Vermont Principals' Association

2025-26

Policies

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Commitment to Racial, Gender-Fair, and Disability Awareness:

The Vermont Principals' Association believes that all individuals should be treated with dignity, fairness, and respect. Students must be able to participate in Association-sponsored activities in an environment that is free of sexual harassment, prejudice, and discrimination. The Vermont Principals' Association and its member schools are committed to creating an environment in our activities and programs that promotes respect for and appreciation of racial, gender, sexual orientation, religious and ethnic differences, and is disability aware. Preventing prejudice and discrimination begins with every individual.

- Link to Reporting a Concern
- VPA Statement of Support for Transgender Students & Student Athletes 10/5/22
- Pregame Statement & Recommendations
- Procedures for any Hate Speech During Events

Policy on Gender Identity:

The Vermont Principals' Association (VPA) recognizes the value of participation in interscholastic sports for all student-athletes. The VPA is committed to providing all students with the opportunity to participate in VPA activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity as is outlined in the Vermont Agency of Education Best Practices For Schools For Transgender And Gender Nonconforming Students. Vermont's Public Accommodations Act (9 V.S.A. 4502) and VPA policies prohibit discrimination and/or harassment of students on school property or at school functions by students or employees. The prohibition against discrimination includes discrimination based on a student's actual or perceived sex and gender. Gender includes a person's actual or perceived sex as well as gender identity and expression.

Definitions: For these guidelines, the following definitions will apply:

- *Assigned Sex at Birth*: the sex designation, usually male or female, assigned to a person when they are born.
- *Gender Expression*: how a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.
- *Gender Identity*: means an individual's actual or perceived gender identity, or gender-related characteristics intrinsically related to an individual's gender or gender identity, regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth. (1 V.S.A. 144)
- *Gender Non-Conforming*: a term used to describe people whose gender expressions differ from stereotypic expectations. The term "gender variant" or

"gender atypical" are also used. Gender non-conforming individuals may identify as male, female, some combination of both, or neither.

- *Sexual Orientation*: a person's sexual orientation and sexual attraction to other people based on the gender of the other person. Sexual orientation is not the same as gender identity. Not all transgender youth identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, and not all gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth display gender-nonconforming characteristics.
- *Transgender*: an adjective describing a person whose sex assigned to him or her at birth does not correspond to their gender identity.
- *Transition*: the process in which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another.

Privacy Policy: All discussions and documentation shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law unless the student and the family make a specific request in writing.

Procedures:

- The student and the parent(s)/guardians shall notify the Superintendent (or designee) that the student would like the opportunity to participate in interscholastic athletics consistent with the gender they identify as.
- The student's home school will determine the eligibility of a student seeking to participate in interscholastic athletics in a manner consistent with their gender identity where the student's gender identity does not correspond to their sex assigned at birth.
- The Superintendent (or designee) will confirm the gender identity asserted for purposes of trying out for an interscholastic sports team through documentation from the parent, guardian, guidance counselor, or a doctor, psychologist, counselor, or other medical personnel. A medical diagnosis shall not be required.
- Once a member school has rendered a determination of eligibility to try out for an interscholastic sports team or teams which corresponds to the student's gender identity the eligibility is granted for the duration of the student's participation in interscholastic athletics. The student shall be required to petition should their gender change. The student must meet all school and VPA standards for eligibility for practice and competition.
- The school's Athletic Director should notify the VPA if any accommodations are needed.

Appeals: All appeals concerning a school's determination as to the eligibility of a gender non-conforming student to participate in interscholastic sports will go directly to the VPA for consideration/action.

VPA Non-Binary Policy

Context:
"Title IX's prohibition on discrimination on the basis of sex to include: (1) discrimination based on sexual orientation; and (2) discrimination based on gender identity. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity offered by a recipient of federal financial assistance."

"As OCR recently reported, LGBTQ+ students often face additional challenges in schools, including disproportionately experiencing persistent bullying, harassment, and victimization. The vulnerability of LGBTQ+ students has only increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving them without access to school-based mental health services and other supports. One survey found that 78 percent of transgender and nonbinary youth reported that their mental health was "poor" either most of the time or always during COVID-19, compared with 61 percent of cisgender youth."[1]

Goal:
Providing opportunities to participate, belong, and contribute and find lifelong healthy habits for social and emotional well-being for members of the LGBTQ+, Nonbinary, and Gender Nonconforming student-athletes.

VPA Policy on Gender Identity:
The Vermont Principals' Association (VPA) recognizes the value of participation in interscholastic sports for all student-athletes. The VPA is committed to providing all students with the opportunity to participate in VPA activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity as outlined in the Vermont Agency of Education Best Practices For Schools For Transgender And Gender Nonconforming Students. Vermont's Public Accommodations Act (9 V.S.A. 4502) and VPA policies prohibit discrimination and/or harassment of students on school property or at school functions by students or employees. The prohibition against discrimination includes discrimination based on a student's actual or perceived sex and gender. Gender includes a person's actual or perceived sex as well as gender identity and expression.

Nonbinary Participation in Individual Sports:

- **In accordance with VPA Policies, individual sports are the following:** golf, ~~gymnastics~~, skiing, snowboarding, ~~tennis~~, cross-country, track (indoor and outdoor), and ~~wrestling~~.
- A nonbinary student-athlete is defined as a student-athlete who does not exclusively identify as male or female.

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[1] *U.S. Department of Education Confirms Title IX protects students from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity*. U.S. Department of Education Confirms Title IX Protects Students from Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity | U.S. Department of Education. (2021, June 16). Retrieved December 15, 2022, from https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-confirms-title-ix-protects-students-discrimination-based-sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity

- A nonbinary division should be offered and available in each of the VPA Individual Sports.

Nonbinary Participation:
Student-athletes who identify as nonbinary shall be able to choose to participate in a nonbinary division and record their scores as nonbinary. Student-athletes shall choose the gendered event they wish to compete in should a nonbinary-specific event not be available.

All student-athletes are required to compete in whichever gendered division they elect at the beginning of the season for the duration of the season.

Championship Requirements:
Requirements shall be the same as the other gender requirements.

Policy on a Coach's Code of Ethics:

The responsibility of a coach is to teach attitudes, proper habits, knowledge, and skills. The athletic program is designed to enhance academic achievement and should never interfere with opportunities for academic success. Each student-athlete should be treated as an individual whose welfare shall be primary at all times. The coach must be aware that they serve as a model in the education of the student-athlete and, therefore, shall never place the value of winning above the value of sportsmanship, health, and safety.

Core Coaching Beliefs

- In all personal contact with the student-athlete, officials, athletic directors, school administrators, the state high school athletic association, the media, and the public, the coach shall strive to set an example of the highest ethical and professional conduct.
- The coach shall support and enforce school rules for the prevention of substance use and abuse.
- The coach shall promote the entire interscholastic program of the school and direct their team in alignment with the total school program.
- The coach shall be thoroughly acquainted with a contest, state, league, and local rules, and is responsible for their interpretation to team members. The coach shall abide by the letter and spirit of these rules at all times.
- Coaches shall actively use their influence to enhance sportsmanship among their spectators.
- Contest officials shall have the respect and support of the coach. The coach shall not engage in conduct that incites players or spectators against the officials or each other. Public criticism of officials or players is unethical.
- Before and after contests, all coaches should meet and exchange friendly greetings to set the correct tone for the event.

- A coach shall not exert pressure on faculty members to give student-athletes special consideration.
- It is unethical for coaches to scout opponents by any other means than those adopted by the state high school athletic association and the league.

Policy on Principal's Responsibilities Regarding Student Activities:

Schools that hold a voluntary membership in the Vermont Principals' Association may participate in interscholastic activities only with other VPA member schools or schools that have been approved by the VPA. No school which holds a voluntary membership in the VPA may participate in interscholastic activities with a school located in another state unless that school is a member in good standing of its state association or permission is given by the VPA. It shall be the responsibility of the principal (or designee) of each member school to determine that all opponents in interscholastic athletic contests are members in good standing of its state athletic association.

Changes: No game shall be canceled nor dates changed except by mutual consent of the principals concerned or their designees, or by procedures approved by a league.

Raffles 50/50 raffles will be allowed at any Vermont Principals' Association finals (championships) and the semi-final contests

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Policy for Scheduling VPA Tournaments:

It is not within the province of the Vermont Principals' Association to oversee the calendar of its member schools or the leagues/conferences they may belong to. In planning state activities, the VPA attempts to avoid conflicts of state-wide importance.

Policy on Student Eligibility:

The definition of co-curricular activities in this document shall include all interscholastic and extra-curricular activities sanctioned by the VPA.

Assurance of Eligibility: The principal of each member school assures the VPA that all participants representing that school in interscholastic activities during the regular season and VPA-sponsored events shall meet all eligibility requirements of the school and the VPA. The administrator of each Recognized Independent School or parent/teacher of a student enrolled in a Home Study Program shall assure the VPA that all participants representing the school or program meet all eligibility requirements of the VPA.

Standards of Eligibility: Eligibility rules and activities policies apply to all students in grades 7-12 in affiliated schools. Eligibility rules and activities policies apply to all activities, both athletic and non-athletic, sanctioned or sponsored by the VPA.

Home Study Programs: A home study student who wishes to participate in a public school co-curricular program shall be an "eligible student" under this section if:

- The participating student is enrolled in a home-study program in compliance with Title 16 V.S.A, Section 166(b).
- The participating student must have a legal residence in the school district or is a legal resident of a district that does not maintain a school and pays tuition on behalf of its students.
- Participation in a school's co-curricular activities program shall not commence until a copy of the Vermont Agency of Education Enrollment Letter is presented to the principal by the parent or guardian.
- The participating student's academic program, as referenced in the Vermont Agency of Education Enrollment Letter, will be reviewed by the student's parent or guardian at appropriate intervals as locally determined and consistent for all students to determine academic progress. This review and determination must be certified in writing from the parent/guardian to the principal.
- The student may participate in co-curricular activities sponsored by a VPA member school provided the student complies with the same physical examination, insurance, age, and any other requirements for participation as required of all students.
- Eligibility issues on all matters other than academic progress may be appealed following the bylaws of the Vermont Principals' Association.
- Before the start of a sports season or fine arts and performance activities in which a home study student wishes to participate, the parent or guardian and student must notify the principal in writing that they wish to participate in a school's co-curricular activities program. Failure to provide a timely notification will not disqualify the student from participating but may result in some delays in participation.
- The home study student must adhere to the same standards of behavior, responsibilities, and performance as other participants of the team.
- Consistent with the law governing all student-athletes, participation in co-curricular activities programs is a privilege, not a right, and nothing in these eligibility standards is intended to confer a right on any individual to participate in co-curricular activities.

Student Participation Limitations*:* Participation on scholastic teams is limited to enrolled students and qualified home study students. The rationale for this limitation is as follows:

- Co-curricular activities are supposed to be part of a scholastic program. These are school teams, not community teams.
- School teams promote academic progress in the classroom by requiring adherence to local academic standards. At a minimum, it is more difficult for schools to administer academic standards when some of the participants in activities are, because they are not enrolled, exempted from those requirements.
- School teams help promote a sense of community within the school.
- Participation by individuals who are not enrolled displaces enrolled students. All teams have limited playing time. Most teams have cut policies; some students do not even get to participate on their school team. We should not tell enrolled students to sit on the sidelines, or even not make the team, because someone from another school has taken the spot.
- Participation by individuals not enrolled places the school's administrators, teachers, and coaches in the position of having responsibility for the participant without the authority they have over-enrolled students.
- The VPA nurtures an environment in which all schools support a full range of activities for their students. Independent schools may partner with another school through a member-to-member agreement. (see policy on member-to-member agreements)

Eligibility Limitations and Amateur Status

Contestants or participants must be enrolled in their school and must meet the school's prescribed academic and eligibility rules. Students may only compete on school teams sponsored by their school during the season, and may only compete for the one school in which they are officially enrolled. Students may participate in meets as individuals but may not participate as a member of another team.

Vermont Name, Image and Likeness Policy

In June 2021, the U.S Supreme Court unanimously decided that the NCAA's rules limited education-related benefits for student-athletes violated federal antitrust laws. *National Collegiate Athletic Association v. Alston*, 141 S.Ct. 2141 (2021). Although the Court's Decision applied specifically to NCAA rules, the ruling has generated expansion of name, image, and likeness (NIL) opportunities for high school students. The Vermont Principals' Association is issuing the following guidance to its members, parents, and students to clarify how student-athletes may engage in NIL activities for financial gain and still remain eligible under the VPA policies.

In addition to defining key terms, this guidance illustrates what is considered permissible and prohibited conduct when carrying out NIL activities for financial gain, and highlights the consequences for violations of the amateur rules set for by the VPA.

Definitions:
VPA Amateur Rule: Students are ineligible if they have lost their amateur standing under any of these qualifications.

