

CODE OF ETHICS
FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL
ATHLETICS

If athletics are to justify themselves in a secondary school program, they should:

1. Emphasize good sportsmanship, upright conduct and the spirit of fair play.
2. Place a premium on the values which accrue from fair play.
3. Eliminate as far as possible the practices which tend to destroy the worthwhile value of the game.
4. Teach respect and consideration for the opponents as either guests or the host of the game.
5. Cultivate respect for the authority of school personnel, coaches and game officials.
6. Develop self-control, self-direction and sound judgment.
7. Discourage profanity and obscene language at all times.
8. Demonstrate the rules of the game are mutual agreements, honorable in spirit as well as in letter, and that stealing of an advantage in sports is dishonorable.
9. Convince everyone that athletics really aim to promote mental, social and moral welfare of the participants, as well as his/her physical well-being.
10. Promote the game for the players, and as a game only; not as a matter of life and death, of lasting glory in victory, or a disgrace of defeat.

WELCOME...

To the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School Athletic Program. The material presented in this booklet has been compiled to better acquaint you and your family with some of the practices and regulations that govern the athletic program at Blackstone Valley Tech. Please keep this booklet handy and refer to it when questions and/or concerns about your son or daughter's athletic experience at the school arise. If your questions or concerns are not answered within this booklet, please speak with your child's coach or feel free to call the Athletic Director's office at the school. Do not let your questions or concerns go unanswered or unresolved.

Michele S. Denise

Director of Athletics
Blackstone Valley Tech

A. Phone Numbers

Michele Denise, Athletic Director	(508) 529-7758 ext. 3141
Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent/Dir.	(508) 529-7758 ext. 3035
Anthony E. Steele, Asst. Supt.-Dir./Principal	(508) 529-7758 ext. 3016
Matthew Urquardt, Assistant Principal	(508) 529-7758 ext. 3024

B. Goals of the Program

- To provide an opportunity for maximum athletic development of players across the spectrum of ability.
- To promote the social, intellectual, emotional, and physical development of our students.
- To develop an understanding of the value of cooperation and competition.
- To develop good citizenship and respect for rules and authority.
- To have fun.

C. Objectives Pertaining to the School

- To provide an athletic program that reflects a level of expertise comparable to school wide curriculum.
- To provide all students with an opportunity to participate as competitors or as spectators.
- To learn to respect our opponent teams and players.
- To sponsor a sports program in accordance with the number of available student athletes, adequacy of facilities, equipment, and competent instruction.
- To involve the student athlete and the student body in wholesome recreational and entertaining activity.
- To develop a sense of school spirit, morale, and loyalty.

PHILOSOPHY

The Interscholastic Athletic Program at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School is committed to the total physical, emotional, social and mental development of its participants. The program is an extension of the values and ideals developed in the instructional programs and constantly strives towards the development of a well-rounded individual. Our goal is to teach, through athletics, the ideals and values, which are consistent with the principles of sportsmanship. Blackstone Valley Tech athletes take pride in themselves, their team, school and community while learning to work together towards common goals. Every athlete should enjoy the experience of being a team member.

The athletic program must be flexible and reflect Blackstone Valley Tech's values and culture in order to address the needs of its entire student population. Athletics teaches an appreciation of another's skills and contributions, commitment towards a common goal, and enjoyment in physical activity. Athletics promotes physical and mental health and contributes to the ability to interact socially. It nurtures friendship where one might not expect it and fosters a sense of pride in self and the community that lasts far beyond life at Blackstone Valley Tech.

Tryouts for programs are open to all students providing they meet the standards of academic eligibility, school citizenship, parental permission and basic physical/health qualifications. Participation in the program, therefore, is a privilege earned by students who meet and maintain these standards.

Athletic programs are an extension of the academic day where our coaching staff is charged with the responsibility of challenging and developing players, both technically and emotionally, in a positive manner, using both praise and constructive criticism.

As a member of the Valley Tech Athletic Program, students are expected to demonstrate proper respect for all coaches, teammates, officials, spectators and equipment. Student athletes are expected to exhibit the highest level of conduct, either on or off the playing field, as they are, at all times, representatives of their team, school and community.

SPORTS AT BLACKSTONE VALLEY TECH

The Blackstone Valley Tech Athletic Program is comprised of **38 teams in 20 sports**. Sports teams compete at any of three levels – Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity. Blackstone Valley Tech's Athletic Program is under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association and the School Committee of the district. Valley Tech is a member of the Colonial Athletic League. The athlete must be a student and comply with the rules and regulations of these organizations to maintain his or her eligibility.

The Colonial Athletic League is comprised of eight (8) schools: Assabet Valley, Bay Path, Blackstone Valley Tech, **Parker Charter**, Keefe Tech, Monty Tech, Nashoba Tech, and Worcester Technical.

The Athletic Program at Blackstone Valley Tech offers a very diversified choice of sports to each student for his or her participation.

FALL

Practice begins in mid to late August (usually August 21-28). Please check with the Athletic Office for exact date of individual sports.

Boys

Cross Country

Football

Golf

Soccer

Girls

Cheerleading

Cross Country

Soccer

Volleyball

Field Hockey

WINTER

Practice begins on the Monday after Thanksgiving.

Boys

Basketball

Ice Hockey

Girls

Basketball

Cheerleading

SPRING

Practice begins on the third Monday of March.

Boys

Baseball

Lacrosse

Track & Field

Volleyball

Girls

Softball

Track & Field

Lacrosse

GOVERNING BODIES

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association

The Blackstone Valley Tech Athletic Department is a member of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and is therefore governed by Association Rules and Regulations. Additional policies, regulations and rules are set by the Blackstone Valley Tech School Committee. Under the MIAA guidelines, local communities are allowed to set their own policy, rules and/or regulations as long as they are more restrictive than stipulated by the MIAA. Rules governing individual sports vary depending upon the sport. For example, rules are as stipulated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (with the MIAA modification) for football, for basketball by the National Federation of State High School Associations, and for baseball by the Sporting News Rules of Baseball. Copies of the completed set of MIAA rules and regulations are available in the Athletic Office or online at www.miaa.net.

One of the primary functions of the MIAA is to sponsor and conduct post-season tournaments leading to the determination of geographical district and state champions. When our varsity teams qualify for them and enter such tournaments, we are completely subject to specific rules and regulations that govern each tournament, as set by the MIAA. Tournament qualification, divisional placement and geographical district criteria are sport specific.

Some of our teams may qualify for regional tournaments, beyond the MIAA tournaments, that are sponsored and conducted by the combined state associations that make up the region of competition.

Some of our varsity teams may host and/or play in seasonal tournaments that are sponsored by local school districts or other qualified agencies. MIAA regulations specify that such tournaments be sanctioned by the Association and be conducted totally under their policies, rules and regulations. The MIAA does not sanction or sponsor any sub-varsity tournament competition.

The MIAA is a member of the National Federations of State High School Association and is bound by their set of rules, policies and regulations.

The Colonial Athletic League

Blackstone Valley Tech is very proud to be a member of the eight school league known as the Colonial Athletic League. The league is governed by the MIAA and its own Constitution. A copy of the Constitution is available for your review in the Athletic Office. Most of our game schedules, at all levels of competition, are set by the league. The athletic department will also schedule some non-league contests against other vocational schools or schools from surrounding communities.

MESSAGE TO SPECTATORS AND PARENTS

We urge you to support the Blackstone Valley Tech Athletic

Program by:

- Attending games both home and away.
- Lending positive support to our teams and coaches.
- Encouraging all players without regard to their role on the team.
- Helping other spectators and parents to maintain an appropriate sportsmanlike attitude.
- Showing respect for the authority of the game officials.

SELECTED POLICIES, PRACTICES, REGULATIONS AND RULES

The following is a list of important policies, practices, regulations and rules that govern our athletic department. Take the time to read and understand them. If any questions and/or concerns arise during your athletic experience at Blackstone Valley Tech that are not addressed or answered in this booklet, please contact the athletic office at the school.

