



**VALLEY LUTHERAN HIGH
SCHOOL
FLAMES
Student-Athletic
Handbook**

August 10, 2021

**VALLEY LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK
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INTRODUCTION/PHILOSOPHY

Valley Lutheran High School (VLHS)
provides a foundation for a life of faith,
learning and service through Biblical,

Christ-centered college preparatory education and Christian relationships.

To teach athletes to learn, serve, and share Christ through relationships, learning about the quality of relationships and their commitment to make a difference in the world.

All students are enthusiastically encouraged to participate in co-curricular activities.

These activities support the mission of VLHS and provide valuable experiences in discipline, self-sacrifice, teamwork, and personal as well as social growth.

VLHS is a member of the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA). The Executive Principal of VLHS is the authorized representative of the AIA and is responsible to the AIA and to the Board of Directors of Valley Lutheran High School for the conduct of the athletic program.

The Athletic Director, appointed by the Board of Directors upon recommendation of the Executive Principal, supervises the athletic program and is responsible directly to the Executive Principal. Head Coaches are appointed by the Executive Principal and Athletic Director. Each Head Coach is accountable for the conduct of assistant coaches and student-athletes while they are representing Valley Lutheran High School in any sports-related activities.

SECTION 1 VALLEY LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL AFFILIATIONS

Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA)
Valley Lutheran High School (VLHS) is a member of the AIA and supports its

philosophy that interscholastic activities are beneficial to the total education program. Further, VLHS supports the AIA in its commitment to equitable interscholastic opportunities for both boys and girls and the belief that there is a need for maintaining a proper balance between the academic programs and extracurricular activities of our school.

As a full member of the AIA, VLHS agrees to abide by all rules and regulations of the AIA Constitution and Bylaws. Effective for the 2021-2022 school year, VLHS is a member of the 2A Conference.

SECTION 2 SPORTS OFFERINGS

VLHS is committed to offering the best possible athletic experiences to its students.

Sports or other activities may be added or deleted based on student participation and the availability of facilities and/or coaching staff. Questions regarding sports offerings should be directed to the Director of Athletics.

Fall Season

Girls Volleyball (varsity and *junior varsity)
Boys Football (varsity)
Cheer (coed)
Girls Cross Country
Boys Cross Country

Winter Season

Girls Basketball (varsity, *junior varsity)
Boys Basketball (varsity, *junior varsity)

Spring Season

Girls Softball (*varsity)
Girls Track & Field (varsity)
Boys Track & Field (varsity)
Girls Tennis (varsity)
Boys Tennis (varsity)
Golf (varsity+)

*Will be offered if number of participants is sufficient.

+Girls are permitted to participate

SECTION 3 ACTIVITY FEES

Costs for operating a comprehensive athletic program continues to rise. These costs include coaching stipends, athletic trainer, uniforms, equipment, facilities rental, membership dues, insurance, officials and transportation. It is necessary to offset these costs with a fee to be paid by each sport participant.

Fees have been set at \$100 per sport with the exception of football which will be assessed a \$175 fee (special equipment, field rental, and transportation costs and officials fees for football require a higher participation fee). Each coach may charge a “gear” fee in addition to a participation fee? Amounts vary by sport.

Fees are payable prior to the athlete’s participation in the specific sport in season. **Athletes will not be allowed to participate in any contest until such fees are paid.**

SECTION 4 PRE-PARTICIPATION EXAMS

In accordance with AIA guidelines, each student must have on file with the school office record of a physical performed by a licensed practitioner (M.D., D.O., N.P. or PA-C). A physical is required EACH year that a student participates in athletics, and is

to be completed on or after March 1 of the coming school year.

Three forms provided by the AIA, the *Annual Pre-participation Medical Evaluation*, the *Annual Pre-participation Medical Examination Form*, and the *Annual Pre-participation Concussion Acknowledgement Form* must be completed and on file in the school office.

Valley Lutheran High School student-athletes are responsible for submitting the proper paperwork and scheduling the appropriate appointment with a family physician. Forms are available from the Athletic Director, on the school’s website, and also on the AIA website: www.aiaonline.org.

SECTION 5 INSURANCE

Valley Lutheran High School retains a comprehensive accidental insurance policy for its athletic program. The coverage, however, is a **secondary policy** that can only be applied to the student-athlete in cases of accidents during supervised competition **after** the family’s primary coverage has been exhausted. It is designed to supplement any claim amount that is not covered by the family primary coverage including deductibles and co-insurance up to \$5,000.

SECTION 6 ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

AIA Guidelines

A student must be enrolled in a minimum of five courses the first six semesters of high school and a minimum as determined by the school during the 7th and 8th semesters.

