



2025-2026

Dear Parent / Guardian –

Welcome to another season of Dinwiddie Generals Athletics! This letter is attached to the DHS Athletic Handbook. The purpose of this handbook is to provide clear, concise expectations that the athletic department has for the student-athletes participating in our sports and activities. Please look over this handbook and refer any questions that you may have to your student-athletes coach. I, as Director of Student Activities, maintain an “open door” policy and would be glad to discuss any questions you may have regarding our expectations of our student-athletes. Please be sure to sign the bottom of this letter as your acknowledgment of receipt of the DHS Athletic Handbook.

I would like to wish each student-athlete the very best of luck this season. The DHS Coaching staff and I would also like to thank the parents/ guardians for their dedication and support of their student-athlete as they participate in athletics at Dinwiddie High School.

GO GENERALS!!

[Archie Tortorice](#)

Director of Student Activities
Dinwiddie High School

Acknowledgment of receipt of the DHS Athletic Handbook:

Team

Parent / Guardian Printed Name

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ATHLETIC / ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK



2025-2026

Rules and Regulations

1. **Alcohol / Tobacco / Drugs:** Any student-athlete using or possessing alcohol or tobacco or using, possessing, buying or selling illegal and controlled substances shall be denied the opportunity to participate in VHSL sponsored athletics / activities and extra-curricular activities based on the following (the offenses are cumulative over the course of student's time in DCPS):
 - a. **First Offense:** banned from participation for the remainder of season (if ongoing), next season (if in between seasons) or remainder of semester for non VHSL activities.
 - b. **Second Offense:** Banned from participation in any VHSL or any other extra-curricular activities for 365 days.
 - c. **Third Offense:** Banned from participation in any VHSL or any other extra-curricular activities permanently.
2. **In Season Participation:** A student-athlete may participate in only one sport per season (this may be appealed to the Athletic Director and coaches involved.) Students are bound by the Dinwiddie High School code of conduct (outlined in the agenda book yearly) while attending and participating in season athletic training sessions and games (home and away).
3. **Out of Season Participation:** Out of season conditioning, weight training and sport specific training IS NOT mandatory, nor will any out of season training be used as the basis for determining whether an athlete makes an athletic team. Any student in good academic and behavioral standing will be allowed to attend any out of season training session as long as that student has a current VHSL physical on file at DHS. Students are bound by the Dinwiddie High School code of conduct (outlined in the agenda book yearly) while attending and participating in out of season athletic training sessions.
4. **Fighting:** Fighting amongst teammates or opponents during the course of an out of season training session, in season practice or game, will bring an automatic suspension for the next scheduled practice or game. Additionally, student-athletes will be subject to punishments as outlined by the Virginia High School League. Student-athletes will also be subject to disciplinary action for fighting, depending on the severity of the incident, by the coach, athletic director or principal.
5. **School Equipment:** School equipment issued to athletes is their responsibility. Loss of any equipment will require the athlete to pay his or her financial obligation prior to being allowed to compete in any further extracurricular activities.
6. **Attendance:** Student-athletes are required to be in attendance for all 4 periods in order to practice or play that day, unless properly excused. (court notes, doctors note).
7. **Quitting:** A student-athlete that makes a team, accepts appointment to the team by attending practice following the try out procedure and subsequently quits the team, will not be eligible to participate in any other extracurricular activities until the team he or she quit from has completed the regular season of play (this does not include playoff competition).
8. **Travel:** All athletes must travel to and from all athletic contests in transportation provided by DCPS, unless arranged by the parent / guardian in writing with the coach of that sport.

9. **Unacceptable Conduct:** Any conduct that results in dishonor to the athlete, the team or the school, including any behavior that is in violation of the DHS Code of Conduct during school hours or while participating in school functions, while a member of a DHS sponsored team, will not be tolerated. Due to the serious nature of this rule, the coach, athletic director and principal will meet to determine the penalty according to degree of infraction. The penalty may range from temporary suspension from the team for which the athlete is participating to permanent denial of participation in DHS sponsored extracurricular sports and activities.
10. **In School or Out of School Suspension:** Student-athletes may not attend any extracurricular sports or activities while serving in school or out of school suspension. Absences for this reason are unexcused in nature. (This includes in season and out of season sessions)

Team Selection / Contest Participation:

Coaches are solely responsible for the selection process in determining team make up. Participation in contests is also the responsibility of the coaches. Any questions regarding team make up or contest participation should be discussed with the coach in a scheduled meeting. Inquiries or questions should be discussed with the Athletic Director and then the principal only after the coach has been contacted and a meeting with the coach has taken place.

