

Dear Parents/Guardians and Athletic Candidates:

Your son/daughter is a candidate for the Victor Central School Interscholastic Athletic Program. We hope that he/she will soon be a member of one of our interscholastic teams. As we begin a new school year, we need your help in reinforcing the essential school practices and policies regarding interscholastic athletics found in the enclosed VCS Athletic Rules and Regulations of Participation document as well as its supporting appendices.

Participation in Victor's Athletic Program is a privilege, not a right, that carries with it responsibilities to the school, the team, the student body, and the community. It demands that our student athletes be responsible and make commitments which imply sacrifices and dedication to physical fitness, a healthy lifestyle, sportsmanship and, most importantly, academics.

An athlete who accepts the privilege of participating in our Athletic Program assumes responsibility as an ambassador for the Victor Central Schools. This responsibility applies whether the student athlete is on campus, off campus, at a competitor's school, during the sporting season, off-season, or during the summer months. While all students at Victor Central Schools are expected to conform to the school's Code of Conduct*, student athletes, because of their visibility, have an additional responsibility to maintain a healthy mind and body, good sportsmanship and a positive attitude in all sporting competitions and training sessions. In addition, they are also expected to follow local, state and federal laws. (* A copy of the Code of Conduct is available at any school office or at: www.victorschools.org)

All parents and athletes are required to read the enclosed VCS Athletic Rules and Regulations of Participation document as well as supporting appendices before completing the enclosed contract in order to participate. Any questions regarding these rules should be directed to the coaches or the Athletic Director.

Thank you for your cooperation. Please join us in supporting your child, your team and your District's Athletic Program.

Sincerely,
Duane Weimer
Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics

VICTOR CENTRAL SCHOOLS

ATHLETIC RULES & REGULATIONS OF PARTICIPATION

*Athletes are reminded that in addition to these athletic and sport specific rules, school policies in regard to **attendance, grades, and behavior must be followed**. The District's Code of Conduct is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety and all student athletes are required to conform to its rules in addition to the Athletic Rules and Regulations. **Poor sportsmanship and other behavior unbecoming an athlete representing Victor**, including misconduct or unlawful conduct on or off school grounds, also **may result in suspension or dismissal from interscholastic athletic programs**. Also, all state regulations regarding eligibility must be strictly followed. NYSPHSAA eligibility information and school policy information can be obtained in the school office.*

All student athletes are accountable for all of our athletic regulations (academic, behavior, and substance abuse) as well as the District's Code of Conduct throughout their school years **including the summer months**. **See Appendix A, page 1, (Athletic Rules Governing Substance Abuse) and Appendix B, pages 1 and 2, (Other Mandatory Requirements for Athletic Participation).**

Reporting a Violation for Code of Conduct and Athletic Rules and Regulations

Any athlete observed exhibiting conduct unbecoming an athlete on or off schools grounds at any time must be referred to the Athletic Director. Such violations may be reported by any student or adult. The Athletic Director will investigate the alleged violation and determine which disciplinary action, if any, should be imposed. The Athletic Director may also, at his discretion, refer the matter directly to the Athletic Review Board for a hearing on the alleged violation.

Consequences for Violating the District's Code of Conduct

A student athlete who violates the Code of Conduct will be subject to appropriate discipline under these Athletic Rules and Regulations, **in addition to any other discipline imposed by the school**. **See Appendix C, page 3, (Consequences for Violating Athletic Rules and Regulations)**. Consequences imposed on a student athlete might include:

- a single game suspension;
- a multi-game suspension;
- a one-year suspension from participating in athletic department activities;
- permanent removal from interscholastic athletics; or
- any other consequence deemed appropriate

Please note that the referenced consequences are advisory recommendations. The Athletic Director and/or Athletic Review Board have the authority to depart from these recommendations based on the nature of the offense and the disciplinary records of the student athletes.

In addition to the disciplinary consequences defined above, the student athlete also may be required to perform community service or any other consequences as determined by the Athletic Director and/or Athletic Review Board. **See Appendix D, pages 4 and 5, (Athletic Board Procedures and Appeals)**.

