



***Athletic
Department
Handbook***

2024-2025

Mills Godwin High School Administrative Team

Principal: Leigh Dunavant
Associate Principal: Mindy Guyer
Assistant Principal: Matthew Engle
Assistant Principal: Ria Mullis
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Mills Godwin High School is a member Central Region 5C and Group 5 of the Virginia High School League, Inc. Region 5C consists of the following schools:

Albemarle	Louisa County
Clover Hill	Matoaca
Douglas S. Freeman	Midlothian
Franklin County	Mills Godwin
Hermitage	Patrick Henry – Roanoke
James River - Midlothian	Prince George
J.R. Tucker	William Fleming
L.C. Bird	

Sports Offered at Mills Godwin High School

Fall

Cheerleading – Competition
Cheerleading – Sideline
Cross Country
Field Hockey
Football
Golf
Volleyball

Winter

Basketball
Cheerleading – Sideline
Gymnastics
Indoor Track & Field
Swimming
Wrestling

Spring

Baseball
Lacrosse
Soccer
Softball
Tennis
Outdoor Track & Field

The Mills Godwin High School Athletics Handbook

The Mills Godwin High School Athletic Department Handbook is designed to provide basic information on the operation of the athletic department. This information will allow members of the athletic department to perform their duties according to the policies of Mills Godwin High School, Henrico County Public Schools, and the Virginia High School League, Inc. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the basic policies of the athletic department while allowing coaches the greatest possible autonomy to manage their program in the way that best suits the needs of the participants.

Boosters - GAA

Mills Godwin HS has one official boosters club, the *Godwin Athletic Association*. The purpose of the GAA shall be to promote athletics at Godwin High School through activities that are consistent with the educational philosophy of Henrico County Public Schools.

Parents, coaches and community members are encouraged to take advantage of every opportunity to work with the GAA and its fund raising projects. For more information, please visit their website at <http://www.godwinathletics.org>.

Code of Parent Conduct

Both parenting and coaching can be extremely difficult during athletic participation. Parents have the right to understand what expectations are placed on their student athlete when they become involved in our program. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child's program.

Communication you should expect from your child's coach:

1. Philosophy of the coach
2. Expectations the coach has for your child, as well as all the participants in the program
3. Locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements, i.e. practice, fees, special equipment, and off-season conditioning
5. Procedure should your child be injured during participation
6. Discipline that results in child's dismissal from the team

Communication expected from parents:

1. Notification of any schedule conflicts well in advance of the date in question
2. Specific concerns regarding coach's philosophy, actions, and/or expectations
3. Disclosure of other issues as they apply to your child's participation on the team

Appropriate concerns parents should discuss with the coach:

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
2. Ways to help your child improve
3. Concerns about your child's behavior
4. Concerns about your child's academic progress

Issues not appropriate for parents to discuss with the coach:

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

Godwin Athletics Communication Procedure

1. Athlete & Coach
 - a. Occurs within 2 weeks of the incident of concern
 - b. Face to face meeting
2. Athlete, Parent & Coach
 - a. Occurs if Athlete & Coach Meeting doesn't resolve issue
 - b. Occurs with 1 week of the Athlete & Coach Meeting
 - c. Face to face meeting
3. Athlete, Parent, Coach & Activities Director
 - a. Occurs if previous meeting doesn't resolve the issue
 - b. Occurs as soon as possible following Athlete, Parent & Coach Meeting
 - c. Will be a face to face meeting
4. Athlete, Parent, Coach, Activities Director & Principal
 - a. Occurs if previous meeting doesn't resolve the issue
 - b. Occurs as soon as possible following Athlete, Parent, Coach & Activities Director Meeting
 - c. Will be a face to face meeting

It is important to remember that we practice the 24 hour rule regarding interaction between parents and staff before and after a practice or contact. These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach and we ask that there be a period of 24 hours if there is an incident that requires a meeting. This will allow all parties involved time to address the issue properly.

Attendance

- Regular attendance in school is mandatory in order to participate in athletics
- No athlete may participate in practice or a game unless he/she was present at least one-half of that school day unless an exception is made by the Director of Students Activities or Principal due extenuating circumstances
- On days following competitions, students-athletes are expected to be in school on time
- If a student-athlete is found to be in violation of the school attendance policy, the athletic administration and coaching staff will follow school and athletic policy as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Tardy and attendance violations by a student-athlete may result in a suspension of participation in activities. If such behavior continues, the student-athlete may be dismissed from the team.
- Student-athletes who are absent from school during the regular school hours will not be permitted to practice or play in any competition scheduled for that day.
- Student-athletes who are assigned Out of School Suspension (OSS) or In School Suspension (ISS/ASP) are not eligible for practice or competition on the day(s) of their suspension

Godwin Event Schedule Conflicts

- At times a student may be involved with a conflict of Godwin event schedules. A student shall be allowed to make his/her event choice without penalty or pressure from the team coach or activity sponsor
- A game or performance has priority over a practice

