

VETERANS HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC HANDBOOK



**COACHES, PARENTS, & ATHLETES
RESOURCE GUIDE
2025-2026**

**340 PINEY GROVE ROAD
KATHLEEN, GA 31047
478-218-7537**

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LETTER FROM THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

We are excited about the 2025-2026 school year from the athletics department at the V! We want to invite every student to be a part of an extracurricular activity that takes place through our school. These opportunities provide a wealth of experience and personal growth for our student athletes that impact the rest of their lives.

The time and commitment required to be a part of an athletic team are integral to developing life skills for our student athletes. These two areas are paramount for the development of your child in the sport they are participating in. The expectation at Veterans High School is for every student athlete to be fully committed to attending practice consistently and managing their time wisely. We also look forward to watching our student athletes compete and represent the power V.

Our coaching staff and athletic department are responsible for providing the best opportunity for the growth and development of your child in their sport of choice. Our staff will work diligently to enhance the developmental process throughout the student athlete's time with us at VHS. Our goal is to build student athletes who can be very successful long after their playing days are over.

The VHS Athletic Department has an athletic handbook for parents and student athletes to reference our athletic processes and policies. You will find the VHS Athletic Handbook on our school website under the Athletics tab. Please make use of the VHS Athletic Handbook as a resource of information from our athletic department. We will also have a preseason parent meeting before each sport begins to cover important information for parents and student athletes.

We hope you have a great year academically and athletically!
Go Warhawks!

Chad Simmons
Athletic Director/Assistant Principal

ATHLETICS STAFF

478-218-7537

Dr. Amy Barbour, Principal

Mr. Chad Simmons, Athletic Director/Assistant Principal (ext. 3635)

Mrs. Marchien Ballard, Athletics Clerk (ext. 3619)

Mr. Mike Edgar, Athletic Trainer

The following sports are offered at Veterans High School:

Season	Sport	Head Coach	Email "@hcbe.net"
Fall	Competitive Cheerleading	Emma Mullis	
Fall	Cross Country-Girls	Jennifer Bolton	
Fall	Cross Country-Boys	Jennifer Bolton	
Fall	Football	Steve Devoursney	
Fall	Softball	Jeff Sans	
Fall	Volleyball	Sam Clark	
Fall	One-Act	Amanda Coody	
Fall	Esports	Caroline Malcom	
Fall	Flag Football	Eric Mack	
Winter	Basketball-Girls	Tracy Fendley	
Winter	Basketball-Boys	Brandon Driggers	
Winter	Bass Fishing	Ike Thompson	
Winter	Basketball Cheerleading	Jaeda Boyd	
Winter	Literary	Amanda Coody	
Winter	Swimming-Girls	Hadley Morgan	
Winter	Swimming-Boys	Hadley Morgan	
Winter	Wrestling-Girls	Chris Chavous	
Winter	Wrestling-Boys	Bryan Horton	
Spring	Baseball	Jeff Sans	
Spring	Golf-Girls	Dave Wiegert	
Spring	Golf-Boys	Chris Nick	
Spring	Soccer-Girls	Patrick Hunter	
Spring	Soccer-Boys	Matt Roth	
Spring	Tennis-Girls	James Watson	
Spring	Tennis-Boys	James Watson	
Spring	Track-Girls	Tajhea Chambers	
Spring	Track-Boys	LaRon Scott	

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

A student that wishes to participate on an athletic team at VHS must have the following:

- a sincere desire and commitment
- adherence to all state, county, and school policies
- All DragonFly documents completed
- Houston County School District Field Trip and Medical Form
- Insurance form on file
- Pre-participation Physical Evaluation form on file
- All eligibility requirements satisfied

All required forms **MUST** be completed and turned in **BEFORE** the athlete may tryout or practice.

GHSA Eligibility Requirements

In order for a student to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, he/she must have passed or be passing 5 out of 7 classes from the previous semester.

