



## Sportsmanship Code of Conduct

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**Section 1 – Philosophy** The Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association (VISAA) believes that interscholastic athletics are an integral part of the total educational program. High standards of behavior, scholarship, and citizenship are important to a sound athletic program. Students volunteering to participate in athletics should assume these responsibilities and will lead by example in demonstrating fairness, respect, and self-control. Athletes, coaches, officials and fans shall at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable and sportsmanlike manner. Each person will be responsible for his or her words and actions at all VISAA Events and shall adhere to the Code of Conduct at VISAA Events. VISAA member schools are asked to include the Code of Conduct in their athletic handbooks.

**Section 2 – Sportsmanship Expectations** Each athlete, coach, parent, spectator, official or other attendee, by participating in or attending a VISAA Event, agrees as follows:

- I will treat any coach, parent, spectator, player, official, or any other attendee with respect regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex, or ability.
- I will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct.
- I will not engage in any behavior which would endanger the health, safety, or well-being of any coach, parent, spectator, player, official or any other attendee.
- I will not use drugs, alcohol or tobacco while at any athletic event. I will not attend, coach, officiate or participate in an athletic event while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I will not use profanity.
- I will not engage in verbal or physical threats or abuse toward at any coach, parent, spectator, player, official or any other attendee.
- I will not initiate a fight or scuffle with any coach, parent, spectator, player, official or any other attendee.
- I will not argue with officials or otherwise indicate dislike or disdain for a decision.
- I will not make any degrading remarks about any official, coach, athlete or school.

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- I will not detain or attempt to confront an official to request a ruling or explanation of actions taken by an official.
  - I understand that conduct that leads to my removal from a VISAA Event may be considered a serious violation of the Code of Conduct and may result in discipline by the Executive Committee.
  - I understand that, as a coach or as a school administrator, the removal of a team before the completion of an athletic contest may be considered a serious violation of the Code of Conduct.
  - I hereby agree that, if I fail to adhere to the Code of Conduct while attending, coaching, officiating, or participating in a VISAA Event, I will be subject to disciplinary action by the VISAA Executive Committee.

**Section 3 – Penalties for Violations** Any one or more of the following penalties may be imposed upon any school, coach, spectator or athlete upon a violation of the Code of Conduct. Violations by parents, spectators or other representatives of a VISAA member school may be assessed against the particular VISAA member school.

- Warning – A warning is an official notice that the conduct in question is a matter of record and any such act must not happen again.
- Probation – Probation is a more severe type of penalty and is for a specified time period. A team, individual or coach on probation shall not participate in any VISAA event.
- Suspension – Suspension is a severe penalty that may be imposed for any VISAA event.

#### **Section 4 – Procedure**

- The VISAA member school shall file a written report describing the Code of Conduct violation within 24 after the violation with the Executive Director and the chair of the VISAA member school's conference.
- The VISAA member school may file an appeal of the Code of Conduct violation in accordance with Section 4 of Article X hereof.
- If a team, athlete or coach is to be suspended, suspension affects the next regularly scheduled game or playoff game.

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- Any VISAA member school or coach that permits any suspended team, athlete or coach to participate in any VISAA Event in violation of a suspension will be subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Committee, which may include but is not limited to suspension from VISAA Events for a specified period of time.

#### Section 5 – Statement to be Read at all VISAA Athletic Events

“The Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association is committed to establishing and developing healthy environments for competition. We ask all spectators to remember to treat the officials and participating teams with respect. Cheer the strengths and victories of your team and do not denigrate the performance of your opponents, their fans or the officials. We expect that all fans will act in an appropriate manner, and respect the opposition and the officials. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the premises. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.”