

Valley Stream Central High School District

Athletic Handbook

For

Parents/Student-Athletes



www.vschesd.org

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Wayne R. Loper, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Brett Kornblum
District Director of Health,
Physical Education & Athletics

Dear Parents and Student-Athletes:

Welcome to the Valley Stream Central High School District Athletic Program. This handbook is a reference tool for our student-athletes and their parents and/or guardians and defines responsibilities as they pertain to the rules and regulations, as well as the policies and procedures, for participation in the interscholastic athletics program.

The Valley Stream Central High School District is committed to providing each student-athlete with a quality interscholastic athletic experience that focuses on the development of self-esteem and individual skills, as well as fostering an atmosphere of teamwork, leadership, discipline, character, and sportsmanship.

The Valley Stream Central High School District Interscholastic Athletic Program is governed by the regulations of the New York State Commissioner of Education and the Valley Stream Central High School District's Board of Education. Each of our four schools are members in good standing with the New York State Public High Schools Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) and Section VIII (Nassau County).

Please feel free to contact the athletic office at (516) 872-5695 if you have any questions, or concerns regarding any of our athletic programs. We look forward to working with you and your family and hope you take advantage of the opportunities our athletic program provides.

Sincerely,

Brett Kornblum

District Director of Health, Physical Education & Athletics

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Table of Contents

Board of Education2

Letter from the District Director of Athletics3

Table of Contents4

Varsity and Junior Varsity Sports Offerings5

Modified Sports Offerings6

Mission Statement7

Athletic Participation Requirements7

Student-Athlete Academic Requirements.....7

Tryouts and Selection of Teams8

Varsity Program Philosophy8

Junior Varsity Program Philosophy8

Modified Program Philosophy 9

Practice Sessions..... 9

Scrimmages..... 9

Club Teams..... 9

Sports Specialization 9

Family Vacations.....10

Section VIII Team, Coaches, Fans, School Sportsmanship.....10

Returning to Practice Following an Injury10

Athletic Injury Reporting10

Concussions11

Concussion Management Team11

Athletic Trainer11

Transportation11

Uniforms11

Parent/Coach Relationship..... 11-12

Behavior Violations13

Board of Education Policy Regarding Student Harassment & Bullying Prevention and Intervention13





Due Process Procedures13

Parent/Guardian and Student-Athlete Acknowledgement and Agreement Form15

Athletic Administrative Contacts.....17





Valley Stream Central High School District Sports Offerings

Varsity and Junior Varsity

	Central 		North 		South 	
Fall Season						
Sport	Varsity	JV	Varsity	JV	Varsity	JV
Cross Country	X	-	X	-	X	-
Fall Cheerleading	X	X	X	X	X	-
Football	X	X	X	X	X	X
Soccer (Boys)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Soccer (Girls)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tennis (Girls)	X	-	X	-	X	-
Volleyball (Boys)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Volleyball (Girls)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Winter Season						
Basketball (Boys)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Basketball (Girls)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bowling (Boys)	X*	X*	-	-	-	-
Bowling (Girls)	X*	X*	-	-	-	-
Competitive Cheerleading	X	X	X	X	X	-
Fencing (Girls)	X*	-	-	-	-	-
Gymnastics (Girls)	X*	-	-	-	-	-
Rifle (Coed)	X*	-	X	-	X	-
Winter Track (Boys)	X	-	X	-	X	-
Wrestling	X	X	X	X	X	X
Spring Season						
Badminton (Girls)	X	-	X	-	X	-
Baseball	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lacrosse (Boys)	X*	X*	-	-	-	-
Lacrosse (Girls)	X*	X*	-	-	-	-
Softball	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tennis (Boys)	X	-	X	-	X	-
Track & Field (Boys)	X	-	X	-	X	-
Track & Field (Girls)	X	-	X	-	X	-
<i>*District Teams are housed at Valley Stream Central High School</i>						

