

Vicksburg Community Schools  
Administrative Guidelines

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## 5500G - REGULATIONS GOVERNING PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

### GENERAL PROVISIONS:

- A. **Eligibility:** Any student who meets the minimum eligibility requirements established by the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) and Vicksburg Community Schools for participation in interscholastic athletics is eligible to try out for one (1) or more interscholastic sports activities sponsored by the Vicksburg Middle or Senior High Schools.
  
- B. **Participation:** Participation by eligible students in the Vicksburg Middle or Senior High Schools Interscholastic Sports Programs is voluntary and subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as may be established from time to time by the MHSAA, the coaches, the Administration, and the Board of Education.
  
- C. **Pre-Participation Requirements:**
  - 1. **Distribution of Rules:** A copy of rules and regulations governing participation by students in the Interscholastic Sports Program shall be given to each student at the time such student first reports for a sports activity each academic year.
  
  - 2. **Review of Rules:** On the first scheduled day of practice of any team sport, each team coach shall review the applicable rules and regulations with all student participants.
  
  - 3. **Acceptance and Authorization:** Each academic year, an authorization form shall be completed by both the student and the student's parent or guardian, if the student is less than eighteen (18) years old, indicating that:
    - a. they have read and agree to abide by the rules;
  
    - b. the parent or guardian authorizes participation of the student in interscholastic sports activities.

A student eighteen (18) years of age or older may complete the acceptance and authorization form on his/her own behalf.

4. **Duration of Rules:** Any student, having once participated in any established school sport, will be considered a Vicksburg athlete covered by the applicable rules and regulations stated below YEAR ROUND.
5. **Special Conditioning Program:** A student athlete shall not be required to attend any special conditioning programs held outside the regular sports season as defined by the MHSAA rules.

#### ATHLETIC STANDARDS:

- A. **Sports Attendance:** Attend all scheduled practice sessions and games unless excused by the coach.

**Authorized Absence:** A student athlete may be excused from a practice session according to the following guidelines:

1. Have an acceptable reason for the absence such as illness, deficiencies in school work, family emergencies, or other obligations which could not reasonably have been anticipated by the student.
2. Request, in advance of the absence, permission from the coach. If advance permission is not possible, then inform the coach by the procedure outlined by the coach at the start of the season.
3. Excused absences are at the discretion of the coach.
4. Written excuses from a parent, administrator, or teacher may be required at the discretion of the coach, in order to determine the reason for an absence.
5. An athlete must complete the current sports season prior to conditioning or trying out for the next sports season.

- B. **Dress:** Arrive promptly and in proper dress for every practice session and game.

- C. **Participation:** Actively participate in practice sessions and games, and cooperate in following instructions, hustling, carrying out assignments, and the like.

- D. **Behavior:** The conduct of any Vicksburg athlete shall be such as to bring no discredit to the athlete, parents, or school. This includes behavior and actions both on and off the field or court.
- E. **School Attendance:** Student athletes must attend school regularly and, in order to be eligible to participate in the next scheduled practice session or interscholastic sports contest, students must attend the last two (2) class periods of the day, unless a pre-arranged absence has been approved by the office. An athlete shall not skip classes. Friday p.m. attendance is required for weekend eligibility, unless prior office arrangements have been made.
- F. **Training Hours:** Student athletes shall maintain training hours as established by the coach.
- G. **Paraphernalia:** Student athletes shall not be in possession of any item associated with the use of illegal or controlled substances.
- H. **Travel:** Team members are expected to ride to and from athletic contests on the bus. Exceptions: Parental contact or written permission form on file prior to departure. (as per AG 2340B)- Athletes with signed consent forms may ride with their parents only, unless prior office arrangements have been made.

**Discipline:** Any student athlete who shall fail to abide by the Athletic Standards "A" through "H" shall be subject to such disciplinary action as the respective coach with administrative consent shall determine, including but not confined to, running laps, spending extra time practicing, repeating assignments, being withheld from participation in a scheduled game, or dismissal from the team for the remainder of a sports season. Discipline should be progressively applied, except where the seriousness of a breach of athletic standards, in the opinion of the coach, with administrative consent shall otherwise require.