Changing Sports after the Season Starts

- An athlete who begins practice in one sport and is released by the coach for any reason other than being “cut”, may not participate in another sport during the same season

Equipment

- A student-athlete is responsible for all team equipment that has been issued to him/her
 - Lost or damaged equipment must be paid for at the rate of replacement cost
 - Students who have delinquent bills will not receive any school-sponsored awards or be allowed to tryout/practice for another sport until the obligation has been met
 - School athletic equipment is to be used for practice or games only, unless otherwise authorized by the coach

College Planning

The process of selecting a college is one of the most difficult and rewarding experiences that a student goes through in high school. This process works best when the student, parents or guardians, school counselor, teachers, coaches and administrators all work together in this process. It is a long, complicated process that is best when it is started early. The following information can assist in the process of selecting a college or university and preparing for college athletic participation. This is only a basic guide for navigating the process; a meeting should be held with the student’s professional school counselor to discuss the specifics of the entire process. A student athlete interested in attending college and participating in NCAA athletics should obtain a copy of the NCAA Guide for College-Bound Student-Athlete from the School Counseling office or <http://www.ncaa.org>.

Grade 9 and 10

1. Pursue academic and behavioral excellence. Make sure you are aware of NCAA sliding scale regarding eligibility requirements and that your classes are consistent with NCAA guidelines.
 - a. Meet with your school counselor to assure your classes are NCAA approved
2. Develop a sports resume of athletic achievements including stats, news clippings, etc...
3. Attend sports camps to increase exposure, improve skills, and to gain contest experience
4. Participate on high school teams year-round, if possible, to gain a wider perspective, increase strength and conditioning, and create a more impressive resume

Grade 11

1. Continue your hard work in the classroom. Make your best effort in school and get the highest-grade point average (GPA) possible. Take a strong academic load that is not only challenging, but also meets the NCAA requirements
2. Meet with your school counselor regarding your interests and the recruitment process. Develop a list of schools with the help of your school counselor, coach, and athletic director.
3. Take required standardized tests (SAT or ACT)
 - a. Make sure you are aware of the NCAA sliding scale and eligibility requirements
4. Continue to develop your athletic resume
5. Obtain literature and visit colleges you may be interested in attending
6. Work with your coach to evaluate your athletic skills to determine a realistic level of competition
7. Attend sports camps during the summer
8. Attend financial aid seminars and fill out appropriate financial aid forms in consultation with your school counselor

Grade 12

1. Continue to pursue excellence in the classroom
2. Request and return college applications as early as possible. Pay attention to application deadlines. Work closely with school counselor to be familiar with the application process.
3. Complete and return financial aid forms paying close attention to deadlines
4. Continue to keep your athletic resume updated
5. Re-take SAT or ACT tests if necessary
6. Contact college coaches to express interest in their school athletic program. Include your athletic resume and other pertinent information
7. Request that your teachers and/or high school coaches write letters of recommendation to the colleges that which you have applied
8. Be familiar with the NCAA eligibility requirements and the NCAA Eligibility Center
 - a. <http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/eligibility-center>
 - b. Meet with your school counselor to make sure you have filled out all appropriate paperwork

NCAA Eligibility Center: If a student-athlete is planning to enroll in a college as a freshman and wishes to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, he/she must be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center.

To be certified you must:

1. Fill out an NCAA Eligibility Center
 - a. https://web3.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp
2. Graduate from High School
3. Have a core-course grade-point average (based on a maximum of 4.0) and a combined score on the SAT verbal and math sections or a sum score on the ACT based on the qualifier index scale. The qualifier index scale is available in the school counseling office.

NCAA Eligibility Center forms are available online. See a MGHS school counselor for more information. If you have any questions, please contact your professional school counselor.

Given the number of out of building coaches that Mills Godwin HS uses we request that all visiting college coaches arrange a meeting appointment prior to coming to the school. This allows for a member of our coaching staff to be present during any meetings as well minimizing the classroom time that a student-athlete misses to meet.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Director of Student Activities

The duties and responsibilities of the Director of Student Activities:

