

Valparaiso Men's Swimming and Diving Policies and Procedures



1. Priorities while a part of the swimming and diving team, in order of importance:
 1. Academics
 2. Athletics
 3. Social

Please ALWAYS keep these in mind!

2. Attendance Rules

Attendance at every practice is mandatory and punctuality is of utmost importance. All absences will be recorded as either excused or unexcused following the school rules as set forth in the student handbook. A note from a parent, guardian, doctor or teacher must be submitted. Please refer to the addendum below for a review of what constitutes an excused absence. If you have a question about the category of an absence, please contact a coach before the absence or the ruling of the coach will be final.

All swimmers are expected to arrive to practice and be on deck and ready to start at the scheduled time. If an athlete must stay after school or is late for any reason, a note must be provided.

The 85% Rule

All athletes participating in championship level swimming meets at the end of the season will be in attendance at least 85% of all scheduled workouts. Championship level meets include JV DAC, DAC Championships, IHSAA Sectional Championship, and IHSAA State Championship. If an athlete misses more than 15% of the total workouts for ANY reason (excused or unexcused) they will be ineligible for their championship meet. An athlete will be informed when their attendance becomes enough of an issue to possibly warrant this rule.

Unexcused Absence

This rule ONLY pertains to unexcused absences during the season. If a student misses practice with an unexcused absence the following penalties will be incurred:

1. The first absence will result in removal of the athlete from the next scheduled swim meet.
2. The second absence will result in removal of the athlete from the next two scheduled swim meets.
3. The third absence will result in removal from the team.

3. Lettering Policy

A swimmer will be awarded a Varsity letter following a season if they achieve any one of the following:

- The swimmer achieves a time standard of 3 varsity times in 3 different events
- The swimmer achieves a time standard of 1 lettering time in at least 1 event
- The swimmer places in the top 16 swimmers or achieves a time that would place them in the top 16 swimmers at either the DAC or Sectional championship meet.
- A swimmer participates in swimming for at least four years and has been unable to achieve the above standards.

4. All athletes are expected to travel to and from all meets with transportation provided by Valparaiso Community Schools. In the event of an extraordinary situation and an athlete must travel home with a parent or guardian a travel waiver must be on file with the athletic department at least 24 hours to the departure of the meet. Athletes will only be allowed to travel with their own parent or legal guardian.
5. All athletes are responsible to know what actions could be in violation of the athletic code as attached in the addendum. Any activity that would be considered criminal or illegal that the athlete is proven to participate in will result in a loss of 50% of the competitions during the season. The most common of these infractions involve the consumption of drugs or alcohol (vaping counts as an infraction). The best way to avoid the possibility of an infraction is for an athlete to remove themselves from any situation that could be considered criminal or illegal.
6. Participation in any other IHSAA sport or intramural competition during the high school season is prohibited.
7. Please take care of all your necessities (including using the restroom) before practice begins to avoid disruptions to the training program. If this becomes an issue, practice will stop and wait for those that cannot follow this. Everyone will be expected to finish all of practice.
8. The line-up for all swim meets will reflect what is best for the entire team. The final line-up for any one meet is not up for discussion, but the coaching staff is happy to explain why a swimmer is placed where they are.
9. During the season you are a member of a team. You have a responsibility to your team members to avoid all activities that pose a risk to your physical health.
10. When traveling to a meet a swimmer must follow team dress code in order to be eligible to participate.
11. All swimmers are financially responsible for any equipment issued to them by either the Valparaiso Aquatics Center or Valparaiso High School Athletics. For example, if a student is issued a kickboard and they intentionally break that kickboard they will be responsible for the replacement of that kickboard.
12. Remember that you represent Valparaiso Swimming and Diving in all that you do both in school and out in the community, perception is reality.

VHS Student Handbook

Policies and Procedures

EXCUSED ABSENCES

NOTE: Excused absences are defined as absences that the school regards as legitimate reasons for being out of school but are NOT exempt the State.

