



Parent/Student Handbook

2016-2017



**Voyager Academy
Athletic Department**

Deuce Harris Athletic Director
dharris@voyageracademy.net

Pete Shankle Assistant to Athletic Director (MS)
pshankle@voyageracademy.net

Jennifer Lucas Managing Director
jlucas@voyageracademy.net

Dr. Chuck Nolan HS Principal
cnolan@voyageracademy.net

Gwen Johnson MS Principal
gjohnson@voyageracademy.net

Leslie Paynter ES Principal
lpaynter@voyageracademy.net

Athletic Fax Number 919.620.0554

Voyager Main Number 919.433.3301

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Table of Contents

		Page
I.	Philosophy/Mission Statement	1
II.	Guiding Principles	1-2
III.	Sportsmanship Code	2
IV	Behavioral Expectations	3
V.	Athletic Eligibility	3-4
VI.	Levels of Competition	4
VII.	Tryout Policy	4
VIII.	Physicals and Waivers	5
IX.	Dual Sport Policy	5
X.	Expectations of Student-Athletes	5-6
XI.	Transportation	6
XII.	Team Pictures	6-7
XIII.	Awards	7
XIV.	Parent Behavior	7
XV.	Miscellaneous Policies	7

I. PHILOSOPHY

Voyager Academy Mission Statement

The Voyager Academy will offer traditional curriculum while instilling character values and leadership development within a positive, challenging learning environment. Students, staff, and parents will be encouraged to lead by example through their positive impact on and service to each other, their school, and their community. We will endeavor to promote and foster excellence, wisdom, integrity, and perseverance within our students to enable them to be successful in today's complex and diverse society.

The Voyager Athletic Department will strive to develop and maintain a comprehensive Athletic Program based on the philosophy of the Voyager Mission Statement. We want to challenge our athletes to develop an appreciation for the concepts of preparation, hard work, commitment, teamwork, and sportsmanship. While we want to promote a winning attitude, we must keep in mind that our primary goal is to instill in our athletes the importance of embracing Voyager values, all of which can be achieved through sports: courage, teamwork, respect, integrity and wisdom. It is our hope that through athletics we are able to make a positive, valuable, and lasting impression on our athletes, and that their involvement with Voyager Athletics will benefit them in all areas of their lives.

II. Voyager Athletics – GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Integration of Core Values in Athletics

- Respectful treatment and interactions with opponents, guests, officials, and fans
- Persistence and work ethic
- The belief that failure is one step closer to success.
- Developing and fostering a growth mind set among student athletes

Balance

- Maintaining the proper relationship between academics, athletics, and family
- Support of each and every player on the team
- A balanced out of season conditioning and training policy

Teamwork

- Athletic department, athletic director, and coaching staff collaboration
- Coaching staff is unified on multi-sport participation
- Sharing of people, space, and resources
- Partnering with parents

Faculty and staff adapts to better serve community

- Flexibility, preparedness, and willingness to change as needed
- Professional development
- Assessment and evaluation

III. SPORTSMANSHIP CODE

It is recognized that independent school interscholastic athletic events must be conducted in such a manner that good sportsmanship prevails at all times. It is therefore necessary that administrators and coaches be individually and collectively responsible for taking every possible step to promote good sportsmanship at every interscholastic event. These steps include the provision of such things as safe and adequate facilities for participants, spectators, and officials; the best possible officials for events; and adequate control of spectators, players, and pre-game/post-game activities. Every effort must be made to promote a climate of wholesome competition.

Athletic competition is guided by the following ideals.

The Players

1. Play within the rules of the game,
2. Win with humility and lose without excuses,
3. Respect officials and accept their decisions,
4. Never play with intent to injure an opponent,
5. Remember that they represent their schools, their coaches, and their families as well as themselves,
6. Respect the property and facilities of their opponents.

The Coaches

1. Inspire in their players a love for the game and the desire to win,
2. Teach that it is better to lose fairly than to win unfairly,
3. Show restraint and respect when dealing with officials, or any adverse situations or people,
4. Serve as positive role models for their players,
5. Hold their players accountable for unsportsmanlike behavior.

We have the responsibility to treat officials, opposing teams, and their spectators as guests. We have a responsibility to educate our supporters to cheer the strengths and victories of their own teams and never denigrate the performance of an opponent or official.

During athletic contests, we will not tolerate any spectator, either adult or student, whose behavior is disrespectful toward players, officials, or other spectators.

We will not permit any type of spectator behavior that detracts from the proper conduct of the game or puts a player or team at a disadvantage.

VI. Behavioral Expectations

Please see Student Handbook, those guidelines are to be followed during practice and competitions.

V. ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

The purpose of an academic eligibility policy is to ensure that our student-athletes are reminded of the importance of balancing athletics and academics.

