

Rules and Regulations

SECTION 26: INTRODUCTION.

26-1-1 Purpose-League rules and regulations have been developed by the principals of Virginia high schools for a period of more than 80 years. They establish standards for the conduct and control of desirable interscholastic activities in order to protect and preserve the educational values inherent in those activities. They provide a uniform code for individual eligibility for participation in order to equalize to some degree the opportunities for success in competition, to encourage the participation of representative students and to insure maintenance of minimum essential standards by all school representatives.

26-2-1 Policy-League rules and regulations are published annually in the Handbook. The current *Handbook* is the official guide, and rules and regulations published herein supersede all previous publications. They may be amended in accordance with the provisions of Section 21.

26-2-2 Violators of the rules and regulations published in Section 26 through 33 are subject to the penalties prescribed in Section 30, Penalties. Principals, coaches and sponsors are urged to study the rules carefully and to request an official interpretation from the district committee or the Executive Director in cases of doubt.

26-3-1 Content-These sections cover two types of League regulations:

(1) School regulations dealing with responsibilities of the school administration, and (2) individual eligibility regulations governing student participation. The regulations are accompanied by exceptions, interpretations and explanatory notes.

26-3-2 There are twelve individual eligibility regulations. Section A contains the first seven, which are applicable to all students who represent their schools in interscholastic contests. Section B, which contains the next five regulations, applies only to students who represent their schools in interscholastic athletic contests. Section C applies to all students.

26-3-3 Contest rules governing specific competitive activities appear in Sections 50 through 129, arranged as follows: athletic activities in Sections 50 through 99, dramatic activities in Sections 100 through 109, speech activities in Sections 110 through 119, and literary activities in Sections 120 through 129.

26-4-1 Guiding Principle-League member schools and their individual and team representatives are required to observe and comply implicitly with both the spirit and the letter of all League rules and regulations in those interscholastic activities regulated by Sections 50 through 129 of this *Handbook* and in those activities sponsored by a district or a region. These rules and regulations are applicable to all who represent their schools in VHSL, Inc. sponsored interscholastic competition, whether individual or team, whether varsity, junior varsity or reserve.

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SECTION 27: SCHOOL REGULATIONS.

Member schools shall observe the following regulations in those interscholastic activities regulated by Sections 50 through 129 of this *Handbook* and in those activities sponsored by a district or a region:

27-1-1 PRINCIPAL'S RESPONSIBILITY RULE-*Final authority and ultimate responsibility in all matters pertaining to interscholastic activities of each school, both athletic and nonathletic, shall be vested in the principal who acts under authority granted by the division superintendent of schools. The principal's responsibilities shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:*

27-1-2 Control:

(1) The principal shall exercise control over all interscholastic contests in which his/her school engages. It is his/her responsibility, as well as that of his/her coaches, faculty members and all representatives of his/her school, to practice the highest principles of sportsmanship in all interscholastic relationships with visiting coaches and official representatives, contest officials, visiting contestants and the general public, as well as to inculcate a sportsmanlike attitude toward visitors on the part of his/her school and community.

(2) The principal shall seek by every reasonable means at his/her command to prevent the development of riots, fights, pilfering, defacement or destruction of property, or any other unsportsmanlike conduct in connection with contests with other schools, on the part of his/her students or the supporters or partisans of his/her school.

(3) Each school of this organization is responsible for the eligibility of its own students in carrying on an interscholastic program. If the principal of a member school has a question about the eligibility of a student of another school, he/she shall direct it to the principal of the other school, the district chairman of the questioned school or the Executive Director for clarification. In taking such action, the first principal is not casting reflection upon the other school's adherence to eligibility regulations, but is acting in the best interest of the League. If, however, he/she has certain knowledge of a violation, he/she is obligated to report it as specified in Section 29, Reporting Violations.

27-1-3 Finances-The principal shall exercise control over all finances involved in the interscholastic activities program and not otherwise controlled by the school board.

27-1-4 Contests-The principal shall approve all contests in which representatives of his/her school participate. No agreement to engage in any contest shall be binding unless approved by the principal.

27-1-5 Contracts:

(1)The principal shall sign all contracts to engage in interscholastic athletic contests, unless he/she has designated in writing a member of his/her faculty as his/her proxy, in which case the proxy's signature on the contract shall be binding. Students' signatures to contracts will *not* be binding.

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(2) The Contract for Interscholastic Athletic Contests (League Form No. 1) is recommended for all interscholastic athletic contests. These forms should be prepared in duplicate and exchanged by competing schools. Principals of schools may, by mutual consent given in writing, cancel any contract upon which they have entered. Should a school fail to fulfill its contract for reasons within its control, the district committee may declare the contest forfeited by the offending school. The offended school may, if it so desires, appeal to the district committee for further redress if the contract was executed on the League standard contract form. Only a contract executed on the standard League form, and no verbal contract, will be considered through protest channels by any district committee.

(3) Unless otherwise specified in the contract, athletic contests between schools shall be considered to be between the strongest representative teams of those schools on that day. When a school has two or more teams competing on the same day in the same activity, one shall be clearly designated in the contract as the first or varsity team.

(4) Principals are expected to act without delay upon contracts presented for their signature. The home school should prepare and sign the contracts in duplicate and send them to the principal of the visiting school for signature. Principals should make reasonable efforts to regain possession of contracts which have not been returned promptly before entering into agreement with other schools for contests on the same dates.

27-1-6 Master Eligibility List:

(1) The principal shall certify on the Master Eligibility List (League Form No. 3) the eligibility of all athletic and VHSL activities contestants representing his/her school. Only League Form No. 3 is to be used; however, copies are satisfactory provided they are replicas of the form.

Policy Manual 27-1-6

(2) Master Eligibility Lists are required even though a school participates in only one game or meet during a sports or activities season. A separate list shall be prepared for each sport / activity. If a school sponsors a separate sports team for boys and girls, the principal shall file two Master Eligibility Lists, one for the boys team and one for the girls team. If a school sponsors one team composed of members of both sexes, the principal shall file one list and designate the team as a boys team on the Master Eligibility List.

(3) Signed copies of each list shall be sent at least one day before the first contest to the Executive Director and to the principal of every school appearing on the schedule in that sport. The principal shall be responsible for keeping all recipients of the original list informed as to subsequent changes in the master list. Since the principal is held strictly accountable for the accuracy of lists submitted by his/her school, he/she should check carefully the eligibility of each student whom he/she certifies. Failure to meet deadlines for MELs will result in a fine as stated in 30-5-1.

(4) Any transfer student who is to be certified for participation must have an official transcript of record or other written evidence on file in the school to which he/she transfers.

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(5) The principal shall, when so requested, furnish such additional information to the district committee as may be required to determine the eligibility or ineligibility of a student in his/her school.

27-1-7 Interpretations:

(1) The "day of the first contest" is the day on which a team representing the school plays another team. Whether or not the game counts in district competition is not a factor in making this determination.

(2) The date of birth and the date of entry into the ninth grade or the year immediately following the passing of five eighth-grade subjects (see Note following 28-4-1 (a)) by an eighth grade student who reached the age of fifteen on or before the first day of October, as reported on the Master Eligibility List on which a student appears for the first time, will be considered controlling and may not be changed in later lists for the same year or later years except when specifically authorized by the Executive Director to correct any error. It is recommended that a new principal, before certifying a Master Eligibility List, verify the information given by checking it with lists previously submitted.

Policy Manual 21-1-7

(3) Failure to comply with the provisions of this regulation requiring the preparation and submission of eligibility lists will result in an automatic fine as stated in 30-5-1.

Note: If it should prove impossible at mid-year to send changes in an eligibility list at least one day before the first contest, a school will be considered to have met the requirements of this rule if copies of the subsequent changes in the original list are mailed to the Executive Director at the opening of the spring semester and if a copy is delivered to the next school on the schedule either before the contest or at the time of the contest.

27-1-8 Excluding Injured Students-The principal shall exclude from athletic participation any student who has suffered serious illness or injury until such time as that student has been pronounced physically fit to participate by a physician.

27-1-9 Accompanying Teams-The principal, or his/her authorized representative chosen from the faculty of a member school, shall accompany all groups representing his/her school in any interscholastic activity, and shall be responsible for the conduct of all students under his/her charge during that activity.

27-1-10 Local Rules-The principal shall be authorized to make and enforce any local rule supplementary to League rules and regulations, but not inconsistent with them. The authority of a principal to impose and enforce such local rules is absolute and will not be subject to League review. The League will not question the right of any principal to exclude any student in his/her school from participation in any League activity at any time.

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27-1-11 State Area Meetings Attendance Requirement-In order to assist school principals and staffs in a better understanding of VHSL rules and regulations, the League shall conduct regular area meetings to review key policies and clarify the responsibility of administrators and coaches. The principal or his/her representative designated in writing shall be required to attend one of these area meetings each year they are conducted.

27-1-12 Penalty-The school shall be assessed a fine as stated in 30-5-1 if it fails to have a representative attend a VHSL State Area Meeting.

27-1-13 Interpretations:

(1) The principal may delegate the exercise of his/her responsibilities under this rule to one or more faculty representative(s), but he/she himself/herself will be held responsible by the League for the observance of all provisions of this rule.

(2) The word "principal," as used in this rule, refers to the high school principal, or to the division superintendent of schools in those cases in which the superintendent performs the duties of the principal.

27-2-1 COACHES RULE-*All coaches and sponsors of League activities, both athletic and nonathletic, shall be certified teachers regularly employed by the school board and responsible to the school principal. They shall have not less than three regular periods of classes or study hall duty per day.*

Note: Interscholastic competition for girls and boys should be coached or directly supervised by a woman or man, respectively, who is responsible to the school principal. If a man coaches girls on a mixed team or coaches a girls team, it is strongly recommended that a female supervisor be present at all games and practices. If a woman coaches boys on a mixed team or coaches a boys team, it is strongly recommended that a male supervisor be present at all games and practices.

27-2-2 Exceptions:

(1) Students in training at institutions of higher learning.

(2) Principals, assistant principals or other members of the school division's instructional or administrative staff with duties comparable to those of teachers carrying three regular periods of classes.

(3) Retired Virginia teachers or administrators as approved by the division superintendent.

(4) Persons approved by the Executive Director upon written certification from the principal and division superintendent. Approval shall be contingent upon written notification from the school principal that the non-faculty coach will be apprised of all VHSL eligibility requirements for participants and any League policies pertaining to his/her sport prior to assuming duties.

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(5) Instructional or administrative aides employed full-time within the same school division.

27-2-3 Interpretations:

(1) This rule bars special coaches or sponsors of an activity who are not employed to serve in any other capacity or who are employed during the season in the activity only, unless they are exempted under 27-2-2 (4) of this rule. It is not intended to bar assistants for whose services no recompense is given, either directly or indirectly, from any source, provided that such services are rendered only at practice sessions under the supervision of a regular faculty member.

(2) Duties after school hours, such as athletic coaching, shall not be counted as one or more of the three regular periods of classes or study hall duty required per day.

27-2-4 State Clinic Attendance Requirement-Any school sponsoring an interscholastic activity in any of the following sports or academic areas shall require at least one member of that activity's coaching staff to attend a VHSL sponsored rules clinic for that activity in each year that one is offered: Baseball, Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Cheer, Field Hockey, Football, Girls Gymnastics, Boys Lacrosse, Girls Lacrosse, Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Softball, Boys Swim and Dive, Girls Swim and Dive, Boys Track, Girls Track, Boys Volleyball, Girls Volleyball, Wrestling, Theatre, Forensics, Debate and Scholastic Bowl. Failure to attend will result in a penalty as stated in 30-5-1.

27-2-5 Coaches Education Requirement-A VHSL-approved course in principles of coaching and sport first aid is required of all first time athletic coaches at a VHSL member school and those athletic coaches who are exempted through the VHSL Coaches Rule 27-2-2 (4). Coaches have three years in which to meet this requirement.

27-2-6 State and Local Knowledge Requirement-All coaches are required to complete a VHSL Component which familiarizes the coach with rules and regulations found in the VHSL Handbook as well as those found at the local level. Coaches have three years in which to meet this requirement.

27-2-7 Penalty-A school shall be fined \$50 for each coach per sport who does not complete this requirement in the prescribed time.

Policy Manual 27-2-4

27-3-1 STATE COMPETITION RULE-*No member school shall engage in athletic competition:*

(1) *With a Virginia public high school that is not a member of the League without the authorization of the State Executive Committee.*

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(2) *With any school under suspension from the League, from the comparable organization in any other state or from the National Federation of State High School Associations.*

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27-3-2 Upon being informed as to whether a Virginia nonpublic secondary school (private, preparatory, parochial, etc.) agrees to abide by the special regulations governing nonpublic schools, League member schools may decide whether or not to compete with that non-member school.