- A. Personal illness or injury requiring absence. It should be noted that most medical offices provide forms to be completed by the nurse or office staff. **We require that whenever a student visits a doctor's office, due to illness or injury, that he/she return to school with a note from that office stating the days the student will be/was absent from school.** This could help avoid absence problems later if a student starts to accumulate too many absences. After five (5) consecutive absences, school officials may require a doctor's note. **If the student absences, due to illness, become excessive, we will require doctor's notes for any subsequent absences, due to illness.**
- B. Regularly scheduled medical and dental appointments should be scheduled during non-school hours whenever possible. If an appointment is scheduled during school hours, a student is expected to attend school except for the time of the appointment and return to school with a medical excuse from the doctor's/dentist's office.
- C. Death in the immediate family.
- D. Attendance at a funeral of someone outside of the immediate family, if the parent deems it necessary (A student is expected to attend school except for the time of the funeral.)
- E. Religious holidays.
- F. College and Career Days. (Juniors and seniors only)
- G. Driver's examination. (A student is expected to attend school except for the time of the examination.)
- H. Military examinations (Arrangements must be made in advance and must be verified.)
- I. Other emergencies and unusual circumstances as approved by the administration prior to the absence.

ATHLETICS

ELIGIBILITY RULE

The IHSAA has established the following rules for eligibility for both girls and boys. If there is a question concerning eligibility to participate in athletics, the student should contact the director of athletics or principal.

Age - A student who is or shall be 20 years of age prior to or on the scheduled date of the IHSAA State Finals in a sport shall be ineligible for interschool athletic competition in that sport; a student who is 19 years of age on the scheduled date of the IHSAA State Finals in a sport shall be eligible as to age for interschool athletic competition in that sport.

Transfer - Students who have transferred from another school shall not be certified or permitted to participate in interschool athletics until the principal or director of athletics has on file a signed and completed IHSAA Athletic Transfer Report approving said transfer by receiving/sending school principals and the Commissioner

Grades - To be eligible for participation, a student must be passing five (5) solid subjects from the previous grading period. The semester grades shall take precedence over nine week grades at the end of a semester. VHS is on a nine-week grading period. Grades must be checked by the head coach of his/her sport.

Amateur Standing - Students will lose their amateur standing and their eligibility for interscholastic sports if they accept gifts or prizes for participation on a team or in a tourney other than with a school team. If there is a question, the athlete should consult with the athletic director or coach.

Parent's and Physician's Consent Form/Emergency Medical Treatment Waiver - Before students may practice with an athletic team, they must have on file in the principal's office the IHSAA physical examination and emergency medical treatment forms. These forms must be properly signed by parent or guardian giving permission to participate. Forms also need to be signed by a licensed medical physician indicating that the athlete is physically able to participate. This form must be completed for both boys and girls and must be renewed each year. No physicals will be accepted that are dated on or before May 1 for the following school year.

Practice Rules - A student must practice the minimum required number of days prior to participation in an interscholastic athletic event as listed in the IHSAA by-laws. The number of required practices is ten (10) for all sports except girl's golf, which is five (5). Practices must be under the direct supervision of a coach.

Absence Due to Illness - A member of any squad who is unable to practice for five (5) consecutive days due to illness or an injury must present to the principal a statement from his/her physician that he/she is physically able to resume practice.

PARTICIPATION ON OUTSIDE TEAMS

1. An outstanding student athlete may participate as an individual during the authorized contest season of a sport without loss of interschool eligibility provided the following criteria are met.
 - a. The student must complete and forward application form to Commissioner 30 days prior to the event.
 - b. Receive approval of parent, coach, principal and Commissioner.
 - c. Receive certification by State, National or International non-school organization chairperson including: (1) evidence of student's qualifications; and, (2) agreement to notify student's principal of advancement to the next higher level of competition.
 - d. Make prior arrangements to complete academic lessons, assignments, tests, etc.
 - e. Ensure that he/she does not miss an Association (IHSAA) sponsored tournament series contest for which he/she is eligible. It is the philosophy of this association that students owe loyalty to their school and team.
 - f. Pledge to not accept, directly or indirectly, any awards, gifts, trips, merchandise, etc. which would violate IHSAA Rule 5 (Amateurism) or Rule 6 (Awards, Prizes, Gifts).
2. A 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade student may NOT participate in an inter-school contest in Indiana with or against a student enrolled in a grade lower than the 9th.
3. Participation of students in an organized athletic contest with or against players not belonging to their school constitutes a game. An organized "scrimmage"

or practice by students with or against teams or players not belonging to their school is considered a game.