In order for a student to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, he/she must be on track for graduation. In short, for a student to be on track, he/she must have earned five (5) Carnegie units following their freshman year (ninth grade), eleven (11) Carnegie units following their sophomore year (tenth grade), and seventeen (17) Carnegie units following their junior year (eleventh grade) in high school.

Other GHSA Policies:

1. Once entered into the 9th grade, a student has four years of continuous eligibility (8 semesters).
2. To be eligible a student must not have attained his/her 19th birthday prior to May 1st preceding the year of participation.
3. The student must be taking at least 7 subject credit hours during the present semester.
4. A transfer student who established eligibility at his or her former school in grades 912 shall be immediately eligible at the new school IF: the student moved simultaneously with the entire parent unit or persons he or she resided with at the former school, and the student and parent(s) or persons residing with the student live in the service area of the new school. It must be apparent that the parent(s) or the persons residing with the student, as well as the student, have relinquished the residence in the former service area and have occupied a residence in the new service area.

If you have any questions regarding eligibility call the Athletic Director or visit the Georgia High School Association website at www.ghsa.net

NCAA Eligibility Center

For athletes who plan on continuing their athletic career beyond the high school level please make use of The NCAA Eligibility Center. The eligibility center will certify the academic and amateur credentials of all college bound student-athletes. For more information please visit www.ncaaclearinghouse.net or call 877.262.1492.

Lettering Procedure

Student athletes at VHS are eligible to receive a letter under the following conditions:

- participation in more than 50% of the varsity contests played, OR
- being a part of the team for three or more years and having participated in all preseason and post-season workouts, OR
- athletes who develop their skill, display a good attitude, and give full effort to the activity will be considered; given at the discretion of the coach

The determination of whether or not a letter is awarded to a student participating in a varsity sport is the responsibility of the head coach in each sport. Each coach will work with the athletic director to make sure the criteria for lettering are met. A student may be awarded a letter by completing the season in a varsity sport; it should be earned through dedication and commitment to that sport and by making a significant contribution to the total team effort throughout the entire season. For students that letter in multiple sports, sport specific logos will be provided to the student, and then they will be provided with bars for those letters for multiple years of earning a varsity letter in that sport.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

Athletic Director meetings will take place for Fall, Winter, and Spring sports before the first official date of practice. We highly encourage all parents/guardians to attend this meeting. The Athletic Director will share important information with parents. The dates are listed as follows:

- Fall Sports meeting (Football/Flag football/Competition cheer/Softball/Volleyball)
Monday, August 4, 2025 at 6:00 pm. (VHS Auditorium)
- Winter Sports meeting (Basketball/Swimming/Wrestling)
Tuesday, September 30, 2024 at 6:00 pm (VHS Auditorium)
- Spring Sports meeting (Baseball/Golf/Soccer/Tennis/Track)
Monday, January 12, 2026 at 6:00 pm (VHS Auditorium)

All player coach communication will be on the sportsYou app.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

1. The mental and physical treatment of your child
2. Ways to help your child improve

3. Concerns about your child's behavior or grades

Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all students involved, the team as a whole, and what they see in practice each day. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those listed below, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with coaches:

1. Team strategy
2. Play calling
3. Playing time
4. Other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. The following protocol should be followed:

- The first conference will be between parents and head coach of the sport
- The second conference, if needed, will be between parents, head coach, and athletics director

When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern:

1. Call to set up an appointment with the Head Coach of the program.
2. ***Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this type do not promote resolution.***

What can a parent do if the meeting with the coach did not provide a satisfactory resolution?

1. Call the Athletics Clerk, Marchien Ballard ext. 3619, to set up an appointment with the Athletic Director.
2. At this meeting the appropriate next step can be determined.

Forfeiting achievements/quitting a sport:

Quitting is an intolerable habit to acquire. An athlete who quits a sport may lose his/her privilege of participation in athletics. On occasion, however, an athlete may find it necessary to drop a sport for a good reason. If this is the case, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Talk with your immediate coach and then the head coach.
2. Report the situation to the Athletic Director.
3. Check in all issued equipment.