The Athletic Director and/or Athletic Review Board will determine the severity of a student athlete's violation of the Code of Conduct and will determine the appropriate consequence. As a general rule, discipline will be progressive and subsequent violations incurred during the same school year will result in increased penalties for the student athlete. In determining the appropriate consequence, the Athletic Director and/or Athletic Review Board will consider the following non-exhaustive list of factors:

- the student's age;
- the nature and severity of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense;
- the extent of the student's involvement in the offense (e.g., a minor participant versus the leader or organizer of misconduct);
- the student's prior disciplinary record, including whether the student athlete had any prior contact with the Athletic Review Board;
- whether the student made a prompt admission of responsibility or guilt;
- whether the student took affirmative steps to remedy the misconduct prior to any directive from the Athletic Director or Athletic Review Board;
- information from the parents, teachers and/or others, as appropriate; and
- any other mitigating circumstances deemed appropriate by the Athletic Director or Athletic Review Board

Other Misconduct

Some examples of the conduct that is unacceptable for student athletes, both on and off school grounds, include, but are not limited to: truancy or other unexcused absences from school or classes; insubordination or lack of cooperation toward school personnel; fighting; ejection from a contest; vandalism; violation of the rights of others; stealing; cheating; assault; harassment; hazing; criminal conduct, on or off school grounds, that brings notoriety to the student and/or school; and any other conduct deemed "unbecoming of an athlete."

**VICTOR CENTRAL SCHOOLS
ATHLETIC CONTRACT**

PARENT PERMISSION

I, , have read the VCS Athletic Rules and Regulations of Participation document as well as its supporting appendices, understand the requirements applicable to student athletes of Victor Central Schools, and agree to those terms and conditions.

As such, I give _____ permission to participate in
(Student's Name)

_____ during the _____ school year.
(Sport and Level)

In giving my permission for my child's participation in this sport, I understand and recognize the potential hazard of participation in this sport and that injuries may occur as a result of this participation. I affirmatively state that my child is also aware of the potential injuries, is in good health, and has no conditions which would prevent participation in this sport or increase the risk of injuries as a result of such participation.

Parent's Signature Date

TERMS OF AGREEMENT FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

I have read and understand the contents of the VCS Athletic Rules and Regulations of Participation documents and supporting appendices, and agree to those terms and conditions. I agree to be bound by the Code of Conduct and regulations for participation in student athletics. I understand that, by participating in a sport, I am a representative of Victor Central Schools and a role model to fellow students and I agree to behave myself in an acceptable and appropriate fashion. I further understand that participation in the Athletic Program is a privilege and not a right and is subject to the rules and regulations of the Victor Central Schools.

Student's Signature

Date

Coach's Signature

Date

*** Please Note: This contract will be in effect the entire year, which includes the summer months.**

**Appendix A:
ATHLETIC RULES GOVERNING SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Substance abuse and other misconduct prohibited by the Athletic Rules & Regulations include the following examples (the examples are not exhaustive):

Possession and/or Use of Prohibited Substances Including Possession by Association

On or off school grounds, no athlete shall use, be in possession of or under the influence of any controlled substance, including but not limited to alcohol, and/or tobacco products, steroids or any other performance enhancing substances, inhalants or any drug paraphernalia, except by lawful prescription.

In addition, on or off school grounds, student athletes must not attend any social functions where alcohol or tobacco products are being used by minors or where controlled substances are being used unlawfully by anyone. The athlete must leave the site immediately upon the knowledge of alcohol or tobacco use by minors (persons under the age of 21) or unlawful use of controlled substances by anyone. Student athletes who attend and willfully remain at an event where there is alcohol or other illegal substances are deemed to be in possession by association of those illegal substances or alcohol and will be subject to discipline.

Students are encouraged to contact a coach or administrator to establish their role in connection with any such event. The purpose of the call is to protect students who made the right choice in leaving the event from future allegations of misconduct.

(Reminder: Parents, by law, may not host or participate in any social functions where controlled substances (including alcohol) are being used by minors. This includes these types of functions held at an adult's property when the owner is not present.)