Policy Manual 27-3-2

27-3-3 Interpretations:

(1) Member schools shall comply with all League rules and regulations in all interscholastic contests.

(2) Member schools may not waive any League rule or regulation by mutual agreement with an opponent. Such action renders all member schools involved liable to disciplinary action.

(3) Member schools shall not use ineligible students in contests with nonmember schools, and no member school shall knowingly compete against any nonmember school which is represented by an ineligible student as determined by the nonmember school.

(4) No member school shall become a member of any organization whose constitution or bylaws are in conflict with the rules and regulations of the League.

Policy Manual 27-3-3

(5) Athletic competition with "outside" or "independent" teams must be approved by the Executive Director and is not recommended when sufficient competition can be scheduled with member schools.

27-4-1 STATE SANCTION RULE-*No member school shall permit its teams or individual representatives to compete in any type of athletic meet or tournament in which three or more schools participate or any contest conducted by a non-school organization or individual unless that meet, contest or tournament has been expressly sanctioned by the executive director.*

Policy Manual 27-4-1

27-4-2 Exceptions:

(1) Sanctions are not required for VHSL district or regional contests or for intra-district competition.

(2) Triangular or quadrangular outdoor track, indoor track, cross country, wrestling, gymnastics or golf contests among member schools which will permit participants to return at reasonable hours may be held without the executive director's sanction when the contests are sponsored and organized by a member school or by joint action of the member schools involved. Such contests are not to be considered automatically sanctioned. This exception should not be interpreted to change any rules relating to number of contests per season or contests per week.

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Note: Schools interested in competing in "outside" meets or tournaments should advise the sponsoring school or college to make application for League sanction on League Form No. 5 Request for Sanction of Interscholastic Athletic Meet or Tournament, available from the League Office. This application shall be submitted no less than 45 days in advance of the date for the meet or tournament. Meets and tournaments which receive League sanction will be announced in a League publication. Each such request for sanction will be evaluated in the light of established League policies. Factors such as distance to be traveled, time lost from school, number of games required per day, commercial exploitation of competing teams and similar items will be considered in the evaluation of each contest, meet or tournament for which sanction is requested. Sanction will not be given to meets or tournaments:

- (1) which conflict with League-sponsored events
- (2) in which nonmember Virginia public high schools or non high school (27-3-1 (1)) teams are invited to participate unless satisfactory entrance requirements are established and enforced
- (3) which are sponsored or conducted by other than educational institutions, unless the event was sanctioned prior to 1970
- (4) in which awards offered winners or participants do not meet League standards
- (5) in which any school under suspension from the League has been invited to participate.

27-4-3 A violation of the Sanction Rule will result in a fine as stated in 30-5-1.

Policy Manual 27-4-4

27-5-1 INTERSTATE AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION RULE-*No member school shall engage in athletic competition:*

- (1) With any school outside of the state which is not a regular or affiliated member in good standing of its home state high school association.*
- (2) In any interstate meet or tournament in which three or more schools participate unless such event has been sanctioned by all interested state high school associations.*
- (3) In any interstate meet or tournament in which four or more schools participate, in any interstate competition which involves schools from three or more state high school associations or in any interstate competition involving two or more schools which is sponsored by an individual or an organization other than a member school unless such event has been sanctioned by all interested state high school associations through the National Federation of State High School Associations.*
- (4) In any international contest unless it has been sanctioned by the National Federation of State High School Associations.*

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Note: Forms on which to make application for sanction of an interstate meet or tournament, or of a distant interstate game, will be supplied by the League Office upon request.

27-6-1 OFFICIALS RULE-*Officials for all League athletic contests shall be mutually agreed upon by the faculty representatives of all schools concerned. Officials for varsity baseball, basketball, cheer, field hockey, football, winter gymnastics, soccer, softball, swimming, volleyball, wrestling, and either the starter or the referee in outdoor track shall be on the authorized officials' list of the assistant director. Administrative details of officials registration, classification and other regulations are included in the Virginia High School League, Inc. Official's Handbook, available on request. This Official's Handbook is an extension of the VHSL Handbook, and its policies are binding upon member schools.*

Note: It is recommended that principals or their authorized representatives take steps to insure that the most competent officials available are obtained. It is suggested that officials be especially requested to enforce the playing rules strictly and impartially, penalizing promptly all unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanlike conduct and administering the rules in an impersonal and effective manner. Officials should be reminded that their decisions of judgment will not be protested, but that the coach, if properly recognized, is entitled to question decisions based upon interpretations of playing rules.

(1) Districts are strongly encouraged to use a single officials' association in any given sport. The use of associations serving less than six VHSL schools' varsity schedules is prohibited unless an exception is granted by the VHSL.

(2) Beginning in 1990, any officials' associations being used by a district must be approved by that district and the region of which that district is a part. Such approval must occur prior to each respective sport's season.

(3) Districts shall meet with each of their officials' associations at least once every two years to review appropriate concerns and policies.

(4) Neither League districts nor local officials associations may make regulations concerning fees, travel allowances or working conditions which change existing understandings until there has been an opportunity for mutual consultation and agreement. Districts and associations should appoint either mutual consultation committees or representatives to meet with the other when consideration is being given to problems affecting the two groups. Agreements on fees, procedures and policies should be made for a specific period of time (example-3 years).

(5) Only officials associations recognized by the VHSL and listed in the VHSL Directory are eligible to work playoff or tournament contests at any level.

27-6-2 Interpretations:

(I) VHSL registered officials should be used for Junior Varsity contests.

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(2) Officials should be selected and agreed upon well in advance of the contest. A principal or principals may request prior to the season that certain officials be eliminated (scratched) from working his/her contests provided that he/she makes his/her "scratches" by the procedures agreed upon by the local officials associations and the schools or districts involved. Additional "scratches" after the season begins will be permitted only if requested by the principal of one of the schools involved.

(3) A coach or student may not officiate in contests in which students from his/her school may be participants except by mutual consent in writing and signed by all coaches concerned. This interpretation does not apply to track.

(4) A member school principal may in an emergency employ a non-registered official provided that a registered official was employed and failed to be present or when, in the judgment of the home school administrator, no registered official is available and the emergency official is mutually acceptable to all teams involved, and the home school principal writes a full explanation of the case and within three days after the contest sends the explanation to the executive director and to the district chairman.

(5) Complaints by officials regarding sportsmanship or other incidents must be filed within seven days in a report to the schools involved, the officials' association commissioner and the League office.

27-6-3 Use of non-registered officials will result in a fine as stated in 30-5-1.

27-7-1 SPORTS SEASON RULE-*No member school team shall engage in any athletic practice in any sport nor shall any interscholastic athletic contest be played prior to the sports season's dates annually published by the VHSL.*

The Executive Director may authorize contests in all sports to be held one or two days prior to the published competition dates as long as the requirement for the number of practice days is observed. With approval from the appropriate region, the Executive Committee may authorize the start of football practice and football games one week prior to the published dates. This authorization must be given prior to the beginning practice date for that season.

Each school's sports season ends with its last regularly scheduled game, or its last League sponsored tournament or play-off contest or the last League-sanctioned tournament or playoff contest. Contests which appeared on a school's original schedule and which were postponed because of factors beyond the control of both schools may be rescheduled after the last regularly scheduled game as long as they are played before the beginning of the district tournament (or the region tournament if no district tournament is played).

Policy Manual 27-7-1

27-7-2 Exception:

(1) Regular season competition for competitive cheer may occur up to the regional deadline as published annually on the VHSL Activities Calendar.

Policy Manual 27-7-2

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27-7-3 Penalty: Any school adjudged guilty of violating the Sports Season Rule shall be subject to such disciplinary action, including ineligibility for district championships, as the appropriate district committee or interdistrict committee may impose.

Policy Manual 27-7-3

27-8-1 OUT-OF-SEASON PRACTICE RULE-*No member school shall engage in any form of preseason or postseason practice or in any preseason or postseason interscholastic competition in any sport except under the conditions outlined below. Out-of-season participation shall not be mandated of any student.*

Policy Manual 27-8-1 (Appendix 6)

27-8-2 Interpretations:

(1) Practice is defined as the involvement of individuals or group of individuals from a member school in any organized program of demonstration, instruction or participation conducted in part or in entirety by a person or group of people who are involved in the coaching of any of these athletes for pay or other remuneration. The spirit of the practice rule shall be that every school and participant shall have the same opportunities to practice prior to the first game of the season. The foregoing provision does not apply to recreation programs sponsored by governmental agencies and civic organizations when approved by a member school. In approving a program, schools shall insist that the program be open to everyone in the community or areas served, and the program not be limited to varsity or junior-varsity athletes from a specific high school.

Note: A member of the school's coaching staff may be employed to assist a school-approved community recreation program without violating this rule provided the coach does not cause such a program to become, for all practical purposes, a high school squad practice scheme. A great responsibility rests upon the coaches engaged in such a recreation program to make certain that the spirit and the letter of the Out-of-Season Practice rules are observed.

(2) A member school is permitted to organize and supervise conditioning programs to include weight lifting, running and exercising as long as the program is general in nature and includes only exercises designed to promote physical fitness. No school may issue equipment designed for a specific sport for this type of program. These conditioning programs must be open to all members of the student body.

(3) A candidate for a school's athletic team may attend a specialized camp, school clinic or other similar program involving coaching and instruction as long as the school does not provide the fee for the specialized sports camp. Attendance at a summer recreation type camp at which a variety of recreational and sports activities are treated equally is not considered a specialized sports camp. Schools may provide transportation for students attending a specialized sports camp. Schools may also issue equipment to students attending such camps.

Policy Manual 27-8-1

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(4) A student may participate as an individual and in a manner that is in no way connected with his/her school.

(5) A student shall not be provided nor may he/she use any uniform belonging to a school. A student may use shoes provided by his/her school. (This rule does not apply to cheerleaders.)

(6) A school shall not provide to any student any uniform designed for use in any VHSL sponsored sport. A school may provide shoes. (This rule does not apply to cheerleaders.)

27-8-3 Penalty: Any school adjudged guilty of violating the Out-of-Season Practice Rule shall be subject to a fine as stated in 30-5-1 and such disciplinary action, including ineligibility for district championships, as the appropriate district committee, interdistrict committee or VHSL Executive Director may impose.

27-9-1 ALL-STAR GAME RULE-*No official or representative of a member school shall participate, either directly or indirectly, in the promotion, management, supervision, player selection, coaching or officiating of any contest involving so-called all-star high school teams or squads; nor shall any member permit any personnel or expendable equipment under its control to be used in such a contest. Facilities may be used only under specific action of a school board. (See also 28-12-1 through 4.)*

27-9-2 Exceptions:

(1) All-Star Contests conducted by the Virginia High School Coaches Association.

(2) The principal may grant permission for a member of the school staff to participate in an all-star contest when he/she determines that such participation is in the best interests of the high school athletes involved in the contest.

27-10-1 PROSELYTIZING RULE-*No member school or group of individuals representing the school shall subject a student from another school to undue influence by encouraging him/her to transfer from one school to another for League activities.*

27-10-2 Interpretation: The appropriate district committee shall decide what constitutes undue influence on the basis of the evidence presented in each case. Undue influence has generally been interpreted to mean an act by any person or group connected with the school or not connected with a school to persuade a student to enroll in a school outside the areas in which he/she resides or persuade his/her parents or guardian to move to the areas of another school. Some specific examples of undue influence are:

(1) Being asked to move by a member of the school faculty.

(2) Being asked to move by a booster organization or a member of such an organization.

(3) Being given tuition, free text books, allowance for transportation or consideration not afforded other students, athletic or nonathletic.

(4) Any other evidence that a transfer or enrollment was made because of athletic ability.

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27-10-3 Penalty: Any school adjudged guilty of bringing such undue influence to bear upon a student through any individual connected with the school, either directly or indirectly, shall be subject to such disciplinary action as the appropriate district committee or interdistrict committee may impose.

27-11-1 CONTEST LIMITATION RULE-*No member school may permit its athletes or teams to compete in more than the total number of regular season interscholastic contests, meets or tournaments specified in 54-8-1 of this Handbook for each sport either on the varsity or subvarsity level. No athlete may participate on two levels (e.g. middle school, junior high, junior varsity, varsity) in any sport on the same day. A student participating in two levels of competition on the same day is ineligible in the second competition and appropriate penalties will be assessed. Students in the eighth grade may participate in competition of less than varsity level.*

27-11-2 Interpretation:

(1) The varsity squad is the selected first team or the one which represents the particular school when contests are arranged without designation as to the use of all eligibles.

(2) Players who engage in junior-varsity contests shall be included on eligibility lists and must be eligible in every respect. Players eligible only for junior-varsity competition shall be added to the eligibility list under a heading entitled: Eligible for junior-varsity only.

(3) Participation means actual play in a game and does not refer to the act of being "dressed" for the game or sitting on the bench.