- I. **Controlled Substances:** Student athletes shall not sell, possess, and/or use tobacco, including smoking paraphernalia such as electronic cigarettes, "vapor", or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes, or other smoking devices for burning tobacco or other substances purported to be illegal; shall not be under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances, and shall not host a party where alcohol or controlled substances are used.

**Discipline: First Violation-In Season:** (from the 1<sup>st</sup> official date of practice through the last day of competition)

A student athlete, while a member of a team, who admits or is observed selling, possessing, using, and/or hosting a party where tobacco,

alcohol, or any other controlled or purported to be controlled substances or have the effects of illegal drugs (including over-the-counter drugs), or is under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances by a member of the Vicksburg staff or Administration, or by a law enforcement officer who makes a report with the Administration, shall be suspended from participation in the interscholastic sports program for the remainder of that sports season, which renders the athlete ineligible for an athletic award for that season.

**Discipline: First Violation-Out of Season: (includes summer)**

A student athlete, while a member of a team, who admits or is observed selling, possessing, using, and/or hosting a party where tobacco, alcohol, or any other controlled or purported to be controlled substance or have the effects of illegal drugs (including over-the-counter drugs), or is under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substance by a member of the Vicksburg staff or Administration, or by a law enforcement officer who makes a report with the Administration, shall be suspended from participation for the first twenty percent (20%) of the next sport season in which s/he participates. In order for the suspension to count, the athlete must make a team and remain in good standing the entire season.

**Discipline: Second Violation-In/Out of Season:**

A student athlete shall be suspended from athletics for one (1) calendar year from the effective date of the decision.

**Discipline: Third Violation-In/Out of Season**

A student athlete shall be suspended from athletics for their career from the effective date of the decision.

J. **Grades:** Maintain passing grades in all subjects.

**Discipline:** Any student participating in athletics for Vicksburg Schools will be expected to maintain passing grades in all subjects during seasons of competition. The Athletic Director will administer weekly checks of academic grades for all athletes in season.

If an athlete receives a failing grade report on the weekly report, s/he will be placed on athletic probation for one (1) week (Mon-Sun). The weekly grade reported in each class is to be the cumulative semester grade for Vicksburg High School and the marking period grade for Vicksburg Middle School at the time of the report. If, at the end of the week long probation period, the grade is still failing, the student will be placed on athletic

suspension for one (1) week. If, at the end of that suspension period, the athlete still has a failing grade in a subject, s/he will remain on suspension from athletic participation, until a passing grade is restored and the week of suspension has elapsed.

Any High School student on athletic/academic probation or suspension may be required to attend weekly study sessions, as determined by the Athletic Director.

1. **Athletic/Academic Probation:** A period of time during which an athlete may continue to practice and participate in contests. During academic probation, the athlete will be required to provide a weekly grade report to the Athletic Director and coach.
2. **Athletic/Academic Suspension:** A period during which an athlete may continue to practice, but not compete in any contest. During academic suspension, the athlete will be required to provide a weekly grade report to the Athletic Director and coach.

In addition to the weekly grade checks for athletes in season, the following academic guidelines will apply to those students who desire to participate in athletics at Vicksburg High-Community Schools.

1. A student who receives a failing grade in one (1) or two (2) class the previous semester will be placed on probation for the following semester.
2. A student who receives failing grades in four (4) three (3) or more classes in a semester will be excluded from athletic participation for the next full semester.

- K. **Equipment:** Be financially responsible for all practice or game equipment issued to him/her.

**Discipline:** No athlete may participate in a sport until all financial obligations are met for the previous sport.

- L. **Student Handbook:** Abide by the rules and regulations set forth in the applicable Student Handbook, or established from time to time by the Administration.