Middle and High School Eligibility Policy Per NCHSAA Standards

Academic

A student must have passed a minimum load of work during the preceding semester to be eligible at any time during the present semester. The semester is normally considered half of the academic year. All students must also meet local promotion standards, set by the LEA and/or the local school.

- (a) A minimum load is defined as five courses in the traditional school schedule, so students must pass 5 of 6 courses in traditional schedule – for a block schedule students must pass three of four 90 minutes courses taken during a semester to be eligible the next semester.
- (b) Any student, including seniors, must pass that minimum load, even if they need fewer for graduation. A minimum load as defined by NCHSAA is 3 of 4 block 90-minute courses. Also according to NCHSAA a student must be present in 3 of 4 courses to be eligible to practice or play in an athletic contest. Middle school student-athletes must be present for over half the day to be eligible for athletic practices or contents.

Discipline

- (a) School-assigned consequences for disciplinary infractions must be served as assigned, even if this causes a student to miss an athletic event or practice.
- (b) Athletes who are suspended from school for 3 days of accrued suspensions are ineligible for the remainder of the school year. Athletes who are suspended for aggressive or violent incidents may be immediately removed from participation for the remainder of the school year.

The Athletic Director and school administration maintain the right to suspend or remove an athlete from the team if necessary. Athletes suspended from school may be ineligible to participate in Voyager Academy sports for the entire year.

Additional Eligibility Requirements/Rule

- (a) Residence – Student’s primary residence must be within a 25-mile radius of Voyager measured by an NCHSAA designated computer program or within the county limits of Durham.
- (b) Age – Student’s 19th birthday must not come before August 31st their senior year. Middle school students whose 15th birthday would fall before August 31st their 8th grade year are allowed to play at the high school level even though they are not in high school.
- (c) Pre Participation Packet – The mandatory NCHSAA Pre participation packet with medical examination no older than 365 days must be turned into Athletic Trainer, Athletic Director or Coach before students may participate in any sports related activities, including but not limited to conditioning, practice and/or tryouts. Packets can be found on the athletic website or with Athletic Director for the 2016-2017 school year.
- (d) Transfers – Any student that transfers to Voyager following their 9th grade year, must sit out one year, or apply for the NCHSAA 365 day ineligibility waiver.

Middle School – Only 7th and 8th graders may participate in athletics. Sixth grade students can be managers however on game days they are required to dress distinctly different from those in uniform.

VI. LEVELS OF COMPETITION

Middle School teams may have students in grades 7th -8th grade only. This is considered the introductory level of interscholastic competition for Voyager Academy students. While student-athletes are expected to have a certain base level of skill and understanding prior to joining any Middle School team, there is a strong emphasis on skill development, individual/team improvement and the building of self-confidence.

High School teams will consist of 9th-12th graders; unless birthday dictates that a student will not be able to compete as a senior as discussed above. High School sports focus on increasing base level skills, understanding, skill development, individual/team improvement and confidence building. These goals are only accomplished through learning and applying new definitions of work ethic, perseverance, responsibility, dependability and goal setting in an effort to develop a goal oriented results driven student-athlete, both inside and outside of school and athletic setting.

VII. TRY-OUT/CUT POLICY

All sports may have limited number of roster positions, as such; students will need to try out for teams. Each coach will determine his or her team, player position, rotation and minutes played. Neither Voyager Academy coaches nor any member of the Athletic Department will ever discuss other student-athletes with anyone other than families of that athlete. Coaches are encouraged to create try-out rubrics, in order to specifically discuss areas student-athletes can improve in the future. Your coaches are trained and knowledgeable and have been instructed to keep only players that they

feel have the ability to earn playing time and help the team either this season or in future.

VIII. PHYSICALS

The Athletic Department will confirm each player has an updated physical form, and completed participation packet. **NO student may participate without an updated/current physical exam and completed participation packet.**

Each coach must submit a roster before the start of each season to the Athletic Office. The complete roster is due 24 hours after the completion of tryouts, unless you are awaiting the end of another sport. In that case, your complete roster is due one week from the time of the last arriving player from another sport. Rosters are to be provided on the eligibility form available in Google documents

IX. DUAL SPORT POLICY

High school students are permitted to participate in multi sports in the same season, provided they have a contract completed and filed with the Athletic Director.

Middle school student-athletes are only permitted to participate in one sport during the same sports season. Participating on two teams during the same season would mean that a student-athlete would miss practices and possibly games/meets for one sport while participating in the other. This would create an unequal situation for team members, as well as place an incredible amount of pressure (athletic and academic) on the dual sport athlete.

