

## **2025-2026 LCPS changes for participation in High School Athletics and Activities**

**Q: As of July 1, 2025, if a student-athlete has a physical that was signed by a healthcare professional within the last 14 months, is a new physical required?**

**A:** No. As of July 1, 2025, a physical is valid for 14 months from the date it was signed by the health care professional on **page 3** of the form.

**Q: If a valid physical was completed before July 1, 2025, using the previous version of the form, does the student-athlete need to get a new physical on the updated form?**

**A:** No. Physicals completed on the previous version of the form are still valid for 14 months from the date signed by the healthcare professional, as indicated on **page 3**.

***Note:** If the 14-month expiration date falls on a non-existent date (e.g., September 31 or February 29, 30, or 31), the expiration will default to the last valid calendar day of that month (e.g., September 30 or February 28).*

**The VHSL rule changes below, as approved by the VHSL Executive Committee, will take effect for the 2025-2026 school year.**

### **TRANSFER RULE CHANGES:**

#### **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 original residence must be abandoned as a residence, that is sold, rented or otherwise disposed of as a residence, and must not be used as a residence by any family members. The entire family must make the change and take with them the household goods and furniture appropriate to the circumstances. The change must be made with the intent that it is permanent. 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 the 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. A transfer should be for the welfare of the student and/or school system and not for athletic and/or academic activity purposes.

Example: A student attends High School A and lives in the attendance zone of that school. The student then moves with his/her mom into the attendance zone of High School B, while the student's dad maintains the home in High School A's attendance zone. As a family member still resides in the home in High School A's attendance zone, the student is not eligible at High School B. The student is still eligible to play at High School A.

#### **28A-7-1 (1) Transfer Rule/Athletic and/or Activity Purposes**

This policy provides an illustrative list of situations that indicate transfers for athletic purposes. Here is the list: Defining Transfers for Athletic Purposes

### **28A-7-1 (5) Transfer Rule/ In-Season Transfers/ Postseason Play**

If a student in 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade transfers before the student was eligible to participate in either (1) at least 50% of the maximum number of Regular Season Contests, or (2) at least 50% of the total number of games on the student's previous team's schedule in that sport, the student is ineligible for participation in the postseason (District championships tournament and thereafter) in that same sport, for the current school year.

If a student in 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grade transfers after the student was eligible to participate in either (1) at least 50% of the maximum number of Regular Season Contests, or (2) at least 50% of the total number of games on the student's previous team's schedule in that sport, the student will be deemed to have participated in an entire season and, following the transfer, is ineligible for further participation in that sport for the current school year, including post-season for the current school year only.

Example: A student is on the basketball team roster at High School A for 13 of the team's 18 games during the regular season. The student transfers to High School B. The student is not eligible to play basketball at High School B since he/she was a member of the team at High School A for more than half of the regular season games.

Example: A student is on the basketball team roster at High School A for 8 of the team's 18 games during the regular season. The student transfers to High School B. The student is eligible to play basketball at High School B for the remainder of the regular season games on that team's schedule since he/she was a member of the team at High School A for less than half of the regular season games at that school. However, the student is not eligible to play in any post season contests at High School B.

### **28A-7-1 (6) Transfer Rule/ Out of Season Transfers/Postseason Play**

If a student transfers for any reason after participating in a sport in their 9th grade year, or thereafter, and following completion of such season, transfers to another school, said student is ineligible for participation in the postseason (District championships tournament and thereafter) in that same sport for the subsequent school year. The student, if otherwise eligible, may participate in that sport only during the regular season. A district committee may grant exceptions to this rule under rule 28A-7-1 (7).

Example: A student transfers from High School A to High School B during the spring of their 10th grade year without a corresponding move (change of address). The student is a football player and wishes to play for High School B during the fall of their 11th grade year. The student is not eligible to play in any post-season football games at High School B in the fall of their 11th grade year, but can be rostered to play football during the regular season of their 11th grade year.

### **28A-7-2 (4) Transfer Rule Exceptions:**

The first time a student transfers from a non-member high school to a member school of the attendance area of the student's parents or guardians, he/she shall be eligible

immediately provided that he/she has been enrolled in the non-member school a minimum of one full year, and has never been enrolled at a member school or is returning to the member school where he/she had been enrolled and has been eligible immediately prior to his/her transfer to the non-member school. The student must meet the scholarship requirements to be eligible to participate in athletic/academic activities for the non-member school or the VHSL scholarship requirements (whichever is less stringent). Home school students must have passed five subjects or equivalent for credit and are currently enrolled in five credit or equivalent courses.