- They have received remuneration, gifts, or donations directly or indirectly for participation in an athletic contest or as a prize for being outstanding players.
- They have participated under an assumed name.
- They have competed on a team on which some player was paid for their participation.
- They have entered into a playing contract with a professional club or agent.
- Reference to "gifts or donations" is not intended to preclude the acceptance of playing apparel and equipment that is provided by a sponsoring organization.
- Students who lose amateur status in one sport do not lose it in other sports.
- Amateurs or a team of amateurs may participate against a team of professionals. Amateurs may not participate on a professional team, or on a team where members of the team are receiving remuneration for their athletic services.

Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL): The three elements of an individual's right to control the commercial use of their identity for financial gain. This concept is also known as the right of publicity.

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

Permissible and Prohibited Conduct:
Student-Athlete: Student-athletes and their families may engage or work with professional service providers, such as agents and advisors, to engage in NIL activities for financial gain, except as prohibited by this guidance. The following activities are permissible for a student-athlete to financially gain from the use of their own NIL:

- Commercial Endorsements;
- Promotional Activities;
- Social Media Presence;
- Product or Service Advertisements; and
- Non-fungible Tokens (NFTs)

Student-athletes must keep their NIL activities and participation in interscholastic athletics separate. Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in the following non-exclusive list of activities when engaging in school-based interscholastic athletics:

- Making any reference to a VPA member school or the VPA when engaging in an NIL activity;
- Wearing a school-based team jersey or otherwise displaying the school's name, mascot, logo or any other school identifying marks when marketing a NIL product or service; and
- Endorsing or promoting goods or services of any third-party NIL partner during the school-based team activities and events, including but not limited to:
    - Wearing third-party apparel;
    - Displaying a third-party logo or brand; and
    - Displaying a third-party insignia or identifying mark.

Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in any NIL activities involving the following but not limited to non-exclusive categories of products and services:

- Adult entertainment products and services;
- Alcohol products;
- Tobacco, nicotine, and/or vape-related products
- Cannabis products;
- Controlled dangerous substances;
- Prescription pharmaceuticals
- Casinos and gambling, including the Vermont State Lottery
- Weapons, firearms, and ammunition

Member Schools and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs): Employees, contractors, and volunteers of member schools LEAs, including administration and coaches, may not:

- Act as a representative of a student, engage in any management or agency activities, or otherwise be involved with a student-athlete's use of their NIL. A legal guardian who is also an employee of an LEA must act solely as the legal guardian and not a representative of the school;
- Promise NIL opportunities to entice student-athletes to transfer or attend their school;
- Offer to provide a student with any grant, loan, gift or financial benefit related to a student's NIL;
- Form, direct, or engage a NIL Collective or conduct any other group interactions as it relates to student-athlete NIL activities.

Violations:

Failure to conduct NIL activities for financial gain in accordance with this guidance may be a violation of the VPA Amateur rule.
If the LEA determines that a student-athlete has lost amateur status, the student-athlete may be deemed ineligible and have to wait 60 school days before reinstatement through the VPA Activity Standards Committee: Appeals from the application of VPA policies and or waivers of VPA policies may be made by a member school directly to the VPA. Appeals/waiver requests may be approved by the VPA Office or may be referred to the VPA Activity Standards Committee for consideration. Requests that are denied by the VPA Office may be appealed to the VPA Activity

Standards Committee by the member schools. Requests that are denied by the Activity Standards Committee may be appealed to the VPA Appeals Committee

If the LEA determines a member school employee, contractor, or volunteer violates the regulations the member school and either the student or the coach, or both, may be subject to the violations, penalties and appeals procedure set forth by VPA policy.

Use of 8th Grade Students on High School Teams

General Eligibility Requirements

Grade Restrictions: No student-athlete below grade eight will be allowed in any VPA sanctioned sports at any level (varsity, junior varsity, freshman) unless approved by the VPA.

Academic and Behavioral Standards: Grade eight student-athletes who participate in a high school sports program fall under the same academic and behavioral expectations as high school students.

Eligibility Period: Grade eight student-athletes who participate on a high school sports team will be granted five years (10 semesters) of eligibility.

Readiness Assessment: Determination must be made by the school's principal (or designee) to ensure that the grade eight student-athlete is physically, mentally, and socially prepared to participate at the high school level.

Sport-Specific Participation Rules: Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Field Hockey and Softball

Divisions 1, 2, and 3: Grade eight participation is possible by waiver request only. Grade eight participation may be granted only at the lowest level of team offering at the school.

Division 4: Grade eight student-athletes may be used on a sub-varsity team provided that the student-athlete is needed to maintain the school's sub-varsity team. If a Division 4 school does not have a sub-varsity team, the grade eight student-athlete may be used on a varsity team provided that:

- A waiver has been granted by the VPA
- No other student-athlete in grades 9 through 12 has been cut from the program

Girls' Ice Hockey (Special Exception)

Grade eight students may only be used if both of the following conditions are met:

- There is a lack of an appropriate program at their grade level either in a local club or middle school program (thus their only option would be to play on a boy's team, with full contact)
- The high school program has demonstrated a need for athletes to maintain their program (using the Member to Member numbers to determine a full complement of players for a team)

Individual Sports (Prohibited)

Grade eight student-athletes are not eligible to participate in high school sports that have an individual component, including: track, cross-country, wrestling, golf, nordic ski, alpine ski, snowboarding, and gymnastics.

VPA Waiver Criteria

For all waiver requests, the following criteria must be met:

1. **Team Necessity**: The use of the grade eight student-athlete is considered necessary for a school to field a team in that sport
    a. Specific Sport Thresholds:
        i. Soccer: Less than 13 players
        ii. Basketball: Less than 9 players Varsity Players
        iii. Baseball: Less than 11 players
        iv. Softball: Less than 11 players
        v. Field Hockey: Less than 13 players

2. **No Displacement**: The grade eight student-athlete must not displace another student-athlete in grades nine through twelve

3. **Eligibility Requirements**: The grade eight student-athlete must meet all VPA eligibility requirements

4. **District Enrollment**: The grade eight student-athlete must be a bona fide student in the same school district as the high school

5. **Middle School Impact**: The use of the grade eight student-athlete cannot eliminate or unduly impact a middle school team

6. **Sending School Agreement**: In cases where the grade eight student-athlete comes from a sending school, both the sending AND the receiving schools' administrators must agree to the usage of this grade eight student-athlete

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Participation in Middle and High School Extracurricular Activities for School Choice and Home Study Students

Purpose

This policy outlines the eligibility and participation guidelines for students enrolled in school choice programs and home study (homeschool) programs concerning extracurricular activities in Vermont middle and high schools. It ensures compliance with Vermont statutes and promotes equitable access to these programs.

Definitions

- **School Choice Students:** Students who attend a public school outside their district of residence under Vermont's school choice provisions.
- **Home Study Students:** Students enrolled in a registered home study program in accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 166b.

General Participation Requirements

All students — whether enrolled through school choice or home study — must meet the same participation requirements as full-time enrolled students as determined by the local district. These include but are not limited to:

- Academic eligibility
- Age and grade-level requirements
- Compliance with behavior and conduct policies
- Proof of a current physical examination
- Proof of valid health insurance coverage

Policy

School Choice Students

- **Eligibility:** Students participating in school choice programs are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities offered by the school in which they are actively enrolled. In the case of Technical Centers, students can access activities through their sending school.
- **Requirements:** These students must meet the same eligibility criteria, including academic standards, physical examinations, insurance coverage, age requirements, and any other conditions as mandated for all enrolled students.

Home Study Students

- **Eligibility:** In accordance with 16 V.S.A. § 563(24) and State Board of Education Rules 4403-4405, home study students are eligible to enroll part-time in academic courses and participate in extracurricular activities at:
    - The public school operated by their district of residence.
    - If the student's school district does not operate a public school offering at the applicable grade level, the student shall be considered a resident of any public school to which their district pays tuition, provided that:
        - The student is attending a school that their district has an established tuition agreement with
        - The student is enrolled at that school through their district's standard process for school placement
        - In cases where multiple school options exist (such as in Hartland, Wolcott, and similar districts with school choice), the student's eligibility will be determined based on their actual school of attendance rather than geographical proximity to their residence
- **Requirements:** Prior to participation, home study students must:
    - **Enrollment Verification:** Provide the school principal with a copy of the Vermont Agency of Education Enrollment Letter confirming compliance with home study enrollment procedures.
    - **Academic Assurance:** Submit written assurance from the parent or guardian that the student is meeting the school's academic eligibility standards. This assurance should be provided at intervals consistent with those required for full-time students.
    - **Compliance with Policies:** Adhere to the same standards of behavior, responsibilities, and performance as other participants, including compliance with physical examination, insurance, age, and other requirements set forth by the Vermont Principals' Association (VPA) and the respective school.

Limitations

Participation is subject to space availability. When capacity is limited, preference shall be given to full-time enrolled students of the public school. Schools must establish and publish clear criteria for admitting non-enrolled students to activities with limited spaces, which may include lotteries or waiting lists. A public school may establish reasonable participation caps to ensure program sustainability and prevent overcrowding due to an influx of students from private institutions that have discontinued similar programs.

Program Availability

If a specific extracurricular program is not offered by the public school operated by the district of residence (for home study students) or the school of enrollment (for school choice students), the student is not eligible to participate in that activity at a neighboring school or district that does

offer the program. Participation is strictly limited to the offerings of the student's designated or enrolled school.

School Commitment Bylaw

Once a home study or school choice student participates in an extracurricular activity at a particular school, that student must remain with that same school for all extracurricular activities for the duration of the academic year. Students may not choose different schools for different sports or activities within the same academic year. This bylaw is intended to prevent "program shopping" across multiple schools and to maintain the integrity of school-based extracurricular programs. Students must commit to one school per academic year for all their extracurricular participation.

Implementation

School principals are responsible for implementing this policy in accordance with existing state laws and guidelines established by the Vermont Principals' Association. They must ensure that all students, regardless of enrollment status, have equitable access to extracurricular activities, consistent with the provisions outlined above.

Non-School Competition Rules

- A member of a school team is a student-athlete who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team tryouts, practices, and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are prevented from missing a high school practice or competition to compete with an out-of-school team, practice, or competition including tournaments, showcases, combines, or other athletic events.
- Whenever a conflict arises between the high school team practice/competition and an out-of-school practice/competition on the same day, the high school team practice/competition shall be honored by the student-athlete. Priority must be given at all times to the high school team, its practices, and its contest unless permission has been granted by the school. It is expressly understood that permission shall not be granted regularly.
- It is highly recommended to all schools that this information be put into all athletic handbooks and also should be presented by Athletic Directors/Coaches at pre-season meetings with athletes and parents.

Eligibility:

Transfer Students

- Transfer students are immediately eligible provided they were bona fide students in good standing in the school from which they transferred according to the definition in (a) above and there is a bona fide change in residence. If the transfer is the result of any coercion, recruiting, or inducement to move to participate in interscholastic activities, students will be ineligible for 365 calendar days from the date of the infraction.
- If there is no bona fide change in residence, students are eligible to participate immediately if they transfer before the first play date of that sports season. If a student transfers after the first play date of that sports season and does not change residence, the student must wait 20 calendar days after the transfer to be eligible and must participate in at least 60% of the regular season competitions (at the new school) to be eligible for postseason competition.
- The VPA may grant a waiver of the 20 calendar day waiting period, the 60% eligibility requirement, or the 365 calendar day waiting period upon request by the school if the school establishes that the transfer was made for reasons not related to activities.
- Students who transfer from one school to another and then transfer back to their original school, or any other school, are not eligible for sports participation for the remainder of that school year unless the transfer is due to a change in residence or permission is granted by the VPA.

Recruitment

- A school shall be deemed in violation of the rule against recruitment for directly or indirectly supporting or sanctioning recruitment if a representative or agent of the school, or any individual or group associated with the athletic programs of that school, approaches a student-athlete in another school, apart from a publicized meeting for all prospective students in that school, and directly or indirectly attempts to persuade or induce a student-athlete to enroll in their school. A school may also violate this rule by failing to take adequate steps to control recruitment by third parties.

Age Rule

- A student who competes in any VPA sanctioned activity must be under nineteen (19) years of age, except that a student whose nineteenth (19th) birthday occurs on or after August 1 is eligible for all activities in the ensuing school year. Students who have attained the age of nineteen (19) before August 1 shall be ineligible for all VPA sanctioned activities.

Diplomas

- Students are ineligible if they have graduated from any course of study in a secondary school comparable to the Vermont system. The initial determination of whether the secondary school is comparable shall be made by the school's principal. If there is a question concerning the eligibility of a student under this rule, the Assistant Executive Director of the VPA may review the principal's determination. Determining whether a secondary school is comparable, the principal, the Assistant Executive Director, the Activity Standards Committee, and the Board of Appeals shall consider the normal number of years of the primary and secondary school program; the length of the school day, and year; the curriculum; whether graduation makes the student eligible for post-secondary education; and any other relevant information. If the total length of the normal primary and secondary program for the school system in question is less than twelve years, then the secondary school may be deemed less than comparable. Waivers of this eligibility rule may also be granted under these bylaws.