Commitment

Every player who is chosen to be on the athletic team is expected to demonstrate a positive and winning attitude toward every task whether it be a practice or game situation. Each player will be expected to contribute to the total team effort whether it be from the bench or on the playing field. Indifference stifles success and, therefore, will not be tolerated in any form. Attitude is a key ingredient in the selection process for candidates to all teams.

Each member of our athletic teams, Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity, MUST:

1. Commit to be present at all team activities including tryouts, practices, meetings and contests with other schools.
2. Dedicate his/herself to becoming an excellent team member and school citizen.
3. Strive to continually improve as an athlete.
4. Demonstrate pride in team performance and in him/herself as a member of that team.

Realizing that these four qualities are necessary to achieve “Valley Tech Pride” we expect a high level of commitment from all of our student athletes within the broad context of their lives as Valley Tech students.

Daily Commitment

When trying out for a team, and after being selected to be a member of a team at Blackstone Valley Tech, students are expected to make at least a five day, two to three hour daily commitment to the team each week. At the sub-varsity level some of our teams do not practice or play on the weekends, but students may expect practices or games each school day. Normally, practices will consist of an average of two hours of team activity per day taking place sometime between the hours of 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The preparation time before and after practices or games bring the usual total time to three hours.

At the varsity level, weekend and/or evening practices and games are more commonplace and students should expect regular involvement during these times. Because many of our teams share facilities, or because some teams may use facilities off campus, practice and game hours may vary considerably. Contact the coach or the athletic office for more specific information concerning practice and game times.

Squad Selection

In accordance with our philosophy of athletics and our desire to see as many students as possible participate in the athletic program while at Blackstone Valley Tech, we encourage coaches to keep as many students as possible without having a negative impact on the integrity of their sport. Obviously time, space, facilities, equipment and other factors may place limitations on the possible size for some sports. However, when developing policy in this regard, we strive to maximize the opportunities for our students without diluting the quality of the program.

Tryouts

Tryouts for programs are open to all students providing they meet the standards of academic eligibility, school citizenship, parental permission, and basic physical/health qualifications.

Participation in athletics is a privilege; students try out voluntarily and, for some of our teams risk being cut. During the tryout period the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet them.

Students cut from one team are encouraged to try out for another team if there is space on that team. Students who are cut from a team will be informed as to the reason for the cut. After tryouts begin, no athlete may voluntarily leave one team and try out for another without the consent of both coaches involved.

Daily Team Attendance

It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student is not going to be present at a practice or game if the student is not absent from school. The coaches in our program expect their athletes to be present at **ALL** team related activities and may suspend a team member from contests for absences. Students are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic, family or religious reasons but prior notification is strongly recommended and expected.

Attendance Policy

1. Attendance will be kept daily. This includes any scheduled practices or contests during vacation periods.

Daily attendance is imperative to the basic development of individual skill, fundamentals, as well as a sound foundation for team discipline, unity, spirit, commitment and loyalty.

2. Attendance at Practice
 - a. On the third unexcused absence from practice
Suspension from next two consecutive athletic contests
 - b. On the fourth unexcused absence from practice
Expulsion from the team for the remainder of season
3. Attendance at Contest
 - a. First unexcused absence from contest
Suspension from team each date of offense for a minimum period of one contest (allowed to practice, not allowed to participate in contest).
 - b. Second unexcused absence from a contest
Expulsion from team for the remainder of season

School/Family Vacations, Extended Absences

Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and contests. Because of scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations.

Vacation Policy

All student/athletes are expected to attend all practices, scheduled scrimmages and games on varsity and sub-varsity levels during all school times.

The only exceptions to this policy are as follows:

- a. Planned family vacations in which the student/athlete will be in the company of his/her parents and have so informed the coach in writing at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled vacation dates.
- b. At the individual coaches' discretion because of unforeseen or extenuating circumstances.

It is understood that enforcement of this policy is to encourage commitment by the student/athlete to his/her team and teammates.

The first priority by the athletic department is to those student/athletes who are faithful to the adherence to the fairness and tradition of a team player.

STANDARDS FOR PARTICIPATION

In addition to being willing to make the above commitment, a student must be declared eligible by the athletic director according to the standards listing in this section to be a candidate for a team.

MIAA Scholastic/School Membership Requirements

(See “Athletic Eligibility”)

Physical Examination

According to The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, all students must pass a physical examination within thirteen months of the start of each season. Students who meet this criteria at the start of the season will remain eligible for that season. Physical examinations must be performed by a duly registered Physician, Physician’s Assistant or Nurse Practitioner.

The sports physical is part of the comprehensive health care received by a student from his/her health care provider. The student’s health care provider’s familiarity with family history and the student’s medical history are important in an assessment for sports participation. A Student must have on file in the Athletic Director’s and Health Center’s office written proof of a current physical examination, signed and dated by a physician. In order for an exam to be considered current and valid, it must be dated within thirteen months of the date of any athletic involvement. It is strongly recommended that an annual examination be scheduled between June 15 and August 20 of each school year. An exam administered during this period of time will cover a student for the complete school year. Please ask your physician to mail a signed

and dated copy of the completed exam to the Health Center office at Blackstone Valley Tech, or you can deliver it to the school personally.

Any new student entering Blackstone Valley Tech must have a copy of a current physical (within the last school year) on file in the Health Office. Immunizations, including Tetanus, must be up to date. Hepatitis B immunization is mandatory for all students. Any student wishing to try out for a sports team must have a current physical on file or they will NOT be allowed to play.

Any student who is unable to schedule a physical examination with their primary care physician may sign up in the Health Center to have a “sports physical” performed by the Nurse Practitioner. Students should see the Athletic Director for preliminary paper work that must be completed and to schedule an appointment with the dates and times specified by the Nurse Practitioner. These sports physicals are offered on a limited basis and students should make every effort to plan ahead to schedule an appointment with their primary care physician prior to anticipated participation.

School Based Health Center

The School Based Health Center is a collaborative effort between Blackstone Valley Tech and Milford Whitinsville Regional Hospital and is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

The School Based Health Center offers preventative care and treatment of health care issues. The School Based Health Center will not replace a student’s primary care doctor but it will work with a student’s provider to make accessing health care for Valley Tech students easier.

Many services will be offered but student must have a signed parental consent form (also known as an “enrollment form”) prior to visiting the School Based Health Center. If a student does not have permission to visit the Health Center, the school nurses will always be available to assess medical issues.

Medication Policy

Our school district requires that the following forms be on file in a student's health record before we begin to give any medicine at school or at an athletic contest, event or practice, either prescription or over-the-counter.

- a. Signed Emergency Card (yellow)
- b. Signed Permission Form for Prescribed Medications
- c. Specific note from physician indicating that athletic trainer may distribute medication to student-athlete
- d. Students are not allowed to take any form of narcotic before or during school. Even with a note from their physician, it is discouraged during the technical aspect of BVT school programs. (Examples of narcotic drugs: Vicodin, Percocet, Tylenol, Codeine)

Your parent or a responsible adult whom they designate should deliver medicines to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container. Your pharmacist should provide separate bottles for prescription medications for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of the medicine should be delivered to the school.

Students are not allowed to be in possession of medications (prescriptions and/or over the counter drugs) during the course of the school day or at an athletic contest, event, or practice. All medications must be kept in the Health Office or with the Athletic Trainer.

Any student who uses an inhaler for asthma or an Epi-Pen for allergic reactions must have a supply of this medication for school as well as home. These medications must be kept in the Health Office or with the Athletic Trainer unless otherwise directed by your physician.