VLHS Guidelines

VLHS has adopted a "No Pass-No Play" policy with regard to academic eligibility.

Students must attain a passing grade in all of their classes to maintain eligibility. If a student has a failing grade in any subject at the end of quarters 1-3 or at any of the mid-quarter reports, the student will become ineligible for all extracurricular activities. The student may regain eligibility by achieving a passing grade in all classes at a subsequent marking period (mid-quarter, two weeks after mid-quarter, or quarter grades).

If a student has a grade of Incomplete, and the Incomplete could be resolved to a Failing Grade, that student is ineligible until the grade of Incomplete is resolved. If the Incomplete is resolved to a passing grade the student will regain eligibility immediately. If the grade of Incomplete resolves to a Failing Grade the student will remain ineligible until the next scheduled grade check.

Students who fail a second semester class will be ineligible at the start of the next school year unless the class is made up over the summer.

In addition:

1. While on academic probation, the student-athlete will have his/her grades monitored by the coach and/or athletic director on a regular basis. Often students on probation will be required to get grade updates from their teachers.
2. Student-athletes on probation will not be allowed to participate in any competition, but may practice at the discretion of the Head Coach. An athlete

on probation is allowed to attend local competitions as permitted by the Head Coach. Athletes on probation are not allowed early dismissal, to travel with the team to out-of-town games or events, or "suit up" for any games.

Freshmen students will not be subject to academic probation until the end of their first mid-quarter of attendance.

SECTION 7 ATHLETIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

Attendance

VLHS student-athletes are expected to attend all scheduled classes and sport practices. Unexcused absences or tardiness could result in loss of eligibility and loss of position on the respective team. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to **personally inform the Head Coach in advance** of any anticipated absence or tardiness from practice or contests.

For participation in practice or game on a school day, the student-athlete must **attend all scheduled classes in their entirety that day. Exceptions to the rule must be cleared by the Athletic Director prior to the absence.**

Student-athletes are expected to obtain all assignments for classes missed due to participation in a VLHS-sponsored athletic event. Failure to obtain and complete assignments on days missed due to contests may result in failing or no-credit for those assignments.

Personal Conduct

All student-athletes must conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the Christ-centered objectives of Valley

Lutheran High School. Student-athletes are expected to be clean, neat, and well-groomed, VLHS student-athletes are representatives of the school and their appearance and conduct must be consistent with the standards set forth in the VLHS Student Handbook.

Behavior to and from games and in the locker room before and after practices and games is expected to be orderly. General rowdiness and excessive fraternizing will not be tolerated. Further, team members must dress in clothing deemed appropriate by the Head Coach.

In the interest of communication and team unity, the use of personal music devices is not appropriate when the team is together prior to a competition, and never when the team is in uniform.

Members of the coaching staff must be treated with respect and their instructions followed without argument. If there are any disagreements with the judgments of the coaches, the student-athlete is encouraged to discuss at a time and location deemed appropriate by the Head Coach. The Athletic Director will be available in situations that are not satisfactorily resolved through this avenue.

Failure to comply with any of the above standards can result in suspension or dismissal from the team or total athletic program.

Practice

VLHS, for some of the sports offered, depends on other organizations to provide practice and game facilities. It is of the utmost importance that VLHS student-athletes treat the practice and game facilities with respect. Facilities should be left as

clean and orderly (or more so) as when athletes arrived.

Student-athletes must be attentive to all of the directives of the coaching staff and comply with drills, exercises, or any other instructions. Student-athletes are required to bring all necessary equipment, including practice clothing, to every practice. Student-athletes may not leave the practice area without a coach's approval.

Playing Time

It is a natural desire of all athletes to want to be involved in game competition. Parents also want to see their sons or daughters play.

Coaches make decisions regarding playing time based on what they feel ultimately is in the best interest of their team. They base these decisions on years of experience, many hours of evaluation of players' performance in games/practices, and a sense of what's in the best interest of the team.

Coaches are expected to communicate expectations and philosophies regarding playing time directly with players and parents.

When there are questions or concerns regarding playing time, players should always talk to their coaches first. Parents should become involved only if a student-athlete feels unable to resolve the issue directly with the coach. In this case, a parent should schedule a time to visit with the coach. If this meeting is not satisfactory, then the athlete or parent should contact the Athletic Director. Remember playing time is not guaranteed, but practice time is.

Game Competition

As stated earlier, VLHS student-athletes are highly visible representatives of the school.

Behavior during athletic contests should reflect the Christ-centered philosophy of the school. Inappropriate, unsportsmanlike behavior, including offensive language will result in disciplinary action by the Head Coach and/or the AD or Principal. Action could include suspension or dismissal from the team or athletic program.