Requirements for an Athlete to be Eligible to Compete:

1. Student-Athletes must be enrolled in at least 3 credit based classes and must have passed at least 3 credit based classes the semester directly preceding the season in which he or she wishes to compete.
2. Age Rule: The student-athlete shall not have reached the age of 19 on or before the first day of August of the school year in which he or she wishes to compete.
3. The student-athlete must be defined as “eligible to compete at Dinwiddie High School” by the Virginia High School League’s Master Eligibility process.
4. Student-Athletes must have a VHSL physical form on file with the DHS Athletic department prior to the first day of try outs.
5. Student-Athletes must have a signed Handbook Agreement on file with the head coach within 1 week of making the team.

Sportsmanship:

1. Be courteous of all (participants, coaches, officials, staff and fans)
2. Know the rules, abide by and respect the officials’ decisions.
3. Win with character and lose with dignity.
4. Display appreciation for good performances regardless of the team
5. Exercise self control and reflect positively upon yourself, your team and your school.
6. Permit only positive sportsmanlike behavior to reflect on your school or its program.

PARENT / ATHLETE / COACH COMMUNICATION GUIDE

Parent Expectations:

IT IS REASONABLE FOR THE ATHLETE'S PARENT TO EXPECT TO BE INFORMED:

1. When and where practices and contest are held.
2. About the coaches' philosophy on coaching
3. About the expectations the coach has for the team as a whole and their student / athlete specifically
4. What is required to be part of the team, i.e. fees, special equipment, off season conditioning, lettering requirements, etc.
5. When their child is injured during practice or a contest.
6. When disciplinary action results in their child being denied participation in practice or contests.
7. About the DHS Athletics website: centraldistrictva.org

Our Expectations for Parents:

IT IS **APPROPRIATE** TO DISCUSS:

1. Any unhealthy mental or physical strain detected in a child at home (especially when it affects academic performance)
2. How parents can contribute to their child's skill improvement and development
3. Any dramatic changes that are detected in the student / athlete's behavior

IT IS **INAPPROPRIATE** TO DISCUSS:

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy or play calling
3. Other student athletes

STEPS TO FOLLOW IF PARENTS HAVE A CONCERN TO ADDRESS WITH THE COACH:

1. Make an appointment with the coach. Never approach the coach after a game unless the coach requests this.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the Director of Student Activities to set up a meeting with the coach.
3. Please do not attempt to approach a coach before, during, or following a contest or practice. These can be busy and emotional times for both the parent and the coach and this period does not promote objective analysis of the situation.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IF A MEETING WITH A COACH DOES NOT RESULT IN A RESOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM:

1. Call and set up an appointment with the Director of Student Activities to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT PLAN

The administration and coaching staff of Dinwiddie High School are committed to the safety and health of all student athletes. To ensure the best possible care of athletes who have sustained concussions/traumatic brain injuries, Dinwiddie High School has implemented this Concussion Management Policy.

Concussion is defined as an injury to the brain, which affects normal brain function, and is caused by a direct blow by an object or person, an indirect blow to the body causing a jarring of the head, or a fall to the ground or against an object or person. A concussion is a brain injury! Concussion is also called traumatic brain injury (TBI), mild traumatic brain injury (TBI), or 'head injury'. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'concussion' will be used.