Example: A student attended a private school from grades 6 through grade 9. Following 9th grade, the student's family decides that he or she will no longer attend the private school and will enroll the student in the public high school serving their attendance zone. The student is automatically eligible as long as he/she takes the required number of classes upon enrollment in the public school and passed the required number of courses or the equivalent at the private school during the semester prior to this change.

### **27-9-1 Proselytizing Rule**

No member school or group of individuals representing the school shall subject a student from another school to undue influence by encouraging him/her to transfer from one school to another for League activities.

### **27-9-2 Interpretation:**

The Executive Director (or designee), or appropriate District Committee shall decide what constitutes undue influence on the basis of the evidence presented in each case. Undue influence has generally been interpreted to mean an act by any person or group connected with the school or not connected with a school to persuade a student to enroll in a school outside the areas in which he/she resides or persuade his/her parents or guardian to move to the areas of another school. Some specific examples of undue influence are:

1. Being asked to move by a member of the school faculty.
2. Being asked to move by a booster organization or a member of such an organization.
3. Being given tuition, free textbooks, allowance for transportation or consideration not afforded other students, athletic or nonathletic.
4. Any other evidence that a transfer or enrollment was made because of athletic ability.
5. Allowing a student who is not a Bona Fide student at that member school to participate in any type of in -season, out-of-season practice, workout open gym. or league play representing that school.
6. Any member of the coaching staff having conversation(s) with a parent or student concerning joining a team at the member school prior to the student being a Bona Fide student at that member school.

Example: A student plays baseball for a travel team throughout the year. The student attends High School A. The coach of the travel team also coaches for High School B and attempts to convince the student through the offering of a varsity position and playing time that he/she should transfer from High School A to High School B to play baseball.

**LCPS has made a change to the rules and regulations for participating in LCPS Student Activities**

We would like to bring to your attention a recent update to our Student Activities participation guidelines. This change, recommended by our high school principals and supported by staff, better reflects the real-world expectations we aim to instill in our students as outlined in the **LCPS Profile of a Graduate**.

**Current Guideline:**

In order to participate in an activity or practice on any given day, student must report to school by no later than 15 minutes after the first bell to begin the school day and must remain in school that entire day. Exceptions may be made for doctor or dental appointments or reasons excused by the principal. A doctor/dental note is required for this exception.

**Updated Guideline:**

In order to participate in an activity or practice on any given day, student must report to school on time and must remain in school that entire day. Exceptions may be made for doctor or dental appointments or reasons excused by the principal. ( A doctor/dental note is required for exceptions.)

This adjustment promotes the development of habits that mirror workplace expectations—such as punctuality, commitment, and personal responsibility. It also supports our broader mission of preparing students not only for academic success but also for life beyond graduation.

Principals continue to have the flexibility to excuse students when appropriate, ensuring we remain responsive to individual needs and circumstances.

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting the academic and personal growth of all LCPS students.

**The VHSL rule changes below, as approved by the VHSL Executive Committee, will take effect for the 2026-2027 school year.**

**28A-7-2 (5) Transfer Exceptions:**

A student entering the ninth grade for the first time becomes eligible in the high school of the attendance area (Zone for LCPS Purposes) of the student's parents or guardians.

Note:

*Note A:* Natural Transition - promotion from an elementary/junior high/middle school to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in a senior high school is considered a Transition, and not a Transfer. A student, entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time by Transition becomes immediately eligible if the student has attended the feeder school for the preceding year before enrolling in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. A student, entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time becomes immediately eligible in the high school of the attendance area of the student's parent or guardians. A student, entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the first time after being approved to enter an academy or specialty program becomes immediately eligible in the high school providing the academy or specialty program.

*Note B:* Feeder Schools - A feeder school is a school with students assigned to attend based on geographic/residence/boundary whose students are also assigned to attend the high school based on geographic/residence/boundary as established by the School Board. A feeder school may be a feeder for multiple high schools. For eligibility purposes, students will be deemed eligible at their School Board assigned high school

*Note C:* A student can be placed at a middle school outside their attendance zone within the school division based on the welfare of the student and/or school system and not for athletic purposes and/or activity purposes. The school board or division superintendent shall determine the students high school of attendance if the feeder school feeds multiple high schools.