Student may participate in sports outside of school but their first commitment is to Voyager Academy, if there is an overlap in the schedule then the Voyager Academy sport takes precedence. No student-athlete may miss Voyager Academy practice for another sport, if they do then they will not be allowed to participate in games/matches that week.

X. EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

1. Student-athletes must know that practice and game attendance are mandatory. Individuals who miss practice will not be allowed to participate in the next competition if there is not another practice prior to the game. Student-athletes are required to attend practices or games that might be scheduled on weekends, holidays, or breaks. Outside club teams, AAU, leagues, etc. are secondary to Voyager Academy sports teams.
2. Student-athletes are responsible for punctuality and preparedness for practice and games. Unexcused tardiness or absences **will not** be tolerated and should be dealt with by the head coach and/or athletic director at their discretion. Exception to this would be student-athletes seeking academic help or makeup. It is expected that student-athletes communicate with the coaching staff prior to missing practice. Student-athletes who are injured should still attend practice unless otherwise notified or cleared by their head coach.

3. Voyager Academy student-athletes, parents, and spectators alike are expected to exhibit the highest-level of sportsmanship at all athletic events (home and away).
4. No athletic jerseys will be worn to school without approval from the Athletic Director and Principle. No uniform shall be worn outside of athletic competitions.
5. Athletes must be in attendance for **over half (2.5 of 4 block classes or 4 of 6 traditional)** of the school day in order to participate in a sporting event (practice or game) that afternoon.

Voyager Academy athletic teams will have the following game day dress options):

- a. Male students are encouraged to wear collared shirts, ties, dress slacks, with dress shoes (NO TENNIS/ATHLETIC SHOES).
- b. Females are encouraged to wear dress skirts/dress slacks and blouse, and dress shoes (NO TENNIS/ATHLETIC SHOES).

** All dress must be in accordance with the any Voyager Academy Dress Codes*

6. Any student-athlete who commits to a team must complete the season, by attending a majority of the practices and all competitions. If a student-athlete does not follow this policy or discontinues his/her role with the team then he/she can be ineligible to participate in the next sport season (the next sport that the student would participate in) until the prior season is completed. Exceptions to this policy are medical or family emergency challenges and will be handled case by case.

XI. TRANSPORTATION

1. Players are permitted to ride home with parent/guardians provided the player and/or parent/guardian inform the coach. Parent/guardians must provide permission to the coach for their child to ride with other parents. Voyager Academy will not be liable for violation of this rule.
2. If you are traveling and come back to school late, it is the coach's responsibility to see that all of the coach's athletes have been picked up or have transportation home.

XII. TEAM PICTURES

A photo day will be scheduled for each team per season. The Athletic Director will set up each team's day and time. Both team and individual pictures will be taken at this time. Athletes will have the opportunity to order and purchase these photos.

Should a team have a scheduling conflict on assigned photo it is the responsibility of the coach to set up a subsequent make up day with the school approved photographer(s). *Pictures will take place on one day only.* The date will be communicated the coach.

XIII. AWARDS

There are athletic awards ceremonies for athletes, parents and coaches that take place at the end of each sport season. Each student-athlete is encouraged to attend the ceremony. This is a special event and attendees will dress appropriately, dress pants, shirts, ties, dresses or skirts.

XIV. PARENTAL BEHAVIOR

1. Respect the decisions of the coaching staff.
2. Under no circumstances are you to approach the team bench during competition
3. Respect officials and accept their decisions,
4. *Respect and obey all rules of the venue:* Remember that you represent the schools, the coaches, and your families as well as yourselves,
5. Your coaches are trained and knowledgeable; do not confuse your son/daughter by teaching them techniques that are contrary to what they are being instructed to do by the coaches.

XV. MINIMUM REQUIRED PARTICIPATION

Voyager sponsored teams required a minimum number of participants in order to qualify for Voyager funding. Minimum required participation levels are based on required starters plus two substitutes, this minimum will be calculated by submitted eligibility rosters. Any individual that wishes to participate in sport without a team can, athletic participation fee will be waived but all other requirements must be met; certified coach, pre-participation packet on file with athletic department, preseason student/parent/coach and Athletic Director meeting attendance, etc. Parent or privately funded coaches are required to secure facilities, scheduling and all expenses associated with sport as well as fulfill all NCHSAA coaching requirements. Should these participation requirements not be met Voyager will not monetarily provide for the individuals.

Examples below:

- Cross Country requires 7 runners for varsity thus must have 9 runners.
- Baseball requires 9 starters to play a game thus team must have 11 players

XVI. SCHOOL PROVIDED TRANSPORTATION

Voyager Academy will provide transportation only for team playoff games/matches with travel distance greater than 100 miles. All regular season contest, and playoff games within the 100-mile radius will dictate that transportation be the responsibility of the team members or individuals participating.