An athlete who follows proper procedure to drop a sport may participate in another sport once the dropped sport's season is completed. If a student quits a sport, or is dismissed from a sport for

disciplinary reasons, he/she must return all items that he/she received from the VHS Athletic Department. Students who quit a sport or are dismissed from a sport will not receive refunds for fees, equipment, or other items purchased for that particular sport. If a student quits a sport without following proper procedures, he/she will be placed on athletic probation. Athletic probation means a student may not participate in any sport until that sport's new season begins the next year. If a student athlete is dismissed from a team due to a discipline problem, he/she may appeal to the coaches and athletic director for reinstatement.

FUNDRAISING/BOOSTER CLUBS/FEES

Students at Veterans High School will be asked to participate in raising funds for various needs (equipment, uniforms, etc.). There may be fees that go with playing a sport and fundraisers will be used to help each student raise the money for these fees. If a student is on the fines list for a sport, they may not try out for THAT sport until the fine is cleared. (ex. Student A has a fine for apparel purchased by the Lacrosse and funds were not raised, they may not try out for Lacrosse during the coming season).

All Veterans High School Athletic Booster Clubs will be utilized to support and encourage individual sports as well as provide financial support. All booster club accounts are subject to audit by the Athletic Director or the Principal at any given time. Records should be kept up to date in the event that this is needed. Booster clubs should hold a meeting quarterly to update patrons on the status of the program.

ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Equipment

All athletic department issued equipment will be the responsibility of the athlete throughout the entire season of that sport. It is expected to remain clean and in good condition. If any equipment is lost or does not perform correctly it is the responsibility of the athlete to notify the coach, who will then assess the repair or replacement. Loss of any athletic department issued equipment is the athlete's financial obligation.

Dress Code for Athletes

- Hats and head scarves, hair nets, stocking hats, sweatbands, combs, picks, hair curlers and bandanas are not to be worn on or in heads at school or on team trips.
- Athletes should be presentable when traveling to athletic events. They should be properly dressed when traveling to and from all athletic events. Appropriate dress will be prescribed by the head coach.
- No jewelry during participation in athletic events or games.
- No jewelry during practice.

- Athletes should be fully dressed at all practices. Shorts, sweatpants, wind pants, etc. should be pulled up and worn properly. Shirts should be worn at all time during practice. Proper shoes should be worn during practice. Flip-flops, sandals, shower shoes, etc. are not proper footwear for practice.
- Athletes should be fully dressed in the weight room or during weight training sessions. Proper attire in the weight room is the same as when at practice.
- No earrings or jewelry should be worn in the weight room or during weight training sessions.
- Cell phones and music devices should not be used during practice or weight training sessions.
- Players and teams should be uniform during athletic events.

Attendance Policy for Athletes

A student athlete must attend at least half of the school day to be able to participate in that day's practice or game. 8:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. constitutes half a day. Playing athletics requires student athletes to make a commitment to participate in scheduled practices in order to develop their skills. If an athlete is going to miss a scheduled practice the head coach for the sport should be notified by the player or parent. Documentation should also be provided to the head coach from the parent of a physician explaining the reason for the athlete missing practice.

There will be consequences for unexcused absences:

- 1st unexcused absence: running & missed playing time
- 2nd unexcused absence: running & full game missed
- 3rd unexcused absence: dismissed from team

ISS/OSS Procedures for Athletes

- Any student athlete suspended from school cannot participate in the athletic program while the suspension is in effect.
- Any student serving In-School Suspension is not allowed to practice. The student may attend and watch practice, but they are not allowed to participate.
- Any student serving In-School Suspension the day of a game is not allowed to play unless it is the student athlete's last day of ISS.