Valley Stream Central High School District Sports Offerings

Modified Athletics

	Memorial 	North 	South 
Fall			
Cross Country (Coed)	X	X	X
Football	X	X	X
Soccer (Boys)	X	X	X
Soccer (Girls)	X	X	X
Winter 1			
Basketball (Boys)	X	X	X
Volleyball (Girls)	X	X	X
Winter 2			
Basketball (Girls)	X	X	X
Volleyball (Boys)	X	X	X
Wrestling	X	X	X
Spring			
Baseball	X	X	X
Lacrosse (Boys)	X*		
Lacrosse (Girls)	X*		
Softball	X	X	X
Track & Field (Coed)	X	X	X
<p>*District Lacrosse teams are housed at Valley Stream Memorial. Teams are comprised of student-athletes from all three buildings.</p>			

Kickline	<p>offered at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Valley Stream Central ✓ Valley Stream North ✓ Valley Stream South ✓ Valley Stream Memorial <p>Practices begin in September and continue throughout the year until the Intra-District Performance.</p>
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Valley Stream Central High School District Athletics

Mission Statement

The Valley Stream Central High School District has developed an interscholastic athletic program with educational value for all students. It focuses on the development of self-esteem and individual skills, as well as fostering an atmosphere of teamwork, citizenship and sportsmanship. In addition, we believe our sports program emphasizes discipline, leadership, respect, loyalty and cooperation. The athletic program does emphasize lifelong activities where participation by as many student-athletes as possible is a goal. **It is a competitive athletic program and not a recreational program.** Winning is neither the most important nor only outcome of the program but is a focus especially at the varsity and junior varsity levels. The District has set high goals and standards and all personnel and students are encouraged to strive to achieve them while maintaining a proper perspective on sports, school and life.

Participation in the Valley Stream Central High School District interscholastic athletic program is a privilege, not a right. Students wishing to take advantage of the opportunities offered to them by the Valley Stream Central High School District must show a commitment to the athletic program by regular attendance at practices and contests, as well as conformity to the rules established by the District and/or coach. Each student-athlete should strive to perform to the best of his/her athletic and academic potential. We believe that all student-athletes should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively upon their school community and promotes good social, emotional and physical health. Therefore, all student athletes must abide by the VSCHSD Code of Conduct established by the Board of Education. Failure to comply with the rules of conduct will result in appropriate disciplinary action and/ or dismissal from the team.

Our programs are governed by the rules, regulations and procedures prescribed by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, Section VIII and the Valley Stream Central High School District. The New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) sets the rules to govern each sport offered in the eleven designated sections and the New York City Public Schools. The VSCHSD is a member of Section VIII, which is the governing body of the member schools in Nassau County.

Athletic Participation Requirements

The requirements for participation, as per the NYSPHSAA, include the student-athlete being a bona fide student enrolled in at least 4 subjects plus physical education and adhering to the NYSPHSAA rules and regulations. A student shall be eligible for 4 consecutive years of interscholastic competition in grades 9, 10, 11, 12 until his/her nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports. If a 7th or 8th grade student meets the Athletic Placement Process criteria and makes a junior varsity or varsity team, they will have their eligibility extended to permit five (8th grade) or six (7th grade) consecutive seasons in the approved sport.

Each student must follow, adhere and abide by the regulations set forth by the VSCHSD student code of conduct.

Each student must pass an athletic physical exam each year. For students seeing their own physician, the school's sports physical form must be used. Prior to the beginning of each sport season, the student and parent/guardian must complete and electronically sign the Health Survey, Emergency Contact Information, and the Athletic Code of Conduct on the RankOneSport website. Information regarding physicals and the RankOneSport website can be obtained on the VSCHSD website or by calling the school nurse or athletic office.

