

VAN VLECK
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT ATHLETIC
DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK

FOREWORD

This Athletic Handbook was prepared and updated to better familiarize coaches, athletes, and administrators with the policies, procedures, and operations of the Van Vleck Independent School District's competitive athletic program. It sets forth in definite terms the procedures and guidelines which we will follow at Van Vleck. It is an effective orientation manual for all new as well as experienced staff members. It can act as a communication instrument not only for staff members, but also for students and patrons. Please refer to this when you have questions about relative policies or procedures of departmental operations.

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VAN VLECK I.S.D. ATHLETES

- A. Use of profanity – we will not allow it.
- B. Stealing – taking things that do not belong to you, especially from teammates, will not be tolerated. An athlete caught stealing will be dismissed from the athletic program. Stealing could also be interpreted to involve school equipment NOT turned in after the season is completed.
- C. Individual conduct – do everything you can to add class to our program. As an individual, don't do anything detrimental that would take away from the program. Van Vleck Athletes should be noted for their clean, tough, and competitive play. Praise your opponents and play beyond your ability. You will be expected to conduct yourself as a lady/gentleman at all times. We know that each of you do not have the same ability, but we expect you to perform to the best of your ability. Failure to adhere to the above conduct standards will result in a coach/athlete conference with possible disciplinary actions.
- D. Respect for Coaches – Coaches should receive “yes sir”, “yes ma’am” and “no sir”, “no m’aam” responses from players. Players in return will be treated with respect by the coaches. Whenever a coach is speaking with you, either individually or as a group, you should give them your undivided attention.
- E. No athlete at any time should have in their possession, use, or intend to use alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal drug. Violating the illegal substance code will result in disciplinary action. Continued violations will result in suspension from athletic contests and/or program.
- F. A Van Vleck Athlete will show respect to all teachers, administrators, and other adults with whom they come into contact.
- G. Male athletes will not be allowed to wear earrings in the field house, gym, or during any athletic contest, off-season or any time they are representing V.V. I.S.D as an athlete. The athletic department will confiscate earrings.

- H. A Van Vleck Athlete will be on time for all classes, practices, trips, and any other scheduled event unless he/she has notified the teacher or coach in advance.
- I. Every athlete at V.V.H.S. or V.V.M.S. will participate in his or her classes and do his or her best in the classroom.
- J. A Van Vleck Athlete will remember at all times when he or she is on an athletic trip that he or she is representing the school and community from the time the bus is boarded until he or she returns home.
- K. A Van Vleck Athlete must remember that he or she is recognized first as a Van Vleck athlete. With this in mind, one must think before one act, and decide if his or her actions will hurt the character of this school and its athletic program.
- L. An athlete's school is one of the most important factors in his or her maturing process. High school days will always be remembered, so one must remain loyal to his/her school and its spirit.
- M. Good sportsmanship is a must in being a true Van Vleck athlete. An athlete never loses his or her poise causing anger to be shown at his/her opponent during competition. It is natural to become angry at times during a contest or game, but a real champion can control his/her feelings and come back stronger instead of "flying off the handle," causing his or her team to be penalized. An athlete will accept the decisions of the officials and show respect for their authority. An athlete will never put on a show in front of the fans whenever he/she disagrees with an official.
- N. Athletics is participation in competitive sports. Athletes must participate at a high intensity level and will be pushed by their coaches and peers to a level higher than thought possible. Athletes will be expected to participate in every workout and/or contest unless they are excused by the athletic trainer and/or head coach due to injury or illness. Continuously not participating could result in dismissal from the athletic program and/or failure of the course.

- O. Tutorials may be required for athletes who are in danger of failing an academic class. If tutorials are required, the athlete is expected to attend or face disciplinary action.

- P. All athletes are expected to conform to all U.I.L. rules and Van Vleck I.S.D. Student Handbook rules and regulations. Athletes who do not follow the athletic code may be removed from the athletic program. The removal of an athlete will be the decision of the head coach and athletic director. There will be a conference between the head coach, athletic director, the athlete, and the athlete's parents before an athlete is removed from the program.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT ATHLETES

I. Participation In Various Sports

- A. All boys and girls are to be encouraged to participate in as many sports as their interests and abilities allow. An athlete will be granted a “trial period” of 5 calendar days to drop a sport without penalty. If an athlete wants to drop a sport, they should first be directed to the Head Coach of the sport. At that time the coach will discuss the matter with the athlete. However the Head Coach of that sport may deny the athlete’s participation in that sport in the future. An athlete dropping/dismissal of a sport after 5 calendar days will not be allowed to participate (practice or contest) in another sport while the sport they are dropping is still in season unless otherwise granted permission from athletic director.
- B. No coach should ever attempt to influence an athlete to give up participation in one sport in order to devote more time and greater concentration to another, unless advised by the athletic director.
- C. Athletes must show academic success by maintaining eligibility. An athlete failing 3 consecutive six weeks will be removed from the athletic program. The athlete may apply for reinstatement after the next six week grading period if the athlete has passing grades in all course.
- D. Athletes are expected to be enrolled in athletics year round to allow for physical development and team building. Students aren’t allowed to “get in and get out” of athletics to avoid off season workouts. For example, a baseball player must be in athletics in the fall and a football player must be enrolled in athletics in the spring.
- E. Sports requiring team or individual workouts during the athletic period of the school day require athletic period enrollment. These sports include football, volleyball, basketball, track and field, baseball, and softball.

