

Student Athletic Handbook



Isle of Wight County Schools

Mission Statement of the Isle of Wight County School Athletic Program

The mission of Isle Of Wight County Schools' high school athletic program is to provide our student-athletes with experiences that promote positive character development, leadership growth and team building.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY SCHOOL **ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT**

The interscholastic program of Smithfield and Windsor High School will strive to provide:

- Activities compatible with the general instructional program of the school.
- Opportunities for student athletes to learn the value of cooperation, hard work, dedication, sacrifice, and perseverance.
- Opportunities for student athletes to develop positive leadership qualities.
- Learning experiences that place team goals above individual goals.
- Physical, mental, and social growth embodied in the spirit of amateur athletics.
- Each student athlete the opportunity to explore a variety of activities.
- A means for students to learn to manage and budget time wisely.
- Opportunities for students to develop a positive attitude toward school.
- Instruction in proper techniques, skills, and regulations of each activity while placing safety of the participant first and foremost. **WARNING:** It should be understood there is an inherent risk of injury and even death while participating in any athletic activity.
- Instruction that fosters respect for opponents, officials, school property, faculty, and coaches.

VHSL ATHLETIC/ACTIVITY OFFERINGS

Realizing that a student's needs, abilities, and interests vary widely, the Isle Of Wight County School (IWCS) Athletic Program offers a variety of interscholastic athletics and activities. Presently, these offerings include:

FALL

Cheerleading*
Cross Country
Field Hockey*
Football*
Golf
Sailing*
Theatre

WINTER

Boys Basketball*
Girls Basketball*
Forensics
Debate
Scholastic Bowl
Boys/ Girls Track & Field*
Wrestling*

SPRING

Baseball*
Boys Soccer*
Girls Soccer*
Softball*
Sailing*
Boys/ Girls Tennis*
Boys/ Girls Track & Field*

*Indicates Varsity and Junior Varsity sports

At no time will a student be permitted to participate in more than one athletic activity during a season. An athlete who quits or is dismissed from a team may not try out and/or join another team during that season.

Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of athletic activities, as long as academic progress and achievement is not hindered. It is the belief of the IWCS coaching staff and administration that specialization and/or concentration in a specific sport is neither in the best interest of the individual nor the school. This practice limits opportunities for students to develop skills and talents in areas where they may possess equal or greater aptitude.

It is recognized that athletic teams provide a means of bonding the school and community together serving as expression of community pride. IWCS athletic programs seek to serve as a catalyst for community spirit and provide a climate that is both satisfying and rewarding to our fans.

GOVERNANCES

A. The School Board

The School Board is responsible for interpreting the needs of the community and school and developing policies in accordance with state statutes and mandates and in accordance with the education needs of Isle Of Wight County students.

B. The Virginia High School League

All Isle Of Wight County School are voluntary members of the Virginia High School League and compete with member schools. As a member school district, the secondary schools of Isle Of Wight County agree to abide and enforce all rules and regulations promulgated by the League.

Smithfield Competes in 4A with student enrollment around 1300.

Winsor Competes in 1A with student enrollment around 460.

C. The National Federation of State High School Associations

The National Federation consist of the fifty individual state high school athletic and/or activities associations. The purposes of the Federation are to serve, protect and enhance the interstate activity interests of the high school belonging to state associations; to assist in those activities of the state association which can best be operated on a nationwide scale; to sponsor meetings, publications and activities which will permit each state association to profit by experience of all other member associations; and to coordinate the work to minimize duplication.

BOOSTER CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Each IWCS high school is encouraged to partner with a school-based Athletic Booster Association. The sole purpose of the Booster Club is to support the extracurricular athletic programs and Virginia High School League (VHSL) activities of the school. The Athletic Booster Association is permitted to operate the concession stand(s) for all home athletic events. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Athletic Booster Association, please contact your school's athletic director. The Athletic Booster Association operates based on its own by laws, is governed by its own officers and is responsible for its own finances.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN VHSL ACTIVITIES

The VHSL sets the criteria for eligibility in athletics and all other VHSL sponsored events. These criteria are set forth in the VHSL Handbook which is published annually and available online at www.vhsl.org or for inspection in the office of the principal and the athletic director. The rules and regulations governing the participation of student athletes at this high school are in compliance with the VHSL Handbook.

VHSL Regulations- Based on the regulations established by the VHSL, a student athlete must meet the following criteria to be considered eligible for interscholastic athletics:

- A. The student shall be a regular bona fide student in good standing of the school of which he/she represents. The student shall be enrolled in the last four years of high school. Note: Eighth grade students may only compete on the sub-varsity level.