- Coaches will be trained yearly through the Center for Disease Control's Head Up Concussion in Youth Sports Fact Sheet on concussions.
- All high impact sport athletes and athletes with previous concussions will take a preseason baseline test on the computer called ImPACT.
 - ImPACT, Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing, is a non-invasive, computer based program. It is a tool to be used to help determine an athlete's recovery and ability to return to activity. Other tools used is SCAT5 (Sport Concussion Assessment Tool)
 - Testing will be done every two years, or as needed post-concussion injury.
- All low to medium impact sport athletes will take a baseline SCAT5 test. SCAT5 is a standardized tool for evaluating concussions designed for use by physicians, and licensed health care professionals.
- Any athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion will be removed from practice/game/event. He/She will not be allowed to return to activity the same day in accordance with the NFHS and the Virginia Board of Education guidelines
- The athlete will then be referred to one of the physicians noted below for further evaluation. The athletic trainer will assist the parent(s) in scheduling
- A post injury test ImPACT/SCAT5 test will be administered once symptom free for 24 hours. Subsequent testing will be administered as needed until athlete has been deemed recovered. Final return to activity decisions will be made by physician and athletic trainer.
- Athletes' parents may seek treatment from their Primary Care Provider. However, ultimate resolutions and return to activity decisions will be made by the Athletic Trainer with consult from one of the team physicians. **Please note, walk in clinics (such as BetterMed, Patient First, etc.,) and Chiropractors cannot be accepted.**
- The parents will be required to obtain notes from their primary care provider that includes any restrictions or clearances
- The Athletic Trainer will notify Dinwiddie High School (and Middle School Nurse if applicable) of concussion injury, or suspected concussion injury. This will allow the school nurse to request reasonable return to learn academic accommodations, as well as in school care.
- Once an athlete has been cleared by team physician/primary care physician, and athletic trainer, the athlete will begin a 5 step return to activity protocol specific to each sport, administered by the athletic trainer. There will be a mandatory 24 hours rest between each step. If at any time the athlete experiences signs and symptoms consistent with concussion, the parent(s) will be notified, and the 5 step protocol will start over once the athlete is symptom free for 24 hours.

REMEMBER THIS RULE OF THUMB: "WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT"

CONSENT FOR POST CONCUSSION COGNITIVE TESTING AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

(To be returned to the Athletic Trainer)

I give my permission for (name of child) _____, born (date of birth) _____, to have ImPACT/SCAT5 test administered at Dinwiddie High School. I understand that my child may need to be tested more than once, depending upon the results of the test, as compared to my child's baseline test, which is on file at Dinwiddie High School. I understand that there is no charge for the testing.

Dinwiddie High School may release the ImPACT/SCAT5 test results to my child's primary care physician, neurologist, and other appropriate treating physician.

I understand that general information about the test data may be provided to my child's guidance counselor, nurse, and teachers for the purpose of providing temporary academic modifications, if necessary.

Signature of parent/guardian _____

Printed name of parent/guardian _____

Contact

Home _____

Work _____

Mobile _____

Student's Home Address _____

Parent Email _____

Date _____

Student Email _____

Student Phone Number _____

PLEASE PRINT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Physician/Licensed Healthcare Professional _____

Practice/Group Name _____

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) Information

What is sudden cardiac arrest?

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is when the heart stops beating, suddenly and unexpectedly. When this happens, blood stops flowing to the brain and other vital organs. SCA does not just happen to adults; it takes the lives of students, too. However, the causes of sudden cardiac arrest in students and adults can be different. A student's SCA will likely result from an inherited condition, while an adult's SCA may be caused by either inherited or lifestyle issues.

SCA is NOT a heart attack. A heart attack may cause SCA, but they are not the same. A heart attack is caused by a blockage that stops the flow of blood to the heart. SCA is a malfunction in the heart's electrical system, causing the heart to suddenly stop beating.

Causes: SCA is caused by several structural and electrical diseases of the heart. These conditions predispose an individual to have an abnormal rhythm that can be fatal if not treated within a few minutes. Most conditions responsible for SCA in children are inherited. Other possible causes of SCA are a sudden blunt non-penetrating blow to the chest and the use/abuse of recreational or performance-enhancing drugs and/or energy drinks.

How common is sudden cardiac arrest in the United States?

SCA is the #1 cause of death for adults in this country. There are about 300,000 cardiac arrests outside of hospitals each year. About 2,000 patients under 25 die of SCA each year. It is the #1 cause of death for student athletes.

