

Voorhees High School

Parent – Athlete

Handbook

2006-2007 Season

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A Message From The Athletic Director

Dear Parents and Athletes:

This letter will outline the goals and philosophy of the Voorhees High School athletic program. It is designed to make you aware of our expectations and to help you understand how a competitive athletic program is conducted. Athletics at Voorhees High School is part of the educational process; it is a place in which students with athletic skills can enhance them. Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Stumpf, the Director of Athletics, if you have any questions.

- In each program, the head coach and coaches are hired by the Athletic Director to be responsible for that program. A major part of that responsibility is team selection. The head coach establishes the criteria for selection with input from the assistants. This can be a highly subjective process. Team selection, practices and decisions regarding game situations are the responsibility of the coaching staff.
- The Voorhees High School athletic program is highly competitive. Parents need to understand that, when your child tries out for a team, there is a real possibility that they may not be selected if a squad reduction is necessary or that they may not be placed on the level where you or they think they should be. Coaches attempt to do the best they can in keeping the most talented athletes, filling positions for play and placing the athlete on the proper level and team. Our coaches are under a good deal of pressure to assemble the most competitive team possible. I believe that it is the coach's responsibility to select the team with whom they will work with for the entire season.
- The "select team" or "club team" syndrome. Each coach looks for something different in his or her players. Participation on a "select" or "club" team does not guarantee any players a spot on the high school team. While players can gain valuable experience playing outside the school athletic program, neither parents nor should students count on this type of participation to "guarantee" them a spot on a high school team.
- Playing time is something that is earned during practice. Coaches must have confidence that a player they put into a game can function at that level of competition. This means that a player must have demonstrated athletic competence, an understanding of the "game plan" and the required level of conditioning necessary to perform. It is the coaches right to make these decisions. The structure of our athletic program (Freshman, JV and Varsity) allows for the growth of the student and the opportunity to demonstrate they have earned the right to play. Starting positions are not guaranteed to seniors or anyone else. Each team member is valuable to the team's overall progress. Some members may play a great deal while others may not. Each athlete should have personal improvement as one of his or her goals.
- By being a member of a team, regardless of time spent in competition, a person can learn many valuable lessons. Among them are the following: citizenship, sportsmanship, appreciating good play by an opponent, working together for a common goal, responsibility, loyalty, placing the team above oneself, learning to accept instruction and criticism, respect for others, winning and losing with dignity, self-control and being responsible for one's own actions.

Sincerely,

Allan Stumpf
Director of Athletics

Handbook for Parents and Athletes

Voorhees High School supports the philosophy that a quality interscholastic athletic program is important to the positive social, physical, and educational development of its students. The interscholastic athletic program enhances and supports the academic mission of our school. We are committed to promoting the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play at all athletic contests. We support high standards of good citizenship, along with regard for the rights of others.

Being a member of the athletic program is a privilege to be earned and maintained throughout the season. Each time the student athlete steps into a school or an athletic contest they are expected to represent themselves, family, team and Voorhees High School in a responsible and sportsmanlike manner.

It is the responsibility of the Voorhees High School Athletic department to provide challenging opportunities for our student-athletes to compete successfully at the county, conference and state levels.

In addition to committing to this philosophy, we will also encourage and promote:

- a. The belief that athletes should participate in multiple sports.
 1. The concept of the broadest-based participation possible by offering as many teams that we can and extending the opportunity to participate to as many students as possible.
 2. The premise that all teams are considered vital for our student-athletes and each is a valued part of our athletic program.
 3. The approach that all teams are treated as fairly as possible.

As we know, being a parent is often challenging. This effort and responsibility is frequently complicated by being the parent of an athlete. This handbook, with its guidelines and suggestions, will give you some insights into this responsibility.

There are many relationships which are involved in being the parent of an athlete.

The Player-Coach Relationship:

Unfortunately, through the increase of sports being shown by the media, many adults feel that they understand or perhaps know more than many coaches. Everyone becomes an expert. This may heighten your appreciation of a sport, however, as a parent, you are not the coach.

The player-coach relationship is the most critical relationship in athletics. A parent can have a pronounced effect on this important and delicate relationship. You may not agree with all the decisions of a coach, how and when you express your feelings can have a decided effect on your child.

If you express a negative opinion in front of your child, you need to remember that he or she will return to practice the next day and may carry your opinions with him or her. Your son or daughter will then have to interact with this coach. You, as the parent, can greatly affect this relationship.

Receiving technical or strategic instruction at home may interfere and conflict with the instructional process at practice sessions and games. This may impede your child's progress and affect their playing time or whether they win a starting position.

The Parent-Coach Relationship:

In your role as a parent, you love and are concerned about your child's welfare. You want the best for him or her. But an athlete can have only one coach. Allowing the coach to instruct and guide the team is crucial in many respects.