Student-Athlete Academic Eligibility

The primary focus for all student-athletes is their work in the area of academics. An Academic Eligibility Policy is in place for those students not attending classes or performing up to their ability in their schoolwork. Students may be temporarily or permanently suspended from athletic participation at any time. **Any student-athlete who cuts a class, arrives late to school (after 2nd period), is assigned to ISS, or assigned to OSS may not participate in a practice or game on that day.**

Tryouts and Selection of Teams

We try to keep as many students on our Varsity and JV teams as possible. The size of each team is determined by safety factors such as how many athletes a coach can adequately supervise. Additionally, team numbers are determined by the number of athletes who can positively contribute in some way. Unfortunately, some teams have to make “selections” OR “cuts.” This is one of the most difficult decisions a coach must make. When athletes are evaluated during a tryout period, coaches are asked to utilize as many “objective factors” as possible. These factors differ from sport to sport but examples might be timing students in an endurance run, shorts sprints or sport specific skills. Some subjective elements come into play like effort and attitude. Generally speaking, if a high school athlete does not make a particular team there might be other teams that may not make cuts, such as football, wrestling, cross country, winter track, and spring track which the students can join. Once a student has made a team, they may not switch to another sport during that season without permission from the coach and the athletic office.

A student in grades 7 or 8 who wishes to participate at the Junior Varsity or Varsity level must pass the **Athletic Placement Process** established by the New York State Education Department. Information regarding the Athletic Placement Process can be found on the VSCHSD website under the athletics tab. The test is administered by the District Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics three times a year prior to the start of the fall, winter, and spring seasons.

Varsity Program Philosophy

Varsity competition is the culmination of each sport’s program. Normally, seniors and juniors make up the majority of the roster, however, talented underclassmen may be included if they demonstrate evidence of advanced levels of physical development, athletic skill and appropriate socio-emotional development. The size of the team at the varsity level may be more restrictive. The number of participants on any given team is a function of those needed to conduct an effective and meaningful practice and to play the contest. It is critical that each team member has a role and knows its importance. The number of roster positions is relative to the students’ acceptance of their individual roles in pursuit of the teams’ goals. While contest participation over the course of the season is desirable, a specified amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed.

A sound attitude and advanced level of skill are prerequisites for a position on the varsity team, as is the realization that a varsity sport requires a six-days-a-week commitment. This commitment often extends into vacation periods for all sport seasons. The commitment needed to conduct a successful varsity program should be taken seriously. The varsity head coach is the leader of that sport’s program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program. Communication among modified, junior varsity and varsity programs is the responsibility of the varsity coach. Preparing to win, striving for victory in each contest and working to reach the groups and individual maximum potential are worthy goals of a varsity team.

Junior Varsity Program Philosophy

The Junior Varsity level is intended for those who display potential of continued development into productive varsity level performers. Although team membership varies according to the structure of each program, sophomores and freshmen occupy the majority of roster positions. Middle school students who pass the Athletic Placement Process (APP) may also earn positions on our junior varsity teams.

At this level, athletes are expected to make a visible commitment to the program, team and continued personal development. To this end, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, refinement of fundamental skills, elements and strategies of team play in addition to socio-emotional development. Junior Varsity programs work towards achieving a balance between continued team and player development and striving for victory. The outcome of the contest becomes a consideration at this level. With the goal of becoming a varsity athlete clearly in sight, a high level of dedication and commitment is expected at the junior varsity level. Junior varsity athletes should expect to practice as often as the varsity programs.

Modified Program Philosophy

The opportunity to participate in a modified sports program is available to all seventh and eighth graders. Sport activities offered are determined by the existence of leagues, student interest, and the relationship to the high school program. At this level, focus is on learning athletic skill and game rules, fundamentals of team play, socio-emotional growth, physiological appropriate demands on the adolescent body, and healthy competition. Our modified coaching staff will make every effort not to cut students who express an interest in a particular sport, however, if the number of students trying out for a particular team creates a situation that is difficult to manage, poses a safety problem, or is problematic because of facility considerations, reducing team size may be necessary. Students who participate on the modified level are expected to attend practice daily during the school week and may be expected to attend an occasional practice or contest on Saturdays for some sports. Opportunities for meaningful contest participation for each member will exist over the course of the season.