27-12-1 SUNDAY RULE-*No member school may schedule or play an athletic contest or engage in practice on Sunday.*

27-12-2 Exceptions:

(1) International competitions scheduled for a Sunday provided the competition is held outside the United States and there is no local school board policy to prevent a participating school from doing so.

(2) State tournaments or state championships which have been postponed because of adverse weather, graduation conflicts or other emergency conditions may be played on Sunday with permission of the executive director in consultation with the League and/or Group Board chairmen and provided there is no local school board policy to prevent a participating school from playing on Sunday.

(3) Requests may be made to participate in individual tournaments that include Sunday competition, subject to approval of the Executive Committee.

(4) District and/or regional tournament games or championships which have been postponed by adverse weather, graduation conflicts or other emergency conditions may be played on Sunday with the permission of the District Council and/or Regional Council and the school or schools involved and provided there is no local school board policy to prevent a participating school from playing on Sunday.

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(5) When the district, regional or state golf championship is scheduled to open on Monday, schools have permission to have a practice round at the site on the Sunday preceding the championship unless the district or region denies permission for a Sunday practice preceding its own championship.

(6) VHSL member schools are permitted to participate in regular season events on Sunday under the following circumstances: local school division approval; involves tournament competition; hosted by an out-of-state high school/college/university; is properly sanctioned and the VHSL is provided with a written copy of the school division approval.

27-12-3 Violation of the Sunday Rule will result in a fine as stated in 30-5-1.

27-13-1 SPORTSMANSHIP RULE-*Member schools are required to conduct all their relations with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship. Acts which are prima facie evidence of failure to abide by this rule are those which are noted below and others of a similar nature which transgress the usually accepted code for good sportsmanship. All incidents of conduct relating to either athletic or academic activities that are violations of the Sportsmanship Rule must be reported to the Virginia High School League.*

27-13-2 Failure to provide for proper control of spectators at a contest constitutes a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule. Incidents where spectators during or after the contest engage in verbal or physical altercations with players, coaches, officials or other spectators which disrupt the normal flow of a contest or endanger the safety of a player, official, coach or other spectators should be reported. Where the number of spectators is expected to be large in relation to the facilities for seating the crowd, uniformed police available for control should be provided. Whereas the provision of uniformed police is not required by this rule, it is expected that the host school shall have taken reasonable and proper steps that would be expected to assure proper control of spectators under any foreseeable conditions if uniformed police are not provided.

27-13-3 Failure of any team or competitor to stay in a contest until its normal end when the failure to do so is related to dissatisfaction with the officiating of the contest, unless the physical safety of the team or competitor would have been endangered by continuing the contest, is a violation and is to be reported.

27-13-4 Harassment of contest officials by a coach or a coach's ejection from a contest constitutes a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule. Any coach's ejection is to be reported in writing to the League office by the school whose coach is ejected with copies placed in the school's and officials' association files. Any incidents involving a spectator, coach or other school personnel or player striking or pushing an official is to be reported. A coach going on the floor or field to interrupt a contest while the ball is "alive" in protest of a decision by an official, conduct which invokes a penalty against the team because of the conduct of a coach or team member or any individual in the official party of a team, continued and visible actions on the part of a coach which will indicate to team members and/or to spectators that the coach believes the game is being improperly officiated, public demonstrations with game officials which indicate to others extreme dissatisfaction with officiating, and such related actions when exhibited in aggravated form are evidence of poor sportsmanship.

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27-13-5 Failure of a school to use every means at its disposal to impress upon its faculty, student body, team members, coaching staff and officials the values of sportsmanship in the preparation for, and the conduct and management of interscholastic contests and the importance of observing published or accepted rules governing coaches, competitors or spectators relating to the conduct of competition constitutes a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule. School personnel must make every effort to ensure that substitute players and bench personnel do not enter the playing field/court during a verbal or physical altercation and that team personnel do not engage in other excessive unsportsmanlike conduct before, during or after the contest; such action is a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule and is to be reported. A school whose substitute players or bench personnel enter the playing field/court during a verbal or physical altercation, or whose team personnel engage in excessive unsportsmanlike conduct before, during or after a contest shall be subject to a fine as stated in 30-5-1.

27-13-6 Players and coaches who are ejected from a contest, scrimmage, jamboree or Benefit Game for unsportsmanlike conduct and are ineligible for the team's next scheduled event must be reported to the VHSL office on the form provided in the Principal's Workbook. For engaging in fighting, biting or aggressive physical contact, a player shall be ineligible for the team's next two scheduled events and a coach for a minimum of the team's next two scheduled events. Coaches ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct will not be physically present or communicate in any way with the team at that next scheduled event. (For the purposes of this rule, a basketball player who collects five personal fouls and must therefore leave the game is not considered to be ejected and is not automatically guilty of a sportsmanship violation.) Any player assessed two technical fouls is considered to have committed a sportsmanship violation and must sit out the next event. The decision to eject and therefore suspend from the next scheduled event(s) may be appealed by conforming with the following procedure.

Policy Manual 27-13-6

(1) The parents, guardians or coach of a suspended player or suspended coach must request in writing that the principal review the decision to eject.

(2) The principal will review the facts utilizing available and appropriate resources and decide whether to appeal the decision. The principal may terminate the appeal at this point if there is insufficient merit.

(3) If, after review of the facts, including consultation with officials, the principal concludes that the appeal is warranted, he/she shall contact the principal(s) or designee(s) of the other schools involved and present his/her case. If, after review of the facts, all principals or designees, together with the commissioner of the association responsible for officiating that game, agree that the appeal had merit and that because of an error or misapplication of the rules by the officials the ejection was not warranted, it will be sustained and the player reinstated for the next contest. If any two of the three individuals hearing the appeal agree that the appeal has merit but the other does not, the appellant may request a review by the VHSL Executive Director or his designee, who may sustain or deny the appeal based upon review of the facts using all available and appropriate resources.

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(4) If a player or coach ejection occurs at a state tournament where one or both principals and/or non-coach designee is/are not available and a VHSL-appointed sportsmanship or game committee is in place, that committee shall sustain or deny the appeal after hearing the facts from the appealing school, the appealing school's opponent, the game officials, the VHSL-appointed supervisor and event director.

Penalties: If the disqualification occurs in the final contest of the season (including playoffs and tournaments), the penalty shall carry over to the next sports season for students who are seniors in eligibility or to the next school year for underclassmen and coaches. A second violation in the same sport shall carry a minimum two-contest suspension (See 30-5-1 (15)).

(5) The decision of the principal(s) or VHSL-appointed sportsmanship or games committee shall be final.

27-13-7 Situations which must be reported to the League are listed, but not limited to those, below:

Policy Manual 27-13-7

- (1) Incidents involving damage to school property, including buses or other vehicles.
- (2) Physical or verbal altercations or other unsportsmanlike conduct between players, coaches, spectators or officials.
- (3) Verbal abuse by players, coaches, or spectators directed toward opposing teams, coaches, or officials.
- (4) Public criticism of officials by coaches in news media.
- (5) Coach ejection from the game.
- (6) Player ejection from the game.

All situations which are a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule must be reported to the League. An initial report should be submitted to the League office within 24 hours with the complete official report within 5 business days. Failure to report violations will result in a fine as stated in 30-5-1.

27-13-8 Failure of an administrator, spectator, athlete, coach or official to follow those directions provided for in the Code for Interscholastic Athletics:

Policy Manual 27-13-8

CODE FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The School Administrator Should:

- (1) Encourage and promote friendly relationships and good sportsmanship throughout the school by requiring courtesy and proper decorum at all times, by acquainting students

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and others in the community with ideals of good sportsmanship and by so publicizing these concepts and attitudes that all members of the school community will understand and appreciate their meaning.

(2) Insist upon implicit compliance with all rules and regulations of the Virginia High School League.

(3) Secure qualified officials for all contests.

(4) Insist upon adequate safety provisions for all activities, for both participants and spectators.

(5) Approve only those activities and schedules which are educationally and physically sound for the school pupil.

(6) Encourage all to judge the success of the athletic program on the basis of the attitude of the participants and spectators, rather than on the basis of the number of games won or lost.

(7) Insist that the school cheerleaders exemplify the highest standard of good sportsmanship as a means of inculcating desirable spectator attitudes.

(8) Provide adequate hygienic, sanitary and attractive facilities for the dressing and housing of visiting teams and officials.

(9) Provide for the efficient handling of all athletic funds, with such safeguards as audits, insurance and proper bookkeeping, in order that maximum benefits may be had from available funds.

(10) Review with staff the Sportsmanship Rule.

The Spectator Should:

(1) Realize that he/she represents the school just as definitely as does the member of a team and, therefore, has an obligation to be a true sportsman, encouraging through this behavior the practice of good sportsmanship by others.

(2) Recognize that good sportsmanship is more important than victory by approving and applauding good team play, individual skill and outstanding examples of sportsmanship and fair play exhibited by either team.

(3) Recognize that since the primary purpose of interscholastic athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well-being of the players through the medium of contests, victory or defeat is in reality of secondary importance.

(4) Treat visiting teams and officials as guests, extending to them every courtesy.

(5) Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

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(6) Respect the judgment and integrity of officials, realizing that their decisions are based upon game conditions as they observe them.

The Athlete Should:

- (1) Be courteous to visiting teams and officials.
- (2) Play hard and to the limit of his/her ability, regardless of discouragement. The true athlete does not give up nor does he/she quarrel, cheat, bet or grandstand.
- (3) Retain his/her composure at all times and never leave the bench or enter the playing field/court to engage in a fight.
- (4) Be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat. A true sportsman does not offer excuses for failures.
- (5) Maintain a high degree of physical fitness by observing team and training rules conscientiously.
- (6) Demonstrate loyalty to the school by maintaining a satisfactory scholastic standing and by participating in or supporting other school activities.
- (7) Play for the love of the game.
- (8) Understand and observe the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
- (9) Set a high standard of personal cleanliness.
- (10) Respect the integrity and judgment of officials and accept their decisions without questions.
- (11) Respect the facilities of host schools and the trust entailed in being a guest.

The Coach Should:

- (1) Exemplify behavior that is representative of the educational staff of the school and a credit to the teaching profession.
- (2) Demonstrate high ideals, good habits and desirable attitudes in personal behavior and demand the same standards of the players.
- (3) Emphasize to his/her players and bench personnel the importance of proper sideline behavior and the necessity of restraining from entering the playing field/court to engage in a fight.
- (4) Recognize that the purpose of competition is to promote the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being of the individual players and that the most important values of competition are derived from playing the game fairly.
- (5) Be a modest winner and a gracious loser.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

(6) Maintain self-control at all times, accepting adverse decisions without public display of emotion or of dissatisfaction with the officials.

(7) Cooperate with the school principal in the planning, scheduling and conduct of sports activities.

(8) Employ accepted educational methods in coaching; giving all players an opportunity to use and develop initiative, leadership and judgment.

(9) Pay close attention to the physical condition and well-being of players, refusing to jeopardize the health of an individual for the sake of improving his team's chances to win.

(10) Teach athletes that it is better to lose fairly than win unfairly.

(11) Discourage gambling, profanity, abusive language and similar violations of the true sportsman's code.

(12) Refuse to disparage an opponent, an official or others associated with sports activities and discourage gossip and questionable rumors concerning them.

(13) Properly supervise student athletes under his/her immediate care and specifically observe a coach's responsibilities in conjunction with district and state contests.

The Official Should:

(1) Know the rules and their interpretations and be thoroughly trained to administer them.

(2) Maintain self-control under all conditions.

(3) Report for duty well in advance of game time, in a rested condition and with an alert mind, and dressed appropriately in the specified uniform.

(4) Make clear all interpretations and rulings during the progress of a game, yet conduct the game in an unobtrusive manner.

(5) Be impartial and fair, yet firm, in all decisions. A good official does not attempt to compensate later for an unpopular decision.

(6) Refrain from commenting upon or discussing a team, play or game situation with those not immediately concerned.

(7) So conduct the games as to enlist the cooperation of players, coaches and spectators in the interests of good sportsmanship.

(8) Honor all commitments and abide by all school, district, regional and League regulations in a professional manner.

To assist schools in the implementation of this program, the Code for Interscholastic Athletics must be in place.

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27-13-9 Protection, Facilities and Assistance-The host school is expected to furnish adequate uniformed police when the number of spectators is projected to be large, the rivalry intense, and when the contest is expected to be close and highly contested. The playing field should be separated from the stands by a restraining barrier (fence, wire, rope, etc.). Officials should be provided with private dressing facilities not accessible to unauthorized personnel. Officials shall be provided with escorts at half-time and after the game. The use of trained, competent, adult "assistant officials", i.e., scorers, timers, chain and down marker crews, etc., is strongly recommended.