Interpretations:

1. A “regular” student is considered a full-time student who is in regular attendance and is carrying a schedule of subjects which, if successfully completed, will render him/her scholastically eligible for League participation the ensuing semester.
 2. Any student who is under penalty of suspension, or whose character is such as to reflect discredit upon his/her school, is not considered in good standing.
- B. The student shall have been regularly enrolled in the school that he/she represents not later than the fifteenth school day of the semester.
- C. The student shall be currently enrolled in not fewer than three (3) subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation and have passed 3 subjects or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation the immediately preceding year or the immediately preceding semester.
- D. **Students may not repeat courses for eligibility purposes for which credit has been previously awarded.**
1. IWCS policy IGBD-R states that a student must pass three of four subjects and have a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) in the semester preceding participation, or maintain a 2.0 or better cumulative GPA.
- E. The student shall not have reached the age of 19 on or before the first day of August of the school year in which he/she wishes to compete.
- F. The student shall not have enrolled in one high school and subsequently transferred to and enrolled in another high school without a corresponding change in the residence of his/her parents, parent, or guardian.
- G. The student shall not have been enrolled in the last four years for a period of more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the semester in which he/she was enrolled for the first time in the ninth grade. The eight consecutive semesters shall be counted continuously from that point, regardless of whether or not he/she remains continuously enrolled in school.
- H. The students shall have submitted to the principal or coach of his/her school, prior to becoming a member of any school athletic team, league form No. 2 (Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Exam Form) completely filled in and properly signed attesting that he/she has been examined and found to be physically fit for athletic competition, and that his/her parent’s consent to his/her participation.
- I. The students must sit out all VHSL competition for 365 consecutive calendar days following a school transfer unless the transfer is corresponded with a family move. (Check with principal or athletic director for exceptions.)

Eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics is a privilege earned by meeting not only the above-listed minimum standards, but also all other standards set by the school's League, district and school. Questions regarding eligibility or the effect an activity might have on eligibility status should be check with the Principal or Athletic Director. Meeting the intent and spirit of League standards will prevent the student, the team, the school and the community from being penalized. When allowing their son/daughter to join a VHSL team, parents also give their consent and approval for his/her picture and name to be printed in any high school or VHSL athletic program, publication or video. Local school divisions and VHSL districts may require additional standards to those listed above.

GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ATHLETES

A. **Training Rules-** In the interest of optimizing performance and insuring the athlete's safety, the following guidelines have been established.

1. **Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco Products, and Criminal Activity**

Possession or use of illicit drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco while a member of any athletic team is strictly forbidden. A student athlete WILL HAVE DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS from any team of which he/she is a member and could be ruled ineligible to represent the school in subsequent sports seasons, if it is determined he/she is involved in any of the following:

- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages during sports/activity season in which he/she is participating. This rule is in effect 24 hours a day during the season.
- Use or possession of illicit drugs during the sports/activity season in which he/she is participating. This rule is in effect 24 hours a day during the season.
- Use or possession of tobacco during the sports/activity season in which he/she is participating. This rule is in effect 24 hours a day during the season.
- Use of anabolic steroids during the training period immediately preceding or during the sport season of the athletic team, unless such steroid was prescribed by licensed physician for a medical condition. Violation of this rule will make the athlete ineligible for two school years to compete in interscholastic athletic competition if the school principal or division superintendent determine the athlete used anabolic steroids.
- Conviction for, or evidence of being involved in, a criminal activity that reflects on the school or the athletic program in a negative way, regardless of when the offense may have occurred.

BEHAVIOR OF ATHLETES

Realizing that student-athletes are highly visible and representatives of IWCS and their community, they are expected to display qualities of favorable character both in and out of school.

A. **Schools and Classroom Disruption** - Any athlete who serves Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) will be suspended from activities during the day(s) of the suspension. Athletes may not practice on days they are serving Out-of-School Suspension. Multiple OSS may result in dismissal from the team. It shall be the responsibility of the athlete to inform his or her coach

when assigned to either In-School Suspension (ISS) or OSS **Athletic and VHSL activities are an extra-curricular activity and any participants that are in violation of a school or athletic/activities team policy can be disciplined, suspended, or removed from the team by a coach, administrator, or athletic director. Any participant deemed not in good standing by the school can be subject to disciplinary action.**

Note: This disciplinary process begins anew with each sport season.

- B. **Team Travel behavior** - Conduct and behavior expectations while en route to and from contest sites will be at specific sport coach's discretion.