Injury Policy and Extended Illness Policy

If your child is injured and has been seen by an emergency room technician, any type of clinician or sports injury specialist, or will be out of school for any length of time, a note from your primary care physician is needed to clear him/her for full participation. Examples would be X-rays taken, sprains, fractures, diagnosis of mono, back injuries, mental health reasons, etc., if handled by any other individual or practice, other than the Athletic Trainer at Blackstone Valley Tech. If full clearance cannot be granted, all limitations must be listed for proper rehabilitation to take place by the BVT Athletic Trainer. Students will not be allowed to participate without an MD note. Under no circumstances will a parental note suffice for return to participation.

Athletic Parental Consent Form

A student must submit a completed, signed Athletic Parental Consent Form prior to his/her first practice session. This form will only be completed once during a school year for the three periods of athletic season involvement. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the Athletic Director with a change of any pertinent information throughout the school year (re: insurance carrier, insurance policy number, home address, phone, or emergency contact, allergies, medical conditions or medications). **This form can now be completed online at <https://www.familyid.com/blackstone-valley-tech>.**

Emergency Medical Information Form

A student must submit a completed, signed Emergency Medical Information Form prior to his/her first practice session. This form will only be completed once during a school year for the three periods of athletic season involvement. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to contact the Athletic Director with a change of any pertinent information throughout the school year (re: insurance carrier, insurance policy number, home address, phone, or emergency contact, allergies, medical conditions or medications). **This form can now be completed online at <https://www.familyid.com/blackstone-valley-tech>.**

Health Insurance

All student athletes should be enrolled in an HMO or similar health insurance plan. Information on personal insurance coverage is requested on the Athletic Parental Consent Form and the Athletic Emergency Information Form. In addition, it is strongly recommended that each family purchase the school insurance when it is available in the school during September. We also have separate insurance coverage for all athletes in grades 9-12 in all sports. This is a back-up insurance policy to the students' family health insurance plan, which should be listed on the athlete's permission form (name of company and number).

Insurance Claims: Should be filled out right away, given to the student for his/her parents to mail to the Insurance Company. All subsequent bills sent to the parents should be mailed to the Insurance Company. It should be emphasized that the school insurance pays only what the parents' insurance does not cover. (Blue Cross, etc.)

It is the family's responsibility to file all claims under its own plan, or supplemental policy, within three months of the date of the injury. Filing forms are available from the Business Office, and if requested, the Athletic Trainer will assist in the filing of these papers.

Concussion Training and Acknowledgement

The Massachusetts State Legislature enacted a law in July 2010 requiring all parents/guardians of student athletes to be educated on the head injuries prior to students participating in contests. As part of the law all parents/guardians must provide annual documentation that they have been provided information prior to the first day of practice. For our purposes you have two options:

1. Please read the information found in the Appendix A of this handbook *or*
2. Please take one of the online courses provided free of charge by the NFHS (National Federation of High Schools) www.nfhslearn.com or by the Center for Disease Control <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/Training/HeadsUpConcussion.html>.

ELIGIBILITY OF BLACKSTONE VALLEY TECH STUDENT ATHLETES

As a member school of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), specific eligibility policies of this association exist. Those adopted by the Blackstone Valley Tech School Committee are as follows:

Academic Requirements

1. A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest a passing grade, and full credit, in the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses **and a passing grade in your Vocational Technical area of study**. A transfer student may not gain academic eligibility if he/she was not, or would not be, eligible at the sending school, unless transfer was necessitated by a move of parents and then eligibility would be determined by receiving school eligibility standards. (see Rule 57.7.1, MIAA Blue Book).
2. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses which would provide Carnegie Units equivalent to four traditional year long major English courses **and a passing grade in your Vocational Technical area of study**.
3. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed and received full credits for the previous academic year the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses **and a passing grade in your Vocational Technical area of study**.
4. The academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined only on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents of all students within a particular class.

5. Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility.
6. A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
7. A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during summer vacation, unless that subject has been previously pursued and failed.
8. Kindly Note: Previous reference to special education students with 502.4 prototypes is rendered valueless given current special education law. Academically ineligible special education students may not participate unless a waiver has been requested and granted by the MIAA.

Procedures to Determine Eligibility

I. Prior to the First Contest – Each Sport, Each Season

1. No later than (7) days before the first contest, the eligibility status of each student athlete is indicated by the Director of Student Services. The status forms are then sent to the Principal for appropriate eligibility action and signature. All completed forms are maintained on file by the Director of Athletics.

II. After Term I, and II

1. No later than (7) days before the first contest, the eligibility status of each student athlete is indicated by the Director of Student Services prior to the first contest following term I and II. Any student whose academic eligibility is in question is brought to the attention of the Athletic Director and the Principal for final decision.

III. Participation at any Time During the School Year

After the eligibility of all student athletes is determined by the sport by season, an alphabetical list of participants is distributed to the Principal. (Each student athlete must be taking courses, which would provide 20 credits to remain eligible). If, as a result of this policy, a student athlete no longer takes courses, which would provide 20 credits, the student becomes ineligible. The parent(s) and the coach are notified of this action by the Principal and Athletic Director. In addition, students must attend all practices and games and they are expected to have a cooperative attitude. It is expected that all reasonable training rules, as set forth by the coaches and athletic department, will be followed. These include prohibiting any student athlete from the use of any tobacco products or any other drugs.

Freshman - To be eligible for Fall Athletic Teams, pupils must have met middle school promotional requirements.

The violation of any eligibility rule may result in forfeiture of a game won. A mistake could spoil a good season's record. If, in your opinion, there is any doubt concerning your eligibility, consult your Athletic Director. The rules apply to all teams, Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Freshman, and to both girls' and boys' sports. The committee on Athletics of the M.I.A.A. will resolve all questions on eligibility.

You Are Not Eligible

1. If you were not a member of some secondary school for the two (2) months, exclusive of summer vacation month, preceding the contest.
2. A student who transfers from any school to an MIAA member high school is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which that student participated at the varsity level or its

equivalent during the one year period immediately preceding the transfer. Exemptions do exist. Please consult the Athletic Director as to your eligibility upon entering Blackstone Valley Tech as a transfer student.

3. If you are taking fewer than twenty (20) periods of prepared work.
4. A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest a passing grade in at least 20 periods of prepared work. Prepared work is defined as any subject or course in which credit is allowed toward the high school diploma. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking at least 20 periods of prepared work. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have final passing grades for the year in the required number of periods of prepared work.
5. If you fail two core courses in academics at any grade level.
6. If you fail your vocational shop.
7. If, since you entered Grade 9, twelve (12) consecutive sports seasons have passed, whether or not you participated.
8. If your 19th birthday came before September 1st of the present school year, you may no longer participate in high school sports.
9. If you have graduated from any secondary school.
10. If you were “persuaded” or influenced to transfer to your present high school by a coach, athletic director, principal, or other person connected with the school.
11. If you are put out of a game for fighting or flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct, you are not eligible to play in the next scheduled game. This includes, but is not limited to, the

use of threatening, abusive, or obscene language. If it is the second time during the same season, then you are disqualified from any further participation in any sport season for one full year.

12. If you physically assault an official, you are ineligible in all sports for one full year.
13. If you willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempt to injure an opponent, you will be immediately excluded from participation in that sport for one year.

Time Allowed for Participation

A student has four consecutive years of eligibility from the date he/she entered the ninth grade. This means 12 consecutive athletic seasons are a maximum; therefore, a fifth year high school student is usually ineligible for interscholastic competition.

Transfers to Blackstone Valley Tech

The rules governing transfer students entering Blackstone Valley Tech from another high school are quite involved. Information regarding the athletic eligibility of all students transferring to Blackstone Valley Tech should be requested from the athletic office.