Warning Signs of SCA

- Fainting or seizures during exercise
- Unexplained shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Extreme Fatigue
- Chest Pains
- Racing Heart
- SCA should be suspected in any athlete who has collapsed and is unresponsive

Emergency Response to SCA

- Act immediately; time is most critical to increase survival rates
- Recognize SCA
- Call 911 immediately and activate EMS
- Administer CPR
- Use Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

Warning signs of potential heart issues:

The following need to be further evaluated by your primary care provider:

- Family history of heart disease/cardiac arrest
- Fainting, a seizure, or convulsions during physical activity
- Fainting or a seizure from emotional excitement, emotional distress, or being startled
- Dizziness or lightheadedness, especially during exertion
- Exercise-induced chest pains
- Palpitations: awareness of the heart beating, especially if associated with other symptoms such as dizziness
- Extreme tiredness or shortness of breath associated with exercise
- History of high blood pressure

Risk of Inaction:

Ignoring such symptoms and continuing to play/practice could be catastrophic and can result in sudden cardiac death. Taking these warning symptoms seriously and seeking timely appropriate medical care can prevent serious and possibly fatal consequences. These symptoms can be unclear in athletes, since people often confuse these warning signs with physical exhaustion. SCA can be prevented if the underlying causes can be diagnosed and treated.

What are the risks of practicing or playing after experiencing these symptoms?

There are risks associated with continuing to practice or play after experiencing these symptoms. When the heart stops, so does the blood that flows to the brain and other vital organs. Death or permanent brain damage can occur in just a few minutes. Most people who experience SCA die from it.

Removal from play/return to play

Any student athlete who shows signs or symptoms of SCA before, during or after activity must be removed from play/practice. **Play includes all athletic activity.** Before returning to play, the athlete must be evaluated by a licensed physician, certified registered nurse practitioner or cardiologist (heart doctor). Clearance for the student-athlete to return to play must be provided in writing.

How can we minimize the risk of SCA and improve outcomes?

The risk of SCA in student athletes can be minimized by providing appropriate prevention, recognition, and treatment strategies. One important strategy is the requirement for a yearly pre-participation screening evaluation, often called a sports physical, and performed by the athlete's medical provider.

1. It is very important that you **carefully and accurately complete the personal history and health questions about your family** section of the current "VHSL Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Examination Form" Click link for form: [VHSL Physical Form](#)
2. Since the majority of these conditions are inherited, **has anyone in your family**, especially any close family members:
 - a. Had a suddenly unexplained an unexpected death before the age of 50.
 - b. Been diagnosed with any of the heart conditions listed above.
 - c. Died suddenly/unexpectedly during physical activity , during a seizure, from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) or from drowning.

Information used in this document was obtained from the American Heart Association (www.heart.org), Parent Heart Watch (www.parentheartwatch.org), and the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation (www.sca-aware.org). Visit these sites for more information.

**Sudden Cardiac Arrest
Athlete Acknowledgement**

(Complete and turn into coach before tryouts)

The Code of Virginia § 22.1-271.8 requires that in order to participate in any extracurricular physical activity, each student-athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall review, on an annual basis, information provided by the local school division on symptoms that may lead to sudden cardiac arrest. After reviewing the materials, each student athlete and the student-athlete's parent or guardian shall sign a statement acknowledging receipt of such information, in a manner approved by the Board of Education.

The Code of Virginia § 22.1-271.8 requires that a student-athlete who is experiencing symptoms that may lead to sudden cardiac arrest be immediately removed from play. A student-athlete who is removed from play shall not return to play until he is evaluated by and receives written clearance to return to physical activity by an appropriate licensed health care provider as determined by the Board of Education. The licensed health care provider evaluating student-athletes may be a volunteer.

I have received and read the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Student Sudden Cardiac Arrest Information and Guidelines. I acknowledge that I have reviewed the risk factors and warning signs of cardiac arrest.

_____ Student Athlete Printed Name	_____ Athlete Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Parent/Guardian Printed Name	_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	_____ Date
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