Length of High School Eligibility

- Students have four (4) consecutive years or eight (8) consecutive semesters of eligibility for participation in school activities. Attendance of thirty (30) school days of any semester shall be regarded as a semester. Attendance is defined as being included in the official roll and attendance records of the school and not a physical presence in the class. A student that is enrolled for his/her eighth and final semester of eligibility, during the fall-winter term, may complete the winter sports season as long as they are an eligible student and have not graduated.

Years of Participation in the Same Sport

- No student may participate in the same sport for more than four seasons.

Amateur Status Rulings and Comments:

Students are ineligible if they have lost their amateur standing under any of these qualifications.

- They have received remuneration, gifts, or donations directly or indirectly for participation in an athletic contest or as a prize for being outstanding players.
- They have participated under an assumed name.
- They have competed on a team on which some player was paid for his participation.
- They have entered into a playing contract with a professional club or agent.
- Reference to "gifts or donations" is not intended to preclude the acceptance of playing apparel and equipment that is provided by a sponsoring organization.

- Students who lose amateur status in one sport do not lose it in other sports.
- Amateurs or a team of amateurs may participate against a team of professionals. Amateurs may not participate on a professional team, or on a team where members of the team are receiving remuneration for their athletic services.

Attendance at Sports Skills Instructional Programs

Students who during the regular school day, attend specialized schools or programs where the primary purpose of this instruction or program is to enhance skills in specific sports and/or activities, during the time of established VPA seasons in that particular activity, will not be permitted to participate with their home school in that activity.

Participation in All-Star Contests

1) For this policy, an All-Star contest is defined to be one in which student-athletes are selected based upon their performance as a Member of a VPA school-sanctioned athletic activity.

2) The VPA does not sanction or approve of All-Star contests. Student-athletes who participate in All-Star contests will lose their VPA eligibility to participate in that same sport at their high school for the next sports season. The only exceptions to this are when the All-Star contest is directly related to the activities of the U.S. Olympic Committee, involves a Senior who has completed their sports eligibility (participation in one sport does not affect participation in another sport), or if the VPA Office gives specific approval for that event.

Eligibility for International Exchange and International Students

- An international exchange student is an international student who attends high school in the U.S. To be eligible for interscholastic athletics in the U.S., such students must be under the auspices of and be placed with a U.S. host family by an international student exchange program that has been accepted for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) and be recognized by the U.S. Department of State. The foreign exchange program must assign students to host families by a method that ensures that no student is placed because of his/her athletic interests or abilities.
- An international exchange student is considered to be placed with a host family when a written notice of placement is provided by the exchange organization to the student and his/her parents, and the host family. No member of the school's coaching staff, paid or voluntary, shall serve as the host family.
- The international exchange student must possess a current J-1 visa, issued by the U.S. State Department.
- The international exchange student must comply with all eligibility requirements set forth by the Vermont Principals' Association and school-based eligibility rules.

- The international exchange student may not be a graduate of or have received a diploma from a secondary school or its equivalent, which is comparable to a Vermont secondary school in the student's native country.
- An international student who is not under the auspices of and placed by a CSIET-listed exchange program must meet the following requirements to be considered for interscholastic athletics eligibility in any state:
- The student must possess a current F-1 visa, issued by U.S. Immigration.
- The student must provide to the principal of the school they attend an official untranslated transcript and a transcript that is translated into English by an acceptable agent or agency, which indicates work taken in all grades in which the student was enrolled.
- The international student must pay tuition to the high school they attend as prescribed in Section 625 of U.S. Public Law 104-208.
- No member of the school's coaching staff, paid or voluntary, shall serve as the resident family for the student.
- The international student must comply with all eligibility requirements set forth by The Vermont Principals' Association in this document.

Non-compliance with one or more of the foregoing provisions shall render the international student ineligible for interscholastic athletics at any high school that is a member of any NFHS member state high school association.

International and Foreign Exchange Student Form:

Waivers (grounds for and hardship rule)

- Waivers of eligibility rules in matters of age may be granted as a matter of discretion only under extraordinary circumstances in which undue hardship (as defined in these rules) directly causes non-compliance with the eligibility rule, and if the waiver will not harm other participants or the fairness of competition.
- For eligibility in matters other than age, waivers may be granted or denied as an exercise of discretion by the Activities Standards Committee after considering the information that the Committee deems relevant. Schools may file for hardship waivers for their students utilizing the Hardship Application that is on the VPA website. As part of the packet, schools need to include the following; a copy of the student's transcript, a letter from the school administrator supporting the waiver request, a letter from the parent and or student describing the request, and any other pertinent information that the school would like to include. Once completed, the packet is to be sent to the VPA and a meeting will be arranged with the Activity Standards Committee. At this meeting, school representatives, the

student, and parent/guardian will be welcome to attend and may present information to the committee.

- Eligibility waivers fall into one of three categories: Medical, Situational, or Refugee. All eligibility waiver requests must fall into one of these three categories."
- Hardship Waiver Rule- The Activities Standards Committee interprets undue hardship as a situation to the student-athlete which is severe enough to prevent the normal application of VPA eligibility rules. Circumstances involving choice on the part of the student or parents/guardians do not necessarily constitute undue hardship.
    - Appeals:
        - Appeals from the application of VPA policies and or waivers of VPA policies may be made by a member school directly to the VPA. Appeals/waiver requests may be approved by the VPA Office or may be referred to the VPA Activity Standards Committee for consideration. Requests that are denied by the VPA Office may be appealed to the VPA Activity Standards Committee by the member schools. Requests that are denied by the Activity Standards Committee may be appealed to the VPA Appeals Committee
        - Appeals of local school policies often follow the steps listed below. However, contact your local school to determine your school's specific process:
            - First step: Meet and present issues with the school's athletic director
            - Second step: If unresolved, meet and present issues to the school's principal
            - Third step: If unresolved, meet and present issues to the district superintendent
            - Fourth Step: If unresolved, meet and present issues to the local school board (this is the final step). Note – appeals of local school policies cannot be appealed to the VPA as these are local policies in which the VPA has no jurisdiction."

Disciplinary Action Procedures:

(Note: This applies to appeals of VPA policies, not local school district policies or procedures).

Investigation: When alleged violations of VPA policies or rules are reported, the Executive Director or designee shall investigate any alleged violations in person or through a designated representative, (e.g. local school administrators).

Local Investigations: Violations of rules, including violations that happen at or about interscholastic athletic events should be reported to and handled by local school officials as their given processes and procedures are outlined. This includes reports of student misconduct, hate speech, and any resulting hazing, harassment, bullying, and/or Title IX. Incidents can be reported directly to the VPA via the online reporting form as well. Any reports received to the VPA will be redirected to local officials as the initial point of contact for investigation and any resulting interventions.

Third-Party Investigation: If violations of rules and the given local investigation(s) are distributed among two or more school systems, the given superintendents can agree to jointly hire a third-party investigator which the VPA will help facilitate and match to the scenario. The results of the third-party investigation will be reviewed by all parties involved to determine the next steps with the given results.

Notice of Probable Violation: If the Executive Director or designee determines from the preliminary investigation that a probable violation has occurred, the Executive Director or designee shall give to the alleged violator written notice of the probable violation. The written notice shall contain the charges made, a recommended penalty, and a copy of the preliminary investigation report if a report has been prepared. The notice shall also advise the alleged violator of his/her/opportunity to be heard before the Activities Standards Committee.

Opportunities to be Heard: The alleged violator may accept the notice and recommended penalty or may file an appeal with the Activities Standards Committee. The alleged violation and penalty shall be final unless the alleged violator submits to the Activities Standards Committee a written appeal with a written explanation of his/her version of the events within seven (7) calendar days of the date of the Notice of Probable violation.

Request for Hearing: A hearing (either in person or by electronic means) will be set, provided a request is made in writing and delivered to the Executive Director or designee within seven (7) calendar days from the date of the Notice of Probable Violation.

Evidence, Right to Counsel: If a hearing is requested, it will be set to be heard within fourteen (14) school days from the request. The alleged violator may introduce evidence and may be represented by counsel. Evidence may be in the form of testimony, affidavits, written reports, electronic recordings, or other information that may assist the Committee in making its decision.

Closing of Hearings: After the presentation of evidence, the Activities Standards Committee shall declare the hearings closed.

Reopening of Hearings: The hearings may be reopened by the Activities Standards Committee or upon application in writing of any party at any time before the decision is made, if the Activities Standards Committee, in its discretion, determines to reopen the hearing.

Modification of Deadline: The Activities Standards Committee may modify any time governing its proceedings by mutual agreement or for good cause.

Time of Decision: The decision shall be made by the Activities Standards Committee within seven school days after the closing of hearings or seven (7) school days after review of the written explanation if no request for a hearing is made. The decision shall be mailed by the Activities Standards Committee to each party by certified mail, return receipt requested, or electronic means.

Decision: The findings and decision of the Activities Standards Committee shall be in writing. The Committee may assess appropriate sanctions, which may include, but are not limited to, warnings, forfeitures, prohibitions from competitions, suspension, the expulsion of membership, and individual bans or suspensions.

Suspensions: The Executive Director or designee may, temporarily, may suspend schools, students, and VPA Tournament officials from participation in athletic events before a final determination of any appeal. In such an event, the suspension shall be continued for no longer than is reasonably necessary for the Activities Standards Committee to convene a hearing if one is requested by the affected parties.

Proper Parties. Only schools shall have the right to challenge discipline assessed against the school or the school's teams. Individuals connected with the school or the affected team may not challenge discipline that is assessed against the school or the team, but may, accompanied by representatives from the school, or in collaboration with the school, may challenge actions or decisions that affect their eligibility.

Appeal from Committee Action: Any VPA Committee action or decision may be appealed directly to the Activities Standards Committee for determination. The principal or designee of the school involved must formally notify the Executive Director or designee in writing (by letter, fax, or email) of the appeal, the grounds of the appeal, and whether the school or individual intends to present evidence in support of the appeal. The Activities Standards Committee shall hear the appeal. The Committee shall conduct the appeal following the procedures described above. Actions or decisions involving a school or a

school team may only be appealed by the leadership of the school. Individuals connected with the school or affected team may not challenge actions or decisions on their own that are made concerning schools or teams but may, accompanied by a representative of the member school, challenge actions or decisions that affect their eligibility. The Executive Director or designee shall then notify the principal of the date, time, and place of the hearing, which may be conducted by telephone or electronically. The principal of the schools involved in the appeal, or his or her designee, must participate in the appeal hearing. If the appeal concerns individual eligibility, the student and his/her parent or guardian must participate in the appeal hearing. Schools or individuals requesting action by the Activities Standards Committee shall submit all relevant information and argument to the Activities Standards Committee at least five business days before the Appeals hearing.

Board Of Appeals

- The Executive Council shall appoint a Board of Appeals as an independent party to hear an appeal from eligibility and discipline decisions concerning activities made by the Activity Standards Committee following appeals under these bylaws. To afford full due process, any decision of the Activities Standards Committee denying eligibility to an individual or team may be appealed to the Board of Appeals. Actions or decisions addressing a school or a school team may only be appealed by the school. Individuals connected with the school or affected team may not challenge actions or decisions that are made concerning schools or teams but may challenge actions or decisions that affect their eligibility.
- The Board of Appeals shall not have authority to alter any policy or bylaw, but shall apply the policies and bylaws in resolving such appeals.
- The Board of Appeals shall consist of five (5) VPA members, and three appointees from other educational organizations, including one superintendent, one teacher, and one school board member. The appointments from other educational organizations would be made in consultation with the Vermont Superintendents' Association, the Vermont NEA, and the Vermont School Boards Association. Five duly-appointed members of the Board of Appeals must be present to hear and determine any appeals.
- The Board of Appeals shall appoint one of its members to preside as Chair over the hearings of any appeal and the presiding member shall control the manner and presentation of the evidence presented at the hearing of the appeal.
- All appeals must be sent to the Board of Appeals through the Executive Director or designee and shall be delivered by letter, fax, or email within seven (7) calendar days after receipt of the decision from which the appeal is taken. This notice of appeal must contain (1) a copy of the decision appealed from; (2) the grounds on which the appeal is based; and (3) the names of all interested parties; (3) a detailed description of the persons who will be participating, and the evidence to be presented at the hearing, will be sent to the VPA within five business days of

the hearing. The Board of Appeals may modify any time governing its proceedings by mutual agreement or for good cause.