Practice Sessions

Generally, practices are held between 3:15 – 6:30 pm. Some teams, i.e., volleyball and basketball, may practice as late as 10:00 pm because of limited gym space. Practices may also vary in their location based on the availability of gyms or fields. Additionally, in the spring because of poor weather indoor practices may utilize gyms from 3:00 – 10:00 pm. Being a member of a Varsity or JV team means a greater commitment than at the junior high level. Many teams practice and have contests on Saturdays. Sunday practices are avoided unless there is a need due to contest schedules. Most JV & Varsity teams practice over school vacations. Teams may only practice 6 days in a week during the course of the regular season. You are expected to attend every scheduled practice, scrimmage and contest (not to exceed 6 days per week). If you must miss a scheduled practice, scrimmage or game, it is your responsibility to give prior notice to your coach, in writing, if possible, dated and signed by you and your parent(s)/guardian(s) (preferably with 24 hours). Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the coach. Students absent from school for an excused absence (i.e. death in the family) may participate in a practice, scrimmage or contest on the day they are absent from school as long as proper notification/documentation has been provided to the school. Interscholastic athletics are an extension of the physical education curriculum. Participating in athletics is a privilege not a right. If you are not prepared or do not participate in your regularly scheduled physical education class, you are ineligible to participate in practice, a scrimmage or contest for that day.

Scrimmages

*Please note: Spectators **will not be** permitted to attend home scrimmages as they are considered a practice.

Club Teams

It is recognized that many times an athlete may have numerous commitments. Some of these may include participation in outside activities including club and/or regional teams. It is important that the athlete and their parents understand that as a member of an interscholastic team, their primary commitment is to their school team. Therefore, all in-season athletes must attend their in-season practices and games as a top priority over any outside activity or team. In-season coaches may not reprimand an athlete for participating in an intramural practice during their free time.

Sports Specialization

We encourage our athletes to play multiple sports. There are some students who choose to “focus” on one sport in order to increase their chances at athletic scholarships. It has been our experience that a well-rounded athlete is one who can exhibit a variety of athletic skills which multi-sport involvement fosters. Many of our athletes who have gone on athletically to the college ranks have been two or three sport athletes.

Family Vacations

When parents and student-athletes choose to take their family vacations during sport seasons it must be understood that the time missed by the student-athlete can affect team chemistry, physical conditioning, and the athlete's appropriate preparedness for a contest. At the high school level if an athlete misses practice due to a family vacation, it may impact the student's ability to make the team and/or playing time. Coaches will make every effort to inform parents and student-athletes of the season schedule as far in advance as possible.

Section VIII Team, Coaches, Fans, School Sportsmanship

It is the expectation that all athletes, coaches and spectators demonstrate a high level of sportsmanship and follow the Section VIII Code of Conduct, as well as the VSCHSD Student Code of Conduct. The Section VIII Code of Conduct Guidelines state:

The Athlete is expected to:

1. *Understand that the student athletic program is a total part of the educational opportunities provided for all students. It should be treated as just that.*
2. *Conduct himself/herself as a gentleman/lady at all times.*
3. *Demonstrate self-control and mutual respect at all times. Uncontrolled emotion can be self-defeating.*
4. *Avoid the use of crude or abusive language or gestures in dealing with opponents, officials or spectators.*
5. *Accept victory with grace and defeat with dignity. Poor winners or losers do a disservice to themselves.*
6. *Set an example in word and deed, both on and off the playing area. Remember that athletes assume a role of leadership and that the young emulate their role models.*

The Spectators are expected to:

1. *Refrain from using noisemakers. The use of noisemakers is prohibited at all events.*
2. *Conform to accepted standards of good sportsmanship and behavior.*
3. *Respect officials, coaches and players and extend all courtesies to them.*
4. *Refrain from the use of crude or abusive language or gestures with players, opponents, officials or spectators.*
5. *Obey the regulations of the building and grounds. Those who do not conform should be brought to the attention of the building authorities.*
6. *Understand that schools are responsible for the conduct of their respective spectators whether at home or away.*

Returning to Practice Following an Injury

You must report every injury and illness to your parent(s)/ guardian(s), your coach, the athletic trainer, and the nurse. If you receive medical attention from a physician for any injury or illness, you may not return to practice, scrimmage or compete in a contest until you receive a written medical release from the physician or health care facility where you were treated. The note must include the date of injury/illness, a diagnosis and a date to return to participation. The note must be verified through the health office and the nurse will give you authorization in writing to give your coach and the athletic trainer.