Should you have any questions or concerns, do not approach the coach immediately at the conclusion of a contest. At this time, coaches have many responsibilities and it may be an emotional time. ***I will ask you to use the Twelve Hour Rule, call and make an appointment to talk with the coach for the next day and approach this meeting in a calm, courteous, and logical manner.***

One of the responsibilities which a coach has at the end of a contest is to have a brief meeting with the players. Athletes should not pause to talk to parents or friends immediately after games. These brief meetings are a major part of the learning process involved in athletics.

The Parent-Player Relationship:

Some parents try to live through their child's athletic efforts. Being positive and supportive is important, but adding pressure and unrealistic expectations can be extremely harmful. Allow your child to enjoy and grow from this valuable experience. Numerous national studies show that most athletes participate for fun and enjoyment. Excessive pressure or expectations can change the reason for playing.

When you speak with your child after a contest do not dwell on his or her play, how many points they scored or if they started. Instead, first ask them how the team did? Did you child play hard, give 100% and have a good experience?

Relationship with Officials:

There is an age-old comment made by irate fans, "How much are you paying the officials?" The home team does not get the officials. All officials are assigned by the league assignor for that sport and neither team has control of which officials are assigned.

Officials agree to follow a code of ethics. They really do not care or have a vested interest in which team wins a game, it is also important to understand that they are a very necessary part of a game and that a game can not be played without them.

While you may not agree with all of their calls (who does?), please do not harass and taunt them. It is also important to remember that they are in charge of the contest and have complete authority to have unruly spectators removed. In many sports, a team will see the same official several times during a season. Coaches, Athletic Directors and schools often work hard to establish a rapport and good working relationship which can easily be damaged by spectators.

Athletic Chain of Command:

At Voorhees High School, the following chain of command is in effect: Players and parents who have questions or comments should follow this order. Start first with: Coach, then Athletic Director, then Principal, and then Superintendent.

Sportsmanship:

Since athletics should be educational, it is important that all parents demonstrate good sportsmanship and serve as role models for our students and athletes. Sportsmanship is an overt display of respect for the rules of sport and for all others-players, coaches, officials, and fans (National Federation News, March, 1995, p.10). It also involves a commitment to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity. This means:

- a. There is to be no vulgar or inappropriate language from our fans or spectators.

1. Taunting or trash talking of our opponents and their cheerleaders can not be tolerated.
2. Spectators are not allowed on the court or field during a contest.
3. Fans should be supportive and positive. Cheering should be done for our team and not against our opponent.
4. It is a Skyland Conference and NJSIAA rule that noisemakers are not be used during interscholastic contests. There are team penalties for violating this rule.

Responsibilities of the Athlete:

Coaches expect an athlete to adhere to the following guidelines:

- a. The team's goals, welfare, and success must come before any individual.
 1. An athlete needs to consistently attend practice sessions. This includes weekend and holiday periods.
 2. Players must be receptive to coaching.
 3. Team members are responsible for all issued uniforms and equipment.
 4. As a member of a team, an athlete must agree to and follow the team rules. Athletes need to remember that they are ambassadors and represent not only themselves, but the coaching staff and Voorhees High School.
 5. If injured, an athlete must report all injuries to the coach and the athletic trainer. Any athlete who sees a doctor other than the school doctor must return with a note stating that that doctor has given permission for them to resume athletic participation.
 6. In order for an athlete to receive any awards for the season, they must finish the season.
 7. It is also important for the athlete and their family to remember as a senior a recognition night will be held for each sport during the school year. Please return all paperwork as soon as possible.
 8. An athlete is expected to be in school each day. If a student comes to school after 11:35 AM, they are ineligible for involvement in athletics that day. This may be waived with prior approval by the athletic department and/or coach for any of the reason listed in the school handbook for excused absences. Also, if an athlete is on In School Suspension or Out of School Suspension they are ineligible for athletic practice and competition that day.
 9. Athletes are expected to complete and return all physical forms, random drug testing forms and parent permission forms by the designated date. Failure to do so will result in not being able to begin practice on time.

Eligibility Requirements for Athletes:

Voorhees High School is a member of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association and the Skyland Conference. NJSIAA requirements state: An athlete becomes ineligible for high school athletics if he/she attains the age of nineteen prior to September 1. However, any athlete attaining age 19 on or after September 1 shall be eligible for the ensuing year.

As an incoming student from eighth grade there are no credit requirements for the Fall or Winter season; however, to be eligible for the Spring season all students must be passing 15.0 credits at the conclusion of the first semester (January 31).

Students in grades 10-12 must earn 30 credits the previous school year to be eligible for the Fall or Winter season.

Another requirement for athletic eligibility is that a current physical examination and parent permission form must be on file.

Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, the NJSIAA has adopted a Steroid Testing Policy, this policy provides for the random testing of student athletes in New Jersey for steroid use. All student athletes and

their parents and/or guardians will be required to sign a consent form for the testing program. Failure to sign this form will result in the student athlete being declared ineligible for interscholastic competitions by the NJSIAA.