Transportation

Students involved in all extracurricular activities at Veterans High School will be provided transportation to and from all events. For efficiency and convenience, athletes may be expected to provide their own transportation for events held within Houston County. In cases where parents will transport athletes to or from an athletic event, proper approval and documentation must be on file with the head coach of that particular sport and approved by school administration in advance. There will be no carpools. Students will not be allowed to travel to or from sporting events unless it is with their immediate family. The athletes at Veterans High School will have a bus provided by the school or by the Houston County Board of Education. All drivers will be properly trained and

approved. These buses routinely undergo inspections and are the safest way for your son or daughter to get to and from events.

COACHING EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Coaches are, first and foremost, educators and must work in coordination with the parents, who are the primary educators of their children. At all times, coaches must exemplify the mission of the school and serve as role models for student-athletes to emulate and ensure that athletic programs embody the characteristics prevalent at Veterans High School.

Goal Setting

When working with Veterans High School student-athletes, a successful coach will work towards goals in the following three dimensions: team, personal, and school.

Team Goals

Veterans High School coaches build a team by:

1. Creating a positive and memorable experience that will be cherished by the student athlete for the rest of his/her life.
2. Teaching the specific and unique skills of a sport to the very best of his/her abilities by using all means, methods, and resources available.
3. Teaching the skills of healthy competition that will prepare athletes and the team to succeed.

Personal Goals

Veterans High School coaches will help student-athletes grow as individuals by:

1. Modeling character, sportsmanship, self-discipline, and a strong work ethic.
2. Appreciating the moments of playing throughout a season, at times of winning and losing.
3. Becoming a lifelong learner of their sport.
4. Maintaining perspective in and throughout all athletic endeavors, realizing teachable moments exist in all experiences.
5. Fostering positive relationships with all school community stakeholders.

School Goals

Veterans High School coaches contribute to the school community by:

1. Infusing the school mission in all athletic activities.
2. Promoting academic excellence as an essential component in the development of student athletes.
3. Committing to effective communication with administrators, teachers, parents, and athletes.
4. Supporting the development of student-athletes as leaders and role models in the greater school community.
5. Creating a culture of school unity and spirit as exemplified through sportsmanship, positive fan participation, and respect for all.

COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Supervise athletes at all times:
 - Students are not to be left alone in locker room or on field.
 - Stay with students until they are picked up/enter their vehicles when leaving from practices/games.
 - Students should not be in the weight room without a coach there to monitor workouts.
2. Complete all online rules clinics that are required by the Georgia High School Association. If a clinic is not completed prior to the deadline set by the GHSA, the coach that did not complete the clinic will be responsible for paying the fine administered by the GHSA.
3. Head coaches are responsible for scheduling varsity, junior varsity, & 9th grade games. Contracts should be given to the athletic director when completed.
4. Schedule and communicate with game officials for all contests. An administrator will be at all Varsity competitions that are a) Home or b) In-county.
5. Communicate cancellations in a timely manner to officials, teams, players, administrators, front office, and parents.
6. Head coaches should make sure that all athletes are current and up to date in Dragonfly. No student should be allowed to participate in tryouts without ALL documentations completed in Dragonfly.
7. Eligibility should be checked on athletes prior to season starting. All eligibility issues will be handled by the Athletic Director, including transfers.
8. All bus requests and request changes should be turned in for buses to be scheduled in a timely manner. Head coaches without a CDL are responsible for finding a driver to transport their athletes.
9. Coaches are responsible for keeping athletic facilities clean. All athletic facilities should be kept clean and presentable, including all locker rooms, offices, weight room, gym, and fields.
10. Inventory reports should be completed and turned in to the athletic director at the end of each sport's season.
11. Gender Equity Report should be completed and turned in to the athletic director at the end of each sport's season.
12. If a sport needs to use the gym or weight rooms for any reason, it should be scheduled through PE Department Chair.
13. **The activity bus must be checked out through the Athletics Clerk.** Whoever uses the activity bus is responsible for refueling it for the next coach to use. Do not return the activity bus low on fuel. Failure to refuel properly will be at the personal cost of the prior activity bus user.
14. All athletic programs are encouraged to have fundraisers. However, all fundraising activities require the approval of the athletic director and principal. A fundraiser request must be completed and approved prior to the start of the fundraiser.
15. Purchase Orders should be approved prior to purchase. Do not buy something without having approval. These require the signature of the Athletic Director and Principal. Please allow time for these to be signed.