The IWCS Athletic Program recognizes and supports its student-athletes' and coaches' rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of social networks. In this context, however, each student athlete and coach must remember that playing and competing for their school and IWCS is a privilege, not a right. As a student-athlete or coach, you represent the high school and are expected to portray yourself, your team, and the high school in a positive manner at all times. Consequently any online postings must therefore be consistent with federal and State laws, and team, department, school, and VHSL rules and policies (including the Guidelines listed below).

- A. **Social Media Networks** - IWCS athletes need to understand that pictures, messages, or anything that is posted on social media that is deemed in violation of a school or athletic policy can result in dismissal or suspension from an athletic team. Anything brought to the attention of the school's administration or coaching staff may be investigated and result in disciplinary consequences.

GUIDELINES

When participating on a social networking site, students must keep the following guidance in mind:

- A. Everything you post is public information – any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online – even if you limit access to your site. Information including pictures, videos, comments, and posters) may be accessible even after you remove it.
- B. Limit information about your whereabouts or plans to minimize the potential of being stalked, assaulted, or the victim of other criminal activity.
- C. What you post may affect your future. Many employers and school admissions officers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments, and posters).
- D. Similar to comments made in person, the IWCS Athletic Program will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as:
 - 1. Derogatory, defamatory, or vulgar language.

2. Comments that create a serious danger to the safety of another person or that constitute a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.
3. Comments or photos that describe or depict unlawful assault, abuse, hazing, harassment, or discrimination, selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other illegal or prohibited conduct, including violating the High School's Policy on Prohibited Harassment and Discrimination.

BEHAVIOR OF PARENTS

Parents are reminded that good sportsmanship is expected to be shown towards not only opposing teams, fans, officials, but also towards their schools, coaching staff and administration. Parents that behave inappropriately towards members of the coaching staff, administration, other school officials, etc. may be removed from the athletic contest and can be banned from all athletic contests. Parents are asked to keep their distance during all practice sessions. Although some practices are considered "open" practices, please keep a reasonable distance between yourself, the coaching staff and athletes.

Parent are NOT to approach a member of the coaching staff immediately following an athletic contest. Please use the 24 HOUR RULE- Wait 24 hours or next available business day to set a meeting to discuss the contest. Athletic competitions bring out the competitor in all of us and we all need time to cool down after the contest.

Playing time WILL NOT be discussed with parents. If an athlete is not getting playing time he or she thinks they deserve, the athlete needs to approach the coach and find out what he or she needs to do to have the opportunity for more playing time.

SPORTSMANSHIP

The VHSL has asked member schools to make good sportsmanship an area of special emphasis. The VHSL Handbook states that the athlete as well as participants in other VHSL activities should:

- Be courteous to visiting teams and officials.
- Play hard and to the limit of his/her ability, regardless of discouragement. A true athlete does not give up nor does he/she quarrel, cheat, bet or grandstand.
- Retain his/her composure at all times and never leave the bench or enter the playing field/court to engage in a fight.
- Be modest when successful and gracious in defeat. A true sportsman does not offer excuses for failures.
- Maintain a high degree of physical fitness by observing team and training rules.
- Demonstrate loyalty to the school by maintaining a satisfactory scholastic standing and by participating in or supporting other school activities.
- Play for the love of the game.
- Understand and observe the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
- Set a high standard of personal cleanliness.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of officials and accept their decisions without question.
- Respect the facilities of host schools and the trust entailed in being a guest.

If a player is ejected for un-sportsmanlike conduct, that player becomes ineligible to participate in the next contest. If the un-sportsmanlike conduct is classified as “fighting”, the player becomes ineligible to participate in the next two (2) contests. (This does not apply to basketball players who must leave the game after five personal fouls.) Major infractions of sportsmanship rules including ejections, must be reported to the VHSL and violations are subject to disciplinary action by the league and sanctions against member schools.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

In order to participate in events, a team member must be counted present in ½ the blocks of the school day. School administration may grant an exception to this rule in extreme extenuating circumstances. Attending classes the day after contests is expected. Tardiness to morning classes on days after contests is NOT ACCEPTABLE. Failure to comply with these rules will be dealt with on an individual basis if it becomes a problem.

If, in the judgment of the Principal and/or Athletic Director, an athlete begins to miss an unacceptable amount of academic instruction, a meeting will be held involving the athlete, the head coach and the Athletic Director. If academic time continues to be neglected, the Athletic Director may implement a period of suspension for the athlete. Further absences during or after the suspension period may result in the athlete being removed from the team and possibly subsequent seasons with the approval of the Principal.