4. Students who participate in any interschool contest when ineligible other than in scholarship, too many quarters, too many events and similar oversights, become ineligible only in that sport for the remainder of that sport season. When facts are purposely withheld or misrepresented, students become ineligible in all sports for the remainder of that semester and all of their next semester in school.

NOTE: Such action shall always be subject to review by the Commissioner and Committee.

5. Team practices out-of-state, other than pre-game practices, shall not be permitted.

CITIZENSHIP

Good daily citizenship and behavior of a lady or gentleman will do much to prove that the athlete is worthy to wear the green and white of a Valparaiso Viking. Good citizenship is expected at all times. Athletes owe this to the team, to themselves and to the school they represent.

PRACTICE POLICY

Athletic teams and individuals may practice Monday through Friday. Coaches may hold Saturday practices when necessary. Coaches are discouraged from holding practices on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Good Friday. Teams may not practice on Sunday. When there are two (2) daily practices before the start of school or when school is not in session, each practice should not last more than two (2) hours.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

1. There should be definite starting and ending times.
2. Everyone's attendance is required at each practice unless excused by a physician or coach.
3. There should be a practice plan to follow.
4. Team members and families should know well in advance changes in normal practice schedules.

REGULATIONS AND TRAINING RULES - ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

The interscholastic athletic program of VHS is an integral part of the school system. As such, the responsibility of administration lies with that of the director of athletics, high school principal, the superintendent, and the Board of Education. The VCS believes strongly in the educational value of interscholastic athletics when properly administered. One of the most important benefits of athletics is the mental and physical development of the participant who represents the school in athletics. To achieve these values, good training is emphasized in the program. Student athletes participating on school teams are required to abide by the rules listed in the Parent/Student Handbook and the IHSAA. In addition to the rules in the Parent/Student Handbook, student athletes are bound by the following Rules A through C, which are in effect during the calendar year.

Rule A Student athletes are not to possess or attempt to purchase, sell, use or be under the influence of any substances represented to be illicit drugs, improperly obtained prescription drugs, alcohol, stimulant, products designed to be smoked or inhaled, or intoxicant of any kind, and/or any product whose use produces an altered mental or physical state when used.

Rule B Every student athlete shall be subject to the penalty provisions listed below if he/ she has acted in a manner that would constitute a crime if committed by an adult or that could result in a criminal charge brought in juvenile or adult court.

Rule C Every student athlete shall be subject to the coach's own rules that he/she has established prior to the start of the season regarding training, practices, curfews, and any rules not covered by the above guidelines. These rules shall be in writing so that there will be no misunderstanding on the part of the participants and their parents. Once a student athlete signs up and goes out for a sport, he is considered to be part of the athletic program. This will be in effect for all four years regardless if he decides not to participate in a given year. The student athlete will be required to adhere to Rule A and B for the calendar year for four years while enrolled at VHS.

A. Enforcement Procedure

No penalties set forth below except those dealing with abuse shall be imposed until the student athlete is afforded an opportunity for an informal hearing, conducted by the director of athletics, which includes:

1. a written or oral statement of the charges against the student athlete;
2. if he/she denies the charge, a summary of the evidence against the student athlete; and
3. an opportunity for the student athlete to explain his/her conduct.

If the director of athletics determines that a penalty set forth below should be imposed against the student athlete at the conclusion of the informal hearing he/she will, within 24 hours of the informal hearing, or such additional time as is reasonably necessary, send a written statement to the student athlete's parent describing the conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or rules, the reasons for the action taken by the director of athletics, and the penalty imposed.

B. Violations

After the informal hearing, the director of athletics shall impose the following penalties if he/she determines that any rules in the Parent/Student Handbook and/or Rules A or B as previously listed in this section have been violated. All penalties commence on date of written statement that is sent to the athlete's parent describing the conduct, misconduct or violation as described in the preceding paragraph.