16. No athletic program or Booster Club should take out a loan from a bank without the approval of the athletic director and principal. If a loan is approved by the AD and principal, a budget and payment plan that accompanies the loan are required.
17. All booster clubs should be in good standing financially and the Athletic Director or Principal can/will check bank statements periodically.
18. Condition athletes properly.
19. Assess athletes' readiness for practice and competition.
20. Have planned instruction for every practice.
21. Teach sportsmanship.
22. Provide proper equipment.
23. Select, train, and supervise assistant coaches.
24. Meet with athletic director as deemed necessary to discuss team or other observations.
25. Promote OUR brand! Utilize social media to promote your players, program and our school. REMEMBER: You, your players, and your program are representations of our school. Send all publicity of wins and region/state accolades and appropriate pictures for publicity to the athletic director and the principal.
26. Participate in each Semester Signing Day event. VHS will hold a Semester Signing Day event that will be placed on the school event calendar.
 - This event will be conducted by the athletic director and will take place on scheduled dates.
 - The head coach is responsible for verifying and obtaining documentation in writing of the student-athlete's awards package; such documentation must be provided to the athletic director.

2024-2025 SIGNING DATES

First Semester: Wednesday, December 3, 2025 – 2:15 pm, Gymnasium
Second Semester: Wednesday, May 6, 2023 – 2:15 pm, Gymnasium

2024-2025 VHS ALL-SPORTS PASS

\$100.00 for the 25-26 school year.

- Pays for all athletic events for the entire school year.
- Can be purchased on GoFan.
- Easy access for sporting events using GoFan on personal cell phones.

SPECTATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Houston County Board of Education continues to provide our schools with new athletic facilities and upgrades as needed. It is imperative we all do our parts as members of the community to keep our facilities in impeccable condition. In your respective role as a parent, coach player, or spectator we ask that you adhere to the following:

- Comply with signs posted (food and drink, player only areas, etc.)
- Child/adult spectators should not engage in other play during contests (football, tag, etc.)
- Chairs are not permitted in any of our stadiums
- Please follow the turf guidelines posted at each stadium
- Please support your team when playing in county by sitting on your team's side



*Georgia High School Association
Sportsmanship Statement*

"The GHSA and its member schools have made a commitment to promote good sportsmanship by student/athletes, coaches, and spectators at all GHSA sanctioned events. Profanity, degrading remarks, and intimidating actions directed at officials or competitors will not be tolerated, and are grounds for removal from the event site. Spectators are not allowed to enter the competition area during warm-ups or while the contest is being conducted. Thank you for your cooperation in the promotion of good sportsmanship at today's event."

HOUSTON COUNTY ATHLETIC EVENT PRICES 2024-2025

Football	All sales (advance and gate) \$10.00
Softball	\$7.00 (single game) / \$10.00 (double header)
Volleyball	\$5.00 **
Flag Football	\$7.00
Basketball	\$10.00
Wrestling	\$5.00 **
Swimming	\$7.00
Baseball	\$7.00 (single game) / \$10.00 (double header)
Track	\$7.00
Soccer	\$7.00 for single game, \$10.00 for Girls/Boys doubleheader
Sub-Varsity	All tickets \$7.00

** In Volleyball and Wrestling admission fee is \$7.00 when there are 3 teams or more competing and \$10.00 for the county championships.

Each school has the option to sell advanced student tickets for their home games for any price they choose, but all tickets purchased at the gate will follow the pricing policy.