

Verndale

Public School

Athletic Handbook

2020-2021

Interscholastic Athletics

Philosophy

The purpose of extracurricular activities at Verndale High School is to provide students with an opportunity to participate in programs outside of the regular school day that will provide positive educational experiences that enhance the academic program.

We operate under the belief that extracurricular programming is an integral part of the total educational process. Extracurricular programs should be operated with the well-being of the student in mind and be grounded in sound educational practices.

Verndale School Policies Regarding Athletics

Extra-Curricular Activity Policy

All students participating in extracurricular activities sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) must follow the rules of the league.

Students must be in attendance at school all day in order to participate in, or attend, any extracurricular activity that day or evening. Exceptions to this are excused absences approved by administration.

Furthermore, eligibility for participation may be limited by academic standing, disciplinary matters and enrollment status. If students have any questions about eligibility for participation, they should contact administration.

Academic Eligibility Policy

A restricted list will consist of students who have un-served detention(s) and/or are placed on academic suspension.

Teachers will report failing grades to the office on Tuesday of each school week to determine student eligibility. A student will be placed on academic probation if they receive an "F" in any class. A student will be placed on academic suspension if they receive an "F" in any class the following week (two consecutive weeks with a failing grade). A Student placed on academic suspension will be ineligible for participation in any school activity for one (1) week. The weekly ineligibility period will run from Wednesday at 8:00 am to the following Wednesday at 8:00 am.

A student on academic suspension will remain ineligible until they are "cleared" by having a passing grade in all classes when grades are reported.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is expected in all activities and is the responsibility of coaches/advisors, participants, cheerleaders, students, adult spectators and officials. Promotion of sportsmanship at activities should include a demonstration of respect for opponents and officials. Rules of the event should be respected and skill and performance should be recognized regardless of school affiliation. The following rules will be adhered to:

1. Respect the rights of all spectators.
2. Accept the official's decision as final.
3. No booing/jeering officials/players at any time.
4. No use of profane or inappropriate language.
5. No throwing of objects on the field or playing surface.

Extra-Curricular Transportation

Students taking part in school activities are to travel to and from events on school-sponsored transportation. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action. The activity sponsor may grant the participant permission to travel home with his/her parent(s) only after his/her parent(s) have contacted the activity sponsor in writing and/or in person. Exceptions must be approved by the administration prior to the event.

In the cooperatively paired programs where the Verndale School District does not provide transportation (currently girls tennis, boys hockey, girls golf, and boys golf), the student and the parent/guardian must sign the transportation waiver agreement.

MSHSL Chemical Eligibility (BYLAW 205.00)

At any time during the calendar year, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity:

- A. use or consume, have in possession a beverage containing alcohol;
- B. use or consume, have in possession tobacco; or,
- C. use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any other controlled substances or drug paraphernalia.

First Violation Penalty

- Two consecutive contests or two weeks (14 calendar days), whichever is greater

Second Violation Penalty

- Six consecutive contests or three weeks (21 calendar days), whichever is greater

Third or Subsequent Violation Penalty

- Twelve consecutive contests or four weeks (28 calendar days), whichever is greater

Hazing or Bullying

“Hazing” means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, student group or for any other purpose. (Verndale School District Policy #526 – Hazing Prohibition)

”Bullying” means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:

- An actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or
- Materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services or privileges. (Verndale School District Policy #514 – Bullying Prohibition Policy)

If an act of hazing/bullying occurs it must be reported to an appropriate school official. Any person denying or lying about an act of hazing/bullying or instigating any other person to do so offends this policy.

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any person, including district employees, who retaliates against any person who reports, testifies, assists or helps to investigate any act of hazing/bullying.

The school district will also take and authorize any action necessary to investigate any case of hazing/bullying and to discipline all persons responsible.

Concussion Testing

The school district will provide concussion testing for all student athletes again this year. The student athlete must complete a baseline test prior to participation in a school sport. These tests will be completed in the school office. Students participating in a fall sport should complete the test prior to the start of practice. Only one baseline test is required every three years. However, if a concussion was suspected last year, a new baseline test will be required this year.

ACTIVITIES DEPT. COMMUNICATIONS PROCESS MAP

Verndale Public Schools Activities Department values “communications that are open and honest.” We will strive to communicate open and honestly with all stakeholders in our department, including the student participants, parents, and community.

Research has long documented the positive life skills students learn through participation in extra-curricular activities. One of the skills developed through participation in activities includes effective communications. With this fact in mind, our philosophy of communications keeps the student in the forefront in advocating their position, concern, insight, and feelings.

In an effort to keep the lines of communication open between all entities, we have outlined a number of expectations for communications to take place. We have also outlined the proper process to follow if any party has a concern with the circumstances the student may be experiencing. Verndale Public Schools values highly qualified staff members, and works hard to provide for the continued professional development of all employees. Our coaches and directors are professionals who will make decisions based on what they believe to be in the best interest for ALL students involved.