Athletic Injury Reporting

Participation by a student in athletic activities involves some degree of risk of physical injury. Such a physical injury can occur in any type of sports activity, be it a "contact" or a "non-contact" sport. Furthermore, many injuries are truly accidental in nature and involve no negligence by anyone, including the student-athlete. By volunteering to participate in a school-sponsored athletic activity, a student-athlete and his/her parents or guardians assume the risks for an injury to occur. All injuries should be reported to the coach immediately. Early care and treatment can minimize the physical restrictions from an injury. Athletes should provide their coaches with all of the information regarding their injury so they can file the accident report in a timely manner. The VSCHSD does provide student

accident insurance that is supplemental to whatever individual plan the athlete may be covered under. Please contact the school nurse for information regarding this plan.

Concussions

The Valley Stream Central High School District recognizes that concussions and head injuries are a commonly reported injury in children and adolescents who participate in sports and recreational activities. The VSCHSD has adopted the Concussion Management Guidelines as per the NYSED, Department of Health, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to assist in the proper evaluation and management of head injuries. Any student demonstrating signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion while participating in interscholastic athletic activity will be removed from the game or practice and be evaluated immediately. They will not be permitted to return to play that day. Students who suffer a concussion must be symptom-free for a minimum of 24 hours and receive written medical clearance from the Chief School Medical Officer before they can begin the Return to Play Protocol under the direction of the Athletic Trainer.

Concussion Management Team

The Valley Stream Central High School District Concussion Management Team (CMT) consists of the building athletic director, a member of the school administration or Pupil Personnel Staff, school nurse, athletic trainer, and the school physician. The CMT may also include the parent, private medical provider, the District Director of Health Physical Education, and Athletics, and a teacher or coach.

Athletic Trainer

The Valley Stream Central High School District employs the services of a certified athletic trainer at the high school level to oversee prevention, assessment, and treatment of injuries commonly associated with athletic participation. An athletic trainer is a highly qualified health professional that works closely with our athletes and coaches. An athletic trainer has the skills to recognize and treat injuries, as well as provide life support in emergency situations. In the event of an injury, this professional will evaluate the athlete, give specific instruction for care of the injury, and follow through by contacting the parent/guardian.

Transportation

Student-athletes will be transported to and from away contests by school authorized vehicles only. **Parents are not permitted to transport student-athletes home from away contests without prior written approval from a school administrator. Requests must be in writing, contain an original signature and be submitted to the office the day prior to the contest for approval. Requests submitted by email will not be accepted.** Proper conduct is expected at all times while riding on school transportation.

Uniforms

Only school-issued uniforms may be worn during athletic contests. Athletes cannot compete if they fail to dress appropriately. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to return all school-issued clothing and equipment to the head coach at the conclusion of the season. Failure to return any uniforms or equipment will result in the student-athlete paying for the missing items. Uniforms and/or equipment cannot be kept at home after the season without permission from the athletic office.

Parent/ Coach Communication

Parent/ Coach Relationship

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult responsibilities. By establishing an understanding of each role, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to athletes. As parents, when your children become involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) offers several free courses for parents. Parents are encouraged to go to www.nfhslearn.com/home/parents to review these courses which include: Positive Sport Parenting, Bullying, Hazing and Inappropriate Behaviors, Concussion in Sports, Sportsmanship, Social Media, as well as several others.

Communication you should expect from your child's coach:

- Philosophy of the coach.
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the team.
- Locations and times of all practices and contests.
- Team requirements, team rules, special equipment, and any off-season recommendations for improvement of skills.
- Procedure, should your child be injured during participation.
- Discipline, that results in the denial of your child's participation.

Communication coaches expect from parents:

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach.
- Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance.
- Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy.