In Season Eligibility

At Blackstone Valley Tech, student athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of scholastic achievement possible. They are also expected to maintain the highest level of citizenship. To promote these goals the following policies are in effect:

Academic Achievement

Scholastic “extra help” sessions and makeup work are expected to be completed as soon as possible. On a Tuesday or Thursday practice day students should stay after school to complete work whenever necessary. Coaches should be informed by students, in advance if possible, when practice time will be missed due to academic obligations. Once the obligations are completed, students are expected to report to the practice, on that day, as soon as possible. If advance notification was not given to the coach, students should ask their teacher for a note explaining the tardiness. Students arriving late to practices due to makeup work or extra help will not suffer any athletic team penalty. On game days, unless time allows, students should ask their classroom teacher if makeup work or extra help may be postponed to a practice day. A classroom teacher may or may not grant a postponement. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for poor academic performance and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. Reinstatement cannot be granted if MIAA scholastic eligibility requirements are not met.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS

A student athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is expected to fulfill the disciplinary obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or cancelled for any athletic reason. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that our athletes be model citizens both in and out of school; they should set an example for all students.

CONDUCT OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

The primary role of this school is to educate its students. The primary role of this athletic department is to promote the ideals of citizenship, individual growth socially and mentally, teamwork and sportsmanship. Poor conduct on a student-athlete’s part not only adversely affects the educational process, but could also adversely affect the efforts of teammates and coaches. Poor conduct will not be tolerated.

The following regulations are established by the school to enhance the educational process and stature of the athletic department.

Each student-athlete shall:

1. Attend school regularly.
2. Apply best efforts in studying and learning.
3. Behave in a non-disruptive manner with regards to the rights and privileges of others.
4. Follow all procedural regulations of this school.
5. Be held responsible and accountable for any action potentially dangerous and/or detrimental to individual health and well-being, either physical or emotional.

Specifically this includes but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Smoking/Possession of tobacco products
- b. Improper use of school equipment
- c. Fighting
- d. Throwing dangerous objects
- e. Swearing and/or speaking obscenities
- f. Theft
- g. Class tardiness (repetitive)
- h. School tardiness (repetitive)
- i. Class and school truancy
- j. Failure to report to a teacher after school
- k. Leaving school grounds without permission

- l. Class disturbance
- m. Corridor, cafeteria disturbance
- n. Willful destruction of school property (vandalism)
- o. Violation of school safety rules affecting the student or others
- p. Violation of bus regulations
- q. Violation of parking regulations
- r. Cheating and plagiarism
- s. Failure to return school materials or equipment
- t. Drinking or possessing alcoholic beverages; possess, use, buy, or sell drugs or alcohol or drug paraphernalia. This includes while being on school property or in a school vehicle; or on any school sponsored or approved activity or function.
- u. Possession of firearms or any other illegal weapons including laser light pens, paint guns, cigarette or butane lighters or any device which may be used to threaten or endanger the safety and well-being of students and staff.
- v. Misuse of solvent as an inhalant and/or the buying, selling or distributing of same solvents for purposes of this school regulation, includes but are not limited to the following: cements, glues, paints, varnishes, brake fluid, gasoline, lacquers, products in aerosol cans.
- w. Being found out of an assigned area
- x. Public Display of Affection (PDA) – Public displays of affection are inappropriate on school property or during school activities.

The preceding are punishable by any one or the combination of the following:

- a. Written reprimand
- b. Aftersession(s)
- c. In-School Suspension (Behavioral Resource Center)
- d. Suspension from school, from 1-10 days maximum
- e. Suspension for more than 10 days at the discretion of the Principal

DAILY ATTENDANCE, CLASS CUTS

Students are expected to attend all scheduled periods during the school day. Athletes must be in school by 10:10 am in order to practice or play that day. The athletic department will make every possible attempt to check daily class and school attendance. Exceptions such as a doctor's appointment and college visits must be cleared by the Athletic Director or Principal's office in advance, whenever possible. The athletic department reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive cuts or truancy and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improvement. To be eligible to participate in an athletic contest, the athlete must attend school the day of, and/or day(s) immediately preceding the contest in the case of a weekend competition.

SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL

Student-athletes may not represent their school if they are on in-house or out-of-house disciplinary suspension. A suspended student is ineligible for practice or competition for at least the number of days (or partial days) equal to the number of days of the suspension. Suspension from school becomes effective at the close of school on the day the suspension was issued. All coaches will cooperate with the administration in enforcing this school policy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes. Students being medically excused from physical education may not be allowed to participate in their team practice or game for that day. Game or practice uniforms issued to student-athletes for contests and games may not be worn during physical education class. If a student does not participate in a regularly scheduled physical education class during the school day, he/she will not be eligible for practice or a game in that same day.

ATHLETIC TRANSPORTATION

Transportation To and From Contests

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to most “away” contests. All team members are expected to travel to these contests using the school provided transportation for student’s safety. Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing, to the Athletic Director, by a student’s parent/guardian prior to the contest. Reasonable requests will be honored. A coach may allow students to ride home from a contest with their parent/guardian provided personal contact at the game site is made between the parent/guardian and coach, and a note releasing the student is signed by the parent/guardian and received by the coach. In most instances, students will not be allowed to ride to and from contests with other students. Non-team members may occasionally be allowed to ride team transportation if room exists, the coach in charge has given approval and prior written parent permission has been given to the Athletic Director.

DIRECTIONS TO AWAY CONTESTS

The Athletic Department has prepared a booklet of directions to all away contest locations for Valley Tech athletic contests. Directions to Colonial Athletic League and non-league contests are also available on the Internet under: www.miaa.net.

In the event that directions are needed to a contest, parents and other interested spectators may call the Athletic Department for directions at (508) 529-7758 x3141.

SPORTS TRAINING/EDUCATIONAL TRIPS

The value of a proposed Sports Training Trip or Sports Educational Trip will be assessed by the Principal and Athletic Director. In specific instances, such trips which extend beyond the borders of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the approval of the School Committee must be secured prior to being undertaken.

LATE TRANSPORTATION

Blackstone Valley Tech provides late transportation for student-athletes during sport seasons following practices and games. The Late Athletic Bus is for the use of student athletes or members of other supervised programs only. You come under the jurisdiction of the school administration during this entire period. You must remember it is a privilege to ride the school bus. If you are not well behaved, courteous, and if your behavior endangers the health or safety of other students, this privilege will be taken away from you. The bus driver has the same authority on the bus as a teacher has in the classroom. Continued disruptive behavior on the school bus may result in removal of student from bus transportation.

These Late Athletic Bus routes are not identical to the regular bus routes. Late Athletic Bus routes may be obtained through the athletic office **and online in the last section of the Bus Routes menu**. It will also be displayed in each locker room for the athlete’s knowledge. Students must make their own arrangements to get home after the bus returns them to their local community. The late athletic bus will leave at approximately 5:45 p.m. from the driveway directly in front of the Valley Tech main entrance.

- a. There should be no rough-housing while waiting for the bus.
- b. Students shall enter the bus in an orderly fashion and go directly to a seat and remain seated until destination is reached.
- c. There should be no littering and/or defacing of the buses.
- d. Students defacing property will pay for replacement or repairs.
- e. Emergency doors and windows must be used for emergency use only. Do not touch any safety equipment on the bus.

Remember: If you plan to ride the school bus you must abide by these regulations.

NOTE: Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 314 Acts of 1973

***“NO PERSON SHALL SMOKE OR DRINK
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ON SCHOOL BUS WHILE
TRANSPORTING PUPILS.”***

Punishable by fines of \$25.00-\$100.00 and may result in suspension from the bus and/or suspension from school.

BUS SUSPENSION

1. If deemed necessary by the Principal or designee and company representatives, individual riding privileges may be suspended in order to provide for the safety of other students.
2. In a situation whereby it becomes necessary to suspend a student from the bus, that student will then be responsible for establishing alternative means of transportation to and from school and following practices and/or games.

ATHLETE/COACH RELATIONSHIPS

Participation in athletics should be an enjoyable experience for all parties involved; student, coach and parent. There is no doubt that participation tends to be emotionally charged, and dealing constructively with these emotions can be an excellent learning experience. In most cases, athletic competition is extremely positive and complements the educational experience enjoyed by students at Blackstone Valley Tech. Occasionally, because of the high emotional level present during athletic competition, conflicts between coaches and students arise. These conflicts must be addressed and resolved immediately so that the many benefits of athletic involvement may continue to contribute to the emotional and physical growth of Blackstone Valley Tech students.