Further, VLHS student-athletes must exhibit total respect to the coaching staff, game officials, spectators, and teammates. VLHS student-athletes are to exhibit enthusiasm and be supportive of the team at all times. Hustle, attentiveness, and maximum effort is expected.

Parents and spectators are expected also to reflect a positive attitude toward officials, all participants and other spectators. Failure to do so may result in being removed from the game, and possible suspension of attendance rights to future contests.

Equipment and Uniforms

VLHS equipment and uniforms are school property and should be treated as such. When equipment and uniforms are issued to student-athletes they become their responsibility. It is also the responsibility of the student-athlete to notify the Head Coach if any piece of equipment or uniform becomes damaged. VLHS understands that there is wear and tear with use but the student-athlete is financially responsible for any deliberate abuse of equipment or uniform. The student-athlete is also financially responsible for any equipment or uniform that is not properly returned to the school in a timely fashion, when requested by the Head Coach.

VLHS athletic equipment is to be worn or used for school practice sessions and athletic

contests only. Uniforms are only worn to classes when instructed by the Head Coach.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

The use of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, and tobacco products are the leading causes of crime and illness in our society today. **VLHS Athletics prohibits the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products, including the abuse of prescription medicines.**

Any violation of the substance policy will result in immediate suspension with possible dismissal from the team and athletic program. Violators also are subject to additional VLHS disciplinary action by the Principal or appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Removal from suspension requires that violators complete a reinstatement process designed and approved by the Coach, Principal and Athletic Director.

Athletic Participation Letter of Agreement

Each VLHS student-athlete and parent or guardian must read this handbook in its entirety and sign the *Athletic Registration Form* before being permitted to participate in VLHS athletic practices and games.

The signatures signify understanding of and the intent to comply with the policies and procedures of the VLHS athletic program and the responsibilities incurred by becoming a member of the VLHS athletic program.

SECTION 8 TRANSPORTATION

Game Competition

Student-athletes are expected to arrange their own transportation to all “home” contests unless otherwise arranged by the respective Head Coach. Travel to and from “away” contests that are located outside the Phoenix Metro area will be arranged by the athletic department. Local “away” contests will have travel plans arranged by the Head Coach to allow total awareness of each student-athlete’s whereabouts.

Practice

Student-athletes are expected to arrange their own transportation to team practice sessions that are scheduled off campus. The Head Coach may provide assistance in arranging transportation to meet the needs of each student-athlete.

Use of Private Vehicles for Athletic Events

Before a student-athlete may use his/her own vehicle for transportation to practices or games, a **Use of Private Vehicles for Athletic Events** form must be signed by the student-athlete and a parent or guardian and returned to the Athletic Director. **This form must be filled out, signed, and delivered to the School Office each academic year.**

SECTION 9 AWARDS

Letter and Certificate Program

The Letter and Certificate Program is designed to award VLHS student-athletes that have made participatory contributions to each school-sponsored athletic program. Each award is determined at the conclusion of the respective season. Recipients will also be recognized at the respective sport’s end of season recognition event.

Certificates are given to all participants of a respective team that complete the season and are academically eligible.

Varsity Letters are awarded based on the following criteria:

1. Regular and prompt attendance at practice, meetings, and contests.
2. Adherence to the rules and regulations as described in the Student-Athlete Handbook.
3. Minimum participation in their respective sport as defined by the Head Coach.

**Please note that the varsity letter emblem is a one-time award. Each subsequent letter earned in any sport results in the student-athlete being awarded with an attachment to be pinned onto the letter emblem.*

Awards/Recognition

At the conclusion of each school year, the athletic program will recognize and award Varsity Letters at the annual Honors and Awards event. ***Student-athletes are expected to attend and parents and relatives are invited.*** Proper dress and conduct, as outlined by the Head Coach, are expected.

SECTION 10 FORMS

Located on the school’s website, www.vlhs.org, are the various forms that may be needed for each student-athlete at Valley Lutheran High School. **Before any official practices, all completed forms must be on file with the Athletic Director.** The required forms are listed as follows:

- AIA Annual Pre-participation Evaluation Forms (3 pages, 3rd page signed by a doctor) 15.7A
- AIA Annual Pre-participation Examination Form (signed by a doctor) 15.7B

- AIA Concussion Acknowledgement Form 15.7C – and, completion of online classes Brain Book and Opioid Awareness www.aiaonline.org (done once during student’s high school career)
- AIA Consent to Treat Form 15.7D
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Player Code of Conduct
- Use of Private Vehicles for Athletic Events
- Sports Registration and Consent Form, including acknowledgement/payment of athletic fee
- Emergency Form