**Discipline:** Any student athlete who is disciplined as a result of Student Handbook shall have his/her participation modified in the following manner:

1. **Limited Suspension:** A student athlete who is given a limited suspension from school, beyond one (1) day (2 to 10 days) for a violation of school rules shall automatically be withheld from participation in the interscholastic sports program for the duration of such suspension. The student shall be permitted to participate in the next regularly scheduled athletic event after the suspension ends, provided however, that such student has participated in practice sessions after the termination of his/her suspension.
  2. **Extended Suspension:** A student athlete who is given an extended suspension from school (by the Board of Education) for a violation of school rules shall automatically be withheld from participation in the interscholastic sports program for the remainder of that sports season or the period of such suspension, whichever is longer.
- M. **Conviction by a Court of Law:** A student who is found guilty of a felony by a court of competent jurisdiction or pleads nolo contendere shall be withheld from participation in any interscholastic sports program for a period of one (1) year from the date of disposition of the case; however, until the date of such disposition, such student shall be allowed to continue participation in practice sessions and contests, unless school discipline has been imposed or is deemed appropriate by administration.
- N. **Hazing:** A student will not haze or conspire to engage in hazing of another. As used in this section, "hazing" includes any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or any pastime, or amusement, engaged in with respect to such an organization which causes or is likely to cause, bodily danger, physical harm, personal harm, or personal degradation or disgrace. The term "hazing" does not include customary athletic events or similar contests or competitions.
1. **First Violation:** Warning, detention, and/or up to ten (10) days suspension.
  2. **Second Violation:** Up to ten (10) days suspension contingent upon the severity of the infraction.
  3. **Third Violation:** Ten (10) days suspension with possible request for expulsion.

#### **REVIEW PROCEDURES:**

- A. **Conference:** The parent or guardian of the athlete, or athlete if eighteen (18) years of age or older, may request a conference within the time period of the suspension, with the coach and Athletic Director.

**Review:** If a parent or guardian, or student if eighteen (18) years or older, is aggrieved by the decision of the coach and Athletic Director, the parent or guardian may request a review of such decision with the principal. The decision of the principal in such cases shall be final.

B. **Season Suspension:** For violations of Athletic Standard "I" (Controlled Substances):

1. **Conference:** The parent or guardian of the athlete, or athlete, if eighteen (18) years of age or older, may request a conference with the coach, Athletic Director, and principal.
2. **Review:** If a parent or guardian, or student, if eighteen (18) years or older, is aggrieved by the decision of the Conference Committee, s/he may request a review by the Superintendent of Schools.
3. **Hearing:** Within ten (10) days from the date of the Superintendent's decision to affirm a season suspension, the parent or guardian of such athlete may request a hearing before the Board of Education. The Board shall establish a date, time, and place for a hearing on the matter, and shall transmit written notice thereof to the parent or guardian at least five (5) days prior to such hearing date. The procedure governing such hearing shall conform to the following guidelines:
  - a. **Notice:** The notice of the hearing shall advise the athlete of the grounds for the charges in specific enough terms to enable the student to anticipate the subject content of the proposed hearing and to prepare a defense thereto.
  - b. **Counsel:** The athlete, or the parent or guardian of the student, may be represented by counsel or other person.
  - c. **Witnesses:** Witnesses may be called by either party, and either party may cross examine the witnesses of the other party.
  - d. **Board Counsel:** The Board may be represented by counsel and shall have the right to have present such other persons as the President of the Board deems essential to the proper adjudication of the matter.
  - e. **Evidence:** The Board may admit evidence of a type commonly relied upon by reasonably prudent persons in the conduct of their affairs, but, inasmuch as a Board

hearing is not a court proceeding, court rules of evidence shall not be enforced at such hearing.

- f. **Public or Private Hearing:** The hearing shall be public unless the parent or guardian shall, in writing, request a private hearing in accordance with applicable law.
- g. **Board Opinion:** The Board shall render a written opinion, including its finding of fact and decision, within ten (10) calendar days from the date of the hearing. A copy of such opinion shall be given to each of the parties concerned.

- 4. **Awards:** The athletic awards are given by the Vicksburg High School Athletic Department in special recognition of athletic performance. To qualify for this honor, a student should meet the established qualifications of the school and must be recommended by the coach of the sport ~~in established qualifications of the school and must be recommended by the coach of the sport in in~~ which s/he is participating, and be approved by the Athletic Director. The athlete must also have an excellent practice and game attendance record and must successfully complete the season. Removal from a team for any reason, during the season will result in the athlete being ineligible for a letter or an award ~~for that season~~.

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