1. Be responsible for the supervision of all VHSL interscholastic programs
2. Secure facilities following all athletic events
3. Provide for the efficient handling of all athletic funds with such safeguards as annual budgets, audits, and proper bookkeeping
4. Obtain bids and make purchases for athletic equipment consistent with the division's procurement procedures
5. Supervise ticket sales, part-time workers, officials, security personnel, and financial expenses for home athletic contests
6. Submit stipends for coaches, sponsors and support personnel
7. Provide adequate safety provisions in all sports for both participants and spectators and provide a periodic check of all facilities for safety and suitability
8. Provide adequate facilities for visiting teams
9. Be responsible for the maintenance of buildings and grounds in the athletic areas
10. Develop effective relations with outside groups, such as booster associations and others
11. Represent the school at athletic meetings – VHSL, conference, district, region, state, and athletic conferences and workshops
12. Review the master eligibility lists (MEL's) of all interscholastic programs to provide compliance with VHSL eligibility standards
13. Arrange all varsity, junior varsity and 9th grade team schedules and publicize dates, sites, and time of contests
14. Make the necessary arrangements for transporting participants to scheduled athlete events
15. Maintain a system of inventory and accounting for equipment for all sports
16. Establish school rules and policies governing athletic contests in cooperation with the principal and coaching staff members
17. Work cooperatively with the principal to ensure that the coaches of all interscholastic teams know their described duties and responsibilities
18. Assist the principal in recruiting and staffing athletic positions
19. Conduct staff meetings on a regular basis to review policies and procedures
20. Be responsible for evaluating the head and assistant coaching staff
21. Insist that the success of the program be judged on the merits it offers for participants – values of being a team, discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and good sportsmanship
22. Ensure that the ideals of good sportsmanship are practiced at all athletic events
23. Plan for seasonal award banquets
24. Work with school custodial staff and maintenance staff to provide appropriate coverage for all events
25. Coordinate and supervise fund raising activities for athletic teams
26. Establish a positive means of communicating to parents in the event of game and practice cancellations, rescheduled dates, and expected return times for away contests
27. Be responsible for other duties assigned by the school principal

Duties and Responsibilities of Coaches

All coaches are official representatives of Mills Godwin High School and Henrico County Public Schools. Coaches have the responsibility for the guidance of team members. The work of the coach must be an integral part of the educational program through character development, encouragement of academic achievement, and enforcement of school rules and policies. Coaches are expected to:

1. Know and enforce Henrico County School Board policies, Mills Godwin High School and athletic department policies, and the rules of the National Federation of State High School Associations and the Virginia High School League, Inc.
2. Complete mandatory VHSL Coaches Education. In May 2009 the Executive Committee of the Virginia High School League passes a coaches education initiative which requires all first-time athletic coaches at VHSL member schools, and those athletic coaches who are exempted through the VHSL Coaches Rule 27-2-2(4) to complete an approved course in principles of coaching and sport first aid. Additionally, ALL **athletic** coaches are required to complete a VHSL component which familiarizes the coach with rules and regulations found in the VHSL Handbook as well as those found at the local school level.
 - a. <http://www.vhsl.org/coacheded.cert-requirements>
3. Attend VHSL sponsored coaching rules clinics each year. Coaches should contact the Director of Student Activities and find the dates and location of the appropriate clinic
4. Know the rules of their sport. They should provide students with thorough conditioning and comprehensive fundamentals of the sport to ensure safety for the participants. Coaches are responsible for always making athletes aware of appropriate safety equipment when participating in a sport
5. Report all sportsmanship violations and ejections to the Director of Students Activities immediately following the contest in which the action occurred
6. Give due process to all student-athletes. If a student has a particular need, it is the responsibility of each coach to inform the student, parent and school administration of the issue at hand and help seek and appropriate remedy. There should be consultation with the student, parent, and administrator before a student is dismissed from a team
7. Be responsible for submitting a complete roster of participants trying out for a team to the Director of Student Activities at the conclusion of the first week of practice. Additions or deletions should be submitted regularly as needed
8. At least ten (10) days prior to the first scheduled contest, provide a roster of team members, including managers to the Director of Student Activities. This roster should include the name of participants with uniform numbers, grade in school and position(s) played.
9. Keep emergency release forms on hand at all times, especially at away competitions
10. The head coach is expected to be available to participate in the team parent meetings each season.
 - a. All coaches will conduct preseason meetings
 - b. Coaches will give participants and their parents written copies of team rules and procedures
 - c. A copy of the team rules and regulations will be kept in the Athletic Department. Team award guidelines should be discussed at this time.

- d. During the Parent Meeting, the coach should emphasize the following to each participant:
 - i. Attendance requirements for practice
 - ii. Proper care of the locker room and equipment
 - iii. Respect for authority
 - iv. Good sportsmanship, both in victory and defeat
 - v. Report all injuries to the coach or trainer
 - vi. School policy on the use of tobacco products, alcohol and illegal drugs
11. Attend all post season meetings pertaining to the selection of Region and State teams.
 - a. These meetings rotate between the schools that compose Region 5C. These meetings may be in person or virtual.
12. Supervise all participants until their departure from Mills Godwin High School after practice or games. No student should be left unsupervised at any time.
13. Be responsible for the cleanliness of the bus after use
14. Assist the Director of Student Activities in the preparation of the playing facility for contests
15. Assist the Director of Student Activities in securing the playing facility after a contest
16. Work with and follow the directions of the athletic trainer for injured athletes
17. Do not provide any medication to participants
18. Be responsible for issuing proper and safe equipment to each participant
19. Coaches should keep an accurate record of equipment issued and make sure that the equipment is returned at the end of a season in an appropriate condition
20. Supervise all participants in the locker room before and after practices and at home and away contests
21. Be responsible for the practice and game facilities to make sure that these areas are kept clean
22. Be friendly and responsive to news media personnel. The head coach is responsible for reporting to local media the home contest results at the conclusion of each event. Athletes, game officials, and opposing teams and coaches should not be degraded in the media at any time. Game results also need to be reported online by 9AM the morning following an event or by 9AM Monday morning following a weekend event
23. Report any unsportsmanlike conduct or game ejection to the Director of Student Activities the night of the event. These events must be reported to the Virginia High School League by the Director of Student Activities within 48 hours.
24. Provide the Director of Student Activities with end of the season awards by the predetermined dates