Participation on an Athletic Team:

It is important to understand that participation on an athletic team at Voorhees High School is a privilege and not a right. Being on and maintaining one's membership on the team means accepting all the responsibilities of an athlete. However, unlike recreation or intramural teams, equal and guaranteed playing time does not exist. In an effort to win, a coach will use players best suited to the conditions or demands of the contest at that time.

Team Captains:

There may be several good reasons for having team captains. These athletes may serve as a positive role model, as a link between the team and the coaches, and should be leaders. A good captain can be a real asset to the team and the coaching staff.

While some coaches may allow their team to select captains, the ultimate responsibility lies with the coach. It is also important to understand that serving in the capacity of a captain is not reserved solely for the seniors on a team, but rather this position is for the athlete best suited to filling the responsibilities.

Hazing:

In athletic settings, some may view hazing as a harmless rite of initiation or an important activity for team bonding. However, it is actually a form of harassment. Therefore, hazing cannot and will not be tolerated or condoned in the athletic program at Voorhees High School. This includes on the fields or courts, in the locker room, on the bus, or at any other activity in which athletes represent Voorhees High School.

Practice Sessions and Games:

Practice sessions are normally closed to spectators. These sessions are equal to a teacher's classroom and there is quality instruction taking place. Interruptions and interference to an athlete's concentration and focus in practice can not be allowed any more than a disruption would be tolerated in an academic setting. Education in any setting can not be compromised.

At Voorhees High School, practice sessions:

- a. May last for up to 3 hours.
 1. May start and end at different times due to the scheduling of our facilities.
 2. Will not be held when school is dismissed due to inclement weather.
 3. Will not be held when school is not in session due to inclement weather, unless unusual circumstances exist.
 4. May be held on Saturdays and over holiday periods.

Spectators are encouraged at games. Positive support of our athletes can be very helpful to performance in athletic contests.

Risks of Athletic Participation:

In spite of protective equipment, and the supervision and sound instruction of our coaches, there are some risks associated when someone participates in athletics. Injuries in some of our activities can and do occur. In extremely rare cases, death could also result. All athletes and parents need to be aware and understand this possibility. At Voorhees High School, we will do all that we can to ensure a safe and healthy for our

athletes. We do have insurance protection for our athletes. This insurance is designed to be a back-up to the family's insurance. Families are encouraged to secure insurance protection for your family members who are athletes.

If a student without family insurance is injured, it is the responsibility of the student to report the injury to the athletic trainer who will fill out an insurance form which must be filled out in order to file claims through the insurance carrier of the athletic. If no form is on file, then no payment will be made by the carrier.

Sports Booster Clubs:

Sports booster clubs should exist to support teams and the entire athletic program. Booster clubs at Voorhees High School should have three primary goals: 1) to increase school spirit, 2) to encourage and promote good sportsmanship, and 3) to help raise funds to assist the athletic teams.

The Sports booster clubs are not a vehicle to hire or remove coaches, advance special interests or to alter Athletic Department policy. They are a service and support organization for the athletic program.

Travel Policy For Athletic Team Members:

The Voorhees High School policy on travel to athletic contests:

All team members must travel as a group to and from all athletic contests. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved in advance by the Athletic Director.

The following procedure must be used:

- a. A travel release form must be obtained, filled out by a parent and returned to the Athletic Office for approval. This must be done at least 24 hours prior to the contest.
 1. The travel release form should specifically explain the reason for not traveling with the team. The athlete can only travel with the parent or a responsible adult over the age of 21 years old.
 2. A daytime phone number of the parent must be on the form in case the Director of Athletics needs to contact the parent.
 3. No athlete will be released by a coach for travel without the travel release being signed by the Athletic Director.

Future Athletics in College:

If an athlete is planning on participating in college, he or she should notify their coach of that desire. Coaches can be a valuable resource in helping an athlete contact college coaches. The athlete should also stop by the Guidance Office for information about the NCAA Clearinghouse application which must be filled out for certain colleges in order to participate in college athletics. This should be done in September of their senior year. There is a fee involved, but without the finished form an athlete possibly could forfeit college eligibility.

Please call 908-638-6116 and ask for the Guidance Department for help.

Closing Comments:

Please feel free to contact me with comments about this handbook. It is an attempt to help parents and athletes become more aware of vital information that the Athletic Department feels is important for you to know. I can be reached at 908-638-2106 or astumpf@nhvweb.net. You can also find up to date information

about the Athletic Department on our website. Changes to our athletic schedule are updated weekly and can be found by using the Schedule Star website on the next page.

Hopefully, you will find this handbook useful, please take the time to read it and to share it with your son or daughter.

Have a great season!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Schedule Star Website: www.highschoolsports.net

See attached sheet for directions to link with Schedule Star.

Voorhees Athletic website: Go to nhvweb.net, click on Voorhees H.S. , click on Athletics. This will give you sports schedules and directions to opposing schools.

Important Phone Numbers:

Athletic Department –	908-638-2106
Voorhees High School -	908-638-2110
Athletic Secretary -	908-638-2107
Athletic Training Office-	908-638-2059
School Nurse-	908-638-6116