- The Board of Appeals shall give notice of the hearing delivered by letter, fax, or email to all interested parties designated as such in the appeal. The hearing may be held by electronic means.
- At the hearing on the merits, the Chair of the Board of Appeals shall preside. A board member who has a conflict of interest shall disqualify himself/herself from participation or attendance in the hearing.
- At the hearing, the Board of Appeals shall receive evidence in the form of testimony, affidavits, written reports, electronic recordings, or other information that may assist their decision. Individuals attending the hearing may not participate unless they are providing evidence or they are parties or attorneys making arguments. It should be noted that if the school and/or appealing party plans to have legal counsel, the VPA reserves the right to also have legal counsel and must receive timely notification in advance. This may necessitate a delay in the Appeal hearing timeline. At the hearing, a representative or designee from the Activities Standards Committee shall participate as a party and explain the decision of the Activities Standards Committee. The principal of the schools involved in the appeal, or his or her designee, must participate in the appeal hearing, regardless of whether or not the school supports or opposes the appeal. All interested parties shall have the full opportunity to present evidence. The Board may recess the hearing to obtain additional information or evidence.
- The Board of Appeals shall make a prompt decision within seven (7) school days after the closing of the hearing; written findings and decisions supported by the evidence shall be delivered to each party by letter, fax, or email.
- If the Board of Appeals finds that the appeal involves new or relevant information that was not presented to the Activities Standards Committee, the Board shall immediately remand the appeal to the Activities Standards Committee for reconsideration of the new information. In making this determination, the Board of Appeals acknowledges that the Activities Standards Committee has the initial and primary responsibility for administering activities, and shall have the opportunity to formally consider all facts and arguments that may affect an appeal and whether there was good cause for failure to submit the new information.

Legal Action Against Association by Member Schools

- The VPA is a voluntary association, which is democratically governed. VPA member schools agree to abide by the final decisions of the VPA. VPA members agree that litigation by members against the VPA undermines the VPA governance

structure and wastes valuable resources that could otherwise be devoted to students.

- Any VPA member school which is a party to legal action in any court to overturn, stay, or enjoin any final decision of the VPA and is subsequently unsuccessful in seeking a verdict shall be liable for reasonable costs and attorney's fees incurred by the Association in defending against such action.
- Should the Association be forced to initiate legal action to collect the aforementioned costs and attorney's fees, the member school shall be additionally liable for the Association's reasonable costs and attorney's fees resulting from the collection action.

Enforcement of Rules by Schools

- Schools are expected to comport with and enforce the eligibility standards as set out in the VPA bylaws and policies.
- Violations of the eligibility standards by schools shall result in one or more of the following penalties:(1) A warning in writing to the principal. (2) Forfeiture of the game (3) Prohibition from postseason competition or state-wide nonathletic activity (4) Suspension or exclusion of institutional membership in the VPA.

Violation of Eligibility Standards

A student who has violated one of the eligibility rules becomes immediately ineligible. This includes academic eligibility (sections (a), (e), (f), (g), (l) transfer or amateur status (section (k); or enrollment in a specialized school/program where the primary purpose is to enhance athletic skills in a particular sport, resulting in ineligibility for that sport (section (l).

Violation of Eligibility Standards, Article II

- Violations of VPA Standards of Eligibility, Article II, will result in automatic forfeitures, by the school, of any competitions in which the students have participated.

Tournament Play – Ineligibility

- If a player or team in any VPA-sponsored tournament or championship is found to be ineligible following any rules in Article III, the Executive Director (or his/her designee), in consultation with the VPA Activities Standards Committee representative(s) and member(s) of the sport/activity

committee in question, will make an ad hoc decision in consideration of the best interests of the tournament and the VPA membership as a whole.

- In cases where a team is declared ineligible at any level of the tournament and therefore disqualified from further competition, the ad hoc committee will correct the error at the lowest level of the tournament possible without disrupting the tournament timelines. For example: When a team is disqualified from a tournament and it is impossible to correct the problem at its origin since it will disrupt the flow of the tournament for other teams, the problem is corrected at the next possible level by allowing the team defeated by the ineligible team to assume the position of the disqualified team and continue the tournament competition at that level.
- The decision made will aim to be the most reasonable and fair for all concerned while producing the least interruption of tournament structure and tournament timelines, maintaining all previously agreed to contractual commitments for facilities and personnel, and promoting fair and equitable enforcement of tournament and VPA bylaws and rules.

Policy on Rules for Organized Vermont 7-12 Sports:

State-wide interscholastic sports are organized, supervised, and regulated by school leaders. Competitors are expected to display a high standard of sportsmanship at all times. Unsportsmanlike acts will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of the school authorities, especially the coaches and their staff, to see that unsportsmanlike conduct is addressed. School officials will investigate any act of unsportsmanlike conduct. This relates to interscholastic athletics between or among member schools, schools holding membership in another state association, or activity sponsored by the VPA.

General Rules

1.1. Schools will organize formal practices for each athletic activity following the definition of the appropriate season.

1.2. No school will schedule more than two (2) games per week, Monday through Friday, exclusive of the need to reschedule postponed games or compete in sanctioned tournaments. A third game may be scheduled on Saturday.

1.3. In all sports, except for baseball and softball, schools shall schedule no more than one contest per day per team. In baseball and softball, schools may schedule doubleheaders, provided that all other policies and bylaws are followed.

1.4. Sunday Competitions: The Vermont Principals' Association will allow the scheduling of VPA Sunday tournament play only under all the following circumstances:

- Weather conditions or availability of venue resulted in a postponed game
- Both principals agree to such Sunday participation.

1.5. Interstate Play: When schools schedule interscholastic games or contests with schools in other states, each school shall observe its state regulations in eligibility. No member school will host or participate in an interstate tournament or meet involving more than two (2) schools unless such a contest has been approved by all interested state associations. Application for sanction must be initiated at least thirty (30) days before the date of the meeting.

1.6. The playing rules for interscholastic athletic contests shall be prescribed by the committee having the responsibility for that activity.

1.7. No member school while involved in interscholastic competition with a team at the varsity, junior varsity, and/or organized school unit level shall compete in a tournament not sanctioned by the VPA.

1.8. Participants in all interscholastic athletic activities must have a minimum of ten (10) practice sessions before competing in interscholastic contests. No more than two practice sessions in a day shall count toward a minimum of ten practice sessions. Participants in unavoidably delayed state tournaments or authorized regional athletic activities are exempt from this rule if such participation prevents compliance. Participants must be allowed one day without any practice or game in each calendar week.

1.9. Participants must have a minimum seven (7) days rest period before starting practice for the succeeding sports season. Participants in unavoidably delayed state tournaments or authorized regional athletic activities are exempt from this rule if such participation prevents compliance.

1.10. No student may participate in any VPA-sanctioned activity without providing evidence to the student's school administration or designee before participation in an activity showing that the participant is covered under some private or public health insurance program for the medical care for injuries that may be suffered on account of participation in an activity. Member institutions are encouraged to work with their student participants and parents to help make available individual insurance policies at an affordable cost to students who wish to participate in VPA-sanctioned activities.

1.11. Interscholastic athletics involving mixed (boys/girls) competition is prohibited except in those instances where the member school does not offer equivalent (same) activities for girls. In these situations, girls shall be eligible to try out in any activity, and upon becoming a member of the team, will be eligible for state competition. Therefore, boys shall not try out for traditional girls' sports and be eligible for state competition. For purposes of this policy, the following activities are identified as girl's sports: field hockey, softball, girls soccer, girls basketball, girls golf, girls gymnastics, girls hockey, girls lacrosse, girls alpine and nordic skiing, girls tennis, girls track and field, girls snowboarding, girls volleyball and girls ultimate.

This policy recognizes traditional boys-dominated sports and the need to protect opportunities for girl athletes.

Unsportsmanlike Behavior

- **Taunting/Harassment**
  Taunting is considered any action(s) or comment(s) by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is a contact that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnicity or origin, or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal matters.
  - Taunting in all sports is a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that will result in a game ejection as outlined in the student/coach ejection policy
  - Each school is encouraged to have procedures regarding taunting by spectators.

Student/Coach Ejection Rule:

Any student/coach ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct or a flagrant foul shall be suspended from the next two contests, (except for football, skiing, and gymnastics, for which the suspension shall be one contest) in the sport from which the student/coach was ejected. If the ejection occurs in the last contest of the season, the student shall be ineligible for the same time in the next sport in which the student participates. If the ejection occurs in the last contest of the coach's or student's last sports season, the school shall take appropriate disciplinary action to impose a sanction proportionate to the penalties imposed by these rules and shall report that discipline to the VPA. The suspended student may not be in uniform. A student who is ejected a second time shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport. A coach ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct shall receive the same suspension given to student-athletes. If suspended, a coach may NOT attend the contest. A student or coach who has been ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct for the second time in a season shall be suspended for the remainder of the season in that sport.

Assault Upon Officials by Coaches:

A coach who intentionally strikes, shoves, kicks, or makes another aggressive physical contact with an official before, during, or after an interscholastic contest, shall be disqualified immediately and his/her coach's eligibility may be suspended for up to one full calendar year. A coach who is disqualified under this provision shall not coach in any contest, pending a hearing before the Activities Standards Committee. The Activities Standards Committee shall determine the length of the suspension, giving due consideration to all relevant factors, including the seriousness of the offense. At the end of any suspension, the coach may request the reinstatement of his/her eligibility. At this time, the Activities Standards Committee will place the request on their next meeting agenda, at which meeting the coach, athletic director, and principal are required to attend. The Activities Standards Committee will determine whether or not to reinstate the coach's eligibility.

Assault Upon Officials by Students:

Any member of the team who intentionally strikes, shoves, kicks, or makes other aggressive physical contacts with an official before, during, or after an interscholastic contest, shall be disqualified immediately and may be ineligible to participate in all sports for up to one full calendar year. A student who is disqualified under this provision shall not play in any contest, pending a hearing before the Activities Standards Committee. The Activities Standards Committee shall determine the length of the suspension, giving due consideration to all relevant factors, including the seriousness of the offense. NOTE: "Member of the team" is defined to include players, managers, scorekeepers, timers, and statisticians.

Assault Upon Coaches by Coaches:

A coach who intentionally strikes, shoves or kicks, or makes other aggressive physical contact with another coach before, during, or after an interscholastic contest shall be disqualified immediately and their coach's eligibility may be suspended for up to one calendar year. A coach who is disqualified under this provision shall not coach in any contest, pending a hearing before the Activities Standards Committee. The Activities Standards Committee shall determine the length of the suspension, giving due consideration to all relevant factors, including the seriousness of the offense. At the end of the suspension, the coach may request the reinstatement of their eligibility. At this time, the Activities Standards Committee will place the request on their next meeting agenda, at which meeting the coach and Principal are required to attend. The Activities Standards Committee will determine whether or not to reinstate the coach's eligibility.

Enforcement: It is the responsibility of the local school to ensure this regulation is enforced. When a suspended student or coach is allowed to participate, forfeiture of the contest is mandatory. This regulation shall apply to all regular season and tournament contests.

The appeal of ejection orders:
Judgment calls by officials ordering ejection shall be final. The only grounds for appeal from a suspension under this section shall be that the ejection was caused by gross misconduct by the official, or that the official has filed a written report stating that the ejection was erroneous. Unless a stay of the suspension is granted, by the Assistant Executive Director in his/her sole discretion, the suspension shall be immediately effective.

Sanctioning A New Activity:

The VPA is open to the development of new sports/activities initiatives that would benefit students in VPA member schools. Listed below are the steps that are necessary to present a new sport/activity and the timeline involved.

- If a school(s) or interested party, would like to present the possibility of a new sport or activity, a petition shall be brought to the VPA Activity Standards Committee. This petition will have evidence of a minimum of 9 schools that have indicated they would be willing to offer the sport/activity for two years on an "exhibition" basis.
- A meeting will be set with the VPA Activity Standards Committee at which the interested school(s) or parties will conduct a presentation concerning the proposed sport/activity. Written evidence from the schools interested in participating in this sport/activity will be provided. A general description of the sport/activity shall also be provided. Additional supporting documents/statements may also be presented. Members of the interested schools must be at the ASC meeting to answer questions.
- If approved, a committee will be formed to write the guide for the new sport/activity that will contain the rules and any other necessary information. This committee will also serve as the "official VPA committee" for that sport/activity for the next two years.
- At the end of the two-year "exhibition" time, the sport/activity committee will meet again with ASC to summarize the progress that has been made over the two years. ASC will then vote as to whether the sport/activity is to be sanctioned.

Coach Replacement During a Contest

- Before the start of any athletic contest, the head coach must identify the adult who is designated to replace him/her in the event they are unable to complete the contest, due to illness, ejection, etc.
- When a coach is unable to continue, their team shall forfeit the contest if a replacement was not named before the start of the contest.

Individual Student Participation Limits:

The present VPA policies relating to individual participation limitations per season are (team sports):

- Baseball – maximum 14 games (14 x 7 innings =98 innings)
- Basketball – maximum 20 games (20 x 5 quarters = 100 quarters) "No basketball player shall play more than five (5) quarters in any day, exclusive of the need for overtime play. Note – overtime is considered as an extension of the 4th quarter. Participation in a quarter (no matter how much time is played) constitutes a quarter of play."
- Esports
- Field Hockey – maximum 14 games (14 x 2 halves = 28 halves)
- Football – maximum 9 games (9 x 4 quarters = 36 quarters)
- Ice Hockey – maximum 20 games (20 x 3 periods = 60 periods)
- Soccer – maximum 14 games (14 x 2 halves = 28 halves)
- Softball – maximum 14 games (14 x 7 innings = 98 innings)
- Tennis
- Lacrosse – maximum 14 games (14 x 4 periods = 56 periods)

Fine For Submitting Late/Inaccurate Pairings Member:

VPA schools that submit inaccurate pairing forms shall be subject to the following fine system:

- 1st Submission: Warning in writing to the principal of the school and no fine.
- 2nd Submission and beyond: $200.00 per occurrence for activities that require applications.
- $100 per occurrence for required non-application materials (participation surveys, etc.)
- The member school principal shall be notified each time an inaccurate pairing form is submitted.