Policy Manual 27-13-9

27-13-10 Procedure-Unsportsmanlike action must be reported to the League. A copy of the report shall be transmitted to the principal of the school or schools involved. Each principal concerned shall report such information or answers to the report as he/she deems appropriate to the League or a member of the Sportsmanship Committee. In some situations the League will provide schools and officials with specially designed forms to facilitate the proper reporting of possible violations. Upon receipt of all reports the League shall refer copies of all documents advising of any suggestions made to the school or schools involved, and to the Chairman of the League who may in turn refer the matter to the Sportsmanship Committee to investigate and adjudicate what appears to be a violation of this rule. The League is specifically directed to pursue any items which on the surface have implications of being sportsmanship violations. A League staff member or Sportsmanship Committeeman may be assigned the responsibility of holding personal interviews with the principal parties involved. Actions such as seeking reports and holding interviews is not to be interpreted in any way as casting reflection upon a school adhering to League regulations, but as an effort to keep all parties properly informed. Penalties up to and including suspensions of member schools may be imposed by the Executive Committee and/or the Sportsmanship Committee. The Sportsmanship Committee shall review at a time and place set by the League Office such available evidence as it deems necessary to reach a conclusion. A copy of the Sportsmanship Committee's action shall be filed with the chairman of the districts concerned.

27-13-11 Procedure: Academic Competition-Unsportsmanlike action must be reported to the League by any school or tournament official. The report should include any corroborating information or testimony available. A copy of the report complete with any supporting information shall be transmitted to the principal of the school or schools involved. Each principal concerned shall report such information or answers to the report as he/she deems appropriate to the League. Upon receipt of all reports and a review of any action taken, the League shall refer copies of all documents, including a staff recommendation as to whether the school's response is sufficient, to the school or schools involved and to the chairman of the League, who may in turn refer the matter to the Academic Sportsmanship Committee to investigate and adjudicate what appears to be a violation of this rule. The Academic Sportsmanship Committee shall review at a time and place set by the League office such available evidence as it deems necessary to reach a conclusion. The League is specifically directed to pursue any items which on the surface have implications of being sportsmanship violations. A League staff member or member of the Academic Sportsmanship Committee may be assigned the responsibility of holding personal interviews with the principal parties involved. Actions such as seeking reports and holding interviews are not to be interpreted in any way as casting reflection upon a school adhering to League regulations, but as an effort

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to keep all parties properly informed. Penalties up to and including suspensions of member schools may be imposed by the Executive Committee and/or the Academic Sportsmanship Committee. A copy of the Academic Sportsmanship Committee's action shall be filed with the chairman of the districts concerned.

27-13-12 Statement of Policy-Insofar as unsportsmanlike actions by players, students, schools administrators, officials, coaches, faculty members and spectators are concerned, the identified items under the Sportsmanship Rule along with the following guides will be referred to by a Sportsmanship Committee:

(1) The school whose coach behaves in a manner likely to have adverse influence on the attitudes of players or spectators may be provided with the choices of suspending its coach from representing that school in athletic or academic events for a specified period of time up to one year or to have discipline taken against the program or entire school by the League.

(2) Any student participant who in protest lays hands or attempts to lay hands on an official may be declared ineligible for all activities by the League or by his/her principal for up to one year. Any student participant who strikes an opponent, a coach or a spectator during or following an athletic or academic event may be declared ineligible by the League or his/her principal for a specified period of time up to one year depending on the seriousness of the act. The basis for this policy statement is that a member school shall not be represented by any student whose conduct reflects discredit upon his/her school.

(3) A school whose substitute team members or bench personnel enter the playing field/court during a verbal or physical altercation will be automatically subject to League discipline. Based on the severity of the incident, a program or school may be warned, placed on probation or suspended.

(4) In the case of spectators physically molesting an official, a coach or a participating player, the school may be given one of two options -- either to take legal action against the offenders or to accept discipline from the League.

(5) The school that does not lend complete cooperation in the host school's efforts to promote the spirit of the Sportsmanship Rule may be disciplined by the League.

(6) A coach or school administrator may be considered as committing unsportsmanlike actions if he/she makes degrading remarks about officials during or after a contest either on the field of play, from the bench or through any public news media; argues with officials or goes through motions indicating his/her dislike for a decision; protests the decision and actions of officials pertaining to the game during and after the contest; or detains the official on the field of play following a game to request a ruling or explanation of some phase of the game. A request for a ruling must be done in private and in a courteous manner. The coach may also be considered as committing unsportsmanlike actions if he/she makes degrading or unprofessional remarks about another school's personnel or about League representatives in the public news media. A coach's ejection from any contest is a sportsmanship violation to be reported to the League by the school whose coach is ejected with copies of the report placed in the school's and officials' association files.

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(7) Sportsmanship violations in academic activities would include but are not limited to discretionary forfeits, attempts to manipulate final ranks and/or the effects of tie breaking procedures by systematically awarding low points to students ranked high, tampering with ballots completed by assigned judges, falsifying an entry or records, seeking information on upcoming debate competition without full identification and disclosure of appropriate associations, seeking access to or sharing content of Scholastic Bowl competition questions used in the current season, failing to produce a manuscript in the required form by the tournament deadline, abusively confronting tournament personnel, permitting a student to compete with the same selection used in a previous year, permitting a student to use an oratory not written by the student, coaches judging their own students, failing to give timely notice of a discretionary decision not to advance to the next level of competition, refusing to follow established competition format or guidelines, or judges acting unprofessionally in violating tournament guidelines or giving preferential treatment to one competitor. Students or coaches found in violation may be disciplined appropriately by their schools; judges may be denied payment for services or banned from future judging assignments.

(8) A school which fails to take appropriate action against participants or personnel who possess or use alcoholic beverages, controlled substances or illegal drugs at the site of a Virginia High School League, Inc., sponsored activity is subject to the discipline of the League.

27-13-13 Penalties-The following represents some explanations of degrees of League discipline which may be referred to in interpreting the Sportsmanship Rule:

(1) **Warning**-A warning may be given by the Sportsmanship Committee or by the League to an individual sport, academic activity or school for a one-year period of time. Cumulative warnings over a period of time may result in suspension or probation for the sport, academic activity or the school. It is official notice that an inexcusable, unethical or unsportsmanlike action has occurred, is a matter of record and that such an occurrence must not be repeated.

(2) **Probation**-Probation is a more severe penalty, based on the nature of the incident, a second incident within the sport or academic activity within a two-year period or cumulative warnings over a period of time within the school. A school or program on probation may not enter any play-off toward a district, regional or state championship nor may the school enter any sanctioned event.

(3) **Suspension**-A school suspended from the League may not meet in interscholastic competition of any kind with a member of the League or a school that is a member of another state associated with the National Federation of State High School Associations.

(4) **Fine**-A fine not to exceed \$300 may be levied with or without any other penalty that is imposed on the school. Failure to report sportsmanship violations will result in a fine per occurrence as stated in 30-5-1.

(5) Violations may result in forfeiture of any championships earned in addition to being placed on probation or suspension for one calendar year.

27-13-14 Appeals-A decision of the Sportsmanship Committee may be appealed in accordance with Section 33 of this *Handbook*.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

27-14-1 COLLEGE TEAM RULE- *Member schools are permitted to schedule and play games or meets against college teams of below varsity level in sports other than football.*

27-15-1 SAFETY AND INSURANCE- *One of the primary objectives of the League is to provide a safe, healthy environment in which students may experience wholesome, enriching athletic competition. In order to meet this objective, schools are encouraged to observe the following guidelines:*

Policy Manual 27-15-1

- (1) Conduct a preseason safety meeting in all sports for parents and players.
- (2) Insure adequate physical examination and conditioning of all athletes, stressing proper diet, adequate rest and physical conditioning including heat acclimation.
- (3) Allow only properly fitted and inspected player equipment to be used and guarantee that playing facilities are maintained to meet safe standards.
- (4) Emphasize that proper techniques are taught and followed, especially in regard to football blocking and tackling, wrestling moves and gymnastics routines.
- (5) Establish athletic emergency procedures including first aid, communication and familiarity with nearest emergency care facilities along with ways to notify/transport injured persons to those facilities.
- (6) Provide certified athletic trainers.
- (7) Review school's and League's insurance program to guarantee that all participants are adequately covered.
- (8) Plan and implement an ongoing chemical awareness program designed to educate students and their parents concerning the harmful effects of alcohol/drug abuse.
- (9) Promote amongst their coaches and student athletes an awareness of the dangers of using steroids and other performance enhancing substances and to undertake the development of a public position against their use. Consistent with the Code of Virginia, a student who is a member of a school athletic team shall be ineligible for two years to compete in interscholastic athletics if it is determined by the school principal and division superintendent that the student used anabolic steroids during the training period immediately preceding or during the sport season of the athletic team, unless such steroid was prescribed by a licensed physician for a medical condition.

Policy Manual 27-15-1

These suggestions serve mainly as an outline for schools to follow. Throughout the year the League will furnish to member schools additional materials, information and aids to promote the well being of the boys and girls who take part in interscholastic athletic competition.

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Member schools are expected to comply with other safety related policies prescribed in this Handbook including but not limited to, 27-1-8, 28-9-1 and 50-3-2 (10-12).

27-15-2 In the belief that the best interests of both students and school personnel are served by adequate insurance coverage for co-curricular activities, the League seeks to provide a program that offers such protection for VHSL activities as defined in this Handbook. Some schools sponsor interscholastic sports that are not listed in the Handbook; students who participate in such sports are not covered by the League's insurance program without approval of the Executive Committee. Applications for approval may be requested from the League office.

Note: Coverage is not intended to replace any present school or district insurance plan to supplement it, especially in the areas of liability and student medical care.

27-15-3 Insurance Coverage for Ineligibles-Students in compliance with the Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Examination Rule (28-9-1), but not meeting all Individual Eligibility Regulations of the VHSL Handbook, are covered under the VHSL sponsored insurance plan until the school submits its Master Eligibility List, at which time only students on that list are covered. Each member school may exercise its own regulations at its discretion with regard to ineligibles practicing with the squad.

SECTION 28: INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY REGULATIONS.

A. General Rules Applicable to All Students.

To be eligible to represent the school in any VHSL, Inc. sponsored interscholastic contest a student shall meet the following requirements:

28-1-1 BONA FIDE STUDENT RULE-*The student shall be a regular bona fide student in good standing of the school which he/she represents.*

Policy Manual 28-1-1

28-1-2 Exception: A student who through school board assignment attends a non-member public school from which he/she will graduate. Such student shall be eligible to represent the high school serving the school district in which his/her parents reside.

Policy Manual 28-1-2

28-1-3 Interpretations:

Policy Manual 28-1-3, 28-1-4

(1) A "regular" student is considered a full-time student who is in regular attendance and is carrying a schedule of subjects which, if successfully completed, will render him/her scholastically eligible for League participation the ensuing semester.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

(2) Any student who is under penalty of suspension, or whose character or conduct is such as to reflect discredit upon his/her school, is not considered in good standing.

(3) Any student is permitted to take course work outside the VHSL high school building provided he/she is enrolled in the high school and is eligible in all other respects.

28-2-1 GRADE RULE-*The student shall be enrolled in the last four years of high school.*

28-2-2 Exceptions:

(1) Students may compete on the sub-varsity level while in the eighth grade; however, no student below the eighth grade level is eligible to participate in any VHSL interscholastic contest.

(2) Eighth-grade students who passed five 8th grade subjects the past school year (see Note following 28-4-1 (b)) and reached the age of fifteen on or before the first day of August may compete on the varsity level.

(3) Eighth-grade students may participate in nonathletic events for one year only while in the eighth grade. Such participation does not affect the subsequent eligibility of the student under the Semester Rule.

(4) A student may participate in VHSL sub-varsity sports for one year only prior to entering the ninth grade.

Note: During the 2007-08 school year this rule will apply to first-time enrolling eighth graders.

28-2-3 Interpretations-

(1) Eligibility is terminated when a student receives his/her diploma; however, a student may complete a spring season started prior to graduation.

(2) Eighth graders, regardless of where they are housed, may fall into two categories.

(a) If they are filed on an MEL and participate on a junior varsity high school team, they must comply with VHSL rules and regulations and are covered by the League's insurance program(s) while they are considered to be representing their high school.

(b) However, if they are competing on a level below the junior varsity (i.e. junior high or middle school), they are not covered by VHSL regulations and are not covered by the League's insurance program(s) unless such insurance has been purchased by the school or system to cover these students specifically. The grade levels of competition, eligibility rules and regulations, etc., under these non-high school circumstances are up to the local school divisions.

