

**VAC**

**VALLEY ATHLETIC CONFERENCE**

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Valley Athletic Conference (VAC) offers a variety of athletic programs to meet the diverse interests and abilities of student-athletes. Team levels vary from elementary, grades 3, 4, 5, and 6, and middle school, grades 7 and 8.

The Valley Athletic Conference is represented by a variety of independent schools. Each school has an equal representation and responsibility in all VAC procedures and development.

Each school is responsible to supervise their athletic events and managing any incidents that may occur while hosting these events.

The Valley Athletic Conference does not hold any liability for any of the independent school's actions or lack thereof. The liability solely rests on each of the independent schools and their administration.

- Officials have the authority to banish any person(s) who is interfering with the game, displaying unsportsmanlike conduct, or is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Any person banished from the game must leave the property where they cannot be seen or heard within 60 seconds.
- Ejected players will not play in the next contest. Please refer to the Ejection section for additional details.
- Flagrant violations such as fighting, profanity, or attempting to strike an official, player, or coach will be reported to the Valley Athletic Conference and may lead to suspension from participating in league events.

## **CONDUCT OF COACHES**

This code of conduct for coaches applies to any person on a team that has a leadership role.

- Will not place winning over the safety and welfare of the athletes.
  - Always instructs players to play within written rules and with good sportsmanship
  - Encourages academic excellence and hard work.
  - Is an example of integrity at all times, especially when it comes to respecting and supporting officials.
  - Attends all games.
  - Responsible for the behavior of assistant coaches, players, and fans.
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- Attends all games. Games without a coach/employee of the school will not be played.
  - A 15 minute grace period is allowed, after which a forfeit will be given.

- Exceptions to this rule will be considered if the delay is due to an unforeseen circumstance. The decision to play will be made by the location/field administrator, along with the coaches, taking into account daylight, time, and schedules. An adjustment of game length may be considered an option.
- It is mandatory for coaches to attend a pre-season coach's meeting prior to the start of their sports season. School AD's will be held responsible and accountable for their coaches' attendance.
  - This will be part of the Handbook Acknowledgement/Rules Meeting document to be signed. (Refer to this section below.)

## **CONDUCT OF SCHOOL/FANS**

Will not criticize, taunt, or embarrass student-athletes.

## **CONDUCT FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES**

Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated on or near any venue before, during, or after games. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Use of disconcerting words or acts
- Disrespectfully addressing coaches, other players, or officials
- Use of profanity or insulting language or gestures
- Making any contact, including spitting, with any other player which is deemed unnecessary and/or incites roughness

## **EJECTION/DISQUALIFICATION POLICIES FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES, COACHES, AND FANS:**

The VAC will follow the NIAA's policy for student-athletes, coaches, or fans ejected or disqualified for unsportsmanlike behavior or flagrant fouls. The decision of a sports official to eject a student-athlete, coach, or fan from a contest is a final decision and may not be appealed. If you are ejected or disqualified, you will be ineligible for the next scheduled contest. If a second ejection occurs in one sports season this will result in the ejection of that game and two games following. If a third ejection occurs in one sports season, this will result in the suspension of the rest of the season games and any post-season games.

## **BOYS FLAG FOOTBALL RULES**

- The season is from early September to mid-October

- Scheduling is done by the VAC AD/Secretary. Schools are to provide the number of teams per division participating and any other pertinent information and/or dates they are not able to play.
- Games typically start at 3:30 pm but are based on facility availability.
- Host field to provide water for teams.
- ES coaches ARE allowed to be on the field in the huddle.
- MS Coaches are NOT allowed on the field in the huddle and should run plays in from the sideline via players or plays.
- The home team always reports all scores via Google Docs within 24 hours, Monday through Thursday. Friday and Saturday games must be reported no later than Monday. Fines are only imposed to home teams when scores are not reported as listed in the VAC Handbook.

#### Field Of Play

- The field of play is 40 x 80 yards, including a ten-yard end zone and a safety zone of ten yards extending beyond each end zone. All fields must be marked with a goal-line and ten-yard markers.
- All balls must be spotted in the middle of the field.

#### Number Of Players

- Each team will consist of nine players on the field. Offenses are allowed six specialists and three linemen. A game may be played if a team has only eight players, but only after both teams agree and the game will be played eight on nine. If a team cannot field a minimum of eight players, the game will be forfeited. Girls are allowed to participate, as long as their school allows. This means that it is the school's decision to allow the girls to participate in flag football.
- A player can play on only one team throughout the regular season and the playoffs. Players may not switch between teams.