VPA Lightning Rule:

The VPA policy on lightning procedures for outdoor interscholastic activities is the following:

- When thunder is heard or lightning is seen, students and spectators must leave the field and go inside.
- Once lightning has been recognized or thunder heard, teams must wait at least thirty minutes (thirty-minute rule) before resuming activities. Any subsequent

lightning or thunder after the beginning of the 30-minute count should reset the clock and another count should begin.

Individual/Team Activities

- The VPA sponsors several activities in which there are both individual and team competitions. These activities are golf, gymnastics, skiing, snowboarding, cross-country, track (indoor and outdoor), and wrestling.
- Traditionally, the VPA has allowed student-athletes who wanted to participate in these sports as individuals but attended schools that did not sponsor teams to practice with and participate through schools with teams. These student-athletes would only participate as individuals. They could win individual awards, but their scoring would not count for any team.
- The purpose of this policy is to formalize this practice and establish regulations that are consistent with the VPA's regulations.

Rules Governing Participation In Individual Competitions

- To participate under this rule, a student-athlete must be enrolled in a school that is a member of the VPA or be enrolled in a home study program in compliance with Title 16 V.S.A.
- Participation in this program is limited to the following sports: golf, gymnastics, skiing, snowboarding, tennis, cross-country, track (indoor and outdoor), and wrestling.
- Student-athletes under this program may practice and travel with the school team.
- Student-athletes under this program only participate as individuals. They may win individual awards, but their scoring will not count for any team.
- A student is ineligible for this program if their school maintains a team in the sport. A home study student is ineligible for this program if the school district in which they have a legal residence (or a school that the home study student's town pays tuition to) has a team. Enrolled students and home study students should first be placed on their home school or hometown teams as participants.
- This program does not allow student-athletes to select the school team in which they will participate. If the school district in which they have a legal residence does not have a team, the student-athletes must participate on a team that is geographically closest to the student's residence.
- The participating student must comply with all VPA regulations to be eligible to participate.

- The school where the student is enrolled and the school that is sponsoring the team must consent to the student athlete's participation.
- The participating student must adhere to the same standards of behavior, responsibility, and performance as the participants on the team. The participating student may be subject to the same discipline and sanctions as are applied to team members.

Sports Seasons:

The following is a list of sports and the seasons to which they have been assigned:

- Fall Sports Season — cross-country, golf, field hockey, football, soccer, volleyball and bass fishing.
- Winter Sports Season — basketball, cheerleading, dance, ice hockey, wrestling, gymnastics, skiing, snowboarding, and indoor track.
- Spring Sports Season — baseball, softball, track and field, tennis, lacrosse, and ultimate.

Scheduling of Sports Seasons:

The Activities Standards Committee shall establish the starting and ending dates for each of the sports seasons following this bylaw. The Activities Standards Committee shall also establish the length of the sports season for each activity. Should state tournaments or authorized regional tournaments be scheduled after the official close of any sports season, an otherwise eligible team may participate. The Activities Standards Committee shall schedule the seasons to maximize gender equity, the availability of appropriate sites and officials and support for all competitions and tournaments.

- **Fall**: All fall sports for athletes shall start on the same date unless otherwise approved by the Activities Standards Committee. Tournament competition in any sport may be staggered so that one gender starts and completes its tournament before the other gender.

- **Winter:** There shall be at least a one-week break between the scheduled end of the Fall Sports Season, and the start of the Winter Sports Season if possible . Tournament competition in any sport may be staggered, dependent upon venue availability.

- **Spring**: There shall be at least a one-week break between the scheduled end of the Winter Sports Season and the start of the Spring Sports Season if possible. All spring sports shall start on the same date unless otherwise approved by the Activities Standards Committee. Tournament competition in any sport may be

staggered so that one gender starts and completes its tournament before the other gender. The Spring Sports Season shall end no later than the second Saturday in June, inclusive of all scheduled tournament dates.

- No school shall permit students to enroll in the winter activity until the fall activity in which they are participating is concluded and they have had the required rest period between sports seasons. No student shall enroll in the spring activity until the winter activity in which they are participating is concluded and they have had the required seven-day rest period between sports seasons. Students participating in state tournaments or authorized regional athletic activities are exempt from this rule if such participation prevents compliance.

Loyalty Clause:

A member of a school team is a student athlete who is regularly present for, and actively participates in ALL team try-outs, practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are prevented from missing a high school practice or competition to compete with an out-of-school team, practice or competition to include tournaments, showcases, combines or other athletic events. Whenever a conflict arises between the high school team practice/competition and an out-of-school practice/competition on the same day, the high school practice/competition shall be honored by the student athlete. Priority MUST be given at all times to the high school team, its practices, and its contests unless permission has been granted by the school. It is expressly understood that permission shall not be granted on a regular basis and shall only be granted in extraordinary circumstances.

2025 Out-of-Season Coaching Policy

Vision Statement

The Vermont Principals' Association (VPA) is committed to fostering an educational athletics environment that promotes student well-being, skill development, and multi-sport participation while providing clear guidelines for coaches and schools.

Policy Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for:

- Supporting student-athletes' participation in multiple sports
- Defining appropriate out-of-season contact between coaches and student-athletes
- Ensuring equitable opportunities across all schools

- Establishing clear boundaries and expectations for coaches

Core Definitions

- **Out-of-Season Period:** Any time outside a sport's official VPA-designated season, excluding summer recess
- **Summer Recess:** The period between the last day of school and the Sunday before the first fall practice date per the VPA calendar
- **Skills and Drills Instruction:** Any organized activity focused on sport-specific skill development
- **Coach:** Any individual designated as a coach for a school's athletic program during the current or upcoming school year
- **Voluntary Activity:** Athletic activity where participation is entirely optional, with no consequences for non-participation

Year-Round Principles

The following principles apply at all times:

1. Multi-sport participation must be actively encouraged and supported
2. No activity may ever be mandatory outside the official sport season
3. Participation or non-participation in out-of-season activities shall never impact team selection, playing time, or standing
4. No coach may pressure or incentivize sport specialization
5. In-season sports always take priority over out-of-season activities

School-Year Out-of-Season Guidelines

During the academic year (outside summer recess), coaches may:

- Provide voluntary skills and drills instruction to students enrolled at their school if:
    - Activities are open to all eligible students
    - No school uniforms, logos, or branding are used
    - No school transportation is provided
    - No formal rosters are maintained
    - Activities are approved by the Athletic Director
    - For contact sports: no contact drills or scrimmages are permitted
- Operate open gyms that are:
    - Unstructured and genuinely open to all

Summer Recess Guidelines

During summer recess:

- Coaching restrictions are lifted, allowing for organized team activities
- All activities must remain strictly voluntary
- Participation shall not influence team selection or playing time during the regular season

Club, Youth, and Non-School Program Guidelines

School coaches may coach in non-school programs (AAU, club, recreation) provided:

- These programs operate independently of the school
- No school resources, branding, or transportation are used. Use of facilities permitted at school's discretion.
- Participation remains entirely voluntary
- Coaches clearly communicate that these programs are not school-affiliated
- Coaches do not discourage athletes' participation in other sports or activities

Prohibited Practices

The following practices are explicitly prohibited:

- Using out-of-season participation as a factor in team selection or playing time
- Excluding athletes based on skill demonstrated in out-of-season activities
- Making statements implying athletes should prioritize one sport over another
- Creating consequences for non-participation in out-of-season activities
- Scheduling out-of-season activities that conflict with in-season sports

Accountability System

To ensure compliance:

- Each school must submit an annual Assurance Form signed by both the Principal and Athletic Director
- Athletic Directors are responsible for approving and monitoring all out-of-season activities
- Schools may implement additional guidelines that align with this policy
- Egregious or repeated violations will be reviewed by the VPA Activity Standards Committee

Local Authority

Schools maintain the authority to:

- Implement stricter guidelines than outlined in this policy
- Determine appropriate facilities usage and scheduling
- Address concerns regarding coach conduct or program priorities

This policy supersedes all previous VPA out-of-season coaching guidelines and takes effect immediately upon adoption.

Scrimmages and Jamborees

- Scrimmage: A scrimmage is defined as and intended to be a learning situation, not a competitive event. A scrimmage is a practice and shall be treated as such.

Scrimmages have unlimited timeouts during which coaches are allowed to provide instruction. Scrimmage can be conducted under the following regulations:

- A team cannot play more than 20% of the maximum number of regular season games as scrimmages with other teams (schools) up to the conclusion of the regular season. Scrimmages are allowed in the postseason and are not a part of the 20%.
- No admission shall be charged. While the public need not be denied admittance to a scrimmage, it shall not be played as a regular game.
- Scrimmages are not bound by the length of game regulations, however, individual players cannot exceed the playing time of a regular season game.
- A score is only to be kept by the quarter/period/inning/half and not as a regular game.
- Jamboree (or Round Robin): A jamboree is defined as a scrimmage in which a team engages two or more other teams. Schools are allowed to use the equivalent of 2 scrimmages at a jamboree/round robin.

Canceled Season Rule:

A school that cancels a sport after the official schedule has been established must forfeit wins to its remaining scheduled opponents unless this action takes place ninety (90) days before the start of the activity.

Divisional Alignments:

The Association may establish divisional alignments within the various activities. When a divisional alignment is being reviewed, The Assistant Executive Director will send a notice to its member schools. The notice shall require that the member school submit to the VPA the count of its enrolled students as of October 15. The count shall be submitted on a form attached to the notice, following the directions set forth on the form. The Activities Standards Committee may solicit and consider advice from any source on the classifications, including committees for the various activities. It shall be the goal of the Activities Standards Committee to establish divisional classifications by February 1 for use in the following school year. Notice of the divisional classifications shall be sent by the VPA to the member institutions. Ordinarily, the notice will be sent by December or immediately after divisional classifications have been determined. Within fifteen days of the receipt of notice of the new divisional alignments, the member institutions may submit a request for adjusting the divisional alignment of the school. Requests to compete in a higher classification may be granted by the Assistant Executive Director of the VPA. If the request to compete in a higher classification is denied by the Assistant Executive Director, the

request may be reviewed by the Activities Standards Committee or sports-specific committee. The Activities Standards Committee or sports-specific committee shall consider all requests to reduce the classification of any member school for any activity. Requests to reduce the classification will be granted only in extraordinary circumstances. The Assistant Executive Director, the Activities Standards Committee and the sports-specific committee shall endeavor to decide all requests for waivers or changes promptly. Following such a decision, the final classifications shall be provided to the member schools. It shall be the goal of the VPA to provide the final classification in as timely a manner as possible. The final classifications shall be employed in the following two school years.

Protest Procedures

School Sponsored Activities unfortunate circumstances and misunderstandings can and should be resolved between the Principals/Headmasters of the schools involved. If the Principals/Headmasters of the schools involved are unable to arrive at a resolution to the problem, a principal will:

- Notify the President of the league in writing, filing a copy with the Assistant Executive Director of the VPA.
- If the dispute is not league related, the Assistant Executive Director (or their designee) will be available to mediate the disagreement.
- VPA Sponsored Activities in all activities sponsored by the VPA, athletic and non-athletic, the following will be the procedure for handling protests and grievances:
- Any protest relative to any aspect, other than the actual activity, will be settled by the observer. Should there be no observer assigned or present the host administrator will make the necessary decisions.
- Any protest relative to the activity will be settled by the chief official. If no official has been designated as chief official by the Council, the referee or the official so designated by the playing rules will be considered the chief official. In any athletic activity where protest procedures are provided in the playing rules, these procedures will be followed. Only playing rules of the rule book/guide governing that activity being played are protestable.
- The director of any activity or the coach of any team desiring to protest the actual activity or game must notify the chief official, referee, umpire, and the opposing coach that the contest is going on under protest. If a protest has not been as outlined in the rulebook or guide, no protest may be lodged.
- Should the principal of any school wish to appeal the ruling, based on the misapplication of a rule made by the chief official, observer, or host principal, the Principal must contact the VPA office within 24 hours. The Executive

Director/Assistant Executive Director will conduct an investigation requiring written reports, if deemed necessary, and will render a decision.