Fourteen Duties of Coaches

In recent history, case law has defined the role of the coaches, their responsibilities, and fourteen duties. On a case-by-case basis, a progression of cases has defined the relationship between the athlete and coach. While these duties may vary in certain instances, below is the list of the most established duties for coaches:

1. Properly plan activities
2. Provide proper supervision
3. Provide proper assessment of athlete's readiness for practice and competition
4. Provide safe physical conditions
5. Provide adequate and proper equipment
6. Provide proper instruction
7. Properly match athletes according to size and ability
8. Provide proper conditioning
9. Provide proper warning of risks
10. Provide proper information on insurance
11. Provide appropriate emergency assistance
12. Provide an emergency response plan
13. Provide proper transportation
14. Provide proper selection and supervision of coaches

Finances and Fundraising

Teams are not required to raise funds. However, fundraisers provide an excellent opportunity for team building and the development of critical life skills. All fundraising and purchases must receive prior approval of the school administration and follow specific HCPS guidelines. These guidelines include the following:

1. The request for activity must be received at least two weeks before the fundraising event
2. All money raised through the fundraising project will be held in school accounts specific to the sport that raised the money
3. All money raised through fundraising projects, including concessions sales, must be deposited with the bookkeeper the day it is received. **No exceptions**
4. The spending of any funds must be pre-approved
5. No disbursements shall be made unless adequately supported by approved invoices, vouchers, and other documents. All disbursements must be signed by the head coach unless the head coach is the recipients of funds in which case the Director of Student Activities will sign
6. Coaches will be held solely responsible for any unauthorized purchases
7. Applications for fundraisers can be found with the Director of Student Activities and Bookkeeper

Duties and Responsibilities of the Athletic Trainer

The duties and responsibilities of the athletic trainer are as follows:

1. Be responsible to and follow the directions and recommendations of the referring physician for the care, treatment, and rehabilitation of all interscholastic participants
2. Aid the Director of Student Activities in providing adequate safety provisions for participants
3. Work cooperatively with the Director of Student Activities and the school administration to carry out school athletic policies
4. Conform to the Virginia High School League, Inc., rules concerning types of legal and illegal protective equipment
5. After conferring with the participant's physician, or in the absence of an attending physician, determine if, when, and to what extent an injured participant can return to practice and competition
6. Offer assistance to visiting team to the extent they request assistance
7. Maintain the training room, and establish and maintain a sports medicine program in a professional manner as determined by the National Athletic Trainer's Association
8. When possible, train and instruct student staff members to assist the athletic trainer
9. Strive to educate coaches and athletic personnel in current methods of first aid and proper athletic training techniques
10. Give reasonable paramedical support to all athletic contests
11. Maintain a level of professionalism through constant review of literature and continuing education in the athletic training field
12. Work with the Director of Student Activities to determine the acquisition of goods necessary to maintain an adequate athletic training program

Injuries and the Training Room

All athletes will be required to have a completed VHSL physical form on file in the athletic office prior to any team tryout period. Unfortunately, injuries are a reality during interscholastic athletics at all levels regardless of the amount of precautions taken, such as safe playing conditions, proper coaching techniques, appropriate safety equipment, and the warnings of possible injury. As a result of this reality, Mills Godwin High School provides a certified athletic trainer (ATC) to cover practice sessions and interscholastic athletic events. The athletic trainer shall have the responsibility of administering care to injured athletes and making the proper recommendations. When the athletic trainer is not available, the coach will have to assume the responsibility of dealing with injured athletes. The coach should have a basic understanding of first aid, but it is the responsibility of the athletic trainer to assess injuries. If in doubt, an emergency unit should be called to address the situation at hand.

All teams will be issued a first aid kit. First aid kits should be available at all practices and contests. In addition, coaches must carry the Emergency Permission Form. Coaches should follow up on all injuries by contacting the Director of Student Activities, athletic trainer and parents of an injured athlete at the earliest possible time.

Athletes that have been instructed to not participate in athletics by a physician will need a note from a doctor to return to practice. All medical documentation must be turned into the athletic trainer.