Appropriate concerns to discuss with coaches:

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
- Ways to help your child improve.
- Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child's not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches are professionals. They make judgements based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain topics can and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other topics, such as those described in the next segment, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues not appropriate to discuss with the coach:

- Playing time
- Team Strategy
- Play Calling
- Other Student-Athletes

Coaches are making decisions that are in the best interest of all members of the team or the program. Please be supportive of their decisions.

Procedures for discussing a concern with a coach.

1. Contact the coach to set up a meeting to discuss your concerns.
2. If the coach cannot be reached call the Athletic Office.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after practice or a contest. These can be emotional times and may not benefit either party to attempt to resolve concerns at these times.
4. If the meeting with the coach and/or the building athletic director did not provide a satisfactory resolution, please contact the office of the District Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics.

Behavior Violations

1. The VSCHSD athletes are not to possess or use any type of tobacco products, alcohol or illegal or controlled substances. Students found in violation of this policy may be suspended from athletic participation.
2. Athletes are not to engage in any behavior inside or outside of school that is illegal or detrimental to the team. Students in violation of this clause are subject to the Student Code of Conduct and may be suspended from athletic participation.
3. Student-athletes are not to use social media of any kind to disseminate negative information by posting comments, videos or photographs. Information posted should not be threatening, harassing, illegal, obscene, defamatory, slanderous, or hostile towards any individual or entity.
4. It is our goal to learn and teach in a healthy and safe environment where all are valued, welcomed and accepted. To that end, all adults are expected: (1) to model acceptable behavior with other students and adults at all times; (2) to be diligent in identifying unacceptable behavior; and (3) to bring to the attention of school officials those who violate these rules.

The Valley Stream Central High School District has a zero tolerance policy regarding all forms of harassment, hazing or bullying of any type. Student-athletes in violation of these behaviors will be immediately suspended from their athletic team and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Valley Stream Central High School District Board of Education Policy Regarding Student Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Board of Education is committed to providing an educational and working environment that promotes respect, dignity and equality. The Board recognizes that discrimination, such as harassment, hazing and bullying, are detrimental to student learning and achievement. These behaviors interfere with the mission of the district to educate its students and disrupt the operation of the schools. Such behavior affects not only the students who are its targets but also those individuals who participate and witness such acts.

To this end, the Board condemns and strictly prohibits all forms of discrimination, such as harassment, hazing and bullying on school grounds, school buses and at all school-sponsored activities, programs and events.

Discrimination, harassment, hazing or bullying that takes place at locations outside of school grounds, such as cyberbullying, which can be reasonably expected to materially and substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school or impinge on the rights of other students are prohibited, and may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Due Process Procedures

Suspension from athletic participation, extra-curricular activities and other privileges: A student subjected to a suspension from athletic participation, extra-curricular activities or other privileges is not entitled to a full hearing pursuant to [Education Law §3214](#). However, the student and the student's parent will be provided with a reasonable opportunity for an informal conference with the district official imposing the suspension to discuss the conduct and the penalty involved.

Valley Stream Central High School District Athletics

The parent/guardian and student-athlete must complete and sign this form and return it to their coach prior to the first contest.

I have read all the materials in the Valley Stream Central High School District Athletic Handbook for Parents and Athletes. I am aware of the behavior and expectations set forth in the handbook relating to conduct inside and outside of school including bullying, harassment, and hazing in addition to the Valley Stream Central High School Code of Conduct.

I agree to support the athletic department in its enforcement of these expectations of conduct and understand the consequences of my son/daughter's failure to do so.

Sport: _____

Level: Varsity [] JV [] Modified []

Parent/Guardian Name-**Please Print**

Student Name-**Please Print**

Parent/ Guardian Signature Date

Student Signature Date

Please sign this page, stating that you have read and understand the expectations of all involved in the educational mission of athletics at the Valley Stream Central High School District. This form must be signed by a parent/guardian and the student-athlete prior to the student-athlete participating in any athletic contest.

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Athletic Administration Contacts

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