- Any protest to be made of a decision by the VPA office shall be by telephone communication within twenty-four (24) hours. It will be The Executive Director/Assistant Executive Director's responsibility to contact the other members of the protest committee and to obtain statements from all concerned. The following will constitute the protest committee:
    - The President of the Association
    - The President-elect of the Association
    - The Executive Director of the Association or his/her designee
    - The Chairman of the Activities Standards Committee
    - The Chair of the Sports Specific Committee involved
    - Alternates shall be appointed by the President to serve in place of any of the principals listed above whose school is involved in the protest or grievance or who have any conflict of interest.
- The decision of the protest committee shall be final.

Coaches Eligibility and Coaches Training Program

The VPA believes that coaches should obtain proper training. Coaches play a critical role in the overall quality of the interscholastic activity program, the safety of student-athletes, and the education of our children.

- A person shall be eligible to be employed as a coach in any interscholastic high school and/or middle-level activity if the person satisfies all of the following conditions:
- The person's appointment as the coach must be approved by the local school district responsible for the member school in which the person coaches.
- The coach must be at least 18 years of age or a high school graduate at the commencement of the sports season for which the person has been appointed to coach.
- The coach must sign a statement acknowledging that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with and abide by all VPA bylaws and policies.
- The coach must complete an NFHS Interscholastic Coaching Principles course, the NFHS Sports First Aid course, and the NFHS Concussion Education course (this course must be completed immediately once a coach is hired and before the beginning of their first practice) or other comparable courses that must be approved by the VPA.
- The coach must complete the NFHS Interscholastic implicit bias course (as of winter sports season 2021).

A coach must complete training within one year (as determined by the start of that sports season) of his or her employment as a coach (except for the concussion education course which must be completed immediately) (Required under 16 V.S.A. sec. 1431 (b)(3)(B).

- Coaches who have previously completed approved training but are not currently certified may continue in their positions; they must complete the approved training within seven years from the adoption of this bylaw.

This by-law only applies to coaches who are under contract with a school or school district. It does not apply to volunteer assistants.

- The Activities Standards Committee may adopt a program requiring coaches who have completed the initial Coaching Education Program to periodically update their training in other courses that are approved by the Activity Standards Committee.

Allowing Member School Students To Participate On Other Member School Teams:

The Member to Member Program is designed to provide a short-term fix for a school with low participation and an opportunity for a student/athlete from another school(s) to participate on a team that a sending school does not offer.
Member high school students may participate on another member high school's team provided that the following criteria are met:

- Member high schools that are interested in developing a program must submit a written request for participation on another member school's team to the VPA Assistant Executive Director sixty days before the start of each sports season to allow adequate time for reviewing the application. The VPA will only approve requests that satisfy all of the criteria of this program. Requests submitted with less than a sixty-day notice will be considered and acted on as soon as possible.
- Priority to requests will be evaluated on the following criteria:
    - Receiving-school in the same county that has a demonstrated need for their program.
    - Receiving-school outside of the county that has a demonstrated need for their program and is within comparable distance from programs within their county
    - Receiving school from within the county that has the desired program, but may not have needed as based on the complement of players in section (j). If there are multiple receiving schools in the area, the highest priority will go to the receiving school with the greatest need.
- As part of the application, there must be a written agreement between each participating school that has been approved by the respective principals and athletic directors. Receiving (or host) schools may enter into multiple agreements

in a sports season, as long as the total number of students does not exceed the 20% allocation of students from other member schools. Sending schools may enter into only one agreement per sport. The agreement must specifically authorize participation in this program.

- The agreement must state that the schools have considered compensation from the sending school(s). Compensation could be in the form of an exchange of opportunities in other programs or any other form that the schools agree to. If compensation is agreed to, the agreement shall describe the compensation. Financial compensation, if any, shall come from the school.

Substantive Requirements:

- This program only applies to team sports (i.e., Baseball, Basketball, Bowling, Cheerleading, Dance, Esports, Field Hockey, Football, Hockey, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Tennis, Ultimate, and Volleyball). Students can continue to participate as individual competitors in all other sports under existing standards. Schools may enter into an agreement provided that no student/athletes have been cut at any level in that sport (cut meaning out of the program).
- The athlete(s) must meet all eligibility and student conduct requirements otherwise established by VPA rules and the involved schools.
- There must be no athletic recruitment of the student-athlete. No coach, booster, or persons involved with the athletic department should directly or indirectly solicit students from other schools for this program. This means that a coach or school employee who receives a direct inquiry must immediately refer the inquiry to the appropriate school administrator.
- The sending school(s) may not offer the team sport in which the student wishes to participate. If a sending school has previously offered this team sport, they are ineligible to participate in this program for two years from the date the team was dropped.
- In sports in which the VPA sanctions separate championships for boys and girls (Basketball, Ice Hockey, Lacrosse, and Soccer), a student may request participation if the student's school does not offer the sport to his or her gender. (All schools should provide athletic programs that provide appropriate opportunities to both genders).
- Schools involved in a Member to Member Agreement must be members of the VPA.
- There must be no displacement of student-athletes from the receiving (host) school sponsoring the activity from spots on the team. Thus, the receiving school sponsoring the team must maintain a no-cut policy for the program in question or have less than the normal complement of players required for a team who is enrolled in the sponsoring school. Students

accepted under a Member to Member program may participate at any level of the team that the receiving school offers.

- Two schools may reach an agreement for a particular sport before a season begins, however, the agreement will not take effect until the first day of the sports season when it has been determined that there are available slots.
- Schools may enter into a Member-to-Member Program for sub-varsity teams as long as there is no displacement at the JV or freshman level.
- For purposes of this rule, the normal complement of players required for a team shall be the following for each of the listed sports:
    - Baseball – 18
    - Basketball – 12
    - Bowling – 10
    - Cheerleading (Winter) – 24
    - Dance – 20
    - Esports
    - Field Hockey – 20
    - Football – 30
    - Hockey – 24
    - Lacrosse Boys – 20
    - Lacrosse Girls – 22
    - Soccer – 20
    - Softball – 18
    - Tennis – 10
    - Volleyball – 14
    - Ultimate – 20
- Students from sending schools shall comprise no more than 20% of the normal complement or team roster (if the school does not have the normal complement) for each team listed above. The maximum numbers are listed below. (Note – A team must go with the normal complement or team roster, whichever number is lower.)
    - Baseball – 4
    - Basketball – 2
    - Bowling – 2
    - Cheerleading (Winter) – 5
    - Dance – 4
    - Field Hockey – 4
    - Football – 6
    - Hockey – 5
    - Lacrosse Boys – 4
    - Lacrosse Girls – 4
    - Soccer – 4

    - Softball – 4
    - Tennis – 2
    - Volleyball – 3
    - Ultimate – 4
- If a sponsoring school receives more requests for placement on a particular team than are slots available, the sponsoring school will arrange a meeting with the sending schools to conduct a blind random lottery. A school may not award the slots based on ability or peer pressure. Returning players are allocated one of the open slots if a new agreement is implemented. Returning players, from a previous year, from a sending school, can remain with a receiving school program through their graduation. If a receiving school decides not to renew a Member to Member program, players returning from the previous year may stay with the receiving school program, and the sending school may enter into a new Member to Member program with another school for new players. Any players who are already participating in a Member to Member program will be able to remain with that program until their graduation. If that program no longer qualifies as a receiving school for the sending school, based on the new member-to-member policy, future players would participate with the new receiving school.
- Schools with a normal complement of players may not enter into a Member to Member agreement unless there is no receiving school within a reasonable distance (county). A receiving school must then show that there is a need even if they have a normal complement of players or the receiving school is the only available option. If there are multiple receiving schools in the area, the highest priority will go to the receiving school with the greatest need.
- The sending school(s) and receiving school shall define all legal liabilities for student participants in the program agreement. This is including, but is not limited to: insurance, transportation, and supervision.

Evaluation & Divisional Alignment

- All agreements are one year in length and must be renewed annually.
- In establishing divisional alignments, the appropriate VPA committee shall consider any existing programs and their impact on fair competition. The VPA shall review the application with the appropriate sports committee and may revise the divisional alignment as a condition of approval if appropriate to preserve fair competition.

Cooperative Team Rule:

Any proposal to form a new cooperative team must be in complete form and submitted to the VPA Activities Standards Committee at least six (6) months in advance of the beginning practice date for that sport.

The Activities Standards Committee will examine all applications with the following foci:

a. Respect the goals of the petitioning schools.
b. Protect competing schools from competitive disadvantage.
c. Guarantee increased student participation.
d. Ensure that no displacement of athletes occurs.
e. Rest on a firm financial commitment by the schools involved to support a viable team.
f. The Activities Standards Committee must then approve this application before action can be taken on the formation of this team.
g. All cooperative team applications must contain a letter of acknowledgment from the league (or the scheduled opponents in the case of independent schools) they belong to (NVAC, MVL, or CVL) that states that they are aware of the application being submitted.
h. A proposal should demonstrate that the cumulative student participation in the combining schools will be greater under the cooperative program than it was during each of the previous two years. This requirement protects against cooperative programs being formed because of the withdrawal of financial support by any of the schools involved.
i. The proposal should demonstrate that students who participated in the program during the previous year are guaranteed the opportunity to continue that participation under the cooperative proposal. If each school has a sufficient number of athletes trying out for a given sport to field a team, then a request for a cooperative team will be denied.
j. No consideration will be given to cooperative proposals that result from the elimination of the sport due to financial cuts during the two years immediately before the request.
k. Cooperative team proposals will only be considered if they increase the number of student participants, and will not be considered if they are driven by the desire to "save money" at the risk of decreasing the number of potential student participants.
l. The division to which the cooperative team is assigned will be determined by the combined student enrollment of the schools involved.
m. A school may not send students to two (2) different cooperative programs in a single sport.

n. One school will be identified as the host for the cooperative team, however, a waiver for playing games at additional sites (with another school(s) in the cooperative team) will be considered as long as the games at the additional site are identified when the cooperative team application is submitted for approval
o. Cooperative team proposals must be limited to VPA member schools.
p. Cooperative proposals will be granted for two years.
q. All liability associated with the formation and conduct of approved cooperative teams rests with the host school that exempts the VPA and its agents from all liability and responsibility.

Process: The school involved in the development of a cooperative team must submit the following packet of information for consideration.

- Complete and submit the VPA Cooperative Team Letter of Application
    - A description of the proposed cooperative team. This description needs to include information from items (b), (c), (e), and (h) from the Policy Requirements listed above and should reflect information on items to be considered in Section 6. Guidelines (below).
    - A letter of acknowledgment from the league that the schools are currently in.
    - A statement from each school involved in the proposal indicates that this proposal is not the result of the withdrawal of financial support over the past two years. Once submitted, the cooperative team application will be heard at the next VPA Activities Standards Committee meeting.
    - Schools will be required to attend this meeting to answer any questions the committee may have. Final approval or denial by the Activities Standards Committee will be done at this meeting.

Guidelines (things to consider when developing a proposal) The principals of the schools involved in the proposed cooperative team need to assure the Activities Standards Committee that the following items were considered and have been resolved:

- A sufficient reason(s) for sponsoring a cooperative team.
- An appropriate name for the cooperative team.
- Suitable practice arrangements.
- Fair competitive arrangements.
- Safe and adequate transportation arrangements.
- Provisions for physical exams and medical coverage.
- Insurance provisions (required by the VPA)
- The setting and monitoring of academic standards for purposes of eligibility.
- The purchase, repair, and maintenance of equipment.
- Source and control of finances.
- Guidelines for termination of the program.

- Use and maintenance of facilities.
- Selection, supervision, and payment of coaches.
- Coordination of class/school schedules.
- Ticket prices and sales, disbursement of proceeds.
- Student spectator and fan control and supervision.
- Cooperative team identity (mascot, colors, uniform, etc.)
- Award policies (determining letters, etc.)
- Governance for the resolution of disputes.
- Identification of and rationale for, programs eliminated within the past two (2) years.

Appendix: Section 1: Emergency Action Plans (EAPs)

Each member school is required to ensure that there is an emergency action plan (EAP) in place that includes a venue-specific EAP for each venue that describes steps to be taken in the event of an emergency which may include but is not limited to:

- Blockage of airway, stoppage of breathing or circulation
- Severe bleeding
- Severely broken bone, deformity, or dislocation
- Any injury to the head, neck, or spine
- Loss of consciousness or seizures
- Heat stroke, environmental emergencies
- Severe asthma attack
- Severe allergic reaction

Every school's EAP is required to:

- Be reviewed and rehearsed each year or sooner if needed. The review and rehearsal shall include pertinent school staff and the local EMS provider.
- Be developed and coordinated with local EMS, school public safety officials, on-site medical personnel or school medical staff, and school administrators.
- Be distributed to all athletics staff members and healthcare professionals who will provide medical coverage during games, practices, or other events.
- List all on-site emergency equipment that may be needed in an emergency situation
- Identify personnel and their responsibilities to carry out the plan of action with a designated chain of command
- Include appropriate contact information for EMS
- Specify documentation actions that need to be taken post-emergency and appropriate notification of the patient's guardian.
- Include venue-specific maps and directions
- Have the venue-specific EAP posted at each venue

Section 2: Participation in the Heat

Exercise in a hot environment with associated fluid loss and elevated body temperature can lead to: Dehydration, Heat Exhaustion, Exertional Heat Stroke and Death.