This section of this booklet deals with what families may expect from the coaching staff, and what to do if problems present themselves.

COACHING EXPECTATIONS

At Blackstone Valley Tech, athletes should expect to be treated with respect and to be treated fairly by their coaches. The coaches are professionals who are aware of and committed to upholding the responsibilities they have and to follow the policies and regulations of the MIAA, The Colonial Athletic League and Blackstone Valley Tech. Each student must be treated as an individual, yet as part of the team. Rules and regulations must be uniformly and fairly enforced at all times. In most instances, during the season of play a student athlete spends more time daily under the direct supervision and guidance of his/her coach than any other adult. This time spent should be enjoyable, educational, positive and worthwhile; the influence that a coach may have with each individual team member is enormous.

As recommended by the MIAA, we encourage participation in varied activities under different teacher/coach role models. We focus our attention upon goals, other than championships or the development of “blue chip athletes” that will develop into contributing members of society.

Athletes and their families can expect the following from members of the Valley Tech Coaching Staff:

Time Commitment

Practice and game schedules and other time commitments, consistent with the guidelines mentioned previously in this booklet, will be made known to all team members.

Team Rules

Members of our coaching staff have the option of establishing additional expectations for his/her team members with the Athletic Director’s prior approval.

Team rules and regulations, in addition to the ones stated in this booklet, will be well defined, discussed and enforced with all team members. Self-discipline of all student athletes will be encouraged. Penalties for rule violations will also be defined and

applied fairly and consistently. The coach will present these expectations to all team candidates in writing as soon as possible prior to the first contest of the season.

Individual Success

The coach will provide an opportunity for each athlete to succeed to the best of his/her abilities.

Social and Emotional Growth

The coach will attempt to assist each athlete to grow socially and emotionally.

Team Spirit

The coach will attempt to instill and promote team spirit and cohesiveness.

Athletic Performance

Individual performance by an athlete will be critiqued by a coach at the appropriate time. Each athlete will be encouraged to work towards his/her full potential and to develop a positive self-image.

Skill Development

Each athlete will be taught the rules and skills of the game with the goal of developing maximum proficiency in the specific sport area.

Approachability

The coach will be available to all his/her athletes. Team members are encouraged to approach the coach about any topic that they wish. Students should make every attempt, if a matter is of personal nature, to approach the coach privately and when there is sufficient time for worthwhile discussion.

Competitiveness

According to the MIAA philosophy, “winning contests, rather than losing them, is a laudable goal,” but “it should not supersede the primary priorities of high school sport programs”. Blackstone Valley Tech coaches do and should play to win, as all involved

enjoy winning rather than losing, but they also know that “preparing students to succeed rather than merely to win games” is more important. “Win or lose, students should learn lessons of a lasting and positive nature.”

Evaluation of Coaches

Each coach employed by Blackstone Valley Tech is formally evaluated on his/her performance at the conclusion of each athletic season. The evaluation of each coach is performed by the Athletic Director.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Athletics involvement is highly emotional and very time consuming. Sometimes conflicts arise between student, coaches, and occasionally parents. When conflicts or issues arise, it is important that they be addressed immediately, and as directly as possible, so that it can be resolved promptly. Students and their parents should use the following process as a guideline when seeking resolution to conflicts or issues between an athlete and coach:

FIRST STEP: CONTACTING THE COACH

The athlete should present the conflict/issue to the coach as soon as possible. If personal contact is not practical, a student may ask his/her team captain to approach the coach. If the personal or captain route is not possible, contact may be made by the athlete’s parent(s) at an appropriate time. In order for the contact to be as productive as possible, times that should be avoided are:

- Prior to, during or immediately following a contest.
- During an active practice session.

- When other students or parents are present or when it would be readily visible to others that the discussion is taking place.
- When it is apparent that there is not sufficient time to allow for a complete discussion. This includes the time immediately before leaving for an away contest.

Perhaps the best solution is to ask the coach, either over the phone or in person, if an appointment could be made to discuss the issue. A parent or student may also leave a note for the coach in the athletic office.

SECOND STEP: CONTACTING THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

If a satisfactory solution is not reached through direct contact with the coach, the student and/or parent should contact the Athletic Director. The coach should be informed that this contact is going to be made. If this discussion does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled involving all concerned parties in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.

Since athletic seasons are relatively short, there should be no delay in airing any and all concerns. It is important for all students and their parents to know that any comments, concerns or issues raised to the Athletic Director will be addressed and communicated to the coach. Parents and students may also expect to hear from the Athletic Director as to the disposition of their concerns.

Although there can be no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings, a thorough, respectful airing of different perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understandings in the future.

THIRD STEP: CONTACTING THE PRINCIPAL

If there is still not a satisfactory resolution, the student or parent may contact the high school Principal. The Athletic Director should be informed that this contact is going to be made.

FOURTH STEP: IF NO RESOLUTION

An appeal of above decision can be made to the Superintendent of Schools. This procedure gives structure and direction in solving a problem/concern. Again, it must start at the coach's level.

The Athletic Department is committed to insuring that there shall be no "retribution" in any form for raising an issue or concern about the Department. Students and parents must be confident that voicing an opinion or concern, using the proper forum and method, is not only penalty and retribution free, but strongly encouraged. If at any time, a student or his/her parent suspects that any form of "retribution" is surfacing, they should contact their coach immediately.

SCHOOL ATHLETIC EQUIPMENT

Students have an obligation and responsibility for all equipment issued to them and for its proper care and retention from the date of issue to the date of return. Students failing to turn in all issued equipment, or returning equipment damaged through misuse, are responsible to meet the current replacement cost for such equipment. Payment is required at the time of the loss, prior to the next season of athletic involvement, or graduation, whichever comes first. In the event that the equipment is found and/or returned after payment, a refund will be made.

LOCKER ROOMS AND FACILITIES

Student Lockers

Once team rosters are set, if not before, each team member will be issued an athletic locker and lock. Students are expected to lock all personal items and team equipment in their own locker at all times. Students should never give their locker combination to anyone else. Experience has shown that most losses are due to lockers left open or unlocked. On road trips, when lockers are not available, it is highly recommended that students leave valuables at home or give them to parents or a member of the coaching staff for safekeeping at the game site. Large amounts of cash or valuable personal items should never be carried or left at the school.

Care of Facilities

Students are expected to treat all facilities, both home and away, with proper care. Blackstone Valley Tech has some of the best facilities in the area and only proper care and respect will keep them this way. Vandalism is cause for dismissal from a team and further disciplinary action by the school administration.

Building and Facility Access

At the conclusion of each school day, student athletes should bring all items that they need until the next school day to the locker room area. For safety reasons students are not allowed access to other areas of the building after practices, games or on non-school days. No students will be allowed access to any of our inside facilities without proper supervision by a school staff member.

Athletic Shoes

At no time should shoes with cleated soles be worn inside the building. Serious injury can occur from slipping on cement or tiled surfaces. Damage to the floors may also occur.

Fitness Center

The Fitness Center exists mainly through our construction and renovation project. It has been equipped, for the most part, through a grant from Washington, DC. The room is supervised by members of the staff on a regular basis. When open and supervised, it is available for all students unless it is being used as an in-season site for a practice session.

Use of Facilities by Outside Groups

Indoor and outdoor athletic facilities are primarily reserved for the use of Blackstone Valley Tech sponsored groups. During times when the facilities are not being used, they may be rented, at a nominal fee, by outside groups. Rentals are granted on a first come, first served basis. Facility Use Forms for private use of the athletic facilities are necessary and may be picked up in the Main Office. Blackstone Valley Tech reserves the right to cancel an outside rental if a school-sponsored activity needs the facility. In most instances, rentals are limited to gymnasium or baseball/softball field use only. For further details, please contact the Athletic Office.

