

VIDALIA HIGH SCHOOL DRUG SCREENING PROGRAM

We believe that the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol can be detrimental to the physical, emotional, and mental health of our students. Also, the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol seriously interferes with the performance of student athletes and teenage drivers, which can pose a danger to the students as well as others. Because of these concerns, the school system has adopted the following goals and procedures for student athletes and parking permit holders beginning with the 2015-16 school year.

Goals of the VHS Screening Program

- Give students another opportunity to stay away from drugs and anyone who uses drugs.
- Produce student-athletes who serve as positive role models, influencing their peers to make healthy and responsible choices.
- Seek to encourage students to remain substance-free and establish appropriate habits at an early age.
- Deter the use of illegal drugs in our community.
- Develop a positive, working relationship with parents and guardians to make them aware of any student who may be using drugs and identify the drugs as well as provide referrals for counseling and treatment.

Testing Procedures

1. At the beginning of the school year, students who are interested in participating in interscholastic athletics at any time during the year or would like to purchase a parking pass must sign a consent form which authorizes the school to administer drug testing and allows the results of the test to be released to parents/guardians, administrative officials, and the head coach of the athletic teams on which the student participates.
(Note: A signed consent form is a requirement for participation in any GHSA governed inter-scholastic activity that requires an annual physical examination for participation. Parents and students do not have the option of not participating in the drug-screen program.)
2. The procedures for testing parking permit holders are the same as for student-athletes.
 - To park on campus, a student must complete a parking permit application. As a part of the application, students must sign that they agree to the following statement:

I understand that as a parking permit holder at Vidalia High School, I am subject to random drug screening as administered by the school. I also understand that parking on campus is a privilege and that it may be suspended or withheld from me if I do not meet the requirements set forth in the VHS drug screening policy.
3. Random testing will take place monthly throughout the school year with students chosen through lottery/random selection.
4. Each month, the firm will select numbers *anonymously* from those in the pool and notify VHS administration of students to be tested. The substances that will be tested include: amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, cocaine, opiates, and propoxyphene.

5. Testing consists of providing a urine sample to the school nurse. A school administrator will supervise students, but will not administer the test. Privacy of the students and confidentiality of the test results will be protected. Specimens will be processed for identity and secured to ensure against tampering.
6. Test results will be reported to the school through the proper chain of command. All parents or guardians of students tested will be notified. In case of a positive result, the parent or guardian will be notified and a conference scheduled.
7. The student must fill out a form delineating any medication that she/he is currently taking.
8. There will be one pool of student numbers from which the student numbers will be selected. The pool will consist of parking permit holders and student-athletes.
9. A student's refusal to test will be considered a positive test result.

What happens if someone tests positive?

1. If a positive reading is returned for a student, the parents or guardians and the student will be notified. The student-athlete will be suspended for 10% of the team's regular season contests beginning with the next scheduled game (this could be a playoff game(s) or a game in the following season; it does not include practice scrimmages). Additional consequences will be left to the discretion of the head coach who is in season at the time.
2. Students with parking permits will be suspended from driving to school for 18 consecutive school days (10% of the year) beginning with the next school day. The student-athlete may remain a part of the team and will be expected to participate in team practices or conditioning sessions.
3. The student and parents must provide evidence of enrollment in a drug-counseling program approved by the principal. The student must agree to another drug test within a timeframe recommended by the Toxicology Lab at the family's expense.

Second Positive

1. If a student has a second positive screen, the parents or guardians and the student will be notified. The student will be suspended from the team and/or driving privileges at the time of notification. A meeting will be scheduled with the parents or guardians, the student, the principal, the head coach, and the athletic director (as applicable) to arrange the following:
 - a. Agree to participation in a drug treatment and counseling program on a regular basis for a minimum of four weeks. Parents or guardians are expected to participate in the program as well.
 - b. Sign an agreement that releases Vidalia City School Board of Education from any liability for injury or illness resulting from drugs and /or treatment.
 - c. May apply for reinstatement to the team and/or for driving privileges after a minimum of four (4) weeks if the following provisions are met: (a) provide a negative drug screen to school administration; (b) agree to continue with drug counseling; (c) agree to be subjected to future testing on demand at the student's expense; and (d) understand that the application for reinstatement may be denied. The principal, head coach, and athletic director will decide on reinstatement.

Third Positive

1. A third positive screen will result in suspension from all interscholastic athletics for one calendar year from date of result. Parents or guardians and student-athlete will be notified immediately. Continued counseling and treatment during the year of suspension is expected with periodic testing at family's expense. Reinstatement procedures will remain constant, meaning they will have to go through the re-instatement process outlined in the Second Positive.
2. A student who is both an athlete and a parking permit holder will lose both privileges during any time of suspension.

Clarifications and Explanations

1. In the event the student-athlete believes this policy has not been applied to him/her in a manner consistent with the intent, the parents or guardians may appeal the decision to the principal of their school within 72 hours of a positive test result, and the principal's decision in this matter shall be final.
2. This procedure is intended to supplement the existing policies of the Vidalia City Board of Education and the Georgia High School Association regarding the governance of interscholastic athletics. Administrators will not use test results obtained pursuant to this policy for disciplinary or other purposes, other than as set forth above.
3. All students remain subject to the Vidalia City Board of Education Student Code of Conduct and may be subject to established discipline procedures if found in possession or under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol at school or at school-sponsored events.
4. Parents (guardians) of a student testing positive may request to have their student-athletes tested at their expense.
5. This policy is not a part of the disciplinary code but is relative to student participation in areas of parking and participation in interscholastic activities.
6. There is not an appeal process as this policy affects participation and not discipline; therefore, the decision of the high school principal is final in all matters regarding this policy.
7. Students who are arrested for a misdemeanor offense involving drugs or alcohol will receive the same consequence as a failed drug test. Students who are arrested for a felony offense will be treated per guidelines outlined in the student discipline of the student handbook.
8. If all suspension requirements are not fulfilled by the end of the season, then the athlete in question will complete his or her suspension in the next sport in which he/she participates.