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28-3-1 ENROLLMENT RULE-*The student shall have been regularly enrolled in the school which he/she represents not later than the fifteenth school day of the semester.*

28-3-2 Exceptions:

(1) Any transfer student who was regularly enrolled within the required 15-day period in the school from which he/she transferred. (This exception refers only to transfer students who transferred with a corresponding move on the part of their parents or who meet Exception 28-6-2 (4) of the Transfer Rule. For other situations involving transfer students, see the Transfer Rule.)

(2) Any student for whom waiver of the provisions of this rule has been granted by the district committee to avert an obvious injustice, when enrollment within the required 15-day period was not accomplished because of circumstances beyond the control of the student. In each such case the waiver shall be requested in writing by the appropriate principal, giving all pertinent details. Each such case will be judged on its merits; however, no waiver will be granted unless it is clearly shown that the student was prevented by circumstances beyond his/her control from meeting the requirements of this rule.

(3) Any foreign exchange student, regardless of when he/she enrolls in the member school and regardless of the number of days he/she will be a student in the member school.

(4) Eighth or ninth grade students otherwise eligible but enrolled in a member school's feeder school.

28-3-3 Interpretations:

(1) "Paper" enrollment is not considered as meeting the requirements of this rule.

(2) Enrollment is defined as official registration and attendance in classes for at least three school days thereafter. Home instruction does not constitute enrollment in a public school. Home schooling is a process through which Virginia Code compulsory education requirements may be met, as is private schooling. Home schooling is the equivalent of school enrollment for purposes of future eligibility requirements such as establishing residence for Transfer Rule purposes, and determining whether the student has met Scholarship Rule requirements of having passed five academic subjects recognized by the Virginia Department of Education in the most recent prior semester.

(3) Engaging in a contest, regardless of whether or not said student has officially registered in the school or attended classes, shall be evidence that the student is enrolled in the school.

28-4-1 SCHOLARSHIP RULE-*The student shall:*

(a) For the first semester be currently enrolled in not fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation and have passed five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation the immediately preceding year or the immediately preceding semester for schools that certify credit on a semester basis; and

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(b) For the second semester be currently enrolled in not fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation and have passed five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation the immediately preceding semester.

Policy Manual 28-4-1

Note: Credit for courses must be recognized by the State Department of Education. Such credit is to be awarded for the semester in which the work is scheduled to be completed. Credit for summer school work must be applied on the immediately preceding semester or year.

28-4-2 Exceptions:

(1) Any student who is enrolled in the first semester of the ninth grade for the first time.

Policy Manual 28-4-2 (1)

(2) Any student who is enrolled in the first semester of the eighth grade for the first time.

Policy Manual 28-4-2 (2)

(3) Any student who has been forced to withdraw from school (a) because of confining illness or (b) because no formal school was reasonably available, upon re-entry in the school at the opening of the subsequent semester, may be exempt from the provision of this rule. If the withdrawal from school was because of confining illness, a written request for the exemption must be made by his/her principal to the district committee with an attached written statement from the attending physician stating that the illness on the part of the student was of such a nature and duration as to make it impossible for him/her to earn credit for a semester's work. If the forced withdrawal was because no formal education was reasonably available, a statement verifying the conditions shall accompany the request. In making application for such exemption the principal shall indicate the grades of the student at the time of his/her withdrawal from school. These shall be taken into consideration by the district committee in each such case. This exemption shall be available only to a student who has been forced to withdraw from school for one of the reasons set forth in the first sentence of this exception. The District Committee has the authority to waive this rule when a student has an extended number of absences during a semester resulting from unusual circumstances such as death in the family, chronic illness, etc.

(4) A special education student who is working toward a special diploma must make standard progress in those courses taken as determined by the student's IEP.

Policy Manual 28-4-2 (4)

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(5) A special education student who is working toward a standard diploma must take and pass the equivalent of five subjects in accordance with any IEP modifications. If the IEP Committee determines that a special education student working toward a standard diploma should take fewer than five subjects, he/she must pass those subjects mandated by the IEP.

(6) Students who are required by directives contained in the Standards of Quality to participate in two periods of remedial instruction will be required to take and pass the equivalent of four subjects in addition to participating in the remedial classes. Those students who take only one remedial class must still meet the five subject requirement.

(7) A student who transfers from a school on a 4X4 block schedule to a school on a traditional schedule too late in the semester to earn credit in an added fifth course may qualify under the Scholarship Rule's five-course requirement for the current semester at the receiving school if he/she was passing at least three credits on the block plan at the sending school at the time of the transfer. If that student receives a passing final semester grade at the receiving school in at least three courses taken on the block plan at the sending school, and takes at least five credit courses the next semester, that will meet the scholarship requirement for that next semester.

(8) A student who transfers from a school on a traditional schedule to a school on a 4X4 block schedule too late in the semester to catch up and earn a passing grade in the block courses may qualify under the Scholarship Rule for the next semester if he/she is enrolled in at least three credit block courses and was passing at least five traditional courses at the sending school at the time of the transfer.

28-4-3 Interpretations:

(1) "Immediately preceding" semester is the last regular school semester prior to the semester in which the student desires to compete.

Policy Manual 28-4-3 (1)

(2) "Immediately preceding" year is the last regular school year prior to the semester in which the student desires to compete.

(3) For the purpose of this rule the student's eligibility or ineligibility shall be determined on the first day of the school year and on the first calendar day following the end of the first semester according to the school board adopted calendar.

Policy Manual 28-4-3 (3)

(4) A student scholastically eligible or ineligible at the beginning of a semester shall be considered eligible or ineligible under this rule throughout that semester; however, throughout any semester during which the student wishes to maintain his/her eligibility, he/she must be continuously enrolled in five subjects that, if successfully completed, will render him/her scholastically eligible for League participation the ensuing semester. (Exceptions: (a) a student who receives an incomplete in a subject which causes him/her not to meet minimum scholastic requirements is ineligible until the work is satisfactorily made up and credit for

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that course is awarded, at which time his/her eligibility is restored and (b) a student whose original failing grade in a subject becomes a passing grade through successful completion of SOL testing in accordance with local school division policies.)

(5) "Equivalent" means that a course granting annual credit of less than one unit equals one subject and a course granting annual credit of more than one unit equals two subjects, etc.

(6) A student who is suspended or expelled from school and, as a result of this, does not finish a semester is ineligible throughout the following semester, since his/her record is "incomplete."

(7) The scholastic eligibility of a student who attended another school during the preceding semester may be established only by an official certificate or transcript from that school.

(8) Grade school subjects may not be counted in determining eligibility under this rule. College courses, or others taken outside the high school, may be counted provided they are accepted for credit by the high school at which the student desires to compete.

(9) A subject for which credit has previously been granted may not, if repeated, be used by any student to satisfy the requirements of this rule.

(10) If a student receives credit for a semester's work he/she is considered to have passed the work within the intent of this rule, regardless of whether his/her grades at the end of that semester were of passing quality.

Note: This interpretation is not to be considered in conflict with interpretation 8 above. Interpretation 4 is only to be considered to provide cases when students making passing grades in the fall on a subject and do not pass in the spring, but it is the policy of the school for all students to average the year's work. In such cases, when the student is given credit for the year's work—including the spring semester in that subject—he/she is considered to have passed the work within the intent of this rule. On the other hand, where passing grades are made at the end of the spring semester and no credit is allowed for the year's work due to failing work at the end of the fall semester on a subject, he/she is considered not to have passed the work within the intent of this rule.

28-5-1 AGE RULE-*The student shall not have reached the age of 19 on or before the first day of August of the school year in which he/she wishes to compete.*

28-5-2 Interpretation: A student born on or before August 1, 1990, shall be ineligible for interscholastic competition in the school year 2009-10.

Notes:

(1) In case of doubt as to age, the following evidence may be accepted as proof thereof: Birth certificate from the State Bureau of Vital Statistics, affidavit of the physician attending at birth, and documentary evidence such as the family record of birth in the Bible, official school record, and the affidavit of parent or guardian. Documentary proof of age other than a birth certificate will be accepted in cases of doubt only when the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state of birth reports that no record exists.

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(2) If there is a discrepancy in the age recorded on the Master Eligibility Lists filed in the League office by member schools, the earliest listed date of birth shall be considered correct until proof otherwise has been submitted and accepted.

28-6-1 TRANSFER RULE- *The student shall not have enrolled in one high school and subsequently transferred to and enrolled in another high school without a corresponding change in the residence of his/her parents, parent, or guardian. Home instruction does not constitute enrollment in a public school. Home schooling is a process through which Virginia Code compulsory education requirements may be met, as is private schooling. Home schooling is the equivalent of school enrollment for Transfer Rule purposes, and determining whether the student has met Scholarship Rule requirements of having passed five academic subjects recognized by the Virginia Department of Education in the most recent prior semester.*

Policy Manual 28-6-1 (1) and (2)

Note: The provisions of the Transfer Rule apply to students transferring from one school to another, including transfers from a private school to a public school as well as transfers from one public school to another. For the purposes of this rule only, the phrase “high school” is defined as a school providing instruction at the ninth or tenth or eleventh or twelfth grade level(s).

28-6-2 Exceptions:

(1) A student shall become eligible for interscholastic competition after he/she has been enrolled in the school for 365 consecutive calendar days.

(2) A student transferring from a school closed by executive or administrative order to the school serving the district in which his/her parent, parents or guardian reside.

(3) A student transferring to the high school serving the district in which his/her parents reside upon completion of the highest grade level offered by the intermediate school, middle school, junior high school or nonpublic high school from which he/she transfers.

(4) The first time a student transfers from a nonmember high school to a member school of the attendance area of the student’s parents or guardians, he/she shall be eligible immediately provided that he/she has been enrolled in the non-member school a minimum of one full year, has never been enrolled at a member school or is returning to the member school where he/she had been enrolled prior to his/her transfer to the non-member school and that he/she has not participated at the school from which he/she transferred in the sport, during a different season, in which he/she wishes to participate during the current school year at the member school to which he/she transfers. For the purpose of this exception only, the student must have been a ward of the guardian for at least one semester prior to his/her transfer. If the transfer occurs during a sports season, Contest Limitation Rule (54-8-1) guidelines would be binding.

(5) A student entering the eighth grade for the first time becomes immediately eligible in the high school in which he/she enrolls regardless of his or her residence status. A student entering the ninth grade for the first time becomes immediately eligible in the high school in which he/she enrolls regardless of his or her residence status.

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(6) A foreign exchange student may become immediately eligible in the high school in which he/she is placed regardless of his/her residence status by meeting the conditions of this exception; however, all other eligibility requirements shall be met. A bona fide foreign exchange student with a J-1 visa may be immediately eligible the first year in residence and is limited to eligibility only during that first year in residence, and only while the student remains enrolled in an established foreign exchange program accepted for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). The foreign exchange program must comply with all applicable CSIET and federal regulations and there must be no evidence of athletic recruitment resulting in the student's attendance at the school either by school personnel or other outside parties. Once the student no longer is a participant in a foreign exchange program or subsequent to his/her first year of enrollment in such program, he/she must meet all normal requirements of the Transfer Rule and would have to meet 28-6-2 (1), discounting any period while enrolled in the foreign exchange program, at the high school in which the student wishes to be eligible.

Policy Manual 28-6-2 (6)

(7) A school board or division superintendent may transfer a student, by name, within the school division without affecting that student's eligibility by specifically granting a waiver of the Transfer Rule (28-6-1). Such waivers should be considered for the welfare of the student and/or school system and not for athletic and/or activity purposes. The Master Eligibility List of all teams which have students who have been so waived shall reference the specific school board minutes or written documentation granting the waiver.

(8) When a local school board requires students within a geographical area, or those who fall within any other category as distinguished from individuals by name, to attend a high school other than the one the students have been attending, such students shall become eligible in the high school to which they are required to transfer at the time the transfer becomes effective.

(9) In the case of a school reorganization or consolidation which results in the discontinuance of one or more high schools in which students had been or would be eligible under this rule, these students become eligible in the school designated by the school board to receive pupils from the discontinued school at the time set for the reorganization or consolidation and only in the high school so designated.

(10) If the city or county school board redistricts the city or county for high school purposes, students who by this action are required to transfer to another high school are immediately eligible at the school to which they are reassigned.

(11) A student under the care and guidance of any department of welfare, any department of corrections or an orphanage who is required to change residence by court order, unless that order was sought to enable the student to participate in extracurricular activities, or who is legally adopted, is eligible to participate in League activities in the school district in which he/she is placed.

(12) In cases of court-ordered custody, a copy of the appropriate legal custody document, signed by the presiding judge of the appropriate jurisdiction, shall be submitted to the Executive Director for review and approval. Approval is contingent upon the receiving school's principal attesting that there is no evidence that the transfer was for athletic and/or

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activity purposes. A student, 18 years of age or older, who would be subject to a transfer of custody if he/she were less than 18 years of age may petition the Executive Director through the student's principal for eligibility, and the Executive Director has authority to grant such eligibility immediately.