Trainer and Training Room

Unlike many high schools, Blackstone Valley Tech is extremely fortunate to have a highly qualified and skilled full-time trainer as a member of the staff. On school days, the trainer's hours are usually 2:15pm – 5:45pm or the conclusion of the home contest. During weekends, or on days when school is not in session, the trainer is required to be on site only for contests and for some scheduled scrimmages. Occasionally, the trainer will be on site for non-school day practice sessions. The training facility is very well equipped.

At certain times, the trainer, student staff and facility are extremely busy. Because of this, access to the training room and its services is limited to athletes who are there for care only; it

should not be used as a student lounge. Training services will be granted on a first come, first served basis on practice days. On game days, students will be treated in an order that will allow bus and/or game commitments to be met. The training program exists to help athletes receive the best possible care. Please feel free to take advantage of it.

In the event of an athletic injury, the trainer and/or physician is in immediate control. At away contests, if the trainer or physician is not present, the host school medical personnel are in control. If no medical personnel are present, members of the coaching staff are instructed to “take charge” of the situation and, if warranted, call for emergency care. After an injury, a student may not return to competition without clearance by the trainer, which may also include written permission from the doctor.

PLAYING TIME

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organizational skills, participating within the rules, physical well-being and striving towards excellence. Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each participant, perhaps the most emotional is “playing time”. He/She is encouraged to discuss it with the coach. At Blackstone Valley Tech, being a member of a team does not guarantee “playing time”. However, there are guidelines for this all important topic.

Sub-Varsity Teams

At the sub-varsity levels (junior varsity and freshman), members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern individuals’ playing time but perhaps the most important are: practice attendance, effort, attitude and commitment. Another factor that must always be considered is

athletic skill. If these factors are present at the sub-varsity levels, students may expect to enjoy their share of “playing time”.

Varsity Teams

At the varsity level, the guidelines for the coaching staff are similar with one other additional major factor. The varsity teams want to compete against opponents at the highest possible level. Players, coaches, parents and staff members all want Blackstone Valley Tech Varsity teams to be successful on the field. To reach that goal, teams must compete to win as many contests as possible. In order to do this, there are many instances when the major burden of the contest will be carried by the most competitive, skilled team members; however, teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes or “second string” players. These athletes have to be ready at all times to step forward and shoulder the burden, when needed. They have to practice as hard as they can to help make the teams as competitive as they can be. They have to constantly strive to move up to a “starting” role.

There are many decisions made on a regular basis by the Blackstone Valley Tech coaching staff. These include: which athletes should start a contest, who should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These coaching decisions, often difficult to make, are made only by the coaching staff and are approached very seriously.

LEVELS OF PLAY

The common goal of the athletic program at ALL LEVELS of play are for athletes to:

- Develop their physical, emotional, social and mental skills.
- Develop respect for authority, teammates, opponents and themselves.
- Develop pride in themselves, their team, school and community.

- Develop leadership qualities.
- Learn to work as a team member towards the attainment of common goals.
- Develop team responsibility and dedication.
- Learn rules of particular sport.
- Develop skills necessary to play a particular sport.
- Have Fun.
- Ensure that all athletes are placed on a team level that will allow them to succeed to the best of their ability.

Additional goals of **FRESHMAN LEVEL** teams are to:

- Introduce and develop the skills and rules of the sport.
- Present an opportunity for an athlete to experience a specific sport.
- Introduce young athletes to interscholastic competition.
- Allow an athlete to determine if he/she wishes to continue in a specific sport.
- Give all participants a fair share of playing time assuming that athletes have attended practice, worked to their potential, have the proper attitude and have committed to the team. Athletic skill is also a factor.

There is a possibility that some students may be cut during tryouts. These students will be encouraged to try out for another sport team whenever possible.

Additional goals of **JUNIOR VARSITY LEVEL** teams are to:

- Further develop the skills and knowledge of the sport.
- Increase the intensity of the competition.

- Prepare for the varsity level in that sport.
- Place more emphasis on winning than at the Freshman level.
- Give participants playing time based upon practice attendance, work ethic, attitude, commitment to the team and athletic skill.

There is a possibility that some students may be cut during tryouts. These students will be encouraged to try out for another sport team whenever possible.

PLEASE NOTE: When freshmen have demonstrated an advanced level of ability, they may be placed on a junior varsity or varsity level team after agreement among the athlete, his/her parents, the coach and the Athletic Director.

Additional goals of **VARSITY LEVEL** teams are to:

- Develop skills and knowledge to their highest level.
- Allow talented athletes the chance to excel and prepare them for future competition.
- Compete for League, Vocational, District, and State Championships.
- Expect all members to be role models for younger students.

There is a possibility that some students may be cut during tryouts.

MIAA “LOYALTY TO THE HIGH SCHOOL TEAM RULE”

Participation in any Meet or Tournament sponsored by the MIAA is limited to students of institutional member schools which have registered that sport with the Association during the summer membership renewal process.

The MIAA Rule Number 45 (2005-2007 MIAA Blue Book, page 41) specifies: A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g. practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Any student who violates this standard is ineligible for the next two contests or two weeks (whichever is greater) immediately upon confirmation of the violation. Rule 96 provides for an additional tournament restriction.

A non-bonafide team member is excluded from all MIAA post-season sponsored tournaments. There are exceptions and waivers are available to this rule. If there are any questions, please contact the Athletic Office.

“A student may practice or play only once in any one day. Such a practice may include double sessions (or multiple sessions prior to the first day of classes in the fall) for the high school team on days when school is not in session, if approved in advance by the principal. Such double sessions may include two practices or one practice and one scrimmage/jamboree, league sanctioned all-star game.”

This rule prohibits a student from practicing or competing for a high school team and a non-school team on the same day. *“A non-school team is deemed to be a team if it has two or more of the following: (1) coach, (2) schedule of contests, (3) schedule of practices, (4) uniforms.*

POLICY OF BLACKSTONE VALLEY TECH RELATIVE TO ILLEGAL TRAFFICKING, USE AND POSSESSION OF DRUGS

As a member of the MIAA, Blackstone Valley Tech High School strictly enforces the below listed rules. (MIAA and/or BVT)

- 1.0 Selling Drugs or Possession with the Intent to Sell during the Regular School Day or at Any School Sponsored Function. (MGL Chapter 70, Section 37H)
- 1.1 Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic practices and/or games, using and/or in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
- 1.2 Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, Teacher, Teacher's Aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
- 1.3 Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (1.1) or (1.2) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may, at his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have violated either paragraph (1.1) or (1.2).

1.4 Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent-Director. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent-Director of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent-Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. School officials follow directives designated in the Memorandum of Understanding between Blackstone Valley Tech and The Upton Police Department.

1.5 When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the Superintendent of school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the Superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion. Added by St. 1972, c467; amended by St. 1973, c.430, s.5; St. 1987, c285; ST. 1989, c.603; ST. 1992, c.133, s.430; St. 1993, c.71, s.36; St. 1993, c.380, s.1.

Note: Students suspended for misconduct at school-sponsored extra-curricular activities will be banned from extra-curricular activities for one (1) calendar year.

1.6 **SECOND OFFENSE**

Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic practices and/or games, using and/or in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including but not limited to, marijuana,

cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (1.1) or (1.2) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent-Director. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent-Director of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent-Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. School officials follow directives designated in the Memorandum of Understanding between Blackstone Valley Tech and The Upton Police Department.

OTHER PROCEDURES

1.7 The Principal or his/her designee will turn over to the School Resource Officer all confiscated illicit drugs and paraphernalia on the day that the violation took place and with a report.

THE RULE

(MIAA 2005-2007 BLUE BOOK, PAGE 51 RULE 62)

Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical

Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco

During the season of practice or play, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of illegally defined drug

specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements. This rule, during an athletic season, is in effect seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day.