Modifications are required if the environment is putting athletes at greater risk for heat illness. All schools are required to adhere to the following policy for athletic participation in all sports during times of high heat and/or humidity.

Exertional Heat Stroke is on the rise in this country, and is currently the leading cause of preventable deaths related to athletic activity. The Vermont Principals' Association mandatory

procedure for athletic activity in the heat provides critical standards to protect athletes against heat illnesses, and potentially save lives.

This procedure follows recommended guidelines from the National Athletic Trainers' Association, the American College of Sports Medicine, and the Korey Stringer Institute.

STEPS FOR MONITORING HOT WEATHER:

- Weather should be monitored by designated athletic department personnel (Athletic Trainer if present) and an advisory should be issued to school coaching staff when applicable. Usually by email the day prior to the event warning of the potential, and the day of the event with any modifications for participation.
- Athletic Department officials are required to use an on-site Wet Bulb Globe Temperature Measuring (WBGT) Device. It is considered the gold standard measurement tool.
    - (if cost prohibitive, heat index measuring charts and apps can be used, although considered less accurate than WBGT)
    - The WBGT considers ambient temperature, relative humidity, wind, and solar radiation.
    - The Heat Index considers effects of ambient temperature and relative humidity only.
    - WBGT can be estimated from the chart below (Chart 2) in cases where there is full sun and light wind by using a heat index monitor.
    - There is a WBGT app for iOS or Android called WeatherFX, to estimate WBGT.
- Weather readings must be measured at the practice/game site, using a WGBT Device (or Heat Index Monitor). Measurements should be obtained beginning at least 1 hour prior to the event/warmups and monitored every 30 minutes thereafter if in the moderate to extreme risk category.
- Reminder: Synthetic Turf/Asphalt/Dark colored surfaces are significantly hotter than the ambient air temperature, especially if in full sun.
- Based on information from local/on-site weather measurements and from the National Weather Service, determine the risk of potential danger to participants using Table 1 below. Issue a warning and implement the practice or game plan for that day to be distributed to all coaches prior to practice/game time. Avoid scheduling training and competitions during the hottest part of the day (between 11 am and 4 pm).
- Shaded Areas should be easily accessible to athletes during rest/fluid breaks with unlimited fluids available
- An on-site Cold Water Immersion (CWI) tub for emergent athlete immersion is required whenever there is a risk of high heat/humidity.

VPA Member Schools may utilize up to Category 2 for activity modifications if all requirements are adhered to within this document. Of most importance: the school must actively monitor the heat index temperature utilizing an on-site WBGT Device, have a CWI tub prepared for emergent

athlete immersion, and is rehearsed and prepared to rapidly cool a student-athlete in the event of exertional heat stroke. If these conditions cannot be met, schools should refer to Category 1 for activity modifications.

Cat 3	Cat 2	Cat 1	Activity Guidelines
< 82.0°F <27.8°C	< 79.7°F <26.5°C	< 76.1°F <24.5°C	Normal Activities – Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 3 min each during the workout.
82.2 - 86.9°F 27.9-30.5°C	79.9 - 84.6°F 26.6-29.2°C	76.3 - 81.0°F 24.6-27.2°C	Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 min each.
87.1 - 90.0°F 30.6-32.2°C	84.7 - 87.6°F 29.3-30.9°C	81.1 - 84.0°F 27.3-28.9°C	Maximum practice time is 2 h. For Football: players are restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice. If the WBGT rises to this level during practice, players may continue to work out wearing football pants without changing to shorts. For All Sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 min each.
90.1 - 91.9°F 32.2-33.3°C	87.8 - 89.6°F 31.0-32.0°C	84.2 - 86.0°F 29.0-30.0°C	Maximum practice time is 1 h. For Football: No protective equipment may be worn during practice, and there may be no conditioning activities. For All Sports: There must be 20 min of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice.
≥ 92.1°F ≥ 33.4°C	≥ 89.8°F ≥32.1°C	≥ 86.2°F ≥30.1°C	No outdoor workouts. Delay practice until a cooler WBGT is reached.

In some instances when a WBGT monitoring device is unavailable, a chart like the one shown below can be used to estimate WBGT. It must be noted that these are estimates and are derived only from using temperature and relative humidity and the chart accounts for *full* sunshine and *light* wind conditions. Thus, depending on the radiant heat load from the sun and the wind, the actual WBGT reading could be different from what is on the chart.

Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) from Temperature and Relative Humidity

Relative Humidity (%) \ Temperature (°C)	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
0	15	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	32
5	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	33	33	34	35
10	16	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	36	37
15	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	
20	17	18	18	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39			
25	18	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39					
30	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	39							
35	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39								
40	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39									
45	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	35	36	37	38											
50	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	37	39												
55	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	36	37	38													
60	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	38														
65	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	34	36	37	38															
70	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	38	39								WBGT > 40							
75	22	23	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	39																
80	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	36	37	38																	
85	23	24	25	26	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	37	38	39																	
90	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	35	36	37	39																		
95	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	33	34	35	37	38																			
100	24	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	35	36	38	39																			

Note: This table is compiled from an approximate formula which only depends on temperature and humidity. The formula is valid for full sunshine and a light wind

Step 1: If you DO NOT have a WBGT measuring device, measure the temperature and humidity so you can estimate the WBGT using Chart 1 above.
Note: This is only accurate in light wind and full sun conditions.
Step 2: Once you have determined an Estimated WBGT, use Table 1 above to see what activity modifications should be implemented.

<u>Recommended Preventative Strategies for Competitions:</u>

Competition Modifications.

- Unlimited supply of water at the site of each activity
- Move competition times to a cooler part of the day; early morning or early evening
- Meet with officials before the game to discuss any or all of the concerns and/or strategies.
- Use player substitutions more often during play
- A mandatory water time-out at the mid-way point of each half of play for both teams
- Extended halftime for players to recover/cool more completely, allow for teams to go to shaded areas
- Cold water/ice towels and/or fans should be used to cool players
- Recommend removal of helmets and other equipment during rest periods or stoppage of play.
- Have plenty of extra ice and water at the site in the event a player needs immediate first aid/cooling
- An on-site Cold Water Immersion (CWI) tub for emergent athlete immersion is required.

- Athletic Trainers/Coaches should be especially vigilant and monitor player's physical condition in extreme temperatures

Hydration:

- Allow athletes unlimited access to water during practice/competition
- Keep in mind individual fluid needs vary. Each athlete should determine their individual need.
- Ensure an unlimited supply of water at the site of activity
- As the heat risk category increases, an increase in the number and duration of hydration breaks should be implemented, along with shortening practice time.

Clothing:

- Everyone must be made aware of the importance of:
    - Wearing appropriate clothing during play (wear light colors, wicking quick dry fabric)
    - How equipment influences one's ability to dissipate heat effectively.
    - Appropriate application and reapplication of SPF 30+ sunscreen

Factors Affecting Body Temperature Regulation: (* = Key Risk Factors for heat illness)

- Physical Effort Unmatched to Physical Fitness (Warrior mentality)*
- Increased WBGT*
- Hydration Status/Fluid Intake/Dehydration Greater than 3% body weight loss during the event*
- Sleep*
- Underlying Illness (Fever, Infection)*
- Body Mass Index (larger BMI greater risk)
- Age of Athlete (children/adolescent, elderly)
- Prior History of heat illnesses
- Unacclimatized athletes (early season, unusually high temps)
- Some medications and/or some medical conditions
- Heavy or "Salty Sweaters"
- High Temperature/humidity the previous participation day

HEAT ILLNESS

- *Exposure to prolonged or abnormal amounts of heat and humidity can be especially dangerous for young athletes who sweat less, adjust more slowly and produce more internal heat than adults.*
- *Remember: More water does not make it less hot!*
- *Exercise in a hot environment, with associated fluid loss and elevated body temperature, can lead to Dehydration, Heat Exhaustion, and Exertional Heat Stroke (EHS). EHS is a preventable, potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately.*
- *Children who take certain medications, have chronic health problems or are overweight may be more susceptible to heat illness.*

<u>Heat Illness Definitions</u>

Dehydration

- *Fluid loss occurs during exercise, due to perspiration and respiration.*
- *It makes an athlete more susceptible to fatigue and muscle cramps. Inadequate fluid replacement before, during, and after exercise will lead to excessive dehydration and may lead to other heat illnesses.*
    - *Treatment: Fluid replacement before, during, and after activity until urine is a light lemonade color and until the individual has replaced fluid losses within 2% of their pre-exercise body weight.*

Heat Exhaustion

- *Dehydration can lead to heat exhaustion and an inability to sustain adequate cardiac output.*
- *Symptoms include:*
- *- Fatigue, weakness - Headache, dizziness -Pale, clammy, sweaty skin - Loss of endurance/skill - Light-headedness -Nausea*
- *Athletes will pass little urine, which will be highly concentrated.*
- *Muscle cramps may be associated with heat exhaustion*
    - *Treatment: Cool athlete in shade or air conditioning, ice towels, remove equipment, and elevate legs. Fluid replacement before, during, and after activity until urine is a light lemonade color and until the individual has replaced fluid losses within 2% of their pre-exercise body weight.*

Exertional Heat Stroke

- *Severe overheating and thermoregulatory failure may lead to exertional heat stroke.*
- *More or Large amounts of water do not prevent heat stroke*
- **HEAT STROKE is LIFE-THREATENING and PREVENTABLE!**
- ***Diagnosis:*** *Accurate temperature measurement, via rectal thermometry,* (performed by a qualified healthcare professional*) is best practice. Exertional heat stroke is suspected if body temperature is higher than 104 degrees Fahrenheit and/or signs of central nervous system dysfunction are present (i.e. disorientation, confusion, dizziness, irritability, headache, inability to walk, loss of balance or muscle function, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of consciousness).*
    - Treatment: In the event of potential Exertional Heat Stroke (EHS), each school participating in interscholastic sports is required to be properly prepared and equipped to initiate Cold Water Immersion (CWI) or equivalent* whole body cooling techniques and EMS concurrently contacted, noting that the focus is to cool first and then transport second. The water should be aggressively stirred during the cooling process. The water temperature of the CWI tub should be between 35*F and 59*F.

    - * Equivalent cooling modalities include rotating cold/wet towels covering the entire body every 60-90 seconds, Tarp Assisted Cooling, and placing the athlete in a cold shower.
- Cold water immersion (usually understood as circulating, ice-water immersion) is considered the most effective strategy for rapid treatment of exertional heat stroke. The goal in any exertional heat stroke case should be to cool the athlete down to 102 degrees (via rectal thermometry) Fahrenheit within the first 30 minutes after collapse, prior to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) transport. These best practices shall be carried out by a licensed athletic trainer, designated healthcare provider, or EMS provider.
- The cooling modality is required to be set up at all warm weather practices and competitions, but should also be readily available if the need arises.

Return to Activity

- Patients who have suffered an exertional heat illness must complete a rest period and obtain clearance from a physician before beginning a progression of physical activity under the supervision of a qualified medical professional. The following is the suggested protocol:
    - Activity should first begin in a cool environment
    - Once the patient has shown success with exercise in a cool environment, the patient should then complete the heat acclimatization protocol (above) for progression back into exercise in a warm environment.
    - Body temperature monitoring may be recommended during the first 1-2 weeks for those returning from EHS episodes.

Section 3. AEDs

(To go into effect Fall 2025)

Each VPA member school that has an interscholastic athletics program is required to have at least one functional automated external defibrillator on site at each school at all times. The AED must be easily accessible during any school-related function, including athletic practices, athletic competitions, and other occasions where students and others will be present, for use during emergencies. For all school-sponsored athletic activities taking place off school grounds, an AED must be on-site as close to the event or practice activity as possible. A person or entity that acquires an automated external defibrillator shall comply with all regulations governing the placement of an automated external defibrillator. AEDs must also be registered with Emergency Medical Services in accordance with Vermont state law.

All coaches are required to have successful completion of CPR/AED training before coaching and maintain current CPR/AED hands-on training per VPA Coach Education guidelines.

