Athletic Trainers' Association. *NATA Position Statements.*

Broglio, S. P., et al. (2014). National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Management of Sport Concussion. *Journal of Athletic Training.*

National Athletic Trainers' Association. (2012). *Inter-Association Task Force Recommendations on Emergency Action Planning and Sudden Cardiac Arrest.*

National Athletic Trainers' Association. (2020). *Emergency Action Planning in Athletics: Best Practice Recommendations.*

Casa, D. J., et al. (2015). National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: Exertional Heat Illnesses. *Journal of Athletic Training*, 50(9), 986–1000.

National Athletic Trainers' Association Research & Education Foundation. *Position Statements.*

International Concussion Guidance

International Conference on Concussion in Sport. (2023). *Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 6th International Conference on Concussion in Sport—Amsterdam, 2022. British Journal of Sports Medicine.*

American Heart Association (AHA)

American Heart Association. (2020). *Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care.*

American Heart Association. (2023). *2023 AHA Guidelines Updates and Emergency Cardiovascular Care Recommendations.*

Cardiovascular Screening and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention

American College of Cardiology & American Heart Association. (2015). *Eligibility and Disqualification Recommendations for Competitive Athletes With Cardiovascular Abnormalities. Journal of the American College of Cardiology.*

Maron, B. J., Friedman, R. A., Kligfield, P., et al. (2014). Assessment of the 12-lead ECG as a Screening Test for Detection of Cardiovascular Disease in Healthy General Populations of Young People. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology, 64*(14), 1479–1514.

Maron, B. J., Levine, B. D., Washington, R. L., et al. (2016). Eligibility and Disqualification Recommendations for Competitive Athletes With Cardiovascular Abnormalities: Task Force 2. *Circulation*, *132*(22), e256–e261.

Heat Illness and Environmental Safety

American College of Sports Medicine. (2021). *ACSM Position Stand: Exertional Heat Illness During Training and Competition. Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise.*

Korey Stringer Institute. (2024). *Heat Acclimatization and Exertional Heat Stroke Prevention Guidelines.* University of Connecticut.

Korey Stringer Institute. *Environmental Safety and Sports Medicine Best Practice Guidelines.*

National Athletic Trainers' Association. (2015). *Inter-Association Consensus: Heat Illness Prevention and Management in Youth Sports.*

Virginia High School League. (2026). *Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) Recommendations and Resources.*

Additional Professional Organizations and Resources

Virginia Athletic Trainers' Association. *Sports Medicine and Athletic Health Safety Resource*



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