**Appendix B:
OTHER MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

The other mandatory requirements for participation in Athletic Programs include: **(1) academic eligibility; (2) satisfactory attendance and behavior records; (3) completion of a physical examination with clearance to participate in athletics prior to the beginning of the sporting season; and (4) adherence to any identified sport specific rules and regulations.**

1. Academic Eligibility:

Involvement in extra-curricular activities must never become detrimental to the academic progress of the student. Participating in athletics, drama and school clubs is also a privilege. Therefore, a system for eligibility based on effort, performance and behavior is to be followed. Such a system will serve as a tool to motivate students to work up to their ability.

Guidelines:

Students who are failing one or more subjects or who demonstrate poor effort within a subject area will be considered ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities. Their names will be put on an ineligibility list, distributed to all faculty and staff.

Once report cards or progress reports are issued, students have one week to make-up all work and get their average to a passing grade.

Students can get an ineligibility sign off sheet from any teacher or secretary in the high school office. Students are responsible for completing their eligibility slip and handing it in at the main office. This will ensure that their name is removed from the ineligibility list. The main office will then issue a signed eligibility sheet to the student who is responsible to forward to their coach.

Students may also be declared ineligible by the administration, with teacher input, for not exhibiting good citizenship. When a student transfers from one teacher to another, the grade transfers, as well. The new teacher then assumes responsibility with respect to determining eligibility.

Once teachers have signed students off ineligibility, the option remains with the teachers to make the student ineligible if the students' effort diminishes and they have a failing grade

The parents of the student declared ineligible or a candidate for ineligibility will be notified on the five-week report and the ten-week report card.

**Appendix B:
OTHER MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION, cont'd.**

During the period in which a student is ineligible, student privileges are suspended. These include but are not limited to:

- A. The student may not leave their advisory without a priority pass signed by a staff member
- B. The student athlete may not participate in athletic games or *practices while ineligible. Also, students in clubs, organizations, music/drama may not participate in performances or * rehearsals.
- C. Driving privileges may be suspended.
- D. The Junior Prom (for juniors), Senior Ball and the Senior Trip (for seniors) are the only "one-time events" recognized to be excluded for ineligibility.

* If a student is failing only ONE course, they may attend practices, meetings or rehearsals if they are attending an after school academic support for the course they are failing. They will still be ineligible to participate in games of final performances v/ competitions

2. **Acceptable Attendance and Behavior:** Students who wish to participate in the Athletic Program must be in good standing and have acceptable attendance and behavior records.

Practice Attendance: All athletes need to be in attendance at all scheduled practices unless excused by the coach. Unexcused absences may result in suspension or dismissal from the team.

Physical Education Attendance: An athlete must participate in his/her scheduled physical education class, unless excused by the school nurse or the athlete's physician. Participation in athletics does not exempt an athlete from gaining the many benefits of the District's Physical Education curriculum. Unexcused absences or failure to participate in physical education without a valid excuse will result in loss of practice or participation

3. **Physical Examinations:** All students competing in interscholastic athletics must have a current physical. Physicals are good for one calendar year and physical dates are recertified through the school nurse's office prior to each new sporting season.

4. **Sport Specific Rules:** Coaches may establish additional rules and regulations that govern training, practice and competition (these rules may supplement the District Athletic Rules and Regulations, but must not conflict with said rules). These sport specific rules must be clearly communicated to parents and athletes **in writing**. These rules must have **prior approval** from the Athletic Director and be on file in the Athletic Office. **Note that coaches have the authority to initiate discipline of team members engaging in conduct that is unacceptable of a student athlete, both on or off campus, as noted above. Any penalty or sanction imposed by the coach may be in excess of the recommended sanction contained in the Athletic Rules and Regulations.** Any coach-imposed penalty is appealable to the Athletic Director and/or Athletic Review Board.

*"If a coach imposes a more stringent enforcement of the drug and alcohol policy they must put this in writing to their parents. Parents do have the right to appeal this decision."

Appendix C:
CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING THE ATHLETIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

VCSD adheres to a three-tiered approach regarding consequences to violations of the Athletic Rules and Regulations. The three tiers of consequences are intended to facilitate the goals of an educational institution to alert, inform, and provide students with an opportunity to learn from mistakes and be successful with future choices.