(13) If the district committee of the district in which the student wishes to participate approves such eligibility, a student may, for the first time only, transfer from one school to another as result of a move from one parent to another parent or from a guardian to a parent, when the parents are residing in different school attendance zones, and become eligible immediately provided the student has not participated during a different season of the current school year at the school from which he/she transferred in the sport in which he/she wishes to participate at the school to which he/she transfers. Contest Limitation Rule (27-11-1) guidelines are binding.

(14) The eligibility of students transferring to a Governor's School or a magnet school shall be determined by the policies approved by the respective Governor's School or magnet school's Board of Directors. The eligibility of students transferring from a Governor's School or magnet school back to the home school of the student shall be approved by the home school division superintendent.

(15) Students who qualify under the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act are eligible provided the school has on file all required documentation substantiating the student's status and provided the student is eligible in all other respects.

28-6-3 Interpretations:

(1) Enrollment is defined as official registration and attendance in classes for at least three consecutive school days thereafter.

(2) Engaging in a contest, regardless of whether or not said student has officially registered in the school or attended classes, shall be evidence that the student is enrolled in the school.

(3) Once a student becomes eligible in a school, he/she may complete his/her eligibility at that school even though his/her parents or guardians may change address, as long as he/she remains continuously enrolled there. However, if a student remains enrolled in that school beyond the third day of the fall semester after the parents' or guardians' move, he/she forfeits the right to transfer to the school serving the district to which his/her parents or guardians have moved without first meeting 28-6-2 (1).

(4) A student who attends a school other than the one serving the school district in which his/her parents reside must comply with one of the exceptions in 28-6-2 to establish his/her eligibility. Also, a student who has established his/her eligibility at a school other than the one serving the school district in which his/her parents reside must comply with one of the exceptions in 28-6-2 to establish his/her eligibility if he/she returns to the school serving the school district in which his/her parents reside.

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(5) The appointment of a legal guardian will not render a student immediately eligible in the school to which he/she transfers except in the case of the death of his/her parents, parent or guardian, and then only if the new guardianship is made legally and without delay. A student who has neither parents nor legal guardian must meet 28-6-2 (1) in the school to which he/she transfers, unless the family with whom he/she lives has been given custody ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction in which case he/she becomes eligible immediately.

(6) If the parents of a student who has previously enrolled in the high school grades move from a district served by one high school into a district served by another high school and the student enters a high school other than the one serving the district into which his/her parents move, he/she is not eligible in the high school of his/her choice until after meeting 28-6-2 (1) in that school.

(7) Residence is defined as the domicile of an individual, meaning that the individual lives in a locality with the intent to make it a fixed and permanent home. Domicile requires more than bodily presence as an inhabitant in a given place; it requires bodily presence and an intention to make such a place a fixed and permanent home. Other indicia of domicile include automobile registration, voter registration and the reporting of a mailing address change to the appropriate agencies, such as the post office, utility companies, creditors and employers. Under no circumstances can a family or student participant have two residences for eligibility purposes. It is the obligation of the school to know the complete residence status of each student participant and to see that all comply with these requirements. Any change in residence must be bona fide. Determination of what constitutes a bona fide change of residence depends upon the facts of each case, but in order for a change of residence to be considered bona fide at least the following facts must exist: (1) The original residence must be abandoned as a residence; that is sold, rented or disposed of as a residence, and must not be used as a residence by any member of the family, (2) The entire family must make the change and take with them the household goods and furniture appropriate to the circumstances, and (3) The change must be made with the intent that it is permanent.

(8) For purposes of transfer, VHSL does not recognize student emancipation by age 18 or through marriage.

Policy Manual 28-6-3 (8)

28-7-1 SEMESTER RULE-*The student shall not have been enrolled in the last four years of high school for a period of more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the semester in which he/she was enrolled for the first time in the ninth grade. The eight consecutive semesters shall be counted continuously from that point, regardless of whether or not he/she remains continuously enrolled in school.*

Policy Manual 28-7-1 (1), (2) and (3)

28-7-2 Exception: A student who interrupts his/her high school career in order to participate in a CSIET-approved foreign study program may have his/her eligibility extended for up to two semesters, provided the student does not participate out of country in sports he/she wishes to play upon his/her return, subject to approval by the district committee prior to leaving for the foreign study.

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28-7-3 Interpretation:

(l) For the purposes of this rule, the eighth semester as applied to those completing their eighth semester at mid-year shall be defined as terminating the last day of classes of the first semester.

B. Regulations Governing Athletes Only.

In addition to meeting the foregoing individual eligibility requirements, a student shall meet the following additional requirements to be eligible to represent the school in any VHSL sponsored interscholastic athletic contest:

28-8-1 AMATEUR RULE-*A student who represents a school in an interscholastic sport shall be an amateur in that sport. An amateur athlete is one who engages in athletic competition solely for the physical, mental, social and pleasure benefits derived therefrom.*

28-8-2 Exception: Accepting a fee for instructing, supervising or officiating in an organized youth or recreation, playground, or camp activities program shall not jeopardize amateur status.

28-8-3 Interpretations:

(1) An individual loses amateur status and thus shall not be eligible for interscholastic competition in a particular sport if the individual:

(a) Uses his or her athletics skill (directly or indirectly) for pay in any form in that sport;

(b) Accepts a promise of pay for participation in that sport even if such pay is to be received following completion of interscholastic athletics participation;

(c) Signs a contract or commitment of any kind to play professional athletics, regardless of its legal enforceability or any consideration received, in that sport;

(d) Enters into a professional draft or an agreement with an agent or other entity to negotiate a professional contract in that sport;

(e) Accepts payment for expenses beyond actual and necessary travel, room and board expenses for practice and competition in that sport;

(f) Accepts preferential treatment, benefits or services (e.g., loans with deferred pay-back) because of the individual's athletics reputation or skill or pay-back potential as a professional athlete in that sport. An award of a country club or sports club membership is prohibited. Receipt of a benefit by student-athletes or their relatives or friends is not a violation if it is demonstrated that the same benefit is generally available to students or their relatives or friends determined on a basis unrelated to athletics ability;

(g) Accepts merchandise, prizes or awards having a retail value greater than that permitted by the amateur athletic governing body regulating amateur status in that sport. If that governing body has no limit, the maximum value of merchandise, prizes or awards shall be \$500 per event.

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(h) Received compensation or benefit, directly or indirectly, for the use of name, picture and/or personal appearance, as an athlete in that sport, or provides endorsement, as an athlete in that sport, in the promotion of a commercial or profit-making event, item, plan or service;

(i) Plays in any contest (school or nonschool) in that sport under a name other than his/her own name.

(2) Road Racing-"Road racing" is essentially the same as cross country or track competition and cannot be separated effectively from those sports for the purposes of this rule. Therefore, a student-athlete who accepts pay in any form for participation in such a race is ineligible for interscholastic cross country or track competition.

(3) Institutional Fund-Raising Activities involving the Athletics Ability of Student-Athletes-Institutional fund-raising activities that involve the use of athletics ability by student-athletes to obtain funds (e.g., "swim-a-thons") are permitted only if:

(a) The total money is contributed to the institution; and

(b) The student-athletes receive no compensation or prizes for their participation.

(4) Scholarships to institutions of higher learning may be accepted provided the amount of the scholarship is paid by the donor(s) directly to the college/institution of choice.

28-8-4 Penalty: A pupil who has lost his/her amateur standing through violation of this rule shall be ineligible for interscholastic athletic competition. Such student may be reinstated as an amateur by the Executive Committee, provided his/her principal requests in writing his/her reinstatement as an amateur and certifies that the student has not during that one-year period violated this rule, and that the student is not now under contract to, or owned by, any professional athletic organization.

28-9-1 ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION/PARENTAL CONSENT/PHYSICAL EXAMINATION
RULE-*The student shall have submitted to the principal of his/her school, prior to becoming a member of any school athletic squad or team, League Form No. 2 (Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Examination Form), completely filled in and properly signed, attesting that he/she has been examined and found to be physically fit for athletic competition, and that his/her parents consent to his/her participation. (See 30-5-3.)*

Policy Manual 28-9-1 (1), (2) and (3)

Notes:

(1) The physical examination shall be required before any student is accepted as a squad member or is permitted to engage in tryouts or practice. Any person licensed to practice medicine or osteopathy may conduct the physical examination and may sign the form, as can a licensed nurse practitioner or a physician assistant under the regulations of the state Boards of Medicine and Nursing and under the supervision and direction of a licensed physician.

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(2) Students taking part in athletic contests should be in fit physical condition. This condition can be attained only through properly conducted and systematic training procedures. It is recommended that coaches and physical education directors insist upon strict observance of the accepted rules of training as a requisite for squad membership.

(3) Students who have been examined once during the period of May 1 of the current year through June 30 of the succeeding year (14 months) do not have to be examined again during that period unless they have had a serious injury or a serious illness. In case of a serious illness or serious injury, the medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy treating the student may specify in his/her release of the patient that the student is approved for athletic participation for the remainder of the school year.

28-9-2 Penalty: A student who has failed to fulfill the requirements of this rule shall be ineligible for practice or competition until such time as the requirements have been met. Schools failing to require strict adherence to this regulation may be subject to such disciplinary action as the appropriate district committee may impose.

28-10-1 AWARDS RULE-*Students may accept permissible awards presented or approved by the student's school.*

Policy Manual 28-10-1 (1), (2), (3) and (4)

28-10-2 Interpretations:

(1) It is intended by this rule that control of awards to school athletes be in the hands of the school principal. Outside agencies or organizations which desire to present awards or recognitions to students for achievement in some phase of the school's activities program must first secure the concurrence of the school principal or the executive director.

(2) Permissible awards include trophies, medals, plaques, certificates, cups, ribbons, pins, letters, pictures, event T-shirts, event hats, game balls, jackets and suitably inscribed rings or watches which are symbolic (no intrinsic value) in nature.

(3) Cash or any other type of negotiable document or other monetary compensation are not permissible awards. Gift certificates may not be exchanged for cash, even in part.

(4) A banquet for a school team (or seniors, letter winners, etc.), sponsored by other than the school, shall not constitute a violation if arranged with the approval of the school.

28-10-3 Penalty: A student who accepts an award in violation of this regulation shall be ineligible in the specific sport from the date of discovery for the number of contests listed below. Such numbers shall include all contests in which the school participates subsequent to the date of violation. The penalty as applied to the student involved under this rule shall be applied and shall be counted consecutively from the date of discovery. The penalty as applied to the school under Section 30-5-1 (1) of this *Handbook* shall be effective from the date of violation. The penalty may extend into the next school year, but in no case will the penalty extend beyond one calendar year.

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SPORT	NUMBER OF CONTESTS
Baseball	9
Basketball	10
Cross Country	5
Field Hockey	6
Football	5
Golf	6
Gymnastics	5
Indoor Track	5
Soccer	7
Softball	9
Tennis	6
Track	5
Volleyball	6
Wrestling	6

28-11-1 INDEPENDENT TEAM RULE-*Student responsibility for sports participation. During the sports season for the relevant sport, a student may, while a member of a school squad or team engaged in interscholastic sports become a member of or participate with an organized team in the same sport which is independent of the school's control so long as such participation does not conflict with the scheduled activities of the school squad or team. No school or student shall be declared ineligible for participation in interscholastic sports because of participation by a student as a member of an organized team in the same sport which is independent of the school's control during the sports season for the relevant sport.*

Policy Manual 28-11-1

28-12-1 ALL-STAR PARTICIPATION RULE-*Only students of member schools who have completed their eligibility in a sport may participate in no more than one all-star game in that sports season prior to graduation from high school. (See also 27-9-1 and 27-9-2.)*

28-12-2 Exception: A student involved in an event designated by the Executive Committee as one involving competition with international ramifications.

Policy Manual 28-12-1 (1) and (2)

28-12-3 Interpretation: An All-Star team is a team composed of players selected from two or more existing or previous high school teams. An All-Star game is a game played between two teams consisting of "selected" players. Whenever teams are formed of players selected from two or more existing or previous high school teams, any game in which they participate against another team is All-Star in nature regardless of how the game is labeled. Such games are often listed as "bowl" or "charity" but are interpreted as All-Star under the All-Star Participation Rule. However, if there is a "tryout" process which determines the team composition and selection of members, there is no violation.

28-12-4 Penalty: Any student adjudged guilty of participating in all-star contest shall be ineligible from the time he/she participates until the end of one calendar year subsequent to such time of participation.