#### Equipment And Uniforms

- Teams must have an identifiable jersey. Shorts or sweatpants are acceptable, no attire with belt loops is allowed.
- Field location to have pennies available for teams with similar colors. The away team will wear pennies. Please make sure the pennies are not taken home and stay at the field.
- Rubber cleats are acceptable. No metal cleats.
- Mouthpieces are required. A player without a mouthpiece will not be allowed to play.
- No jewelry or watches of any kind are allowed.
- Officials to conduct an equipment check/flag pull before the start of the game.

## Flags

- Game site locations shall supply standard approved flags. Please make sure the flags are not taken home and stay at the field.
- Flags shall be the velcro pull away belt with 3 flags on each belt, two on the side and one on the back, and are provided by the host location. Both teams MUST wear the flags provided by the host site.
- Velcro flags, popper flags, or loop flags are not acceptable.
- Teams shall wear color flags that offset their uniform.
- Flags must be worn outside the jersey.
- All portions of the flag must be outside of the jersey (belt and flags). No portion of the jersey may cover any portion of the flag unit.

## Footballs

- A junior size football will be used for elementary (TDJ). For middle school, a junior size football (TDY) should be used. The offensive team may switch to their football if desired.

## Down And Distance Markers

- Each team playing will provide two volunteers to assist with chains and down markers.

## Length Of The Game

- Playing time shall be 40 minutes of running time, divided into two 20 minute halves. Half time shall be 5 minutes. Ball possession shall change at the beginning of the second half.
- During the last two minutes of the half and last two minutes of the game, the game clock will stop during dead balls or a play out of bounds. The game clock will be stopped on all measurements for first downs. If a team is not ready to play at the scheduled game time, the game will be forfeited.
- Clocks are provided by the VAC and used at each host site location.

## Timeouts And Stopping Play

- Each team is permitted two timeouts per half. One additional timeout is awarded for an overtime period. Timeouts are 1 minute in length. Timeouts will not carry over from the first half to the second half.
- The clock will stop on the administration of penalties when there is any discussion by officials and coaches to administer the penalty.
- The game clock will stop in the case of an injury. If a timeout is called for an injured player, the injured player must leave the game for at least one play.

### Start Of The Game

- A pre-game coin toss will determine first-half possession. There are no kickoffs. The offensive team will start with the ball on the 20-yard line.

### Offensive Linemen

- The offense must have 3 offensive linemen. They can line up at any distance apart. The center and players directly beside the center are ineligible. A two-point stance, no hands on the ground, is required. A 3-point stance is not allowed. The 1st offense for a 3-point stance is a warning to the team. The 2nd offense is a 10-yard penalty.

### Blocking

- Blocking is done with palms up and arms extended. All blocking must be above the waist and below the shoulders. No contact with the face or head is allowed.
- Down-field blocking is allowed. No player may leave their feet when blocking and there is no chop blocking.
- Clipping, or blocking in the back, is not allowed. If a defender spins while being blocked an offensive lineman may continue to block the defender.
- Illegal blocking is a spot foul, 10 yards from the spot of the foul.
- Officials will ensure that blockers are not overly aggressive.

### Ball Carrier Actions

- Offensive players may jump and spin to avoid a flag pull. They may not dive head first. Runners are to avoid a defender and not run through them.
- Flag guarding is the specific use of the hands to push away or slap away a defender's hand to avoid being tackled. Pumping of arms in a natural running motion is allowed, along with spinning as long as the ball carrier does not run through a defender or push the defender's hands away.
- Straight arming or stiff-arming is not allowed. The penalty shall be 10 yards from the spot of the foul and a loss of down.
- Flag guarding is a spot foul and the penalty shall be 10 yards from the spot of the foul.
- While carrying the ball, if any receiver or runner loses his flag, the ball is dead at the spot where the flag is lost.

### Defensive Actions

- All defensive players must start 3 yards from the line of scrimmage. If the line of scrimmage is less than 3 yards from the goal line, the defense must be behind the goal line.
- Defensive players are allowed to dive only in pursuit of a ball carrier.

- The defense is not allowed to run through or bull rush a blocker. No contact with the face or head is allowed.
- The defensive rush is allowed to block passes and make contact with the quarterback's arm. However, no unnecessary roughness will be tolerated. NO contact should be made until the ball is thrown.
- Fumbles are considered dead balls when the ball hits the ground and is not allowed to be picked up by the other team. If the ball does not hit the ground, it is a live ball.