Communications you should expect from your child’s coach/director:

1. Purpose of the program
2. Locations and times of practices and contests
3. Team requirements i.e. fees, special equipment, etc.
4. Expectations of the coach/director
5. Playing time philosophy of the coach
6. Concerns your child’s coach/director has for your child

Appropriate topics to discuss with your child’s coach/director:

1. Ways to help your child improve
2. Concerns about your child’s behavior or health
3. Illnesses, vacations, family conflicts with practices/contests/performances
4. Perceived violations of the values outlined in our handbook

Topics not to be discussed with your child’s coach/director:

1. Playing time
2. Strategy
3. Other students

In keeping with the guidelines provided above, the following process map has been developed to help us establish a uniform process for communication to take place that is both aligned to our goals of teaching lifelong communication skills to the students and in providing clear and honest communication among all stakeholders. This process map is progressive in

nature and should be followed as presented. In the case that any part of this process map is omitted, the party will be directed to return to that step prior to further action being taken.

Step 1: student talks to coach/director

This is the first step in resolving any issues and is essential in the development of student communication skills.

Step 2: student and parent talk to coach/director

If following step 1, the student still has concerns, the student can invite a parent(s) to sit down with the coach/director. The student must be present at this meeting and should initiate the discussion.

Step 3: student, parent, and coach/director talk to Activities Director

If following step 2, there are still unsolved issues, the student and his/her parents can request a meeting with the Activities Director. Any such meeting should include the coach and the student along with the parent(s).

Step 4: student, parent, coach/director, and Activities Director talk with Superintendent

If following step 4 there are still unresolved issues, the student and his/her parents can request a meeting with the Superintendent of Schools. Any such meeting should include the student along with the parent(s), coach/director, and Activities Director.

Step 5: student, parent address the school board

If following step 4 there are still unresolved issues, the student and his/her parent(s) can address the school board and explain their situation, steps taken to this point, answers/suggestions offered by district staff, and offer their own solutions.

By following the above outlined process map, it is our belief that effective communication can take place, and the goals of learning life skills can be met. Research has continually indicated that student involvement in extra-curricular activities greatly enhances the chance for success during adulthood. We are committed to providing both the opportunity for participation, and in striving to deliver the highest quality programs possible.



Education and Leadership for a Lifetime

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COVID-19 NOTICE

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

In accordance with governmental directives, the MSHSL will offer certain activities subject to compliance with local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and guidelines. The Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Education and the MSHSL have developed guidance and requirements related to youth sports, use of school facilities and modifications of MSHSL activities designed to keep participants safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Even with these measures, the MSHSL cannot guarantee that students or other individuals participating in organized athletic activities ("Participants") will not be exposed to COVID-19. Participants and their parents/legal guardians should consider the risks before participating in any MSHSL activities. It is a shared responsibility to protect everyone from COVID-19 and Participants should follow MDH/CDC guidelines to reduce the risk of exposure, including but not limited to the following:

- Stay home as much as possible;
- Stay at least 6 feet from other people if you are in public places;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Wash your hands often, with soap and water. Wash for at least 20 seconds;
- Always wash your hands after being in a public place;
- Always wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol;
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Throw used tissues in the trash;
- Wear face coverings/masks that cover your nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of your face.

In recognizing the serious nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the positive impact that participation in MSHSL fine arts activities and athletics has on student participants, it is imperative that students and families know and understand the following:

1. Participating in MSHSL activities is **voluntary**.
2. While participating in MSHSL activities, all laws as well as MSHSL and school rules, guidelines, and protocols related to COVID-19 must be followed.
3. Participant acknowledges the contagious nature of COVID-19, and the Participant understands that there is risk of injury and/or illness from participating in MSHSL activities, including the risk to have direct or indirect contact with individuals who have been exposed to and/or diagnosed with COVID-19.
4. Participant agrees that if he/she is exposed to, or infected by, COVID-19 during the period of participation, they will immediately cease participation and follow Minnesota Department of Health protocols for schools and activities and MSHSL guidelines for notification and return to participation.
5. Participant has signed a separate Eligibility Statement connected to general participation in MSHSL athletics/activities and agrees that the terms of that statement are wholly incorporated into this document and that the terms of this document are incorporated into the Eligibility Statement.

Additional information regarding Activity Participation and COVID can be found at:

- health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sportsguide.pdf,
- health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/k12planguide.pdf
- www.mshsl.org
- www.nfhs.org

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By signing this sheet, we acknowledge that we have read and understand the 2020-2021 Verndale Public School Athletic Handbook. We also agree to abide by the policies set forth in this handbook.

Student's Printed Name

Grade

Student's Signature

Date

Parent's or Guardian's Signature

Date