This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render "guilt by association", e.g. many student athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury, academics, or otherwise, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

MINIMUM PENALTIES

First Violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purposes of rehabilitation. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and Subsequent Violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a second and subsequent violations has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season the violation occurs. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

If, after the second or subsequent violations, the student of his/her own violation becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student

may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

During practice or competition, a coach shall not use any tobacco product.

In addition to the MIAA Student (and Coach) Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco Policy, violations by a Valley Tech student-athlete will also incur consequences established by the Student Handbook to be administered as follows:

CONSEQUENCES FOR THE USE OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS

All Blackstone Valley Tech student-athletes are subject to the rules and regulations of the Blackstone Valley Tech student handbook and in addition, but not limited to, student-athletes are also subject to the rules and regulations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA).

First Offense:

- Choice of tobacco education program or suspension (3 day in-house)
- Parent Notification
- Notification of coaches/extra-curricular activity advisors

Second Offense:

- Suspension (3 day out of school)

- Parent Notification
- Notification of coaches/extra-curricular activity advisors

CONSEQUENCES FOR POSSESSION OF SMOKING RELATED ITEMS

First Offense:

- Parent Notification
- Notification of coaches/extra-curricular activity advisors

Second Offense:

- Choice of tobacco education program or suspension (3 day out of school)
- Parent Notification
- Notification of coaches/extra-curricular activity advisors

Multiple offense will be consequences with up to 5 suspension days.

Note: Consequences for suspicion of tobacco use will be up to the discretion of the Administration.

The BVT Tobacco Education/Cessation Program will be facilitated by a staff member and students trained as facilitators. Students who opt for the program in lieu of suspension must adhere to a contract.

Steroid Use:

Anabolic androgenic steroid use at the high school level is of grave concern. Steroids are used by some athletes, and the seriousness of the problem has been well documented. A recent study indicates that over 3% of high school seniors have tried steroids in their lifetime (NIDA, 2004). High school coaches may not be able to prevent the use of steroids altogether, but they can

clearly and forcefully discourage their use. Coaches should take a proactive role, learning about steroids, and then providing this information to their athletes.

Steroids can, with proper diet and weight training, increase muscle development; however, as is typical with most “get-rich-quick” schemes, steroid use has serious short and long term consequences.

Normal and equal musculature development can occur without steroid use. Although the natural process takes longer, muscle tone will last longer and does not carry the harmful side effects of steroids.

Most coaches would not promote steroid use intentionally. Total silence by coaches however condones use in some young people’s minds. Even though steroids may not be mentioned when it is suggested to an athlete that his/her success is limited only by a lack of weight and/or strength, without a disclaimer the statement can be a motivation to use steroids. The pervasiveness of the drugs that allow for development of increased weight under the aforementioned circumstances is a coercive power that is difficult for young athletes to resist without knowing what the side effects of the drugs may be.

The issue goes beyond protecting the integrity of sport. The use of steroids in sports is cheating. We must oppose the use of steroids for both health and ethical reasons.

TEAM CAPTAINS

It is a coaching decision as to how team captains are selected. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game-by-game basis.

It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and should be ready to assume duties as outlined by their coach. They are expected to be more aware of team rules and student athlete responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains meet with the Athletic Director during the preseason to discuss the athletic program and its policies.

The position of captain is one of honor, leadership, and responsibility. As a result, students serving in that capacity are expected to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner both in and outside of school. Any student who is involved in a violation of the discipline code that results in a suspension from school and/or team, or is found to be involved with drugs, alcohol, weapons or crimes outside the school will lose the ability to serve as captain or to be appointed or elected to the position of captain for the period of one calendar year.

Captain's Practice

Captain's Practices are According to the MIAA Blue Book "a captain's practice usually means that the team's captain(s) organizing and conducting, without adult supervision, out-of-season practice for that sport."

The MIAA does not in any way sanction, encourage, or condone "Captain's Practice" in any sport. "Captain's Practice", depending on the member school's involvement, may be a clear violation of the rule defining season limitations.

There is also a serious practical consideration. If it can be demonstrated that a school is allowing "Captain's Practice", the liability responsibility for an injured athlete may be quite serious.

These practices are designed by students to allow team candidates to "get in shape" for the upcoming season. They are not organized, attended or sponsored by members of our Valley Tech coaching staff. Since members of our Valley Tech coaching staff are not permitted to be involved with these practices, they are NOT MANDATORY, attendance is NOT MONITORED by a Valley Tech coach, and they are NOT part of our Valley Tech athletic program.

COLLEGE/CAREER GUIDANCE

One of the most important decisions facing high school students is what to do with their lives after high school. The members of the Blackstone Valley Tech athletic staff are willing and eager to assist all of their students with this extremely important decision. Staff members fully understand the importance of this assistance. They may be able to answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send videotapes, if available, and write letters of recommendation. The least they will be able to do is guide students to more knowledgeable resources who can help with decisions. If a student's goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) regulations. Copies of the latest regulations are available in the Athletic Office. The high school guidance department also has a wealth of information and experience on this topic. Please be familiar with these regulations and seek assistance if needed.

NCAA Clearinghouse

The NCAA Clearinghouse is a central repository for information on high school curricula. The NCAA maintains this information to conduct evaluations of incoming college freshmen. The NCAA evaluates high school graduates' academic records in light of current NCAA initial-eligibility requirements. A prospective collegiate athlete needs to apply and receive a final

certification by the Clearinghouse in order to participate in college athletics at the Division I or II levels. A student athlete does not need to apply if he or she will attend a junior college, NAIA or NCAA Division III institution. Students may pick up Clearinghouse forms in the athletic office.

GAME ADMISSION

It is the practice at Blackstone Valley Tech to charge admission to some home contests, all homecoming contests, and during state vocational and district tournament games. Admission charges should be expected for contests in the following activities: varsity football games, varsity and junior varsity boys' basketball games and varsity hockey games. With the exception of hockey, the revenues generated by admission charges help offset the cost of the athletic programs at the high school. Revenues are used for the benefit of all teams, not just the teams that generate the revenue. The revenue collected at Lake Ave. Rink during the varsity hockey games helps offset the fees charged by Lake Ave. Rink for the games. Season tickets for sports in which admission is charged at Valley Tech will be made available in the future, if the demand exists.

POSTPONED CONTESTS

Many contests throughout the school year are postponed due to factors such as inclement weather. In most instances it is the "home" school that calls for a postponement. By Colonial Athletic League and MIAA rule, games are to be made-up on the next available open date on both schools' schedules, including weekends, whenever practical.

Decisions on postponements are made as late in the day as is practical for proper notification of all interested parties. On school days, the most common time is about 1:00 pm for afternoon contests. On non-school days, and for evening contests, postponements are made approximately two to three hours prior to the contest.

It is sometimes necessary, because of scheduling conflicts, to cancel rather than postpone sub-varsity and freshman contests. Cancellations of varsity contests, because of league standings and/or tournament qualification regulations are extremely rare. If the school day has been cancelled due to inclement weather, no team will be allowed to practice or participate in a regularly scheduled event or contest unless special permission is given by the principal.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Blackstone Valley Tech expects all parties present at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches and spectators should treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators with respect.

The MIAA reserves the right to "warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship."

Blackstone Valley Tech, in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests, home or away.

TAUNTING

1. Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal characteristics.

Examples of taunting include but are not limited to: "trash talk", defined as verbal communication of a personal nature

directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/her skills, efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including “in the face” confrontation by one player to another, standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player, etc.

2. Athletic participants may wear sun glare black only under their eyes.
3. In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike offense that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from that contest/day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to all existing MIAA Disqualification Rules. A review of the MIAA taunting policy and a warning shall be given to both teams by game officials prior to each contest.
4. At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, contest management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials or other spectators should be ejected.

Comment: All MIAA endorsed rulebooks give officials/umpires/judges authority to penalize what is generally considered taunting. The purpose of the MIAA’s action is to be more specific in the definition, more emphatic in the penalty of disqualifications, and more uniform in the application of the definition and enforcement from sport to sport.

