

PROHIBITION OF THE USE OF HATE SPEECH, ETHNICALLY OR RACIALLY INSENSITIVE EXPRESSIONS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

***NEWLY PROPOSED REGULATION**

I. Governing Policy: JFCB: Respect, Ethics and Integrity in Extracurricular Activities

II. Definition

Hate Speech – abusive or threatening speech or writing that expresses prejudice against a particular group, especially on the basis of race, religion, or sexual orientation.

III. Generally

This regulation reflects the Virginia High School League (VHSL) Policy 27-16-1, Use of Hate Speech, Ethnically or Racially Insensitive Expressions, effective November 9, 2021.

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is committed to providing an environment that respects every individual. In alignment with School Board Policies JB: Nondiscrimination in Education, and JFHA/GBA: Prohibition Against Harassment, Bullying, Hostile Work Environment and Retaliation, all individuals participating in or attending interscholastic, extracurricular activities regulated by the VHSL are prohibited from using hate speech, ethnically, or racially insensitive expressions against students, athletes, coaches, and officials.

Any coach, team personnel and/or contestant who confronts or addresses a coach, contestant or official using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expressions will be disqualified for the contest and will be ineligible for the team's next scheduled contest and/or subsequent contests until penalties and educational/restorative interventions are completed.

Note: For the 2021-2022 school year, the disqualification will be a one-game suspension. VHSL may increase this to a two- or three-game suspension for the 2022-23 school year. For the 2021-2022 school year, educational/restorative interventions are recommended by VHSL. Beginning July 1, 2022, educational/restorative interventions are required for any person violating this regulation.

IV. Procedure

- 1. A school is expected to inform VHSL of any alleged incident involving the use of hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expressions within two working days after the school administration becomes aware of the incident.**

2. VHSL will send a copy of the report to the principal of each school involved.
3. Within five working days of receiving the report, each principal will file a response or provides information concerning the incident to VHSL.
4. A VHSL committee consisting of three or four principals, athletic directors, and coaches will review the incident report and response from each school involved. Following the completion of the review, the committee will make a recommendation to the VHSL Executive Director and/or designee for action.

V. Penalties

The following represents degrees of VHSL discipline which will be referred to in interpreting a violation of using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression.

1. **Ejection** - Any coach, team personnel and/or contestant who confronts or addresses a coach, contestant, or official using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression will be disqualified for the remainder of the contest.
2. **Player/Coach Suspension** - Any coach, team personnel and/or contestant who is ejected from a contest for using hate speech or ethnically or racially insensitive expressions will be ineligible for the team's next scheduled contest. If a coach or player commits a second offense, he/she will be ineligible for the remainder of that sport/activity season.

Note: For the 2021-2022 school year, disqualification will continue as a one-game suspension. For the 2022-2023 school year, the suspension may increase to a two- or three-game suspension.

3. **School Warning** - A school's program may be placed on warning status for a one-year period of time by the VHSL Sportsmanship Committee for repeated infractions of using hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression.
4. **School Probation** - Probation is a more severe penalty, based on repeated offenses with-in a two-year period of time by the same program or cumulative warnings over a period of time within the school. A school or program on probation may not enter any play-off toward a district, regional, or state championship nor may the school enter any sanctioned event.
5. **School Suspension** – A school suspended from the VHSL may not compete in interscholastic competition of any kind with a member of the VHSL or a school that is a member of another state associated with the National Federation of State High School Associations.

6. **School Fine** – A fine not to exceed \$1,000 may be levied by VHSL with or without any other penalty on a school. Failure to report violations involving the use of hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expression will result in a fine per occurrence.

VI. Appeals

A decision may be appealed to the VHSL Sportsmanship Committee.

VII. Notification to Students, Parents/Guardians and Coaches

Schools will hold **parent/guardian, player, and coach** preseason meetings to discuss expectations for students, parents/guardians, coaches, and spectator's behavior related to cultural awareness and equity.

Note: For the 2021-2022 school year, preseason meetings with parents/guardians, players and coaches are recommended. For the 2022-2023 school year, preseason meetings will be required.

VIII. Spectators

The authority and rules of the VHSL govern schools themselves, including participants and coaches. ACPS is responsible for the conduct of its spectators, except at championship events, which are conducted by the VHSL.

For any spectator who uses hate speech, ethnically or racially insensitive expressions while attending interscholastic, extracurricular activities on ACPS property:

1. First Offense – removal from the audience/school property
2. Second Offense – suspension from attending contests for a semester
3. Third Offense – suspension from attending contests for a year; issuance of a no trespassing letter.

Established:

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended, §§ 22.1-78, 22.1-208.

Virginia High School League Policy 27-16-1, *Use of Hate Speech, Ethnically or Racially Insensitive Expressions*

<u>Cross Refs:</u>	<u>IGDA</u>	<u>Student Organizations, Co-Curricular Programs and Extracurricular Activities</u>
	<u>IGDAA</u>	<u>Grade Average Requirement for Eligibility to Participate in Athletic and Co-Curricular Programs</u>
	<u>IICA</u>	<u>Field Trips</u>

<u>IICA-R</u>	<u>Field Trip Procedures</u>
<u>JB</u>	<u>Nondiscrimination in Education</u>
<u>JB-R/JFHA-R</u>	<u>Procedures for Investigating Student Complaints of Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying (PDF)</u>
<u>JFC</u>	<u>Student Conduct</u>
<u>JFC-R</u>	<u>Standards of Student Conduct</u>
<u>JFCB</u>	<u>Respect, Ethics and Integrity in Extracurricular Activities</u>
<u>JFCC</u>	<u>Student Conduct on School Buses</u>
<u>KG</u>	<u>Community Use of School Facilities</u>
<u>KG-R</u>	<u>Community Use of School Facilities Regulations and Application</u>
<u>KQ</u>	<u>Commercial, Promotional and Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships</u>

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