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28-13-1 COLLEGE PARTICIPATION RULE- *The student shall not have been a member of a college team in the sport in which he/she desires to represent his/her high school.*

C. Special Rules Applicable to All Students.

28-14-1 DUE PROCESS RULE- *Whenever a principal has information that a student who wants to represent the school in a League-sponsored activity may be ineligible to do so because of failure to qualify under one or more of the individual eligibility regulations in Section 28 of the Handbook, he/she shall promptly conduct an informal hearing within three working days to resolve the question. The student shall be entitled to be present at the hearing and to offer information about his/her eligibility. If, subsequent to the hearing, the principal determines that the student is ineligible, he/she shall inform the student by letter of his/her ineligibility and the specific individual eligibility regulations involved. Excluding those exceptions listed under 28-14-2, the student or parent may appeal the principal's declaration of ineligibility to the district committee by writing to the district chairman. The district committee shall review the case within five working days after receiving notice of the appeal. The student shall be entitled to be present at the district committee hearing and to offer information about his/her eligibility. The district committee may set aside a rule only for these specific cases: Enrollment Rule 28-3-2 (2), Scholarship Rule 28-4-2 (3) and Transfer Rule 28-6-2 (13). All other decisions of the district committee shall be recommendations only. Any decision of the district committee may be appealed by the student, parent or member school principal to the Executive Director and subsequent levels of appeal in accordance with Section 33 of the Handbook.*

Whenever a district committee or an interdistrict committee has information that a student previously certified as eligible by the principal may not be eligible because of failure to qualify under one or more of the individual eligibility regulations in Section 28 of the Handbook, the committee shall promptly, within five working days, conduct an informal hearing to resolve the question. The student and the principal shall be entitled to be present and to offer information about the case, and the district committee shall consult the Executive Director as required in Section 23-3-1 of the Handbook. The district committee may set aside a rule only for these specific cases: Enrollment Rule 28-3-2 (2), Scholarship Rule 28-4-2 (3) and Transfer Rule 28-6-3 (14). All other decisions of the District Committee shall be recommendations only. If, subsequent to the hearing, the committee determines that the student is ineligible, it shall notify the student and the principal of the ineligibility and the specific individual eligibility regulations involved. The student, parent or member school principal, in keeping with Section 33 of the Handbook, may appeal the committee's decision to the Executive Director and subsequent levels of appeal in accordance with Section 33 of the Handbook

28-14-2 Exceptions- A student who is denied participation in League activities (a) because of local rules authorized in Section 27-1-10, or (b) because of any rule or regulation of any local school board or division superintendent.

28-14-3 Interpretations:

(1) Upon receipt of information that a student may be ineligible, or that a district or interdistrict committee is considering the eligibility of a student, the principal may temporarily suspend that student's participation in League activities until the required hearing has been completed and the question resolved. If the principal permits the student to continue participation until the hearing, and the student is subsequently found to have been ineligible, the provisions of Section 30-2-1 of the Handbook shall apply.

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(2) The failure of any person entitled to be present at a hearing under this rule shall not prevent the conduct of the hearing if the person has been previously invited to appear.

SECTION 29: REPORTING VIOLATIONS.

29-1-1 The principal of each member school is obligated to report any violation of League rules and regulations to the appropriate district chairman; but if the violation is an interdistrict, intergroup or nonmember matter, or is a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule, the principal shall report it to the Executive Director. Whenever the district chairman or the Executive Director learns officially of an alleged violation, he/she shall make a complete and thorough investigation and shall initiate appropriate action through the district committee or the Chairman of the Executive Committee, as the case may be.

29-1-2 The principal of each member school will report any violation of the Sportsmanship Rule to the Executive Director within seven calendar days. A final report will be filed with the VHSL as soon as possible and will include a complete description of the incident and explanation of any disciplinary action taken by the principal in addressing the problem.

SECTION 30: PENALTIES.

30-1-1 Imposition of Penalties-When League rules and regulations have been violated, penalties may be imposed on the offending school by the appropriate district committee (or by the appropriate district council in those instances where the district committee elects to refer violations to the district council for decision), or by the Sportsmanship Committee for violations of the Sportsmanship Rule, and by such interdistrict committees as may be appointed by the chairman of the League to decide cases involving interdistrict, intergroup and nonmember offenses. Penalties may include warning, probation, suspension and payment of a fine. Please refer to specific references elsewhere in this *Handbook* describing penalties for violating the **SPORTS SEASON RULE (27-7-3)**, the **OUT-OF-SEASON PRACTICE RULE (27-10-3)**, the **PROSELYTIZING RULE (27-10-3)**, the **ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION/PARENTAL CONSENT/PHYSICAL EXAMINATION RULE (28-9-1)**, **THEATRE FESTIVAL Rules and Regulations (101-2-1)**, and **SPEECH ACTIVITIES Rules and Regulations (110-7-1)**. The principal of any school on which a penalty has been imposed may appeal the decision in accordance with Section 33 of this *Handbook*.

30-2-1 Participation of Ineligible Student/Coach-For participation of an ineligible student/coach or students/coaches in any interscholastic contest or contests: forfeiture of the contest or contests in which the ineligible student/coach or students/coaches participated and disqualification of ineligible student/coach or students/coaches until such time as he/she or they become eligible under League rules in addition to fine as stated in 30-5-1. If the ineligible student/coach participated after he/she had been officially declared ineligible and his/her principal had been so notified, his/her school shall be automatically suspended from the League for a period of one calendar year unless the principal was acting under a court order.

Note: If an ineligible student/coach participates in any interscholastic contest without the knowledge of his/her principal, the principal, upon learning of that student's/coach's participation, should report such participation to the principals of all schools against which the ineligible student/coach participated, to the district chairman and to the

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executive director. Such action on the part of the principal shall not automatically cancel any penalty which the district committee may impose, but will be considered as evidence of good faith by the district committee in determining what penalty or penalties to impose.

30-2-2 Ineligibility for Steroid Use-Consistent with the Code of Virginia, a student who is a member of a school athletic team shall be ineligible for two years to compete in interscholastic athletics if it is determined by the school principal and division superintendent that the student used anabolic steroids during the training period immediately preceding or during the sport season of the athletic team, unless such steroid use was prescribed by a licensed physician for a medical condition.

30-3-1 Participation of an Ineligible Student/Coach under a Court Order-If a student/coach who is finally determined to be ineligible participates in a League contest under a temporary or other court order, the executive director shall forfeit the contest, and all team awards, individual awards and other awards and honors won during the term of said order shall be forfeited and returned to the League office or to the appropriate district or region.

30-3-2 Restitution Rule-Any member school (or school board acting on behalf of a member school) which institutes an unsuccessful court suit challenging a rule, rules or decision of the League, either prior to or after having first exhausted the internal appeal procedures of the League, shall be assessed the full costs resulting from such litigation, including, but not limited to, court costs, counsel and actual expenses incurred by the League. Any member school that does not make full payment of such costs within sixty days of the assessment shall be prohibited from playoff participation in all sports. The restriction shall continue until the full amount plus interest at the statutory rate is paid.

30-4-1 Types of Penalties-For violation of any rule or regulation (other than participation of an ineligible student and sportsmanship) by any member school: such penalty as may be called for under the specific rule or regulation, or, in case no specific penalty is called for, such disciplinary action, including warning, probation, suspension and payment of a fine, as the appropriate district committee may impose.

(1) **Warning**-A warning may be given by the League to an individual sport, academic activity or school for a one-year period of time. Cumulative warnings over a period of time may result in suspension or probation for that sport, academic activity or the school. It is official notice that an inexcusable, unethical or unsportsmanlike action, has occurred, is a matter of record, and that such an action must not be repeated.

(2) **Probation**-Probation is a more severe penalty based on the nature of the incident, a second incident within the sport or academic activity within a two-year period or cumulative warnings over a period of time within the school. A school or program on probation may not enter any play-off toward a district, regional or state championship nor may the school enter any sanctioned event.

(3) **Suspension**-A school suspended from the League may not meet in interscholastic competition of any kind with a member of the League or a school that is a member of another state associated with the National Federation of State High School Associations.

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(4) **Fine**-A fine not to exceed \$1,000 may be levied with or without any other penalty that is imposed on the school.

30-5-1 Specific Penalties-The following penalties shall be specific and shall be enforced by the Executive Director, with the provision that the Executive Director shall notify all member schools involved and the district committee in case of the forfeiture of a contest.

(1) Use of an ineligible student/coach in any contest with any other school. **Penalty**-Fine as stated below, plus forfeiture of the contest to the team opponent or forfeiture of any events won or lost by the ineligible contestant to the next best opponent in the case of individual events. If competing schools are both guilty of using ineligible contestants, this constitutes a double forfeiture and each school is credited with a loss. In addition, it is required that the district committee be apprised of the violation and the district committee may hold a hearing on the case at its convenience to determine whether or not the violation justifies further action against the violating school.

Policy Manual 30-5-1 (1)

(2) Failure to send eligibility list at least one day before the first contest. **Penalty**-Fine as stated below. Refer to 27-1-6 and 27-1-7 (3).

(3) Failure to use eligible game official in any sport requiring registered officials or to comply with the proviso that the principal notify the Executive Director within three days. Refer to 27-6-1 and 27-6-2. **Penalty**-Fine as stated below for each instance chargeable to the home team after any contest when an emergency official has been used, regardless of any agreement with the other team for the use of the unauthorized official.

(4) Violation of sanction rules or of the rule against competing with nonmember schools. Refer to 27-3-1, 27-3-2, 27-4-1 and 27-4-2. **Penalty**-Fine as stated below, plus such other penalty as may be imposed by the appropriate district committee.

(5) Failure to send to the VHSL office the Weight Control Program Compliance Verification Form (W-3) the second week of January. **Penalty**-Fine as stated below.

(6) Failure to comply with the provisions in 68-6-2 (1) and (2) shall impose upon the school involved a fine as stated below. Refer to 68-6-2 (1).

(7) Competing schools that fail to comply with 68-6-2 (3) and (4) shall be fined as stated below; neither school shall receive rating points for the unreported game, their opponents will received appropriate rating points.

(8) Failure to attend the state rules clinics which are offered each year (Baseball, Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Cheer, Field Hockey, Football, Gymnastics, Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, Softball, Boys Swim and Dive, Girls Swim and Dive, Boys Track and Field, Girls Track and Field, Boys Volleyball, Girls Volleyball, Wrestling, Debate, Forensics, Theatre and Scholastic Bowl). **Penalty**-Head coach is required to take a written rules examination and the school shall be fined as stated below.

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(9) Failure to attend the state rules clinics which are offered in alternate years. **Penalty-**Coach is required to take a written rules examination and the school shall be fined as stated below.

(10) Violation of participation rules in team sports, including exceeding the Contest Limitation Rule. **Penalty-**Forfeiture of the contest to the team's opponent.

(11) Failure to attend a VHSL State Area Meeting. **Penalty-**School shall be fined as stated below.

(12) Failure to attend a VHSL State Area School Media Meeting prior to submitting a publication for VHSL evaluation. **Penalty-**School shall be fined as stated below.

(13) A school whose substitute players or bench personnel enter the playing field/court during a verbal or physical altercation shall be subject to a fine as stated below and an official VHSL Warning to that specific sports program.

(14) A school whose team personnel engage in excessive unsportsmanlike conduct before, during or after a contest shall be subject to a fine as stated below.

(15) The first time a player or coach is ejected from a contest for unsportsmanlike conduct, he/she shall be ineligible for the team's next contest. A second ejection in the same sport in the same season carries a minimum two-game suspension penalty. A player or coach who engages in fighting, biting or aggressive physical contact shall be ineligible for the team's next two contests. The second incident in which a player or coach engages in fighting, biting or aggressive physical contact in the same sport in the same season carries a minimum four-game suspension penalty. (Note: If the disqualification occurs in the final contest(s) of the season, the penalty shall carry over to the next sports season for students who are seniors and to the next school year for underclassmen and coaches.) (See 27-13-6).

(16) Failure to provide a required Student Congress judge at state debate competition.

FINES: In addition to other penalties, fines not to exceed the following schedule will be imposed on member schools. Monies from fines shall only be used for student and member school services.