XVI. GAMES AND PRACTICE OVER SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

At the High School level the high number of mandatory conference games makes it impossible to prevent schedule contest over breaks or reschedule contest that are to be played during school holidays and vacations. As such athletes are expected to be present at practices and competition during holiday and school break periods.

Should a student-athlete have a conflict her/she should inform the coach of this conflict no later than the 1st week of the season.

At the middle school level, the athletic department will make every effort to avoid scheduling dates over time periods when school is not in session.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Voyager Academy will provide transportation only for team playoff games/matches with travel distance greater than 100 miles. All regular season contest, and playoff games within the 100-mile radius will dictate that transportation be the responsibility of the team members or individuals participating

XVII. VARSITY LETTER REQUIREMENTS

Each High School Varsity Coach will create a written policy outlining the qualifications for a varsity letter. Those that meet these qualifications will be awarded a varsity letter and can be picked up from athletic department. Lettermen jackets can be ordered through Neff online at www.neff.com

XVIII. PARTICIPTION AND STUDENT-ATHLETE AFTERSCHOOL CARE FEES

Flat athletic fees for all sports - HS \$135 first sport \$95 each additional sport.
MS \$105 first sport and \$75 each additional sport

During Season Athletic After School Care - The after school care program in conjunction with national honor society members will provide tutoring and homework assistance in subjects should there be a need for student-athlete supervision between school and practice/game. No student-athlete will be allowed to stay on campus between the end of school day and practice/game without this supervision.

There are still costs associated with providing officials; venues and coaches for each sport however we do not want these cost to prevent participation in multiple sports from student athletes.

Fees are to be paid prior to first contest to be deemed eligible to dressing or participating in any interscholastic contest.

Voyager no longer accepts personal checks; all fees should be paid through orgsonline.com just like you would do for hot lunch, field trips or before/after school care.

XIX. UNIFORMS

- Teams Uniforms are provided for the following teams currently
 - HS- Volleyball, Men's and Women's Soccer, Women's Basketball, softball, baseball, wrestling, Men's Basketball
 - MS - Volleyball, Boys and Girls Soccer, Boys and Girls Basketball, softball, baseball
- Teams that purchase own uniforms - xc, tennis, golf, swimming and lacrosse (HS- 13 total sports, MS - 11 total) 23 total sports team
- Beginning in 2016-2017 a four year rotation which would require approximately 5 new uniforms a year - Varsity teams will pass down used uniforms to Junior Varsity Team in the case of that situation.
- Beginning in 2016-2017 and moving forward athletes will be required to purchase competition uniform pants and/or shorts. This should be done using the BSN website created at the beginning of each season for your team.
- Uniforms provide by Voyager
 - Uniforms provided by the Athletic department belong to Voyager as such it becomes the student-athlete and parents responsibility to care for uniforms properly and to return those to coaches within a week of the last game played. Failure to do so will result in families being charged the cost of replacing the uniforms, cost of replacement will be included in care and collection contract provided by each coach.
- Coaches Responsibilities
 - Coaches are now responsible for collecting and creating uniform agreement with athletes including establishing a collection date and time and proper care for uniform handout. Any student-athlete that does not return or returns uniform that has not been cared for properly will be charged for replacing the uniform.

XX. TEAM SELECTION PROCESS WITH OVERLAP OF SEASONS

At Voyager we are allowed to begin basketball on October 17th and begin playing games on October 31st, however Soccer regular season ends October 24th and state championships are not completed until November 19th. This overlap has presented issues in the past however moving forward Student – Athletes that are participating in other sports will be given the same time and opportunity to make the teams as those that did not participate in previous sports.

XXI. Game Practice Cancellation or Change Policy

- All practices, games and location changes or cancellations by the school will be done no later than 2:00pm for a game or practice that begins directly after school or 3:00pm for any games with a start time after 5pm. These changes, and/or cancellations will be posted on the Voyager and Voyager Athletic website and in communication with coaches to student-athletes or parent representatives. After this time changes are at the discretion of Officials/umpires or coaches
- **Early Release Policy**
 - a. Schedules for all sports will be available on Voyager Athletics website and will include release time, game time, address and venue if different than host schools.

XXII. Banners

- Banners will be provided for High School teams that win a conference championship, conference tournament, and regional championship. Should team win more than one of the above championships years of championships will be added to the existing banner
- Banners for Middle School teams will be placed in gym when the team finishes the season undefeated and wins conference championship. Each team member of the team will have their name on the undefeated championship banner.
- State provided championship banners would be displayed in the gym when a team wins a state championship. Pictures of team and individual State Champions, on Jeff White & Family the wall of fame, outside the gymnasium. Large team pictures will not be displayed in the gym.