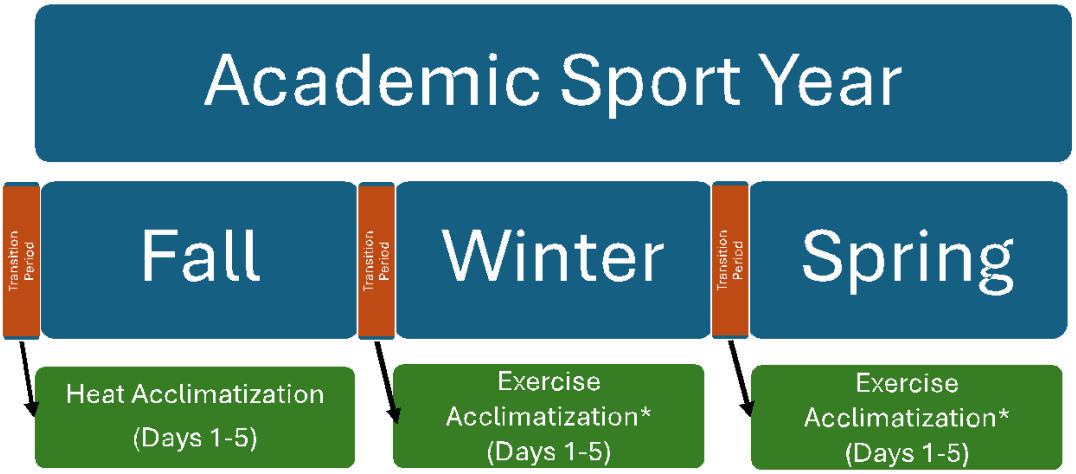
AED Location and Placement Regulations:

1. The AED should be used in conjunction with enacting the EMS system.

2. AED should be stored in a safe place.
3. All athletic trainers, coaches, administrators, school nurses and physical education teachers should have access to an AED on the school property.
4. Institutions sponsoring athletic events/activities should have an AED onsite (or access to one) at each athletic venue for practices, games or other athletic events.
5. An AED must be located within three minutes of the location of any athletic activity and available at any time.
6. The location of the AED should be well-marked, publicized, accessible, and known among all trained staff.
7. The AED should only be used after enacting the EMS system.
8. AEDs should be inspected regularly following manufacturer guidelines to ensure proper working order. This includes making sure the batteries are charged, wires and electrodes have not expired, and are in good condition. Thorough documentation of routine inspection of these devices is strongly encouraged.

Section 4: Heat Acclimatization

(To go into effect Fall 2025)



***Transition period is defined as**: The first 5 days of any new conditioning cycle or new physical activity
Additional Transition Periods may be needed for individual athletes throughout the course of the season due to sickness or injury
(including but not limited to return to sport from any circumstance that has caused a removal from sport for 14 or more consecutive days. For example: an athlete is sick and has been removed from sport for ≥14 days OR an athlete is returning from surgery (≥14 days away from organized practice).

Reference: Caterisano A, Decker D, Snyder B et al. CSCCa and NSCA joint consensus guidelines for transition periods: safe return to training following inactivity. Strength and Conditioning Journal. 2019;(3)41:1-23.

Heat Acclimatization (Days 1-5)

- **During the first five (5) days of any athlete's participation, it is required that participants do not engage in more than one practice per day.** Student-athletes who begin practice with a team after the start of official practice will be required to follow this same five (5)-day procedure. An official practice is defined as one continuous period of time in which a participant engages in physical activity.

- It is required that each practice be no more than three hours (3 hours) in length. On days when two practices are conducted, it is required that either practice not exceed three (3) hours in length and student-athletes not participate in more than five (5) total hours of practice activities on these days, Warm-up, stretching, and cooldown activities are included as part of the official practice time.
- A walk-through is permitted during Days 1-5 of the acclimatization period. However, a 3-hour recovery period is required between the end of practice and the start of the walk-through or vice-versa. A walk-through is not permitted on days that have two (2) official practices.
- The first two (2) days of practice are restricted to helmets only, days 3-5 can introduce shoulder pads with shorts, and then beginning day six (6) of practice, full gear can be utilized and body-to-body contact is permitted.
- Student-athletes who begin practice with a team after the start of official practice will be required to follow this same 6-day procedure. During the initial five (5) days, the use of arm shields, tackling and blocking dummies, sleds, and other devices can be used for instructional purposes, however, deliberate body-to-body contact is prohibited.
- Beginning Day six (6) it is required that any double practice days must be followed with a single practice day so that there are not two consecutive days with double practices. This means that a day consisting of two practices should be followed by a day with only one practice. On a day consisting of two practices, the two practices must be separated by at least three (3) hours of continuous rest in a cool environment. One walk-through session may be added to a day with a single practice session, with a minimum of three (3) hours of continuous rest time between the practice and walk-through.

Area of Practice Modification	Practices 1-5		Practices 6-14
	Days 1-2	Days 3-5	
# of Practices Permitted Per Day	1		2, only every other day
Maximum Duration of Single Practice Session	3 hours		3 hours (a total maximum of 5 hours on double session days)
Permitted Walk Through Time (not included as practice time)	1 hour (but must be separated from practice for 3 continuous hours)		
Contact	No Contact	Contact only with blocking sleds/dummies	Full, 100% live contact drills

Section 5: Exercise Acclimatization

(Days 1-5)

- Conditioning periods should be phased in gradually and progressively to minimize risk of injury during transitional periods. **The first 5 days of any new conditioning cycle or new physical activity** (including but not limited to return to sport from any circumstance that has caused a removal from sport for 14 or more consecutive days) are referred to as
- New conditioning activities should be phased in gradually, especially during the early stages of a conditioning period.
- transitional periods. If no previous strength and conditioning history exists, default to the most conservative workload from other athletes.See the Progressive introduction of strength and conditioning example:

Week	Reduction From Previous Peak Conditioning*	Reps	Work: Rest Ratio	EXAMPLE (sprint/drill based)	
				Sprint/Rep Time (will vary by athlete)	Rest time (varies by rep time)
1	50%	5	1:4	10 seconds	40 seconds
2	30%	7	1:3	10 seconds	30 seconds
3	20%	8	1:2	10 seconds	20 seconds
4	10%	9	1:2	10 seconds	20 seconds
5	none	10	1:1	10 seconds	10 seconds

*If no previous strength and conditioning history exists, default to the most conservative workload from other athletes.

- Exercise and conditioning activities should be consistent with daily training objectives and are not permitted to be used as discipline/punishment or put the student athlete's physical, social, or psychological health at risk.
- All exercise and conditioning activities are required to have appropriate supervision (ie. coach trained and rehearsed in CPR/AED with education on the prevention of sudden death in sport, or an athletic trainer on site).

Procedure for Athletic Participation in the COLD

COLD INJURY Cold weather is defined as any temperature that can negatively affect the body's thermoregulatory system.

It is important to remember that temperatures do not have to be freezing to have this effect.

Individuals engaged in sports activities in cold, wet and/or windy conditions are at risk for environmental cold injuries

Reminder: Windy & Wet conditions reduce body temperature 3-5 times quicker

STEPS FOR MONITORING COLD WEATHER:

· Weather should be monitored by designated athletic department personnel (Athletic Trainer if present) and an advisory should be issued to school coaching staff when applicable. Usually by email ***the day prior*** to the event warning of the potential, ***and the day of the*** event with potential modifications. · Temperature, wind speed, and wind chill will be monitored.

· Athletic Department officials will use a **Wind Chill Index Chart (Chart 1)** as a measurement for impending weather situations and adjust outside activities as necessary using the **Activity Modification Table 1** o The Wind Chill Index considers effects of temperature and wind speed (see Chart 1 below) o Keeping in mind that precipitation increases risk dramatically

o This chart is available at: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/windchill.shtml

· Based on information from the National Weather Service, local weather stations and local/on-site Cold Index measurements, determine the risk of potential danger to participants. Issue a warning and implement the practice or game plan for that day to be distributed to all coaches.

Activity Modification Table 1

RISK Temp/Windchill MODIFICATIONS#

Low Risk 30°F & below Outside participation allowed w/appropriate^ clothing
Moderate Risk 25°F & below Mandate additional protective clothing (hat, gloves, layers)
Limit practice time to 60-90 minutes/15 min rewarm
Provide re-warming facilities (warm dry environment, fluids,
blankets, hot packs)

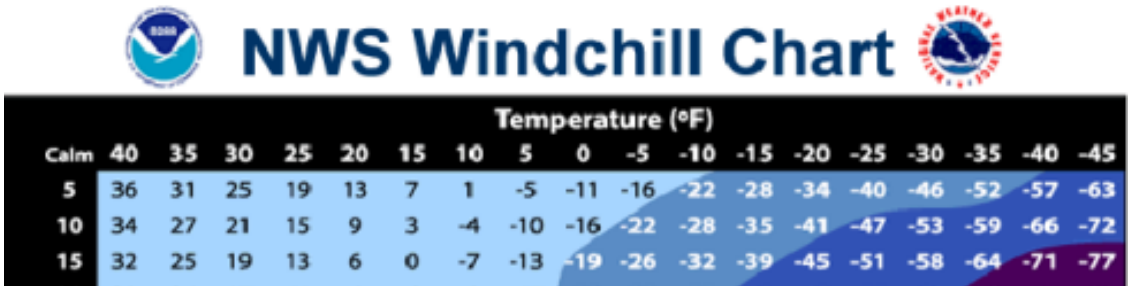
High Risk 15°F & below All participants must have appropriate clothing as above Cover all exposed skin (cover helmet ear holes)
Outside participation limited to 45 minutes/15min rewarm
Provide re-warming facilities (warm dry environment, fluids,
blankets, hot packs)

Extreme Risk 0°F or below Termination of all outside activities * #

*Frostbite can occur in 30 minutes with minimal wind. See attached Windchill chart
Nordic ski teams, Alpine ski teams, and snowboard teams are subject to coach's and venue location discretion. These participants and the nature of their sport dictate necessary equipment/clothing for such extreme weather. Venues issue warnings & "wind holds". ^See appropriate clothing on following page under Clothing Recommendations

VPA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee August 2015

Chart 1



NWS Windchill Chart

	Temperature (°F)																	
Calm	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45
5	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63
10	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72
15	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77

VERMONT PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION
POLICY for Athletic Participation in the COLD

Recommended Preventative Strategies:

Competition/Practice Modifications:

· Consider extended half-times to allow for rewarming
· Provide access to a warm building
· Consider abbreviated introductions
· Ensuring/mandate proper clothing (hats, gloves, pants)
· Consider a "EZ" up tent for players/officials for protection from the elements
· Coaches should be vigilant and monitor player's physical condition and mental status · Have adequate rehydration fluids available, consider warm beverages
· Have hotpacks, blankets, additional warm, dry clothing available

Appropriate Clothing:

In cold weather conditions appropriate clothing should be worn to prevent cold exposure. Both the Athletic Trainer(s) and coaches should require the student-athletes to implement the following: · Wear several layers around the core of the body (especially those who are not very active). o The first layer should wick moisture away from the body (DryTech, underarmor)
The top layers should trap heat, block the wind (fleece, windblock)

o No cotton as inside layer.
o Outside layer should be water resistant/waterproof

· Long pants designed to insulate.

o On cold/and or windy days windpants or a nylon shell should be worn on the surface layer to break the wind.

· Long sleeved garment that will break the wind
· Gloves
· Hat or helmet to protect the ears; tape helmet ear holes for cold/wind protection · Face protection
· Moisture wicking socks (preferably wool blend)

-It is important that athletes avoid wearing multiple layers of cotton. When the body sweats the cotton will become dense and permeated with sweat

Factors Affecting Body Temperature Regulation in Cold:
Wind and moisture (rain) *dramatically* increase heat loss from the body
Cold exposure/activity requires more energy from the body. Additional calorie intake may be required.
Cold exposure/activity requires similar hydration to room temperature; however the thirst reflex is not activated. Conscious efforts before and after practice to hydrate should be initiated. · Never train alone. A simple ankle sprain in cold weather may become life threatening.
Appropriate clothing must be closely monitored and mandated (see above)
Increased risk factors: Previous cold injury, females, low body weight, asthma, CV conditions
COLD INJURY DEFINITIONS:

Hypothermia: Body Core Temperature below 95°F

Symptoms include:

- Shivering - Lethargy, amnesia
- Impaired motor control - Pale, cold face and extremities
- Decreased heart rate - Slurred speech
- Impaired mental function

***Treatment*:** remove wet clothing, warm with dry insulating blankets, cover the head, get to a warm environment. Provide warm beverages, avoid friction, avoid warming extremities initially

Frostnip/Frostbite:
Frostbite is actual freezing of body tissues. Most susceptible are fingers, toes, earlobes, nose.
Symptoms include:

- dry, waxy skin - swelling
- burning, tingling - limited movement
- white/blue/gray patches - aching, throbbing, shooting pain

Treatment: rewarm slowing in warm water (not hot); avoid friction/rubbing tissue

Chilblain:

· An exaggerated or uncharacteristic inflammatory response to cold exposure
· Symptoms include:

- red or blue lesions - swelling
- tenderness - itching, numbness, burning
- increased temperature

Treatment: wash, dry area, elevate, cover with loose clothing/blankets, avoid friction, lotion **General**

Signs/ Symptoms of Cold Stress

Uncontrollable shivering

Swollen Extremities

Confusion
Fatigue
Blurred Vision

Slurred Speech
Headache, dizziness
Red or Painful extremities
Numbness/tingling of skin

Sports Guides (linked):

Alpine skiing

Baseball

Basketball

Cheer

Dance

Field hockey

Football

Golf

gymnastics

Ice hockey

Indoor track (802 Timing)

Nordic skiing

Outdoor track (802 Timing)

Snowboarding

Soccer

Softball

Ultimate

Unified

Volleyball