The athletic training room will be open after school prior to practice. Athletes reporting to the athletic training room should report immediately after school and sign-in. No athlete is allowed in the athletics training room without the athletic trainer and designee. Basic athletic training room rules are as follows:

1. The Athletic Training Room is open in the afternoons, Monday through Friday
2. After school treatments are given if...
 - a. The athlete is out of practice due to injury
 - b. The athlete has sufficient time to obtain treatment before practice
 - c. The nature of the injury constitutes treatment prior to practice
3. All athletes must sign in before receiving any services in the ATR
4. Respect all persons in the ATR
5. Do no touch any supplies or equipment (tape, modalities, ice, etc....) in the ATR without permission from the ATC
6. No swearing, yelling, arguing or unpleasant gestures
7. The ATC reserves the right to refuse treatment to any athlete due to non-compliance or disrespectful attitude
8. The ATR is under supervision of the Certified Athletic Trainer, and he/she has the sole authority to modify the above rules. Any delinquency of the above rules will have consequences to be determined by the ATC and the appropriate coach and administrator if necessary

ImPACT™ Concussion Test

Every 2 years each athlete will participate in the ImPACT program. This is a computerized exam that the athlete takes prior to the season. If the athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury, he or she re-takes the test to help determine a) the extent of the injury, b) the location of the injury has healed. The system is used throughout professional sports, has been mandated in the NHL, and is fast becoming the “gold standard” in recognizing and better managing concussion-type injuries. The University of Pittsburg Medical Center’s Sports Concussion Program is the founding group of this software (www.impacttesting.com).

The test takes about 15-20 minutes. The program is basically set up as a “video-game” type format. What it is doing is giving the brain a preseason physical of its cognitive abilities. It tracks information such as memory, reaction time, processing speed, and concentration. It is simple, and most who take it enjoy the challenge of the test. If a concussion is suspected, the test is re-taken, parents are notified, and the information is shared with your student’s physician to help determine when return to play is appropriate and safe.

The administration, coaches, and athletic training staff are trying to keep your child’s health and safety at the forefront of the high school athletic experience. Please sign the HCPS Concussion Policy attached at the end of this document and return it to your athlete’s coach to be able to participate.

Insurance

Parents are advised to thoroughly research and investigate their insurance plans and the related coverage for school athletics, rescue squad usage, emergency room visits and any other related medical expenses. Health insurance should be provided by the legal guardian through a personal policy. In situations where personal insurance is not carried, information on school insurance can be found on the HCPS website (<http://henricoschools.us/activities-athletics/>).

Locker Rooms

Each coach is responsible for the action of team members in the locker rooms. Coaches must provide supervision in the locker room before and after practice sessions and athletic contests. No participant should be in the locker room unsupervised. The following rules apply to the use of the locker room by student-athletes:

1. Valuable items and money should not be kept in the athletic locker rooms. Students should avoid bringing these items to school and practice. It is the responsibility of the individual to secure these items.
 - a. The school will not be held liable for lost or stolen items
2. Rough housing, throwing of towels or other objects, and hazing of other students is not permitted
3. All showers should be turned off after use
4. Shoes with spikes or cleats may not be worn inside the school. Shoes with spikes or cleats should be removed and cleaned before entering the building
5. No glass objects are allowed in the locker rooms
6. Equipment should be stored in the lockers and locked before leaving the locker room
 - a. Equipment is the responsibility of the student to who it was issued, and she/he will be responsible for that equipment until it is turned into the head coach
7. Athletes may not share a locker with another student. Students should never leave items lying on the locker room floor or benches
8. Locker Rooms should be left orderly at the end of practice. Clothes and equipment should be picked up and stored properly
9. Only team members of in-season activities are permitted to use the locker rooms
 - a. Students found in the locker rooms without permission to be there will be subject to disciplinary action per school rules
10. Lockers must be cleaned out following the last game of each season

Practice Information

1. All participants must have the following to participate:
 - a. **VHSL Athletic Physical Form**
 - Prior to participating in team tryouts and/or practice, a student-athlete must have an approved VHSL athletic physical on file in the Director of Student Activities' office
 - b. **Sports Emergency Card**
 - Prior to participating in team tryouts and/or practice, a student-athlete and his/her parent or guardian must complete, sign, and return this card to the head coach
 - c. **Student-Athlete Handbook Acknowledgement Form**
 - Prior to participating in team tryouts and/or practice, a student-athlete and his/her parent or guardian must sign and return the form to the head coach

THERE ARE NOT EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE. COACHES AND ATHLETES WILL BE STRICTLY HELD TO THIS STANDARD.