1. First Violation

Violations of Rule A will include:

- a. The student athlete shall be ineligible from participating in 50% of the varsity scheduled events allowed by IHSAA By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation in the sport he/she is currently participating or if the student has previously participated in a sport and is not selected for the team after tryouts in the season following the violation, the penalty will have been served during that season.
- b. A student must complete his/her entire period of ineligibility before actively participating in the student athlete's next sport. For example, this may mean that a penalty commencing at the close of football could extend through the first weeks of baseball, if baseball is the athlete's next sport. This student athlete cannot add a new sport in which he/she has not participated the previous year to serve an athletic penalty.

EXAMPLE: Two student athletes violate a rule in July. One of them plays football and basketball (the previous year) and one plays only basketball. In this case, the football-basketball player would begin the period of ineligibility at the beginning of the football season. The one who plays basketball begins the penalty at the beginning of basketball season. Both regain their eligibility after the penalty is complete.

EXAMPLE: A football player is in violation at Christmas time. If the athlete did not participate in any other sport the previous year, the period of ineligibility begins the following football season.

Percent (%) of penalties will be served during the remainder of the season in which the student athlete is presently competing and/or during the next sport (chronolog-

ically) in which he/she was a participant during the previous year.

c. During the period of ineligibility, the student athlete shall remain away from team practice sessions until he/she meets with the substance abuse coordinator for assessment, and is in compliance with the recommendations of the director of athletics and substance abuse coordinator. Refusal to participate in an assessment by the substance abuse coordinator will result in a one (1) calendar year of ineligibility. All penalties commence on date of written statement that is sent to the athlete's parent describing the conduct, misconduct or violation as described in the preceding paragraph.

d. A counseling and/or education program for the student athlete and/or parents is required, along with an agreement to meet the terms of a contract developed by the director of athletics and substance abuse coordinator. Failure on the part of the student athlete to comply with this stipulation will result in the student athlete being ineligible from participating for one (1) calendar year.

Violations of the Parent/Student Handbook and Rule B will include:

a. The student athlete shall be ineligible from participating in 50% of the varsity scheduled events allowed by the IHSAA By-Laws and Articles of Incorporation in the sport he/she is currently participating or if the student has previously participated in a sport and is not selected for the team after tryouts in the season following the violation, the penalty will have been served during that season.

b. A student must complete his/her entire period of ineligibility before actively participating in the student athlete's next sport. For example, this may mean that a penalty commencing at the close of football could extend through the first weeks of baseball if baseball is the athlete's next sport. This student athlete cannot add a new sport in which he/she has not participated the previous year to serve an athletic penalty.

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Percent (%) of penalties will be served during the remainder of the season in which the student athlete is presently competing and or during the next sport (chronologically) in which he/she was a participant during the previous year.

Violation of Rule C

Any accountability or declaration of ineligibility will be determined by the coach whose established rules are in violation.

2. Second Violation to Rule(s) A and/or B

a. A student athlete's second violation will result in one (1) calendar year of ineligibility, the ineligibility which will commence as of the date of the written statement sent by the director of athletics to the student athlete's parent.

b. One week prior to the student athlete's reinstatement to his/her sport following the completion of the penalty, the student athlete must make an appointment with the director of athletics to discuss the procedure for reinstatement.

3. Third Violation to Rule(s) A and/or B

If a student-athlete commits a third violation, he/she is permanently ineligible from participating in interscholastic athletics.

C. Ineligibility - Starting Date

First time ineligibility begins on the first day of IHSAA authorized practice. If a violation occurs during season, the period of ineligibility begins on the date of notification to the athlete.

Time counted toward the 50% ineligibility stops when the team is eliminated from the IHSAA state tournament.

APPEAL PROCESS

A. An athlete has the right to appeal any imposed penalty.

B. The appeal must be made in writing to the Athletic Director within five (5) school days following the hearing.

C. The Board of Appeals will consist of:

- 1) The Athletic Director and/or Assistant Athletic Director(s)
- 2) Three (3) coaches, not to include a coach of the sport in which the athlete is currently participating
- 3) The Principal and/or Assistant Principal(s)

D. The Board of Appeals has the following options:

- 1) Affirm the penalty
- 2) Change the penalty
- 3) Reverse the penalty

E. The Board of Appeals will vote and announce its decision to the athlete immediately following the appeal