#### Quarterback Sneaks And Offense Runs Up The Middle

- Quarterback sneaks are not allowed. Quarterback sneaks are defined as the quarterback taking the ball from under center in a non-shotgun formation and lunging forward immediately. Doing so is a ten-yard penalty
- Quarterback draws are allowed. Quarterbacks may run up the middle as long as a shotgun formation is used. When under center the quarterback must take one step back into the backfield first and then run forward.
- Handoffs or runs up the middle are allowed.

#### Fumbles

- Fumbles are considered dead balls when the ball hits the ground and is not allowed to be picked up by the other team. If the ball does not hit the ground, it is a live ball. Play will continue at the spot of the fumble.

#### Intentional Grounding

- A player may not throw a pass out of bounds or into the ground to avoid being tackled. This will be a 5-yard penalty and a loss of down.
- The quarterback may spike the ball to stop the clock during the final two minutes of the half. The quarterback should make no forward movement and raise the ball higher than his ear when spiking the ball to stop the clock.

#### Receptions And Interceptions

- If a player is in the air attempting to catch a pass, the player must contact the ground with at least one foot in-bounds with possession of the ball before going out of bounds.
- If contact is made by the defensive player that forces the offensive player to go out of bounds during the catch, it is a legal catch. If possession of the ball is lost simultaneously when the receiver hits the ground, it is not a catch.
- If the receiver loses his flag before catching the ball, the reception is awarded and the ball is dead where it was caught. No further advancement is allowed.

- If the receiver loses his flag before catching the ball and the reception is made in the end zone, it is ruled a touchdown.
- If a defensive player intercepts a pass, they are allowed to advance the ball.

### Pass Interference

- It is pass interference if an eligible receiver is deflagged, shoved, jammed, or touched before touching the ball when receiving a pass past 3 yards of the line of scrimmage.
- Pass interference should also be called if a defensive player removes the flag of an offensive player before the offensive player has caught the ball.
- Pass interference that occurs past 10 yards, the penalty will occur at the spot of the foul. Pass interference not over 10 yards, a 10 yard penalty will occur from the line of scrimmage.
- If the pass interference is intentional or unsportsmanlike, an additional 10 yards may be accessed.

### Punts

- Before any team punts, they must notify the officials. No fake punts are allowed.
- No rushing the punter, the offensive team will have 10 seconds to punt the ball. The offensive and defensive team must not move until the ball is kicked.
- The punter may receive the ball under center and walk back to punt the ball. If the punter fumbles the ball the play is dead once the ball hits the ground.
- All touchbacks will be placed on the 20-yard line
- A punt is declared dead after the ball is touched by a defensive player. The receiving team may pick the ball up and advance if it touches the ground.
- Blocking is allowed

### Safety

- If an offensive player with the ball is tackled in their end zone, two points are awarded to the defensive team.
- If a defensive player intercepts the ball in the end zone, they must leave the end zone and then return to the end zone and be tackled for a safety to occur.

### Scoring

- Touchdowns = 6 points
- Extra points:
  - From 5 yards = 1 point
  - From 10 yards = 2 points



- Once an offensive team decides on an extra point they cannot change their decision unless a timeout is called.
- Should the defense stop the extra point with an interception, the play is dead.

### Overtime

- Overtime will begin with a coin toss.
- One timeout is awarded for an overtime period. Timeouts are 1 minute in length.
- Both teams will be given a chance to score from twenty yards away from the goal line.
- The offensive team will have four plays to score a touchdown or move 10 yards for a first down.
- An interception is a dead ball with a change of possession.
- Extra points will be attempted after a touchdown.
- If a winner can be determined after each team has had one offensive possession the game is over.
- If second overtime is necessary, teams will switch the order of offense and defense, relative to the first overtime and each team must go for two if they score a touchdown.

### Playoffs

- The top four (4) teams in the league will make the postseason.

### Officials

- Officials have the authority to banish any person(s) who is interfering with the game, displaying unsportsmanlike conduct, or is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Any person banished from the game must leave the property where they cannot be seen or heard within 60 seconds.
- Ejected players will not play in the next contest. Please refer to the Ejection section for additional details.
- Flagrant violations such as fighting, profanity, or attempting to strike an official, player, or coach will be reported to the Valley Athletic Conference and may lead to suspension from participating in league events.
- The official's decision during the game will be final.
- Any rule may be changed without notice to program participants. If a change is made, each team will be notified as soon as it is necessary.