2. Practice sessions are scheduled after school and may also be held on Saturdays. Practice sessions may not conflict with the regular academic school day
3. No practice or meetings of any kind may be conducted with student-athletes on Sundays
4. Each coach shall fulfill VHSL requirements regarding the number of practice sessions necessary prior to the first contest date
5. Daily attendance is expected per the Student Handbook
6. Please note the Mills Godwin student handbook for specific rules regarding attendance
7. Student-athletes are expected to be at practice from the beginning of the season unless there are exceptions
8. Games may be scheduled during Winter and Spring Break vacations. It is the responsibility of the athlete to notify the coach in advance of any absences during these periods. As an athletic department, we value family and recognize that this is an important time for families. With advance written notification, absences due to family travel will be excused

Hazing

Hazing will not be tolerated in any form. It is important to realize that hazing is an action taken or a situation created intentionally, whether on or off the school grounds, to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule. Such activities may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Use of alcohol or other drugs
2. Paddling of any form
3. Creation of excessive fatigue
4. Physical and psychological shock
5. Hair Cuts
6. Morally degrading or humiliating games and activities which are not consistent with school rules, policy, or the regulations of the school district

Hazing is against the law in the state of Virginia and is prohibited in Henrico County Public Schools. Hazing may result in lawsuits and criminal prosecution. A coach can be held individually liable for hazing incidents. Students who engage in hazing activities will be removed from school activities per the Student Handbook.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is generally defined as any unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical advance of a sexual nature. It is against the law and will not be tolerated by coaches or athletes. The following are recommendations for preventing sexual harassment:

1. Do not engage in excessively personal conversations
2. Never use sexually explicit language or tell sexually explicit/off color jokes
3. Do not send personal letters, emails or gifts
4. Do not comment on the physical appearance, including manner of dress and specific attributes of athletes or colleagues
5. Avoid to the greatest extent possible physical contact with touching of another individual.
 - a. If this is necessary during professional responsibilities, make sure another adult is present and it is done in an open area
6. Do not give student-athletes rides home alone or even in groups where eventually only one student will remain in the car alone with the adult
7. Do not meet off school property with individual student-athletes. On overnight trips exercise extreme caution and propriety regarding interaction with student-athletes
 - a. All school trips must be approved by the administration

Reporting Harassment: Any student who is a victim or witness to any personal harassment by another student or school employee should report the incident to an administrator, counselor, teacher, coach or other staff member immediately. If any student would like to discuss an incident, administrators and/or counselors will be available upon request. Disciplinary action will be taken and may include a report to the School Resource Officer. Any coach who is a victim or witness to personal harassment should report the incident to the Director of Student Activities or a school administrator immediately.

Weather Related Issues

Inclement weather and game administration

It is the responsibility of home/game management to determine whether a game will be started. While this decision is best made in concert with game officials, it is ultimately the game manager's call. It is also the responsibility of home/game management to have in place a policy for dealing with thunder, lightning or other potentially dangerous situations that may or may not be observed or known about by game officials. The policy should at a minimum include the following:

1. Assignment of a staff member to monitor local weather conditions before and during events
2. This individual should be introduced to the officiating crew prior to the game
3. An evacuation plan:
 - a. Where will teams and officials go?
 - b. Where will fans go?
 - c. This information should be posted and announced, especially when weather could play a role in the ensuing game
4. Criteria for suspension and resumption of play. Guidelines provided by the NFHS are as follows:
 - a. When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play and take shelter immediately.
 - b. Thirty-minute rule, see below for specifics. Once the play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lighting is witnessed prior to resuming play.
 - Any subsequent thunder or lighting after the beginning of the 30-minute count, reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin
5. Once the game has started, the game officials have jurisdiction and are responsible for making all determinations regarding actual field conditions. Game officials are responsible for judging whether a field has become too wet, too muddy, or too slippery to continue play. School officials do not make those determinations
6. Officials may not set aside school policies and procedures. Game administrators may not halt games for reasons having only to do with sloppy field conditions. In all cases, officials and administrators should work together to do what is best for the students

Lightning

1. Please follow the "30-30 rule"
 - a. Wait at least 30 minutes from the last lightning flash before returning to the activity. This is based on the fact that thunderstorms move at approximately 25 mph. 30 minutes allows the storm to travel approximately ten to twelve miles.
 - b. Henrico County requires that lightning be a minimum of 15 miles away in addition to the 30-minute waiting period
2. During practices it is the coach's responsibility to watch for lightning and to remove athletes from the field and seek cover inside a building immediately. As a rule, take no risks. If you are in doubt, the team should be taken inside immediately

3. If your team is at an away game, determine the closest safe shelter in the event the outdoor field needs to be cleared
 - a. A safe shelter is any sturdy building normally occupied or frequently used and has electrical power and plumbing
 - b. A safe alternative for the team is on the school bus

Heat and Hydration

As noted on the VHSL website, heat illness and injury can range from simple muscle cramps to life threatening heat stroke. Catastrophic heat injuries are preventable. The most important components in preventing heat injury are the prevention of dehydration and limiting activity when temperature and humidity make it near impossible for the body to cool through evaporation of sweat.

1. You will find some important websites on the VHSL site related to heat and hydration below. Please visit these sites and familiarize yourself with the most recent information related to this topic: <http://www.vhsl.org/sportsmed.heat-hydration>

Team Selection

In accordance with our department philosophy, it is our desire to see as many students as possible participate in athletics at Mills Godwin HS. Coaches are encouraged to keep as many athletes as possible. Obviously, time, space, facilities, equipment and other factors will place limitations on the size of teams for a particular sport.