The Athletic Rules and Regulations will be in effect from the beginning of the student athlete's initial interscholastic participation through the student athlete's high school graduation, including summer months. The beginning of the season is defined as the first day of practice.

Please note that the disciplinary actions noted are advisory recommendations for penalties. The Athletic Director and/or Athletic Board have the authority to depart from these recommendations based on the nature of the offense and the disciplinary records of the involved student athletes. As a general rule, discipline will be progressive and subsequent violations occurring during the same school year will result in increased penalties for the student athlete. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, the Athletic Director and/or Athletic Review Board will consider the non-exhaustive list of factors stated above.

A violation of the rules **typically** will result in the following:

First Offense: Suspension from participation in 20% - 30% of the regularly scheduled contests of the team on which he/she is playing. Participation in the **Mandatory Diversion Program, if deemed appropriate given the nature of the misconduct.** (See below).

Second Offense: Suspension from participation in 50% - 60% of the regularly scheduled contests of the team on which he/she is playing. Required Drug and Alcohol Assessments with appropriate treatment / completion. Participation in the **Mandatory Diversion Program, if deemed appropriate given the nature of the misconduct.** (See below).

Third Offense: Dismissal from the team for a period up to one calendar year or permanent suspension from all athletic programs for the duration of the student's school career.

All final decisions regarding the appropriate sanction to be imposed for a violation of the rules are appealable to the Athletic Review Board.

Mandatory Diversion Program: Any student athlete who violates the regulations for drug and/or alcohol use shall be required to participate in a Substance Abuse Diversion Program developed or approved by Victor Central Schools. A failure to participate in this program shall result in continued athletic suspension until this requirement is met.

Carry-Over: If the duration of the consequence goes beyond the end of the current season, it will carry over to the next season in which the student athlete participates. It will not affect the tryout period for the next season.

Suspensions: Suspensions apply only to regularly scheduled contests or events and do not include scrimmages.

Loss of Leadership Positions and Post-Season Honors: Any violation of the rules will result in loss of team captaincy and other leadership positions. Athletes who violate the rules will also be ineligible for post season awards from Victor Central Schools. This includes the Excellence, Outstanding Achievement, Edward D. Ahonen, and Barney Lynaugh awards.

Self-Referral – 1st offense only: In recognizing the importance of the values of honesty and integrity, any first-time violations that are self or family reported, prior to the District's initiation of an investigation and/or disciplinary proceedings against the student athlete, typically will receive a reduction in penalty of 50%.

Implementation of Suspension: Suspensions shall begin immediately after the athlete is determined to be in violation of the District's Code of Conduct and/or the Athletic Rules and Regulations. All violations of the Code of Conduct and/or Athletic Rules and Regulations shall be maintained in the student athlete's athletic record and the student athlete's history of violations shall be considered when determining appropriate sanctions for misconduct. **During a period of suspension, a student athlete shall attend all practices and shall be allowed to participate in practice. On game days, the suspended student athlete will be expected to attend the athletic contest and sit on the bench, but not in the team uniform.**

Appendix D: Athletic Review Board Procedures and Appeals

The Athletic Review Board will be comprised of the following seven (7) positions (based on availability): Athletic Director, the principal or his/her designee, substance abuse prevention coordinator or school counselor, a coach, or coaches not directly involved in the sport in question, a teacher, a community member, and the school resource officer or his designee. However, if the Athletic Director imposed the initial sanction or penalty, he will not serve on the Athletic Review Board for purposes of determining the athlete's appeal; the Athletic Director's role will be limited to presenting the case on appeal to the Athletic Review Board. Similarly, if the school resource officer was involved in the initial investigation of the athlete's alleged misconduct, his/her role would be limited to serving as a resource to the Athletic Review Board and presenting the evidence of the alleged misconduct.

In the event that a member of the Athletic Board is absent or otherwise unavailable to participate in the hearing, the hearing shall continue, provided that there are at least 5 or 7 members present and in attendance.

The Athletic Review Board will be responsible for conducting the initial hearings on matters alleging a violation of the athletic rules and regulations directly referred by the Athletic Director. The Athletic Review Board will also be responsible for conducting hearings of the appeals of decisions made by the Athletic Director on violations of athletic policies.