Fine	Infraction
\$25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Late eligibility lists• Failure to complete and send to VHSL Weight Control Program Compliance Verification (W-3) Form
\$50	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of a coach who has not completed the coaching education requirement in the prescribed time• Use of non-registered officials• Failure to properly report additional football games• Failure of coach to attend required rules clinic• Failure of school to have representative attend VHSL State Area Meeting• Failure to provide a required judge at state forensic competition

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- Failure to provide a required Lincoln-Douglas judge at state debate competition
 - Failure to provide a required Student Congress judge at state debate competition
 - Failure of a broadcasting, magazine, newspaper/newsmagazine or yearbook adviser to attend a VHSL State Area School Media Meeting or of a new adviser to attend prior to either his/her first or second year in the job and subsequently submitting a publication for VHSL evaluation.
- \$75
- Sanction rule violation
- \$100
- Removing team from field or court prior to completion of game unless removal is by mutual agreement of both administrators
 - Failure to report sportsmanship violations (fine is per unreported occurrence)
 - Use of an ineligible player/participant
 - Use of an ineligible coach
 - Failure to properly report required football scheduling information
 - Failure to submit regional tournament reports/proceeds on time (fine is per occurrence)
- \$200
- Illegal practice
 - Sunday restrictions
 - Out-of-season practices
 - Minimum practice sessions
 - Violations of equipment restrictions
 - Illegal scrimmage or game
- \$300
- Damage of school/facility property (in addition to cost of replacement/repair of property)
 - Substitute players or bench personnel enter the playing field/court during a verbal or physical altercation
 - Team personnel who engage in excessive unsportsmanship conduct before, during or after the contest, scrimmage, jamboree or Benefit Game

30-5-2 Specific Penalties for Violations of Individual Eligibility Rules and Rules for a Sport-Refer to the following sections for guidance on penalties when violating a specific rule: **AMATEUR RULE (28-8-4), ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION/PARENTAL CONSENT/PHYSICAL EXAMINATION RULE (28-9-2), AWARDS RULE (28-10-3), ALL-STAR PARTICIPATION RULE (28-12-4), GOLF (70-1-2) and TENNIS (82-1-2).**

Policy Manual 30-5-2

30-5-3 Specific Penalty for Giving False Information-If a student or his/her parent(s) or guardian gives false information, written or verbal, relating to his/her residence, eligibility or any other aspect of these rules and regulations, the student shall be deemed ineligible at any VHSL school for a period of one year from the date the information is certified as being false.

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30-6-1 Appeals-The principal of any school on which a penalty has been imposed may appeal the decision in accordance with Section 33 of this *Handbook*.

SECTION 31: RULES INTERPRETATIONS.

31-1-1 Authority-The executive director and in some instances an assistant director is authorized and required to interpret League rules and regulations.

31-2-1 Requests by Principals-The principals of any member school may request an interpretation of rules and regulations and may place his/her request directly with the executive director instead of the district chairman.

31-3-1 Oral Interpretations-Oral interpretations by the executive director, deputy director or assistant directors shall not be regarded as binding, but merely advisory, and shall not be considered official. If later committed to writing, however, such interpretations shall have the same force and effect as other written interpretations.

31-4-1 Written Interpretations:

(1) Written interpretations by the executive director, deputy director or assistant director in his/her area of responsibility, shall be official and binding on member schools unless and until they are challenged by written request for a hearing by an Appeals Committee, as authorized in Section 33.

(2) When the executive director, deputy director or assistant director replies in writing to a request for an interpretation, he/she shall send a copy of his/her reply to the district chairman concerned, unless the request came from the chairman, in which case the chairman would receive the original reply.

SECTION 32: PROTESTS.

32-1-1 Filing:

(1) Protests or complaints growing out of interscholastic competitions, such as those dealing with the eligibility of participants or with alleged violations of rules and regulations, shall be filed with the appropriate district chairman for adjudication or settlement by the district committee.

Policy Manual 32-1-1 (1)

(2) Protests involving the Sportsmanship Rule shall be filed with the deputy director as prescribed in the Sportsmanship Rule (Section 27-13-8). Protests involving schools from more than one district or group or involving a nonmember school shall be filed with the executive director, as prescribed in Section 32-2-1. In those cases that do not involve the Sportsmanship Rule, the executive director shall request the chairman of the Executive Committee to appoint an interdistrict committee to investigate and adjudicate the protest. The interdistrict committee shall be empowered to act with the authority of a district committee, and its decisions shall be subject to such rights and restrictions as govern the authority granted to a district committee.

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(3) The Virginia High School League permits the correction of clerical or scoring errors in each interscholastic activity as specified in that activity's specific rule book. In those cases in which there is no rule book for an activity or in which the rule book does not specify a definite time period for the correction of clerical or scoring errors and the results are not announced until the conclusion of the activity, clerical or scoring errors may be corrected within 60 minutes of the announced results. In debate, drama and forensics, a school which leaves the site prior to the end of the review period forfeits the right to appeal the results. No protests will be considered which are based upon the real or alleged failure of contest officials to interpret or apply game or contest rules properly, or to render correct decisions in matters of judgment. League rules provide that officials for all League athletic contests shall be mutually agreed upon by the faculty representatives of all schools concerned. When this has been done and the contest has been started, differences of opinion which arise during the progress of the contest must be considered on the spot, and the decision of the contest official shall be final. Games may not be played "under protest" for later review by a district committee or interdistrict committee; however, the Assistant Director shall render an interpretation to all parties involved as to the proper application of rules in cases of protests if complete facts are presented in writing to the League office. Such an interpretation will not change the outcome of the contest as the decision of a game official is final, unless the Assistant Director determines that the game official(s) has incorrectly permitted a contest(s) to be suspended, a tie(s) to be broken or a tie(s) to stand in contradiction to the game rules adopted by the League.

32-2-1 Procedure:

(1) Principals only may initiate protests. Protests shall be in writing, addressed to the district chairman or the Executive Director, as the case may be, and shall contain a digest of all the facts pertinent to the case. Protests shall be delivered in person or sent by special delivery or first class mail. They shall be delivered or postmarked not later than two working days after the contest or receipt of the information on which the protest is based. The district committee shall meet promptly to consider and act upon each protest properly filed with the district chairman. The Executive Director, when protests are filed with him/her, shall act promptly to initiate action through the Chairman of the League, as prescribed in Section 32-1-1 (2).

(2) In each case in which disciplinary action is taken or a penalty is imposed by a district committee, Sportsmanship Committee or interdistrict committee, the committee secretary shall file within five (5) working days, unless an extension of time is granted by the League Chairman, a complete report of the case with the principals of all schools involved, with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, with the appropriate division superintendents of schools and with the Executive Director of the League.

32-3-1 Ineligible Student/Coach-Whenever the district committee, or an interdistrict committee empowered with the same authority, establishes the fact that an ineligible student/coach has participated in any interscholastic contest, the committee shall report the infraction to the executive director and the school committing the infraction shall forfeit the contest. If the infraction is discovered and reported to the appropriate committee or to the executive director within the three weeks after the League-designated end of the season, no matter how long it takes to reach a finding, the school in violation shall also lose any district, regional or state honors affected by the violation.

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32-4-1 Use of Protested Student-If, when a protest has been made, time does not permit its consideration and settlement prior to a contest in which an individual or a point of protest is involved, the contest shall be held as scheduled, and any protested student may compete in that contest at the risk of the school which he/she represents. If the student is subsequently declared ineligible, or if the point of protest is sustained, the appropriate penalty shall be imposed, as provided for in Section 30, Penalties.

SECTION 33: APPEALS.

33-1-1 When Appeals Are Permissible-Any decision involving a penalty or protest rendered by a district committee, district council, Sportsmanship Committee or interdistrict committee adjudicating an interdistrict, intergroup or nonmember dispute, or one which a district committee was unable to adjudicate, or any rules interpretation rendered or upheld by a district committee, may be appealed by any principal whose school is directly involved in the penalty, protest or rules interpretation. Excluding those exceptions listed under 28-14-2, decisions involving individual eligibility (Section 28) of any student may be appealed by the student, parent or member school principal involved through the procedure outlined in the Due Process Rule (28-14-1).

33-2-1 Appellant's Premeeting Procedures-No appeal shall be heard or acted upon unless the appellant, within seven days after receiving the decision or the rules interpretation from which the appeal is being taken, files a written application for appeal, containing a digest of the facts pertinent to the case.

33-2-2 The appeal is filed when it is submitted in writing by special delivery or registered mail or delivered personally to the executive director.

33-3-1 Review by Executive Director- The first level of appeal after review by the district committee shall be to the executive director. Any student affected by the decision, his/her parents or a member school principal may request a review by the executive director. The person(s) requesting such a review shall be known as the petitioner. The petitioner shall request the review in writing, shall set forth the specific reason(s) supporting the request for waiver of the eligibility regulation and shall provide all documents pertinent to the case. If the district committee recommends waiving the eligibility regulation(s) and the executive director concurs that waiver of the rule is appropriate under the League's published criteria, the executive director may declare the student eligible immediately but may not grant retroactive eligibility. If the executive director determines that there is sufficient evidence that a waiver should be considered, the appeal will be advanced to the Executive Committee or a duly authorized subcommittee thereof. If the executive director determines that there is no evidence meeting the criteria for waiver, the executive director may dismiss the appeal.

33-4-1 Executive Committee Review-No appeal shall be heard or acted upon by the Executive Committee unless the appellant within five working days after receiving the decision of the district committee or the Executive Director files a written application for appeal containing a digest of the facts pertinent to the case. The Executive Committee or a duly authorized sub-committee thereof, which may include active members of the Executive Committee and/or prior Executive Committee members who remain active school administrators or who have been retired no more than three years, hereinafter called the Executive Committee, shall hear the case referred to it within 10 working days after referral or an ap-

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peal is made by a member school principal or a student who failed to qualify under one or more of the individual eligibility regulations in Section 28 of the *Handbook* or his/her parent, hereinafter called appellant. The Executive Committee is authorized to review the substantive as well as the procedural aspects of the case referred to it. The Executive Committee is authorized to set aside VHSL rules and regulations in a specific case when at least two-thirds of the Executive Committee members agree that an inequity exists and that only such setting aside will rectify the situation. Any decision not involving the setting aside of VHSL rules and regulations shall be decided by a majority vote. The eligibility for a student who is granted a waiver shall not precede the day the Executive Committee acts. NOTE: The 10-working-day requirement for a hearing by the Executive Committee shall not apply during the time from May 10 to August 10, during which time hearings shall be held as soon as the Executive Committee can reasonably be assembled.

33-4-2 Decision-Based on the facts of a particular case, the Executive Committee may enlarge, reduce, alter or sustain any penalty imposed by the committee which first heard the case. The decision of the Executive Committee shall be binding except for cases involving individual eligibility (Section 28), which may be appealed to the independent hearing officer.

33-5-1 Independent Hearing Officer-Any decision rendered by the Executive Committee involving individual eligibility (Section 28) may be appealed to the independent hearing officer by any principal whose school is directly involved or by the original appellant.

33-5-2 Appellant's Premeeting Procedures-No appeal shall be heard or acted upon by the independent hearing officer unless the appellant within five working days after receiving the decision of the Executive Committee files with the VHSL Executive Director a written application for appeal containing a digest of the facts pertinent to the case.

33-5-3 Independent Hearing Officer Appointment-The independent hearing officer shall be appointed by the Council of School Attorneys of the Virginia School Boards Association and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and may not represent any political subdivision that includes any school immediately involved in the appeal:

33-5-4 Authority-The independent hearing officer is authorized to review the substantive as well as the procedural aspects of the case referred to him/her and is authorized to waive VHSL rules and regulations only when he/she finds that the student meets the stated criteria for a waiver, and an inequity would exist if the waiver were not granted. The independent hearing officer may not ignore, alter, or decline to apply the rules and regulations as agreed upon by the member schools and published annually by the VHSL. The eligibility for a student who is granted a waiver shall not precede the day the Independent Hearing Officer acts. The decision of the independent hearing officer shall be final.

33-5-5 Costs for an independent hearing will be shared equally by the appellant and the League.

Policy Manual 33-5-5

33-6-1 Hearing Notice-The executive director shall notify the League chairman, the appellant and the principals of all schools concerned in the appeal of the date, place and hour set for the hearing.

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33-6-2 The chairman of the committee whose original decision is being appealed may, if practical, attend any subsequent hearing on the case. The expenses of his/her travel, lodging and meals, as well as those of the principal of the appellee school (if the case is one that lies between two schools) and members of the committee hearing the appeal shall be paid by the League. If the chairman is unable to attend, a written statement from him/her relative to the decision of the committee is acceptable.

33-7-1 Hearing Policies-The chairman shall conduct the meeting in accordance with the League rules and regulations as provided by this Section and Section 17, Robert's Rules of Order, and shall use, but shall not be limited to, the following procedures:

(1) The chairman shall verify that all of the requirements for a hearing were correctly followed according to League regulations and that the appellant has properly filed his/her appeal in accordance with League regulations.

(2) The chairman shall verify that the existing hearing body was properly appointed according to League regulations.

(3) The chairman shall identify the VHSL staff person who will serve as recording secretary and who will provide the official minutes of the appeal. An audio tape of the hearing shall be made.

(4) The chairman shall have all persons present who are to address the committee identified by name and position or relation to the matter under consideration.

(5) The chairman shall identify the principals who will make presentations. Each principal may question any of his/her delegation, but cross examination will not be permitted by anyone except committee members, who may question any person present. Any person involved may have present an attorney, but in no case will that attorney be allowed to conduct any form of examination, cross examination or present argument or address the committee without the permission of the chairman.

(6) The chairman may entertain any motion for an executive session that is in compliance with Virginia's Freedom of Information Act.