F. The sports of cross country, golf, tennis, and power lifting do not require athletic period enrollment because all practices and workouts will be conducted outside of school time. Individuals wishing to participate in these sports must be approved by the athletic director and must adhere to all policies in this handbook as well as those of that sport's coach.

II. Student Athlete Travel To And From Contests

- A. All athletes are required by policy to travel to the destination of all athletic contests with the coach or sponsor by transportation means furnished by the school district.
- B. All varsity team sport members are required to return home from contests with the team. *Note exception: Special circumstances such as a family emergency, injury, or illness may require exceptions to this rule but must be approved by head coach of that sport.
- C. Sub-Varsity (JV, 9th, 8th, 7th) participants may be granted permission to return home after a contest with their parent or guardian. **THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN MUST PERSONALLY CONTACT THE COACH AND ASK PERMISSION TO TRANSPORT THEIR CHILD AT THE SITE OF THE CONTEST AT ITS CONCLUSION.** No person other than parents or guardians can be granted this permission. *Note Exception: An athlete may be transported by another adult with written approval from parent of athlete to be transported.

III. Athletic Dress

- A. No athlete will be allowed to wear issued athletic clothing to school. This right and privilege should be reserved to practice and game participation.
- B. Student/Athletes can wear issued athletic clothing if they are going to leave directly from school to participate in a contest. **AT NO OTHER TIMES WILL THIS BE PERMITTED.**
- C. All athletes must wear issued uniforms to all contests. Every athlete must wear their uniform in the same manner. No one will be allowed to be different.
- D. Personal clothing worn to contests by athletes should not include tank tops, t-shirts with alcohol, drugs, etc., on them. Slacks, jeans,

or dress skirts are preferred. Girls may wear dress shorts if approved by the Head Coach of their sport and the Athletic Director.

- E. All Athletic Equipment will be clearly marked for identification purposes when issued to an athlete. Each article issued to an athlete is the property of the Van Vleck Athletic Department and is on loan to the athlete. The Head Coach of each sport will maintain in written form an equipment issuance checklist showing every item issued, the replacement cost, and its identification number. All issued equipment **MUST** be returned at the request of the Head Coach or Athletic Director regardless of the items condition.

IV. Discipline of Student Athletes

- A. Discipline in athletics may be in addition to any discipline already administered in the classroom or by principal. The discipline of student athletes will be administered by the coach immediately responsible for the athlete.
 - 1. Common discipline procedures for all sports (all of the following discipline steps will vary from sport to sport, but should resemble the discipline set in this handbook. Discipline may be more or less severe if the circumstances are unique.)
 - a. Missing an assigned tutorial, or serving detention. One egg or equivalent (an egg is a 210 yard bear crawl on hands and feet or Halo)
 - b. ISS. One egg for two consecutive days.
 - c. Other infractions such as; cussing, disrespect, misbehavior in the classroom, etc. will be dealt with by the policy set by each sport and approved by the athletic director.

- B. Discipline will be consistent and fair, and will meet the violation. There will be standard discipline procedures for some behavioral problems. Other infractions that are not listed are the responsibility of the head coach of each sport. Discipline procedures will be similar among all sports and each sport's guidelines will be approved by the Athletic Director.
- C. No student athlete should ever be punished for attending another school activity in which they are team or squad member. However, there may be make-up activities required for the athlete to learn any skills or to make-up conditioning they may have missed while absent.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

Parent/Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication You Should Expect From Your Child's Coach

1. Philosophy of the coach.
2. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad.
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
4. Team requirements, i.e. rules, paperwork, equipment, off-season conditioning.
5. The procedure followed should your child be injured during participation.
6. Discipline resulting in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication Coaches Expect From Parents

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
2. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations.

As your children become more involved in the programs in VVUSD, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments in their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way you or your child wishes. At these times discussion with the coach is encouraged.

Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.
4. Concerns about the coach's behavior

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those in the following sections, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues Not Appropriate To Discuss With Coaches

1. Playing Time.
2. Team Strategy.
3. Play calling.
4. Other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the others position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote resolution to the issue of concern.