Athletes are expected to be at all team practice sessions. Any athlete missing a scheduled practice needs to contact the coach to explain the absence. A coach, Athletic Director, or School Administrator may discipline an athlete for unexcused absences from practices or games. Excused absences must be pre-approved by the head coach. Any athlete that is absent from school due to an illness should still contact a coach.

PHYSICALS

All athletes are required by VHSL policy to have an annual physical prior to trying out or participating in VHSL activities. Physicals completed after May 1 of any year are acceptable for the following school year's eligibility. The cost of the physical is the responsibility of the athlete.

Activity Participation Fee:

The IWCS School Board has set a fee of \$40.00 per student, per season regardless of the number of sports or activities a student participates in, with a maximum cap of \$100 per school year/ per student. The activity participation fee is to be paid once a student has completed tryouts and is selected to become an official team/activity member. Team members are required to pay the participation fee prior to the first official contest in order to be eligible to compete. The fee will be waived for students who qualify for free or reduced price meals.

It is important for parents and students to understand that there is no relationship between payment of the activity fee and a guarantee of student participation time. Participation time for students is at the sole discretion of the head coach or sponsor and his/her staff. The student participation fee is non-refundable should the athlete quit the team, be suspended or dismissed.

TEAM TRAVEL

Student athletes are expected to travel as a team using school provided transportation to and from contest sites. It is the philosophy of the coaching staff that camaraderie and esprit de corps are cultivated by equal treatment and spending time together as a group. While riding a school bus is not particularly enjoyable, the experience of doing so is invaluable in team bonding. There are times however, that not doing so is permitted in the case of an emergency or extreme situations. Pre-approval must be granted by the school administration and/or Athletic Director and the head coach. In all cases, it must be understood that only the parents or guardians transport athletes. Parents must also submit a written note to the coach in these situations.

HAZING AND OTHER RITES OF INITIATION

Any form of hazing or other rites of initiation or intimidation are strictly forbidden at any time, on or off of school property. Any athlete that is in violation of this rule may be removed or suspended from the team.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS AND PARKING

Students may not be on school property before 7:15 a.m. or after 3:15 p.m. during the instructional day or any time school is not in session unless they are supervised in a specified activity. **A coach or approved school staff member must supervise the activity. Students may only use the weight room if a coach or school weight trainer is supervising. Students should not stay after school for a game or activity unless directly supervised by a coach.** Once on school property, students must enter the building or practice area promptly. Sitting in vehicles or standing in the parking lot is prohibited. Students may not go to the parking lot at any time during practice without permission from the coach. Students must park in the main, white line, student-parking area during the school day.

UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

Team uniforms, travel bags, and equipment are the property of the school unless specifically purchased by the athlete. These items are expensive and a great deal of time and money has been spent to ensure that our teams have uniforms that will last and are in presentable condition. All issued uniforms, travel bags, and equipment must be returned promptly within one week of the final competition. Failure to meet the return deadline causes problems in reconditioning, storage, laundry, inventory, and budget requests for the subsequent season. Athletes who do not conform to the return deadlines will be disciplined in an appropriate manner by the staff and will be held financially responsible for these items. The administration reserves the option to deny participation in subsequent sport seasons for those in violation.

AAU/INDEPENDENT TEAM PARTICIPATION

Any student participating on an IWCS athletic/academic team may not be excused or permitted to miss a scheduled team practice or event to meet, practice or compete with a non-school/independent team. Each absence or early dismissal for participation in a non-school/independent team function

may result in suspension from the next scheduled school/VHSL sanctioned competition. Consistent infractions may result in elimination from the high school team and/or loss of eligibility for district competitions in accordance with team rules and attendance policies.

A. Student athletes who chooses to do AAU, travel team, or recreation league sport:

- 1. Must inform his/her in-season coach of his/her decision to participate in an out-of-school sport.**
- 2. Must complete ALL duties pertaining to his/her current in-season sport.**
- 3. Cannot miss practice/game(s)/meeting/etc. due to out-of-school sport participation. Likewise, he/she should not arrive late or leave early from in-season practice either.**
- 4. Should view his/her participation in a school sport as more important than the out-of-school sport.**

WEATHER RELATED DECISIONS

On days when snow/weather or other situations have caused the cancellation of school, the Superintendent of Schools may allow practice or playing of a contest on a day school is closed. Once the decision is made, each coach will be contacted by their athletic director. When school is released early due to inclement weather or other unplanned releases, all practices and games are cancelled.

All cancellations of games will be displayed on school websites and communicate through the county wide "Connect 5" communication system.