It is the responsibility of the coaching staff of an athletic team to choose the members of that team. Junior Varsity coaches should take into consideration the policies established by the Head Varsity Coach of the team. Prior to the tryout period, the head coach will provide the following information to all candidates for the team:

1. Length of the tryout period
2. Criteria used to select a team
3. Number of team members to be selected
4. Practice commitment if they make the team
5. Game commitment

When a team cut becomes necessary, a coach should remember the following:

1. All squad members should have completed a minimum number of practice sessions
2. Do not post cut list
 - a. The coach should personally contact all students cut from a team and provide a reason for the action
3. Coaches should discuss alternative possibilities for participation in the sport or other opportunities in the athletic program
4. If a coach foresees difficulties arising as a result of a squad cut, he/she should discuss the situation with Director of Student Activities prior to making the cut

The VHSL calendar has the first day of practice for winter and spring season beginning prior to the end of the previous season. This may create an attendance issue for an athlete who participates in sports in consecutive seasons. It may also create an issue for the coach of a team for the upcoming season when conducting a tryout and selecting team members. The following guidelines should be followed in these situations:

1. An athlete must complete the season she/he is currently involved in prior to trying out for a team in the next season. The current season will continue until the team finishes play, including post-season, and all equipment issued has been returned
2. If a coach schedules a preseason meeting with prospective athletes, the meeting should be scheduled so as not to interfere with a practice session of a team currently in season
3. The coach of a team for the upcoming season should exercise good judgment when selecting team members. In the even a prospective team member is participating on a team which is in season, the coach should consider the following:
 - a. Previous experience
 - b. Prior participation and recognition
 - c. The abilities and talents of the prospective athlete
 - d. The coach should talk with the athlete, a previous coach, the coach of the team on which the athlete is presently participating and the Director of Student Activities
 - e. The coach may also attend an athletic contest to observe the athlete. If a video of a previous season is available, the coach may use this as well
4. At no time should an athlete be penalized because he/she is presently participating on another team during a prior season and is unable to attend tryouts and team meetings
 - a. It is not considered a penalty if an athlete does not immediately earn a starting role on the team because he/she was not available due to previous athletic participation

End of Season Awards and Varsity Letters

At the conclusion of each season teams shall select the recipients of team awards. Categories and criteria for each award are set by the individual program and voted on by team members. Individual end of season awards shall fall into the following categories:

1. Certificate – Will be presented to ALL members of the program for completion of the season
2. Letter and Sport Pin – Will be awarded to all Varsity Members of the program for completing their 1st season for that sport at the Varsity Level at Godwin HS
3. Bar – Will be awarded to all Varsity Members of the program for completing their 2nd season for that sport at the Varsity Level at Godwin HS
4. Plaque - Will be awarded to all Varsity Members of the program for completing their 3rd and 4th season for that sport at the Varsity Level at Godwin HS

Virginia High School League Information

Coaching Rules Clinics

Coaches have the responsibility of completing the VHSL sponsored coaching clinics for their sport if one is offered. Clinics are offered for the following sports and activities: Baseball, Basketball, Cheerleading, Field Hockey, Football, Lacrosse, Soccer, Softball, Track, Volleyball, Wrestling, Theatre, Forensics, and Debate. Please contact the Director of Student Activities or <http://www.vhsl.org> for the dates of these clinics. The penalties for failure to attend are the head coach shall take a written rules examination and the school shall be fined \$50. The \$50 will be paid by the coach of the team.

Eligibility Requirements

Mills Godwin High School is a member of the Virginia High School League, (VHSL), a nonprofit organization created in 1913 that is composed of public high schools throughout Virginia. The VHSL seeks to encourage student participation in sanctioned interscholastic activities. MGHS strictly adheres to all VHSL rules and regulations establishing a codified set of rules that guide interscholastic athletics and activities. To participate for Mills Godwin HS, students will demonstrate appropriate behavior in and out of the classroom and meet the VHSL requirements listed below.

1. **28A-1-1 AGE RULE**-The student shall not have reached the age of 19 on or before the first day of August of the school year in which he/she wishes to compete
2. **28A-2-1 BONA FIDE STUDENT RULE**-The student shall be a regular bona fi de student in good standing of the school which he/she represents.
3. **28A-3-1 ENROLLMENT RULE**-The student shall have been regularly enrolled in the school which he/she represents not later than the fifteenth school day of the semester.
4. **28A-4-1 GRADE RULE**-The student shall be enrolled in the last four years of high school
5. **28A-5-1 SCHOLARSHIP RULE**-The student shall:
 - a. For the first semester be currently enrolled in not fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation; and have passed five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation the immediately preceding year or the immediately preceding semester for schools that certify credit on a semester basis; and
 - b. For the second semester be currently enrolled in not fewer than five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation; and have passed five subjects, or their equivalent, offered for credit and which may be used for graduation the immediately preceding semester
6. **28A-6-1 SEMESTER RULE**-The student shall not have been enrolled in the last four years of high school for a period of more than eight consecutive semesters, beginning with the semester in which he/she was enrolled for the first time in the ninth grade. The eight consecutive semesters shall be counted continuously from that point, regardless of whether or not he/she remains continuously enrolled in school.
7. **28A-7-1 TRANSFER RULE**-The student shall not have enrolled in one high school and subsequently transferred to and enrolled in another high school without a corresponding change in the residence of his/her parents, parent, or guardian. The sending and receiving VHSL school principals are required to complete and file the VHSL Transfer Form, acknowledging that to the best of their knowledge the student has met all aspects of the transfer rule or its exceptions.