The Procedure You Should Follow If You Have A Concern To Discuss With A Coach

1. Call to set up an appointment.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, call the athletic director. He will set up the meeting for you.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.

THE NEXT STEP

What can a parent do if the meeting with the Coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call and set up an appointment with the athletic director to discuss the situation.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

Since research indicates a student involved in co-curricular activities has a greater chance for success during adulthood since these programs have been established. Many of the character traits required to be a successful participant are exactly those that will promote as successful life after Middle/High School. We hope the information provides within this letter makes both your child's and your experience with the VVISED Athletic Program less stressful and more enjoyable.

COMMANDMENTS

1. Make sure your children know that win or lose, scared, or heroic, you love them, appreciate their efforts, and are not disappointed with them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
2. Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic capability, competitive attitude, sportsmanship and actual skill level.
3. Be helpful but do not coach them on the way to the game or on the way back, or at breakfast, and so on. It is tough not to, but it is a lot tougher for the child to be inundated with advice, pep talks, and often critical instruction.
4. Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be 'out there trying,' to be working to improve their skills and attitudes. Help them to develop the feel for competing, for trying hard, and having fun.
5. Try not to relive your athletic life through your children in a way that creates pressure; you fumbled too, you lost as well as won. You were frightened, you backed off at times, you were not the hero. Do not pressure them because of your lost pride.
6. Do not compare the skill, courage, or attitudes of your child with other members of the team, at least within his/her hearing.
7. Get to know the coach so you can be assured that the philosophy; attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his leadership.
8. Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before overreacting.
9. Make a point of understanding courage, and the fact that it is relative. Some of us can climb mountains, and some of us are afraid to fight. Some of us will fight, but turn to jelly if a bee approaches. Everyone is frightened in certain areas. Explain that courage is not the absence of fear, but a means of doing something in spite of fear or discomfort. The job of the parent of an athlete is a tough one, and it takes a lot of effort to do it well. It is worth all the effort when you hear your youngster say, "My parents really helped, I was lucky in this."

FAIR PLAY AMONG THE SPECTATORS

- Remember that you are at a contest to support and yell for your team and to enjoy the skill and competition, but you are not to intimidate or ridicule the other team and its fans.
- Remember that high school and middle school athletes are students and that they sometimes make mistakes. Praise student athletes for their attempts to improve, just as you would praise students working in the classroom.
- Remember that holding a ticket to a school athletic event is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to assault others verbally or to be otherwise obnoxious.
- Learn the rules of the game to understand and appreciate certain situations that take place during a contest.
- Show respect for opposing players, coaches, spectators, and support groups. Treat them as you would treat a guest in your home.
- Never taunt or insult opponents during the game. Avoid comments of an ethnic, racial, or sexual nature.
- Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. They do their best to promote student-athletes, so admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public!
- Show appreciation for an outstanding play by either team.
- Refrain from using alcohol or drugs before, during and after games on or near the site of the event (i.e.; no tailgating).
- Cheer only in a way that supports and uplifts the teams involved.
- Compliment school and league administrators for their efforts to support educational athletics and fair play.
- Be a positive model through your own actions and censure poor behavior in other spectators.

ATHLETIC STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

BE PROFESSIONAL – In attitude, responses, work, and appearance.

Be the kind of person for whom you would want your son or daughter to play... Watch your language and your actions!

Enthusiasm is contagious! Show it on the practice field, in the dressing room, at pep rallies, in the hallways, in the classroom – everywhere.

Be cooperative with and considerate of the administration.

Be on time.

Be consistent with discipline in the classroom and all sports.

Appropriate coaching attire will be worn.

There will be no misuse of equipment.

Never discipline an athlete without making a point to talk with him or her again after practice. Do not let hard feelings leave the field.

No athlete is to be dismissed from athletics until twenty-four hours has lapsed from the time of the offense. This time period will include a discussion with the head coach and athletic director.

All administration and school board policies will be followed at all times.

All U.I.L. rules will be followed in every sport.

The head coach of each sport will be responsible for the issue and care of the equipment in his/her sport as department regulations state. Each coach will take inventory before and after the season. Inventory will then be submitted to the athletic director.

All coaches will enforce our athletic code. We will be just as successful as our implementation of the code in our total athletic program.

Teaching and coaching responsibilities at V.V.H.S. must take priority over all other commitments or sources of employment.

AT ALL TIMES – BE FAIR AND HONEST!

U.1.L. requires athletes to have the following documents on file with their school district each year.

- 1) UIL Parent and Student Agreement/Acknowledgement Form not to use Steroids**
- 2) UIL Acknowledgment of Rules Form**
- 3) Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Form**
- 4) Concussion Acknowledgement Form**
- 5) Extracurricular Acknowledgment Form**
- 6) Drug Testing Acknowledgment Form**