Hearing Procedures

Prior to the hearing, the athlete and person in parental relation to that athlete will be notified in writing of the allegation(s) and potential for disciplinary action. The student athlete and a parent/guardian are required to be present at the hearing before the Athletic Review Board to present an appeal. Any failure to appear before the Athletic Review Board by the student and his/her parent may be considered adversely to the student.

1. The athlete and parent will have the opportunity to appear at the hearing to confront the evidence against the athlete and present his/her own evidence.
2. The athlete will be given the opportunity to explain any extenuating circumstances surrounding the alleged conduct pertinent to his/her defense.
3. The hearing before the Athletic Board shall be electronically recorded so that there is a reviewable record of the proceedings in the event of a subsequent appeal to Board of Education or Commissioner of Education.

Athletic Review Board Decision

1. The Athletic Review Board will base its decision on more than suspicion that the alleged conduct was committed. The decision will be based on competent and substantial evidence that the student's conduct was of a serious nature, and, in the case of conduct occurring off school grounds and not during school activities, that the conduct is related to school policies or impacts the discipline of the school community. Decisions will be based on a majority vote of the Athletic Review Board.
2. The decision of the Athletic Review Board will be reported in writing, specifying the evidence upon which the decision was made and the circumstances upon which the discipline, if any, is based. The decision of the Athletic Review Board will be issued within 10 days of the hearing.
3. The parent, student or coach may seek to reopen the disciplinary proceeding for reconsideration of the sanction imposed upon written notice to the Athletic Review Board. All applications for reconsideration must be made in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the Athletic Review Board's initial decision.

Appeals

1. **Decisions of the Athletic Director** may be appealed by the athlete, parent, or coach to the Athletic Review Board within five (5) calendar days. The appeal must be made in writing and must request an Athletic Review Board hearing. The Athletic Board will then provide a *new hearing*. The Athletic Review Board has the authority to uphold, rescind, modify or **increase** the penalty imposed by the Athletic Director. The appeal decision will be based on a majority rule of the Athletic Review Board and will be made in writing, specifying the reasons and circumstances upon which the decision was based.
2. **Decisions of the Athletic Review Board** may be appealed by the athlete, parent, or coach to the Assistant Superintendent of the Victor Central Schools within five (5) calendar days. The Assistant Superintendent shall have the authority to uphold, rescind, or modify the penalty imposed by the Athletic Review Board following a hearing. The Assistant Superintendent's decision will be reported, in writing, specifying the basis for the decision. Following the Assistant Superintendent's decision, any modification of the penalty will be immediately imposed.
3. **Decisions of the Assistant Superintendent** may be appealed by the athlete, parent, or coach to the Superintendent of Victor Central Schools within five (5) calendar days. The Superintendent shall have the authority to uphold, rescind, or modify the penalty imposed by the Assistant Superintendent. The Superintendent's decision will be reported in writing specifying the basis of their decision. Following the Superintendent's decision, any modification of the penalty will be immediately imposed.

**Appendix D:
Athletic Review Board Appeals, cont'd.**

4. **Decisions of the Superintendent** may be appealed by the athlete, parent, or coach to the Board of Education (BOE) of Victor Central Schools within five (5) days. THE BOE shall have the authority to uphold, rescind, or modify the penalty imposed by the Superintendent. The BOE's decision will be reported in writing specifying the basis of their decision. Following the BOE's decision, any modification of the penalty will be immediately imposed.
5. **Decisions of the Board of Education** The BOE has the final District authority regarding disciplinary measures. The BOE's decision will be reported in writing specifying the basis of their decision. Following the BOE's decision, any modification of the penalty will be immediately imposed. The BOE's decision may be appealed by an athlete, parent or coach to the Commissioner of Education within thirty (30) calendar days.

During the appeal process, the student athlete's suspension will remain in effect. If the Athletic Review Board made the initial determination regarding the student's penalty, the first step of the appeal process will be to the Assistant Superintendent.

ALL PARENTS AND ATHLETES ARE REQUIRED TO READ VICTOR CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT'S ATHLETIC RULES & REGULATIONS BEFORE COMPLETING THE ATHLETIC CONTRACT/PERMISSION, IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THESE RULES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE COACHES.