Home instruction does not constitute enrollment in a public school. Home schooling is a process through which Virginia Code compulsory education requirements may be met, as is private schooling. Home schooling is the equivalent of school enrollment for Transfer Rule purposes, and determining whether the student has met Scholarship Rule requirements of having passed five academic subjects recognized by the Virginia Department of Education in the most recent prior semester.

8. **28B-3-1 ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION/PARENTAL CONSENT/PHYSICAL EXAMINATION RULE**-The student shall have submitted to the principal of his/her school, prior to becoming a member of any school athletic squad or team, League Form No. 2 (Athletic Participation/Parental Consent/Physical Examination Form), completely filled in and properly signed, attesting that he/she has been examined and found to be physically fit for athletic competition, and that his/her parents consent to his/her participation
9. **28B-4-1 AWARDS RULE**-Students may accept permissible awards presented or approved by the student's school
10. **28B-6-1 INDEPENDENT TEAM RULE**-Student responsibility for sports participation. During the sports season for the relevant sport, a student may, while a member of a school squad or team engaged in interscholastic sports become a member of or participate with an organized team in the same sport which is independent of the school's control so long as such participation does not conflict with the scheduled activities of the school squad or team. No school or student shall be declared ineligible for participation in interscholastic sports because of participation by a student as a member of an organized team in the same sport which is independent of the school's control during the sports season for the relevant sport.
11. **27-11-1 SPORTSMANSHIP RULE**-Member schools are required to conduct all their relations with other schools in a spirit of good sportsmanship. Acts which are prima facie evidence of failure to abide by this rule are those which are noted below and others of a similar nature which transgress the usually accepted code for good sportsmanship. All incidents of conduct relating to either athletic or academic activities that are violations of the Sportsmanship Rule must be reported to the Virginia High School League.
12. **27-11-4 Harassment of Officials**-Harassment of contest officials by a coach or a coach's ejection from a contest constitutes a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule. Any coach's ejection is to be reported in writing to the League office by the school whose coach is ejected with copies placed in the school's and officials' association files. Any incidents involving a spectator, coach or other school personnel or player striking or pushing an official is to be reported. A coach going on the floor or field to interrupt a contest while the ball is "alive" in protest of a decision by an official, conduct which invokes a penalty against the team because of the conduct of a coach or team member or any individual in the official party of a team, continued and visible actions on the part of a coach which will indicate to team members and/or to spectators that the coach believes the game is being improperly officiated, public demonstrations with game officials which indicate to others extreme dissatisfaction with officiating, and such related actions when exhibited in aggravated form are evidence of poor sportsmanship.
13. **27-11-5 Sportsmanship Education**-Failure of a school to use every means at its disposal to impress upon its faculty, student body, team members, coaching staff and officials the values of sportsmanship in the preparation for, and the conduct and management of interscholastic contests and the importance of observing published or accepted rules governing coaches,

competitors or spectators relating to the conduct of competition constitutes a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule. School personnel must make every effort to ensure that substitute players and bench personnel do not enter the playing field/court during a verbal or physical altercation and that team personnel do not engage in other excessive unsportsmanlike conduct before, during or after the contest; such action is a violation of the Sportsmanship Rule and is to be reported. A school whose substitute players or bench personnel enter the playing field/court during a verbal or physical altercation, or whose team personnel engage in excessive unsportsmanlike conduct before, during or after a contest shall be subject to a fine as stated in 30-5-1

2024-2025 Mills Godwin High School

Student-Athlete Handbook Acknowledgement Form

[Complete and sign this form and return it to your Team Coach](#)

Prior to participating in team tryouts and/or practice, a student-athlete and his/her parent or guardian must sign and return this form to the Varsity Head Coach or Director of Student Activities.

Mills Godwin High School Student-Athlete Acknowledgement Section. As a Mills Godwin High School student-athlete, your choice to participate in interscholastic athletics is a privilege.

As a perspective MGHS student-athlete and parent, I have read, understand and will abide by the rules and guidelines set forth in the Mills Godwin HS Student-Athlete Handbook.

Student-Athlete's Name (Print): _____

Student-Athlete's Signature: _____

Parent or Guardian's Name (Print): _____

Parent or Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____