INTENT TO INJURE RULE

“The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Associations Rule Number 49.7 states “any student in any sport” (in the opinion of the game official) “who willfully, flagrantly or maliciously

attempts to injure an opponent shall be removed from the contest immediately and shall be ineligible in all sports for one year from the date of the incident. (“Fighting” does not apply to this section unless warranted in the judgment of the game official.)

HAZING

In addition to being in violation of Massachusetts General Laws, hazing is a most flagrant example of lack of respect for both self and others. Massachusetts General Law Chapter 269, section 17-19 was enacted in 1988. The law requires that secondary schools provide all school groups (e.g. athletic teams) a copy of the law.

The Massachusetts Hazing Law is quoted below. Hazing in any form is unacceptable. If you have any concern that your son or daughter is involved in a hazing incident, we strongly encourage you to call the Coach, Athletic Director, or the Principal immediately.

Massachusetts State Law – Chapter 269, Section 17-19

Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or person. Incidents of hazing must be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials as soon as reasonably practicable.

Chapter 269, Section 17 – Crime of Hazing, Definition, Penalty

“Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Hazing is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or

mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.”

Chapter 269, Section 18 – Duty to Report Hazing

“Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in Section seventeen and is at the scene of such a crime, shall, to the extent that such a person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such a crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such a crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.”

Chapter 269, Section 19 – Statutes to be Provided to Student Groups; Compliance Statement and Discipline Policy Required

“Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of secondary education shall issue to every group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution’s compliance with this section’s requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and section seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, team or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution’s recognition’s or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams, or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team, or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team, or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full-time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution’s policies to its students. The board of regents and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report. Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c665.

Consent to such treatment does not make it legal.

HARASSMENT

Harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation or disability in any form will not be tolerated. Such harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender or to racial, ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation or handicapped individuals or groups.

If you have any concern that your son or daughter is involved in a harassment incident, we strongly encourage you to call the Coach, Athletic Director, or the Principal immediately.

BLACKSTONE VALLEY TECH ATHLETIC AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

1. ATHLETIC AWARDS

Athletic awards on all levels are determined by the Athletic Director and Coach of that team. Standards and requirements to earn the award are set by the varsity coach in each sport, and must be publicized and made clear to all team members prior to the first contest or at the pre-season meeting. The athletic department will honor athletes in good standing at an awards night at the conclusion of the fall, winter and spring seasons.

2. TYPE OF AWARD

Varsity – Certificate with Gold Service Bar, Sport Insignia, Chenille Letter

Sub-Varsity – Certificate and Gold Service Bar

Freshman – Certificate and Gold Service Bar

Outstanding Senior Award Plaque – Recommended by the varsity coach to the Athletic Director.

3. DEFINITION OF AWARD

Certificates: All members of athletic teams ending the season in good standing will receive a certificate indicating level of participation.

Chenille Letters: Awarded to member of the Varsity athletic teams who have participated in a majority of the periods, quarters, halves or innings in that season. Also, Cross-Country runners who have averaged tenth place in their contests and Track and Field members who earn fifteen points in varsity meets.

Sports Insignia: Awarded at time of receiving first varsity letter for an individual sport.

Service Bars: Awarded for each year participating in a sport.

Captain Bar: Awarded to each captain of a varsity sport.

Manager Bar: Awarded to each manager of a sport.

Superintendent-Director's Commendation List Academic All-Star

Blackstone Valley Tech student-athletes should understand that the lessons learned in the playing arenas are a direct extension of the classroom setting. With this in mind, athletes must achieve an academic standard for extra-curricular participation in athletics. Those athletes that excel in the academic setting will be honored at

a specified awards ceremony as a member of the Superintendent-Director's Commendation List Academic All-Star. Commendation List student-athletes will be chosen three (3) times per year, at the end of each trimester. Student-athletes will be honored following their season of participation during the present season's awards ceremony. The criteria for each student-athlete to achieve such an honor is as follows:

- a. A student must maintain a grade point average of 80% or above (no incompletes) in technical, related and all academic courses.
- b. A student must maintain an effort and conduct grade average of 2 or better in all technical, related and academic courses.
- c. A student may not be absent more than five (5) days during the term.
- d. A student should have a clean discipline record.

Colonial Athletic League All-Star

- a. Nominations are made by Valley Tech Varsity Coach at league all-star meeting.
- b. Selected by league coaches in each sport.
- c. Winner of league competitions in Cross Country and Track and Field.

APPENDIX A – Concussion

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs of a concussion:

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just “not feeling right” or “feeling down”
- Forgets instruction
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or positions
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)

How can you help your child prevent a concussion or other serious brain injury?

- Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. Protective equipment should fit properly and be well maintained.
- Wearing a helmet is a must to reduce the risk of a serious brain injury or skull fracture.

However, helmets are not designed to prevent concussions. There is no "concussion-proof" helmet. So, even with a helmet, it is important for kids and teens to avoid hits to the head.

What should you do if you think your child has a concussion?

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to regular activities, including sports.

KEEP YOUR CHILD OUT OF PLAY. Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a repeat concussion. Repeat or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

TELL YOUR CHILD'S COACH ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION. Coaches should know if your child had a previous concussion. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

If you think your teen has a concussion:

Don't assess it yourself. Take him/her out of play. Seek the advice of a health care professional.

APPENDIX B – Mouth Guards

Mouth Guards

Mouth Guards are required in the high risk sports of Football, Ice Hockey, Field Hockey and Lacrosse.

In May 2009, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) voted to make mouth guards "highly recommended" instead of required. Given the physical nature of basketball and soccer, the Athletic Department of Blackstone Valley Tech will continue to offer mouth guards to the student athletes if they so choose to wear mouth guards during the basketball and soccer seasons.

The Sports Medicine Committee of the MIAA has reviewed the research and statistics and concludes that the use of mouth guards will prevent or greatly reduce the chance of the athletes suffering tooth damage or loss, jaw fractures, TMJ problems or damage to the lips, tongue and cheeks. Organizations that recommend mouth guards for basketball and soccer include the American Dental Association, Massachusetts Dental Society, The Academy for Sports Dentistry, Massachusetts Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, National Athletic Trainers Association, National Youth Safety Foundation, National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Federation. A properly fitted custom mouth guard is the best type for protection, comfort, breathing and speech, but any mouth guard will give much more protection than none at all. The cost of a mouth guard is minimal. The Massachusetts Dental Society has a program called "Grin and Wear It" in which dentists have agreed to make mouth guards at a reduced fee. Access to further information about this program is on the MIAA webpage.

APPENDIX C – MRSA

Although outbreaks of MRSA usually have been associated with health-care institutions, MRSA is emerging as a cause of skin infections in sports the community. According to ESPN roughly 130,000 Americans are infected with MRSA each year. MRSA is usually contracted by a break in the skin. It comes off the skin onto items such as towels, gym equipment, and body contacts in sports.

Some guidelines for protecting your son/daughter against infections:

- Washing uniforms and equipment after each game
- Washing towels (do not leave towels in lockers in between games/practices)
- Not sharing water bottles
- Adequately covering wounds
- Practicing and encouraging good hygiene, including showering with soap and hot water after all practices and competitions
- Avoiding sharing towels and personal items such as clothing or equipment
- Ensuring all shared equipment is routinely cleaned with an antimicrobial cleaning solution or disinfectant
- Practicing proper first aid of skin wounds and monitoring for wound infections.
- Hand hygiene should be always be performed after contact with any wound.
- Encouraging players to report all skin lesions to the team trainer or coach
- Seeking immediate medical attention for any serious or potentially infected skin wound

As an athletic staff, we are working hard to make the student athletes aware of this potentially serious infection, but we need your help. Please make sure you ask your son/daughter to take care of their uniforms and practice items daily. If you can help monitor that these items are being brought home and washed, we will better be able to prevent this infection from affecting our athletes.