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY SCHOOL ATHLETIC TRAINER

School Athletic Trainers are contracted health professional who specializes in the prevention, care and rehabilitation of sports related injuries. They are certified nationally and by the state in the field of sports medicine. The Athletic Trainer is a member of the Sports Medicine Team (SMT) that also includes the student athlete, the student athlete's parent, the head coach, the Athletic Director, the School Administration and the team/family physician. Any member of the SMT may deem an athlete ineligible for participation and may not be overridden by any other member. **Only the Athletic Trainer may finalize the return-to-play status of an athlete.** Athletes that go see a doctor must bring a doctor's note back when they return.

VHSL ENERGY DRINK BAN

On September 22, 2012 the VHSL Executive Committee passed an energy drink policy which is in effect for all VHSL member schools. The basics of this policy are as follows:

- A recommendation that athletes not consume energy drinks during participation in VHSL practices and competition.
- The penalty for violation of this rule is a warning to the member school.
- Energy drinks are defined as drinks advertised as boosting energy. These drinks do not emphasize energy derived from the calories they contain but rather through a choice of caffeine, vitamins and herbal supplements the manufacturer has combined. Some common examples of energy drinks are Amp, Monster and Red Bull.

- Fluid replacement drinks or drinks used to replenish body fluid after exercise are defined as drinks that are designed to replace energy and electrolytes, used especially to assist the body in recovering from exercise. Some common examples of fluid replacement drinks are Gatorade and Powerade. Soft drinks such as Coke and Pepsi, while not fluid replacement drinks, are not classified as energy drinks.
- Athletes are not to be consuming energy drinks at any time during their participation in SHS athletics. This policy is in effect 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Any athlete caught using these energy drinks will be disciplined within the athletic department.

CONCUSSION INFORMATION

As of July, 2011, the Virginia Department of Education requires that all parents and student-athletes must be presented with information pertaining to concussion injuries before the student-athlete can participate in any athletic practice. Each parent and student should read through the ***Concussion*** document provided by the Athletic Director to gain an understanding about concussions. Parent must sign the acceptance form to verify material was read and reviewed with the student athlete.

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNTY SCHOOL
VHSL STUDENT ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK SIGN OFF PAGE
2 015-2016 School Year

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Alcohol, tobacco, and drug use does not enhance or assist the development of athletes or other students. There is a significant amount of research that shows the effects of these substances are dangerous to the health and condition of athletes. Use, possession, or involvement with alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs, and/or the misuse or abuse of any medication or other substance, is not acceptable to the coaches and administration or the school and is strictly prohibited.

A student-athlete or other VHSL team member will be suspended or dismissed from any team of which he/she is a member and could be ruled ineligible to represent the school in the subsequent season, if it is determined that he/she is involved in any of the following:

1. Use or possession of alcoholic beverages or tobacco during the sports season in which he/she is participating. This rule is in effect twenty-four hours per day during the season.
2. Use or possession of illegal drugs during the sports season in which he/she is participating. This rule is in effect twenty-four hours per day during the season.
3. Conviction for, or evidence of being involved in a criminal activity that reflects on the school or the athletic program in a negative way, regardless of when the offense may have occurred.

PARENT BEHAVIOR

Parents are reminded that good sportsmanship is expected to be shown towards not only opposing teams, fans, officials, but also towards their schools, coaching staff and administration. Parents that behave inappropriately towards members of the coaching staff, administration, other school officials, etc. may be removed from the athletic contest and can be banned from all athletic contests. Parents are asked to keep their distance during all practice sessions. Although some practices are considered "open" practices, please keep a reasonable distance between yourself, the coaching staff and athletes.

Parent are NOT to approach a member of the coaching staff immediately following an athletic contest. Please use the 24 HOUR RULE- Wait 24 hours or next available business day to set a meeting to discuss the contest. Athletic competitions bring out the competitor in all of us and we all need time to cool down after the contest.

Playing time WILL NOT be discussed with parents. If an athlete is not getting playing time he or she thinks they deserve, the athlete needs to approach the coach and find out what he or she needs to do to have the opportunity for more playing time.

Your signature indicates that you have received a copy of the IWCS VHSL Student-Athlete Handbook and you are aware of the information about concussions, expectations, rules, and regulations as they apply to the athletic programs and other VHSL activities offered at IWCS.

Student Athlete: (PRINT) _____

Student-Athlete: (SIGNATURE) _____

Parent/Guardian: (SIGNATURE) _____

DATE: _____

THIS SIGNATURE PAGE MUST BE RETURNED TO YOUR COACH WITHIN A WEEK OF RECEIVING PACKET